

Saint Ann's School

Brooklyn, United States

In Brooklyn Heights, narrative reports replace letter grades while nationally recognized arts programs anchor the curriculum.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	74/100
Academic outcomes	79/100
University placement	75/100
Prestige & heritage	74/100
Alumni network	72/100
Facilities	67/100
Transparency	74/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Saint Ann’s School occupies a rare position in the New York market: a fiercely academic, non-religious day school that rejects the standard machinery of grades, class rank and prize-giving. Founded in **1965** and teaching an American curriculum in English, it has built its reputation on narrative reports, close teacher attention and a conviction that intellectual risk matters more than tidy transcript optics. The **1:6** student-teacher ratio is not decorative; it underpins a classroom culture where teachers know pupils closely and write about their work in detail. For families tired of formula, that is *a serious distinction*. For families who want constant numerical benchmarking, it is not.

What sets Saint Ann’s apart is the scale of its commitment to the arts. Plenty of strong schools claim to value creativity; Saint Ann’s has made it structural. Its arts programmes are not an adjunct to the academic core but one of the school’s main engines, and that gives the place a *restless, high-output energy*. The result is a school for children who want to make, write, perform, debate and think with intensity. It is also a school with a clear tolerance for eccentricity, appetite and independent judgment. That mix gives Saint Ann’s *a rare kind of freedom*: ambitious without drill, cultivated without polish for its own sake.

This is not a universal fit. Saint Ann’s suits students who are intellectually alive, verbally agile and comfortable in an environment that rewards curiosity over compliance. Children who flourish there tend to like ideas for their own sake, welcome close scrutiny from teachers, and gain momentum from an atmosphere that treats artistic work as central rather than decorative. Families who want a school to impose heavy external structure, or who need conventional grades as a weekly reassurance mechanism, will find the model *disconcerting*. Families who value deep teaching, original thinking and serious arts provision will find it *hard to ignore*.

In market terms, Saint Ann's sits at the top end of progressive American schooling in New York: academically credible, culturally ambitious and unapologetically individual. Its NAIS accreditation gives the expected baseline, but the school's real currency lies in ethos and execution rather than badges. It belongs on a shortlist because few schools deliver this combination of *intellectual seriousness*, artistic centrality and intimate teaching at ages **3-18**. For the right child, it is not merely distinctive; it is *transformative*.

STRENGTHS

- Saint Ann's eschews letter grades through middle school in favor of narrative reports and ongoing dialogue between teachers and students. So that every child will flourish, we eschew grades, rankings, and prizes in favor of ongoing dialogue and teacher reports.
- The school has a strong historical record of college placement: in a 2004 survey conducted by The Wall Street Journal, Saint Ann's was rated the number one high school in the country for having the highest percentage of graduating seniors enroll in Ivy League and other highly selective colleges.
- Arts are woven into the core curriculum rather than treated as an elective add-on. We cultivate a joy for learning through a deep and rigorous curriculum, in which the arts are an essential presence.
- Class sizes are small, with a student-teacher ratio reported at roughly six to one across the PK-12 student body. It has 1,097 students in grades PK, K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 6 to 1.
- The school has produced a number of well-known creative alumni, including actress Jennifer Connelly and art dealer Vito Schnabel. Jennifer Lynn Connelly (born December 12, 1970) is an American actress...Vito Schnabel is an art dealer and the owner of Vito Schnabel Gallery, founded in Switzerland in 2015.

TRADE - OFFS

- Fees are high even by New York independent-school standards: Tuition for 2026-2027 Preschool \$58,550, Kindergarten \$62,000, Lower School grades 1-3 \$62,000, Grades 4-8 \$64,500, Grades 9-12 \$66,400, plus mandatory lunch, activity, and high school fees on top.
- Admission is capped structurally: new students are admitted to the Preschool through Grade 10 as vacancies permit, and, on occasion, exceptions may be made for Grade 11, so lateral entry in the final two years of high school is rare.
- The narrative-report model is unusual among peer schools and can complicate benchmarking: Saint Ann's is the only major NYC private school that does not assign letter grades through middle school...the school transitions to letter grades in the upper school but retains a more narrative-rich evaluation tradition than peer institutions, which may unsettle families used to conventional grading.
- Athletics appear to take a back seat to arts and academics; one student review noted its athletics program is not great, although I love soccer and have loved my time there, and the school fields no football program.

ADMISSIONS

Entry points span Preschool through Grade 10, with occasional Grade 11 exceptions if space allows. Selection is holistic: admission rests on personal interviews and school-administered assessments rather than the ISEE, IQ scores, or grades from a prior school. Divisional deadlines cluster around mid-November for Kindergarten and Lower School and early December for Middle School, with high school admission following an information-session and interview cycle. Because the roughly 1,100-student body is drawn mainly from Brooklyn and Manhattan, and because the school occupies a single Brooklyn Heights campus, popular entry points such as Kindergarten and Middle School are competitive despite the absence of a published acceptance rate.

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_5f86858835.