

Riyadh Schools

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Five decades running the Saudi national curriculum in tandem with California English-standard benchmarking and MAP testing.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	50/100
Academic outcomes	52/100
University placement	48/100
Prestige & heritage	62/100
Alumni network	45/100
Facilities	55/100
Transparency	30/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Riyadh Schools sits in a distinctive niche: a long-established Saudi day school, founded in **1955**, that runs the Saudi national curriculum while importing external academic checks through California English-language standards and MAP testing. That combination matters. Many schools in Riyadh offer either a fully international pathway or a straightforward national one; Riyadh Schools does something tighter and more pragmatic. It keeps students anchored in Arabic, English and an Islamic school culture while measuring parts of performance against an overseas benchmark. For families who want *cultural continuity* without surrendering *academic scrutiny*, that is a serious selling point.

What puts it on a shortlist is not novelty but fit. This is a school for parents who want their children educated inside the Saudi system from ages **4–18**, yet do not want English provision treated as decorative. The California benchmarking gives the school a sharper edge than a standard national-curriculum option, and MAP testing adds a layer of data many local families now expect. The attraction is clear: *rootedness without isolation*, a long institutional history, and a bilingual structure that reflects the realities of professional life in Riyadh. The trade-off is also clear. Families seeking the IB, A levels, or a broad Western liberal curriculum will not find that here. Riyadh Schools serves a different brief, and serves it with *clear intent*.

The students who thrive here are those who value structure, linguistic range and a school identity tied to national and religious context. Ambitious Saudi families, and others committed to Arabic and Islamic education, will see the appeal. Children who do best here will not need a cosmopolitan brand to feel motivated; they will respond to order, expectations and steady progression inside a familiar framework. For the right family, that produces *confidence*, *belonging* and academic direction. For the wrong one, it will feel too bounded. That is the real market position: not a catch-all international school, but a focused Saudi day school with **70** years of history and a more rigorous English-measurement spine than many direct competitors.

STRENGTHS

- Riyadh Schools is part of Riyadh Schools Group, a leading non-profit educational institution in Saudi Arabia and a subsidiary of the Misk Foundation, blending internationally recognized curricula with Saudi heritage.
- The school offers both a national stream and an international stream for boys and girls across primary, middle and high school, both accredited by AdvancED.
- The national stream follows the Ministry of Education's curriculum from Grades 1-12 alongside an advanced English curriculum aligned with California Core Standards, with progress tracked via MAP tests.
- Riyadh Schools partners with the Mawhiba Foundation on the Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Scholarship, providing 50 scholarships for gifted and distinguished students to join the Mawhiba Program.
- Tuition sits in the budget band relative to Riyadh's international-school market, with primary fees estimated around SAR 30,000-42,000 and secondary around SAR 38,000-58,000 per year, according to a third-party fee aggregator.

TRADE-OFFS

- The core offering is a Saudi Ministry of Education national-curriculum pathway taught mainly in Arabic, which will not suit expat families seeking a full IB, A-level or AP track for direct entry to non-Saudi universities.
- In the Muslim world, public schools and most private schools are sex-segregated, and Riyadh Schools' national stream follows this common Saudi practice rather than operating as a coeducational Western-style day school throughout.
- The editorial rank (403) and challenger_300 tier place it below Riyadh's premium international schools in reputation and resourcing, and no independent inspection-body report (e.g. BSO, ISI) could be verified publicly.
- Fee and outcome figures circulating online come mainly from third-party aggregators rather than the school's own published fee schedule, so families should confirm exact costs and academic results directly with the admissions office.

ADMISSIONS

Entry points span nursery from one month of age through kindergarten (3-5 years) to Grade 12, with registration opening on a set date each year and closing once vacancies are filled; children must turn six within 90 days of the academic year to enter Grade 1. Applications for Riyadh Schools Group campuses run through the Classera platform, requiring passport copies, previous school records, immunization records and iqama documentation. Competitiveness is moderate and driven by campus capacity rather than formal entrance exams, though gifted-track (Mawhiba) places are limited and separately nominated.

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_dd38e13b3a.