

Prem Tinsulanonda International School

Chiang Mai, Thailand



On a 100-acre farm and forest campus in the Mae Rim foothills, the first school in Southeast Asia to run all four IB programmes

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	61/100
Academic outcomes	62/100
University placement	60/100
Prestige & heritage	62/100
Alumni network	61/100
Facilities	67/100
Transparency	51/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Prem Tinsulanonda International School occupies a distinctive niche in Thailand’s international market: a full-through IB day and boarding school on a ****100-acre**** campus in the Mae Rim foothills, with a farm, a forest school and far more physical space than most urban competitors. The headline fact matters: Prem was the first school in Southeast Asia to run all four IB programmes. That gives it unusual curricular breadth at sixth form age, where students can choose between the Diploma Programme and the Careers-related Programme rather than being pushed down a single academic track. The school’s scale also sets the tone. With a ****1:8**** student-teacher ratio, average class size of ****16****, and a community of around 500 students, Prem offers a campus life that feels **expansive**, **grounded** and markedly less compressed

than Bangkok's high-rise international schools.

What puts Prem on a shortlist is not raw prestige signalling; it is fit. This is a school for families who want the IB delivered in a setting that gives children room to move, make, grow and spend time outdoors. The school advertises more than 100 co-curricular activities and sports, and the campus itself supports that claim in a way few schools can match. Boarding adds another layer: Prem functions as a genuine residential school rather than a day school with a small boarding annex. For international families in northern Thailand, or for parents who want a structured boarding environment without sending a child to Europe, that matters. The proposition is **a home away from home**, but the stronger editorial point is simpler: Prem offers breadth, space and boarding in one package, which remains rare in the region.

The caveat is equally clear. Parents hunting for a relentlessly academic, exam-factory atmosphere may find Prem too diffuse in character. Its identity rests on whole-child education, interculturalism and experiential learning, not on published headline exam statistics; the school does not publish aggregate IB outcomes in the source material here, and serious buyers will want hard data on Diploma and Careers-related Programme results, university destinations by cohort, and boarding house oversight. The website's language also leans heavily on aspiration. The substance sits in the campus, the all-IB structure, the activity range and the boarding offer, not in polished slogans.

The students who flourish here are curious, self-directed and comfortable in an international mix of ****40**** nationalities. Prem suits children who need more than classrooms: outdoorsy students, arts-minded students, boarders who want a settled community, and older teenagers who value the option of an IB pathway with a stronger career focus. It also suits families who want schooling to feel **joyful**, **international** and **human-scale** rather than urban and transactional. For the right child, Prem offers something many schools promise and few deliver: **education beyond the classroom** in a setting built for it.

STRENGTHS

- Authorized IB World School delivering PYP, MYP and DP continuously from Early Years through Grade 12 on one campus.
- One of the few schools in northern Thailand offering full boarding, drawing students from across East and Southeast Asia.
- Large rural campus in Mae Rim, Chiang Mai, includes an organic farm and an elephant conservation program woven into the curriculum.
- Relatively small enrollment allows lower student-teacher ratios and closer pastoral supervision, useful for boarding families.
- Founded with backing from General Prem Tinsulanonda and Bill Heinecke of Minor Group, giving it long-standing local institutional ties.

TRADE-OFFS

- Location outside Chiang Mai city, several hours from Bangkok, means fewer nearby corporate expat postings than capital-based schools.
- Smaller IB Diploma cohort limits the breadth of subject options compared with larger international schools in Bangkok or Singapore.
- Boarding and day fees remain a significant household cost, even if lower than Bangkok's flagship international schools.
- Less publicly available recent data on IB Diploma average scores compared with more established regional IB schools.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is possible at any grade from Early Years (age 3) through Grade 12, with common intake points at Early Years, the Grade 6/7 secondary transition, and Grade 9/10 for new boarders. Applications require past school reports, references, and an assessment or interview; English proficiency is checked for older applicants. Admissions run on a rolling basis to accommodate year-round demand from overseas boarding families, and while day-school entry is not highly competitive, popular boarding grades and dormitory places can fill ahead of the academic year.

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_b6ef90ef0f.