

Sherborne Girls

Sherborne, United Kingdom



Full boarding anchors life in this Dorset abbey town, where seven historic houses and joint sixth-form classes with Sherborne Boys shape every girl's day.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	71/100
Academic outcomes	72/100
University placement	70/100
Prestige & heritage	73/100
Alumni network	72/100
Facilities	73/100
Transparency	65/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Sherborne Girls is defined by boarding, not by a day-school timetable with dorms attached. More than ****90 per cent**** of pupils live on campus in its ****seven boarding houses****, and that fact shapes the place: girls spend their days in a full residential community in Sherborne rather than dispersing at 4pm. The school covers ages 13 to 18, teaches a British curriculum in English, and sits in a Dorset market town whose rhythms still suit an old-fashioned boarding model. The draw is clear. Parents looking for a ***serious boarding school*** with scale, structure and a settled sense of routine will find it here.

What distinguishes Sherborne Girls from many girls’ schools is that it combines a single-sex environment with joint sixth-form teaching with Sherborne Boys. That gives pupils a girls’ school through the main adolescent years, then a more mixed academic and social experience before university. For the right student, that is a **sharp advantage**: focused pastoral and academic life earlier on, then broader interaction later without a change of school. The school has 485 pupils in the most recently cited figure, which keeps it substantial enough to offer breadth without the anonymity of a giant campus. Its double “excellent” Independent Schools Inspectorate judgement adds a useful external marker of quality.

Fees place it firmly in the upper tier of British independent education: an average annual day fee of ***£35,850*** and an average annual boarding fee of ***£56,055*** across the full age range. That is expensive, and families should judge it against the intensity of the boarding offer. This is not the right choice for a girl who wants a loose, urban, day-led sixth form or a school with a casual relationship to house life. It suits girls who want a **contained**, **high-commitment** school community, who will use boarding as the centre of their week rather than an add-on, and who value the combination of a girls’ school identity with a shared sixth-form dimension next door. On a shortlist, Sherborne Girls earns its place through that specific formula, not through generic claims of prestige.

STRENGTHS

- Founded in 1899, the school has a long institutional track record in single-sex boarding education.
- Predominantly a full-boarding school, with over 90 per cent of pupils boarding across a house system, giving a coherent, pastorally structured residential community.
- A close, formal partnership with Sherborne Boys gives girls single-sex classrooms alongside joint co-curricular opportunities and mixed social life.
- World-class co-curricular provision in sport, music, drama and visual arts, plus elite dance, supported by dedicated facilities including the Merritt Centre for Music and Stuart Centre for Drama.
- Holds an Excellent rating from the Independent Schools Inspectorate, and publishes its own results and university destinations on its website.
- Direct mainline rail links to London Waterloo despite the rural Dorset setting.

TRADE - OFFS

- Girls-only, ruling it out for families wanting co-education for their daughter throughout secondary school.
- Fees sit at the upper end of the independent sector, as is standard for full boarding.
- The rural Dorset setting makes regular parental visits, weekend collection or day commuting from major cities impractical for most relocating families.
- The school deliberately does not appear in national league tables, so families who rely on tables for comparison must request the school's own results and destination data directly.
- Entry is concentrated at fixed assessment points (13+ and 16+), so places outside these years are limited and dependent on rare vacancies.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is chiefly at 13+ and 16+, with applicants sitting Common Entrance or the school's own assessment papers alongside an interview and current school reports; sixth-form entrants are assessed on GCSE predictions. Families are advised to register well ahead of the intended entry point. Academic, music, art, drama and sport scholarships are offered at entry points, and bursaries are available subject to a means test. Prospective families should confirm current registration and deposit charges directly with the school.

WTS RATING 

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