

Westminster School

London, United Kingdom



Sandwiched between Parliament and the Abbey, its Latin prayers and ancient halls send close to half of leavers on to Oxford or Cambridge.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	82/100
Academic outcomes	83/100
University placement	86/100
Prestige & heritage	85/100
Alumni network	84/100
Facilities	75/100
Transparency	78/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

There are few schools in London with a setting this loaded: Parliament on one side, Westminster Abbey on the other, and school life threaded through ancient buildings, weekly services and a live relationship with the political and cultural life of the capital. Westminster trades on that inheritance, but it earns its reputation in the classroom. This is a **fiercely academic** school for ages 13–18, with a ***10:1*** student-teacher ratio, average class sizes of ***18***, and a sixth-form destination record that justifies the pressure. In the 2024 leavers’ cohort of 172, 95% went to top-100 universities, with 53 to Oxbridge, 53 to Russell Group institutions and 13 to the Ivy League. That is not just strong; it is **hard-edged** evidence of a school built for intellectual competition.

What marks Westminster out is the combination of old English institutional weight and a strikingly open academic culture. The school describes itself as co-educational, day and boarding, with pupils leading societies, plays, Model United Nations events and cultural celebrations, speaking in the Abbey, and taking part in everything from STEM Racing to Articulation. That range matters because Westminster is not a one-note exam factory. It wants pupils who like argument, who read beyond the syllabus, and who can use central London as an extension of the classroom. The school’s Anglican foundation still shapes the texture of daily life, but the intake is described as diverse and international at 16+, and the public identity is **intellect first**, not confessional.

Parents should shortlist Westminster if they want a school with **serious academic consequences** and the confidence to back pupil independence. The average annual fee is ***£51,000*** for day pupils and ***£69,000*** for boarders across the full ladder, which places it exactly where its market sits: expensive, elite, and under no pressure to apologise for either. ISI and HMC accreditation place it firmly inside the top tier of British independent schooling, and its alumni footprint is vast even by historic standards. This school suits students who are **restlessly bright**, verbally agile and happy in a culture where cleverness is visible and prized. It does not suit children who need heavy hand-holding, a softer pace, or a school willing to dilute standards for comfort.

STRENGTHS

- The 2024 A-level cohort achieved strong results, with 60% of grades at A* and 88% at A* or A on the published grade bands.
- At GCSE in 2025, Westminster's 122 candidates recorded 94% of grades at 9 or 8 and 98% at grade 9 to 7.
- In 2024, 95% of leavers progressed to top-100 universities, with 53 to Oxbridge and offers extending to Ivy League and other leading US institutions.
- The school sits in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, founded in 1179 and refounded by Elizabeth I in 1560, giving it exceptional historic and civic standing.
- The school runs a substantial means-tested bursary programme, with awards reaching up to 100% of fees alongside King's Scholarships for academic merit.
- Old Westminsters include architect Christopher Wren, physicist Robert Hooke, historian Edward Gibbon and composer Lord Lloyd-Webber.

TRADE-OFFS

- Westminster sits in the ultra-premium fee bracket, with day fees of £30,000 and boarding fees of £55,000 a year.
- The school does not accept international boarders under 16 and sponsors Child Student visas only at 16+, limiting the international boarding route to the Sixth Form.
- Admission is highly competitive: 13+ entry attracts around 500 applicants, of whom roughly half are invited to interview.
- Facilities are compact and central-London based rather than expansive, so families wanting extensive on-site pitches or a sprawling campus will find provision comparatively limited.

ADMISSIONS

Entry points are 11+ via Westminster Under School, which feeds into Year 9, plus 13+ and 16+ into the senior school. The 13+ round draws roughly 500 applicants, with about half interviewed after pretesting; 16+ candidates sit subject exams and interviews in November. International boarders under 16 are not accepted and visa sponsorship is offered only at 16+. Means-tested bursaries can reach up to 100% of fees, alongside King's Scholarships for academic merit; registration, entrance and deposit fees apply at each stage.



ADMISSIONS CALENDAR

The next 4 milestones for Westminster School. Dates confirmed against the school's most recent published admissions calendar — check the official site to confirm before submitting.

Nov 1, 2027
15MO

ASSESSMENT YEAR 9

Common Pre-Test window

Nov 30, 2027
16MO

REGISTRATION CLOSES YEAR 9 ⓘ

Year 9 registration closes

Jan 20, 2028
17MO

ASSESSMENT YEAR 9

Westminster Challenge (interview + task)

Feb 14, 2028
18MO

DECISION YEAR 9

Offers issued

NOTABLE ALUMNI (1170)

SPORT: Reginald Doherty, Ivor Montagu, Ronald Rawson, John Sackville, 3rd Duke of Dorset, William Brett, 1st Viscount Esher, Richard Howe, 1st Earl Howe, Charles Gordon-Lennox, 6th Duke of Richmond, Philip Verdon

MUSIC: Peter Ustinov, Henry Purcell, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Mika, Dido, John Gielgud, James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos, Theodore Holland

DRAMA: Matthew Gregory Lewis, Stephen Poliakoff, Helena Bonham Carter, Peter Brook, Patrick Hamilton, Ivor Montagu, Nicholas Rowe, Peter Ustinov

VISUAL_ARTS: Christopher Wren, Robert Hooke, Dido, Henry Aldrich, Thomas Dolby, H. T. Cadbury-Brown, Charles Robert Cockerell, Henry Bunbury

LETTERS: Matthew Gregory Lewis, Edward Gibbon, Stephen Poliakoff, Peter Brook, Matthew Prior, Patrick Hamilton, Edward Marsh, Edward St Aubyn

POLITICS: Matthew Gregory Lewis, William Amherst, 1st Earl Amherst, William Cavendish-Bentinck, 3rd Duke of Portland, John Russell, 1st Earl Russell, Edward Gibbon, Thomas Howard, 21st Earl of Arundel, Christopher Wren, Matthew Prior

SCIENCE: Andrew Huxley, Edward Gibbon, Christopher Wren, William Sharp Macleay, Henry Octavius Coxe, Edward Marsh, Tom Pocock, William Grey Walter

BUSINESS: Ruth Kelly, Chris Huhne, William Beckford, Robert Harding Evans, Joe Cornish, William Knox D'Arcy, Charles Wigoder, George G. Weston

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_e562437587.