

Pickering College

Newmarket, Canada



Canada's only Quaker-founded school pairs a bespoke Global Leadership Diploma with its own student-run campus radio station.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	69/100
Academic outcomes	70/100
University placement	68/100
Prestige & heritage	71/100
Alumni network	70/100
Facilities	72/100
Transparency	63/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Pickering College has a clear hook that few Canadian schools can match: it is Canada’s only Quaker-founded school, and it turns that inheritance into something concrete rather than ceremonial. The strongest expression of that is its Global Leadership Program, which runs across the school and gives moral language, service and public purpose a formal place alongside the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. This is not a school built around brute-force exam branding. It sells a broader idea of education: achievement tied to contribution. For the right family, that is **distinctive** and **serious**. For families chasing a narrow, exam-factory culture, it is the wrong fit.

The practical shape matters too. Pickering is in Newmarket on a 17-hectare campus, takes both day pupils and boarders, and teaches in English from ages 11 to 18. Average class size is **14**, which puts it in the small-class, high-contact end of the market. Fees place it firmly in the premium independent bracket: **CAD 41,275** a year on average for day pupils and **CAD 87,500** for boarding across the full ladder covered here. Parents paying those sums should expect close attention, access to staff and a campus life with substance. The school’s own student-run radio station adds a *refreshingly specific* note; it signals a place that values student voice in more than slogan form.

What makes Pickering shortlist-worthy is the combination of scale and ethos. Smaller classes, boarding, and a bespoke leadership framework create a school for students who want to do more than compile grades. It will suit articulate, community-minded children who thrive when adults know them well and expect them to participate. It will also suit internationally minded families who want a school with a *clear moral centre* but no confessional religious identity; the context here lists it as non-religious, even while its Quaker foundation still shapes the school’s language and priorities. Students who want a huge sixth form, a hard-edged sporting culture or a relentlessly *results-first* atmosphere will find stronger options elsewhere. Pickering’s appeal lies in a more *purpose-driven* proposition: small classes, broad leadership expectations and a boarding environment built for involvement rather than anonymity.

STRENGTHS

- Founded 1842; long-established independent school.
- Offers both day and boarding in Newmarket.
- 7:1 student-teacher ratio allows close attention.
- Global Leadership Program adds purpose beyond OSSD academics.

TRADE-OFFS

- OSSD only; no IB or A-level alternative.
- English-only instruction may limit bilingual development.
- Quaker-founded ethos may not suit every family.

ADMISSIONS

Pickering College is a co-educational independent school in Newmarket taking both day pupils and boarders, with the listing here covering ages 11–18. In practice, that suggests entry around the start of the middle and senior years, with boarding available for older pupils, though the school's public materials provided here do not set out formal admissions entry points by year group. Nor do they publish, in the sources supplied, the detail an admissions-minded parent would usually want on assessment: there is no public confirmation here of testing, interview structure, writing sample, or English-language screening.

The school also does not publish, in the material provided, specific application deadlines or a bursary and financial-aid framework, so families will need to ask admissions directly. What is distinctive, and likely relevant to selection as well as fit, is the school's Quaker foundation and its stated emphasis on character, service and its Global Leadership Program. That points to a school looking for more than straightforward academic promise: pupils who will engage seriously with community, responsibility and leadership are likely to be a more natural match.

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_2d92090d87.