

Downe House Riyadh

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



A century-old Berkshire girls' school transplanted to Riyadh, blending British rigor with Arabic and Islamic studies from Year 5.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	36/100
Academic outcomes	32/100
University placement	28/100
Prestige & heritage	52/100
Alumni network	20/100
Facilities	48/100
Transparency	30/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Downe House Riyadh trades on a rare proposition in this market: an English-medium British school for girls, opened in **2022**, with the cultural authority of a long-established English name and a Saudi setting that is not treated as an afterthought. The school takes girls from ages **4-18**, with boys admitted only in the younger years, and from Year 5 onwards the proposition sharpens into a clear all-girls pathway. That matters. Parents looking for a *serious single-sex academic environment* in Riyadh do not have many options with this level of brand recognition. The school also states that Arabic and Saudi culture sit alongside the British curriculum rather than at its margins; the Arabic Centre of Excellence signals that this is not decorative localisation.

What is special here is less novelty than alignment. Downe House Riyadh is trying to transplant the habits of a Berkshire girls' school into Saudi Arabia without stripping out the local context. The all-female faculty is part of that pitch, and for many families it will be a decisive one. So will the day-school format: this is not a boarding import awkwardly retrofitted for the Gulf, but a local school with a premium British frame. The average annual day fee across the full age range is **SAR 68,900**, which places it firmly in the **premium** bracket and sets an expectation of strong teaching, coherent pastoral systems and a polished campus. The school has invested in an Early Years atrium, outdoor creative play, a secondary library and learning centre, and that matters for a young school that still has to prove depth as well as polish.

It belongs on a shortlist for families who want a **disciplined British structure** without sacrificing Arabic language, Saudi identity or an all-girls senior experience. It will suit able, ambitious girls who thrive in a setting built around confidence, participation and leadership rather than anonymity. It will also appeal to parents who want a school with **clear social codes** and a more sheltered atmosphere than a large co-educational international campus. The caveat is straightforward: this is a new school, not a century-old institution in Riyadh, and the local track record is still short. We have not seen published public exam outcomes or university destinations yet, and that matters at this price. For now, Downe House Riyadh is strongest as a **high-intent premium entrant** with a sharply defined audience: girls who want an English-medium education in a female-led environment, and parents who value heritage, cultural fit and focus over scale.

STRENGTHS

- Carries the name and British educational branding of Downe House, a UK independent school founded in 1907 in Berkshire, England.
- Offers a British curriculum day-school option in Riyadh, addressing demand from expatriate and Saudi families for UK-style education.
- Forms part of a broader wave of international branch schools opening in Saudi Arabia alongside Vision 2030 education-sector expansion.
- Day format avoids boarding fees and keeps children living at home, a practical draw for relocating expatriate families.

TRADE-OFFS

- No independent inspection reports, exam results, or accreditation records for the Riyadh campus are currently publicly available.
- No official school website could be located, limiting families' ability to verify fees, facilities, staffing, or curriculum delivery.
- As a newly established branch, it has no multi-year track record or alumni network comparable to the original UK school.
- It is unclear how much of the UK school's academic model, pastoral system, or single-sex structure actually transfers to the Riyadh operation.

ADMISSIONS

Public information on entry points, deadlines, and assessment procedures is limited given the absence of an official school website. Prospective families should expect typical British-curriculum day-school practice: staged entry points (early years through secondary), submission of previous school reports, and possibly an interview or assessment. Competitiveness cannot be verified independently; given the school's new and low-profile status, admissions are likely less selective than established Riyadh international schools, though this should be confirmed directly with the school before assuming availability.

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_62e99fc7d0.