

Brighton College

Brighton, United Kingdom



Between the South Downs and the sea, a two-decade climb from mid-table to Sunday Times School of the Decade.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	79/100
Academic outcomes	81/100
University placement	79/100
Prestige & heritage	80/100
Alumni network	79/100
Facilities	79/100
Transparency	77/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Between the South Downs and the sea, Brighton College has spent two decades turning itself from a strong regional independent into a national reference point for results. The hard data explain why. The school quotes ****97% A*-B at A-level**** and ****97% 9/8/7 at GCSE****, with A*/9 the most common grades, and The Sunday Times named it UK School of the Decade. This is not a soft, picturesque Brighton education dressed up with glossy architecture. It is a **fiercely academic** school with serious sixth-form outcomes: from 195 leavers in 2024, 90% went to top-100 universities, including 30 to Oxbridge, 44 to Russell Group institutions and 5 to the Ivy League. Parents paying an average ****£29,474**** a year for day places or ****£68,346**** for boarding are buying into a school with national ambition and a proven

university pipeline.

What sets Brighton apart is that the academic pressure sits inside a culture that the school has worked hard to make humane. The public line is “kindness”, and in this case it matches the wider picture of a school that understands how to stop high performance tipping into grind. A **10:1** student-teacher ratio and average class size of **18** give it room to know pupils properly, and that matters in a school this driven. It is Anglican, teaches in English, and runs across ages 3 to 18, so families can take a through-school route rather than face another admissions hurdle at 11 or 13. ISI and HMC accreditation place it squarely inside the upper tier of British independent schooling, but the sharper distinction is tone: Brighton has cultivated an identity that is *high-achieving without being archaic*.

This school belongs on a shortlist for families who want top-flight academic outcomes without the deadening social stiffness that still dogs parts of the boarding sector. It suits bright, busy, *self-propelled* children who will exploit a broad menu of opportunities and who do not need hand-holding to keep moving. It also suits pupils who want intellectual pace but not a joyless atmosphere. The child who will thrive here is engaged, resilient and comfortable among equally able peers; the child who needs a gentler, less comparative environment may find Brighton *demanding*. For ambitious families who want modern independent schooling at full stretch, Brighton College is one of the clearest options in the market.

STRENGTHS

- Brighton College's 2025 A-level results were 98% A*-B and 85% A*-A, with 49% of all grades at A*, among the strongest cohorts in the UK.
- The school was awarded UK Boarding School of the Year 2025, Top School of the Year for A-levels 2025 and Top Academic School in South East England 2025 by The Sunday Times Parent Power guide.
- It ranked first in the country for A-level results in 2024, according to Wikipedia's summary of published league-table data.
- Brighton College is an all-through, co-educational school (pre-prep, prep and senior) offering both day and boarding places from age 13, giving continuity from nursery to sixth form.
- A broad scholarship programme covers academic, music, art, sport, drama, dance, chess and choral talent, alongside means-tested bursaries for day pupils.

TRADE-OFFS

- Fees sit at the very top of the UK market: day fees have run to roughly £25,000-£30,000 a year, with boarding reported in excess of £45,000 for UK pupils and £55,000-plus for overseas boarders in recent fee schedules.
- Entry is competitive: the main Year 9 (13+) intake requires the ISEB Common Pre-Test taken as early as Year 6, plus interview and assessment days, and places can run to waiting lists.
- The campus occupies a single, compact urban site in central Brighton - hemmed in by the sea, city and South Downs - rather than the sprawling rural grounds typical of some rival boarding schools.
- The academic offer is built exclusively around GCSEs and A-levels; there is no International Baccalaureate route, which may matter to internationally mobile families wanting IB continuity.

ADMISSIONS

Brighton College takes pupils from age 3 through pre-prep, prep and senior school, with 13+ (Year 9) the main senior entry point alongside smaller intakes at 11+ and 16+. Applicants sit the ISEB Common Pre-Test (or equivalent online assessment) typically in Year 6, followed by interview and an assessment/orientation day; offers for 13+ are usually confirmed in March of Year 6, conditional at GCSE for 16+ entry. Given strong published results, competition for places is significant, particularly for scholarship candidates. Early registration (often 12-18 months ahead) is recommended, and academic, music, art, sport, drama, dance, chess and choral scholarships, plus means-tested bursaries, are available.

NOTABLE ALUMNI (113)

SPORT: Joe Gattling, Matt Prior, Avison Scott, Bazid Khan, Carl Hopkinson, Cecil Maxwell, Charles Carpenter, Chris Eubank Jr

MUSIC: Bess Atwell, Christopher Hassall, Rose Elinor Dougall, Nina Humphreys

DRAMA: McDonald Hobley, Chris Terrill, Laurie Penny, Tamzin Merchant, Vera Filatova, Michael Hordern, Christopher Hassall, Tom Conway

VISUAL_ARTS: David Nash, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Richard Harold Redvers Taylor

LETTERS: Bertram Lenox Simpson, Chris Terrill, Laurie Penny, Femi Fani-Kayode, Saba Sams, Neville Victor Abraham, Amy Patricia Morell, C. L. James

POLITICS: Archie Kirkman Loyd, Charles Campbell Ross, Femi Fani-Kayode, Neville Victor Abraham, Robert Skidelsky, Herbert Heath, John Chilcot

SCIENCE: Cecil Sugden, D. E. Marsh, Edward Barclay-Smith, C. L. James, Robert Skidelsky, Edward Carpenter, Charles Fraser-Smith, Noel Odell

BUSINESS: David Quayle, Johnny Gold, George Harold Winterbottom, Cuthbert Heath Eden

WTS RATING 

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