

Shibuya Makuhari School

Chiba, Japan



Founded to help Japanese returnee students readjust, this reclaimed-land Makuhari campus now funnels graduates into Waseda and Keio by the hundreds.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	75/100
Academic outcomes	84/100
University placement	87/100
Prestige & heritage	76/100
Alumni network	58/100
Facilities	64/100
Transparency	62/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Shibuya Makuhari School is a Japanese day school in Chiba for ages 15-18, founded in ****1983**** with a clear original purpose: helping returnee Japanese students re-enter domestic education without losing an international outlook. That origin still matters. The school’s language of instruction is Japanese and the curriculum is the Japanese National curriculum, but the institutional idea is wider than a standard academic high school. Its own framing rests on “self-directed inquiry and self-reflection” (“自調自考”), international mindedness, strong ethics and an internal culture of freedom. In practice, that makes

Shibuya Makuhari attractive to families who want elite domestic preparation without the narrowness that can afflict exam factories. It sits in Makuhari, on **an expansive planned-city campus setting**, and carries the confidence of a school that knows exactly what it is.

What puts it on a shortlist is the combination of academic seriousness and a less rigid social atmosphere than many top Japanese schools. The school talks openly about exchange with overseas schools, study abroad, returnee and international students, and the presence of native-speaker teachers. That does not turn it into an international school; it remains firmly Japanese in curriculum, language and structure. But it does give students **a broader field of vision** than the domestic norm. The phrase “Shibumaku-style freedom” is part of the school’s own language, and parents should read that as meaningful: this is a high-performing environment that still values personal judgement, autonomy and school life as something more than test preparation. **That balance is rare.**

Its market position is clear. This is for ambitious families who want access to Japan’s top university pipeline while keeping a door open to overseas study and a more outward-facing peer group. The school itself publicises overseas university application briefings, active international exchange and a culture built around judgement and conscience rather than obedience alone. That gives it **real distinction** in a crowded upper-tier market. It is also a day school, not a boarding school, and that matters: the model suits families rooted in Greater Tokyo who want high academic expectations without handing adolescence over to an all-consuming residential institution.

The student who will thrive here is bright, self-propelled and comfortable in a competitive Japanese academic setting, but not content with pure conformity. Shibuya Makuhari suits returnee students, internationally minded Japanese students, and teenagers who want intellectual stretch with **room to think for themselves**. It does not suit families seeking an English-medium education, an overseas curriculum, or a soft landing for weak self-management. The school’s own values point the other way: independence, ethical judgement, freedom with responsibility, and engagement with the world. For the right child, that is **a serious proposition** and **an unusually compelling mix**.

STRENGTHS

- The school was established by Tetsuo Tamura to serve Japanese students who have lived abroad, returned to Japan, and have had difficulties adjusting to the Japanese educational system, giving it a genuine, decades-long track record with repatriating families.
- It operates as a sister institution to Shibuya Junior and Senior High School, a private co-ed secondary school in Shibuya Ward, Tokyo, part of the same Shibuya Kyoiku Gakuen network and shared educational philosophy.
- University outcomes are exceptional by national benchmarks: 2026 data show 82 students admitted to the University of Tokyo from a graduating cohort of 352, alongside sustained placements at Harvard and other overseas universities.
- Designated a UNESCO Associated School in 2009 and a Super Global High School by Japan's

TRADE - OFFS

- Regular entry is extremely competitive: reported deviation-score (hensachi) benchmarks of 70-72 in the first round and 69-71 in the second round (2024 data) place it among Japan's toughest junior-high entrance exams, ruling it out as a realistic option for average-ability applicants.
- The campus sits in the Makuhari waterfront district of Chiba Chiba-shi Mihama-ku Wakaba, well outside central Tokyo, so families based in the capital's core wards face a non-trivial daily commute.
- Teaching follows the Japanese National curriculum and is delivered predominantly in Japanese day-to-day, so it is not an English-medium or IB alternative for families whose children lack strong Japanese literacy outside the small returnee intake.
- Beyond headline tuition, families are billed for a range of additional recurring charges - a parent-

Ministry of Education (MEXT) in 2014, one of only 56 schools nationwide selected for that global-education programme.

- The school runs a dedicated returnee (kikokushijo) admissions track in which, according to specialist sources, the selection is conducted in English only, with no Japanese-language or mathematics test, easing entry for internationally raised applicants.

association entrance fee, monthly reserve-fund payments, and materials fees (including PC leasing at senior high level) - which add to the effective cost of attendance.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is chiefly at Grade 7 (age 12) through the school's own written examination, with a smaller senior-high entry point. Regular applicants face intense competition, with reported hensachi scores around 70-72, placing it among Japan's most selective secondary schools. A parallel kikokushijo (returnee) route admits a small cohort - assessed in English only via language credentials, a preliminary essay and an interview, with no Japanese or maths test - reflecting the school's founding purpose of supporting repatriating Japanese families. Full requirements and deadlines are published annually on the school's admissions pages.

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_a6415553fc.