

Shrewsbury School

Shrewsbury, United Kingdom



Curled inside a loop of the River Severn, twelve boarding houses keep alive a rowing tradition dating to 1866.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	67/100
Academic outcomes	75/100
University placement	73/100
Prestige & heritage	77/100
Alumni network	13/100
Facilities	78/100
Transparency	70/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Curled inside a loop of the River Severn, Shrewsbury trades on something many old English public schools have lost: a strong sense of place that still shapes daily life. The rowing tradition dating to 1866 is not decorative; it is part of the school’s identity, as are the twelve boarding houses and the fact that this remains a full boarding-and-day operation for pupils aged 13 to 18 rather than a day school with boarding attached. That matters. The scale and structure create an **immersive community** with real house loyalty, busy weekends and a rhythm that suits teenagers who want more than classroom competence. Parents looking for a sixth-form factory should look elsewhere. Shrewsbury sells a broader proposition: British schooling in the old mould, but co-educational and less socially brittle than some rivals.

Academically, the signal is strong enough to put it firmly on a serious shortlist. In the Class of 2024, there were **170 leavers**; **82%** went to top-100 universities, with **15 Oxbridge** places and 51 Russell Group destinations. Oxford took 8 and Cambridge 7, while Durham drew 12. Those are credible outcomes for a school that pushes the “whole person” line hard on its own site through intellectual, active, expressive and reflective development. That language can read *earnest*, but at Shrewsbury it sits on top of a school with evident depth in sport, music, performing arts, CCF, DofE, societies, volunteering and Futures provision. The question for parents is not whether there is enough to do; it is whether their child wants a *full-throttle boarding culture* in which participation carries weight.

It is expensive, as this tier of British boarding school is expensive: an average annual day fee of **£41,000** and an average annual boarding fee of **£59,000** across the age range. That buys history, facilities, pastoral infrastructure and a strong university pipeline, but it also buys into a school with a defined character. Shrewsbury will suit able, energetic pupils who thrive in a structured, communal environment and who want their education to extend well beyond lessons. It will not suit the teenager who wants anonymity, a light-touch culture or a narrowly transactional route to exam grades. What is special here is not novelty. It is *institutional confidence*, *deep-rooted tradition* and a boarding ethos that still feels alive rather than staged for prospectuses.

STRENGTHS

- Founded in 1552, Shrewsbury is one of the historic English public schools with a continuous academic tradition of more than 470 years.
- Strong 2024 outcomes: 82% of leavers to top-100 universities, with 15 Oxbridge places, and an A-Level cohort achieving 31% A* and 32% A.
- Set on a large riverside campus in the county town of Shrewsbury, with strong facilities for rowing, cricket, music and drama.
- World-class co-curricular provision in sport, drama, dance and music, backed by high co-curricular scores across the board.
- A house-centred boarding and day model that gives pupils a genuinely immersive community and strong pastoral anchoring.

TRADE-OFFS

- Boarding fees of around £55,000 a year sit toward the upper end of UK independent-school pricing, a significant commitment for relocating families.
- The school is in Shropshire, several hours by road or rail from London and major international airports, which adds travel time and cost for overseas parents.
- Full co-education is comparatively recent, so the mixed-sex system is younger than at schools with many decades of co-education.
- Day places are comparatively limited, as roughly three-quarters of pupils board full time.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is mainly at 13+ via Common Entrance or the school's own entrance assessment, with a smaller Sixth Form intake at 16+ based on GCSE results; the school also lists entry points at 11+ and 14+. Roughly three-quarters of the school's pupils board full time, so day places are comparatively limited. Demand is solid but not hyper-selective, and the school describes itself as fully subscribed. Overseas families should register early, pay a registration fee, and expect interviews alongside testing; academic, music, art and sport scholarships, plus bursaries, are available for exceptional candidates.

WTS RATING 

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