

Sacred Heart Preparatory

Atherton, United States



Seminar-style classrooms in Silicon Valley's heart, guided by Sacred Heart's five Goals and Criteria and a hands-on Creative Inquiry studio.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	65/100
Academic outcomes	68/100
University placement	66/100
Prestige & heritage	65/100
Alumni network	64/100
Facilities	66/100
Transparency	56/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Seminar-style teaching is the clear draw here. Sacred Heart Preparatory runs as a small, senior-only day school for ages 14 to 18, with an average class size of ****14**** and a student-teacher ratio of ****9:1****; that points to discussion, close reading and teachers who know exactly who is coasting and who is stuck. The school also adds a concrete layer of hands-on work through its Creative Inquiry programme, which gives the academic offer more range than a standard AP-only treadmill. This is a Catholic school, founded in 1898, and the intellectual culture sits inside Sacred Heart’s five Goals and Criteria rather than alongside them as decorative mission language. Parents who want a school with a moral vocabulary, service expectations and a stronger communal frame than many secular Bay Area independents will find that

structure **purposeful** rather than pious.

In market terms, this is an **expensive**, high-touch Silicon Valley day school: the average annual fee is ****\$53,787**** across the full high-school ladder. That buys scale in the classroom, not a sprawling all-through model at the preparatory level. Sacred Heart Preparatory is for families who value attention, discussion and adult guidance more than brute size or endless subject sprawl. The published academic route is the US High School Diploma with AP, which keeps the programme conventional in structure even if the teaching format is more **intimate** than at many American college-prep schools. NAIS accreditation adds a baseline of institutional credibility, but the stronger signal is the school’s consistency: small classes, explicit values, service, counselling, clubs, sport, arts and college counselling all sit in the same ecosystem.

The right student for Sacred Heart Preparatory is bright, articulate and willing to participate. Quiet students can thrive here too, but only if they can handle being known. This is not a place to vanish into the back row. It suits teenagers who like discussion-based classes, want teachers close at hand, and do well in a school culture that asks for engagement beyond grades. It will also appeal to students who want a Catholic environment without retreating from mainstream American university preparation. Families hunting for a **hard-edged** pressure cooker or a huge comprehensive course catalogue have stronger options elsewhere; families after a **thoughtful**, close-knit sixth-form equivalent in the heart of Silicon Valley should keep Sacred Heart Preparatory firmly on the shortlist.

STRENGTHS	TRADE - OFFS
• Large 63-acre campus in Atherton • Strong college-preparatory academic environment • Clear service-learning and Catholic mission • Robust athletics within broad student life	• Competitive admissions and selective fit expectations • Mission-driven culture may not suit everyone • Independent-school setting can feel highly polished

ADMISSIONS

Families should approach admissions to Sacred Heart Preparatory with two priorities in mind: academic readiness and community fit. This is a college-preparatory high school, so applicants should be prepared to show solid classroom performance, thoughtful teacher recommendations and a record of constructive involvement beyond academics. Just as important, however, is the school's Catholic and Sacred Heart identity. Interviews, essays and visits are opportunities to demonstrate not only achievement, but also how a student contributes to a community through curiosity, character, service and participation.

Prospective families should spend time understanding the school's mission, its place within the worldwide Network of Sacred Heart Schools and its relationship to the broader Sacred Heart campus. Students who can articulate why they want a values-based, co-educational day school experience will be better positioned than those offering generic interest. Visiting campus, asking specific questions about academics, athletics, arts and service-learning, and showing a realistic sense of fit will matter.

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_618d920ef2.