

Lycée du Parc

Lyon, France



France's largest classes préparatoires campus, drawing 14,000 applicants a year to 31 divisions feeding the grandes ecoles

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	74/100
Academic outcomes	74/100
University placement	72/100
Prestige & heritage	78/100
Alumni network	76/100
Facilities	66/100
Transparency	73/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Lycée du Parc occupies a rare position in French education: a public secondary school with real gravitational pull, and a serious one. Founded in **1919** and based in Lyon’s sixth arrondissement, it sits close to the Parc de la Tête d’Or and serves students aged 15 to 20 on a day-school basis. The headline attraction is clear. This is the campus identified with France’s largest classes préparatoires operation, with 31 divisions and 14,000 applicants a year competing for routes into the grandes écoles. That scale matters. It gives the school a *hard-edged academic identity* and a *national, not local, reach*.

What sets Lycée du Parc apart is not pastoral theatre or campus spectacle. It is academic concentration.

Families looking at the French Baccalauréat and CPGE route will recognise the appeal: a school built for students who value structure, pace and intellectual competition. The average class size of **30** and student-teacher ratio of **14:1** point to a large, serious institution rather than a boutique environment. That will suit students who thrive in *high-pressure classrooms*, accept comparison with strong peers, and want entry into selective French higher education to shape their school years from the start.

It belongs on a shortlist for one reason above all: clarity of purpose. Lycée du Parc offers a *clear runway to elite French post-secondary study* in a public-school setting with an established name. Parents who want hand-holding, soft discipline or a broad co-curricular sales pitch should look elsewhere. Students who want *academic intensity without frills*, who can handle repetition, scrutiny and demanding expectations, will find the point of the place immediately. For that group, Lycée du Parc is not just a good option; it is a *serious credential in itself*.

STRENGTHS

- One of France's oldest and largest CPGE providers, with a purpose-built campus that opened for the 1913-1914 school year and now runs roughly 31 preparatory divisions across scientific, economic and literary streams.
- Consistently ranked among France's top public preparatory schools; Le Figaro Etudiant's 2025 rankings placed it as the second-best lycee in Lyon, with strong integration rates into competitive grandes ecoles.
- Runs the only BCPST (biology/geology-focused) preparatory class in the Lyon metropolitan area, with results regularly cited in the national top 5-10 for BCPST integration outcomes.
- Offers an English-language European section from seconde (10th grade), adding roughly one hour per week of history-geography or life sciences taught in English alongside the standard French curriculum.
- As a public lycee, tuition is essentially free, and a dedicated school foundation (created in 2015) subsidises the cost of oral exam travel for CPGE students who qualify for multiple grande ecole interviews.

TRADE-OFFS

- Teaching is conducted almost entirely in French; the school offers no International Baccalaureate or English-medium track, which limits suitability for expat families whose children are not fluent in French.
- It is a public day school with only partial boarding capacity reserved for a subset of preparatory-class students, so most families must arrange their own accommodation or daily commute in Lyon.
- With around 31 CPGE divisions it is one of the largest preparatory schools in France, meaning first-year classes can be sizeable even if second-year specialist groups narrow to smaller cohorts.
- Entry to the CPGE track is dossier-based and academically selective, drawing applicants from across France, which raises the competitive bar relative to a typical local secondary school place.

ADMISSIONS

Entry at the seconde (10th grade) level follows standard French public-school sector/catchment rules, with places also open via the European English section application. Entry to the CPGE (post-bac preparatory classes) is via Parcoursup, based on academic dossier, teacher appreciations, and baccalaureat results; competition is significant given the school's national reputation and draw from outside Lyon. No entrance interview or fee-paying pathway substitutes for academic selection.

WTS RATING 

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