

Winchester College

Winchester, United Kingdom



Six hundred years on College Street, still built around Div - unexamined seminars in history, literature and philosophy.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	81/100
Academic outcomes	81/100
University placement	78/100
Prestige & heritage	87/100
Alumni network	87/100
Facilities	76/100
Transparency	75/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Winchester’s defining feature is not the medieval frontage or the 1382 foundation date, but Div: a non-examined programme in history, literature and philosophy taught across all year groups, built around discussion for its own sake. That matters because it tells you what the school values. This is a place for pupils who enjoy argument, abstraction and reading beyond the syllabus, not just efficient exam collection. The structure is still traditional: boys join at 13 for full boarding, while day and boarding places for boys and girls open in the sixth form. The academic environment is intimate by major boarding-school standards, with a ****10:1**** student-teacher ratio and average class sizes of ****18****. Winchester is old, Anglican and unapologetically cerebral; for the right child, that remains **electrifying**.

It also has the outcomes to justify the seriousness. In the class of 2024, 138 pupils left and **94.0%** progressed to top-100 universities; 40 went to Oxbridge, 43 to Russell Group institutions and 7 to the Ivy League, with Oxford, Cambridge and UCL the most frequent destinations. Those figures place Winchester firmly in the **top-flight academic** market, and parents should treat it as such on fees too: the average annual day fee across the school is **£45,954**, and the average annual boarding fee is **£55,000**. This is expensive, highly selective schooling with a clear intellectual proposition, not a broad church trying to be all things to all families.

Why shortlist it? Because few British schools combine this depth of history with such a **distinctive intellectual identity**. Many schools promise “critical thinking”; Winchester has formalised it into the curriculum. It also offers the full boarding structure that suits independent, self-directed teenagers, while sixth form entry opens the door to girls as well as boys. The best fit is a student who wants serious academic company, can thrive in a culture with strong traditions, and enjoys ideas that do not end with the exam paper. The wrong fit is just as clear: children who want a relaxed, modernised, less ritualised school experience will find Winchester **demanding**, **rarefied** and, at times, **not for the faint-hearted**.

STRENGTHS	TRADE - OFFS
• Founded by William of Wykeham in 1382 as a feeder school for New College, Oxford, and has operated continuously on its present site ever since, giving it the longest unbroken institutional history of any English school. • The school publishes strong 2024/2025 results: 44% of A-Level grades at A*, 92% at A*-B, and 93% of GCSE grades at 9-7, per its own results page. • In 2024, 94% of leavers progressed to top-100 universities, with 40 to Oxbridge, 43 to other Russell Group universities and several to the Ivy League. • Sixth Form girls can now enter as day or boarding pupils, widening access at 16+ while the boys' full-boarding tradition from 13 continues. • The 13+ 'Election' academic scholarship, combining written examinations and interviews, reflects a distinctive intellectual culture beyond standard entrance testing. • Around 20% of pupils receive some financial support, with the college distributing means-tested bursaries of up to full fee remission.	• Girls cannot enter before the Sixth Form, so there is no route into the school for girls before age 16. • Fees are among the highest in the UK independent sector at £55,000 a year for boarding and £30,000 for day pupils. • Winchester does not use the standard Common Entrance exam; instead it runs the Winchester Entrance and the Election scholarship examination, so families must prepare for a bespoke process. • The school's identity remains heavily traditional and boarding-centred, which will not suit families wanting a relaxed, broadly progressive or highly international environment.

ADMISSIONS

Main entry is at 13+ (Year 9) for boys, who sit the school's own Winchester Entrance exam rather than standard Common Entrance; the academically strongest candidates are invited to the multi-day Election scholarship process. A Sixth Form (16+) intake, introduced in 2022, admits girls as well as boys as day and boarding pupils via separate assessment. Registration carries a non-refundable application fee. Given the school's strong published results and Oxbridge placement record, competition for places — and especially for scholarships and Sixth Form girls' places — is intense. Means-tested bursaries of up to full fee remission are available, with around 20% of pupils receiving some level of financial support.

 ADMISSIONS CALENDAR

The next 2 milestones for Winchester College. Dates confirmed against the school's most recent published admissions calendar — check the official site to confirm before submitting.

May 10, 2027 9MO	ASSESSMENT	YEAR 9	Winchester Test + interview
Jun 15, 2027 10MO	DECISION	YEAR 9	Conditional offers issued

► 2 PAST DATES

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_9cc3874169.