

St. Paul's College

Hong Kong, Hong Kong



Founded in 1851 on Bonham Road, Hong Kong's oldest continuously run school still sorts Paulines into six tree-named houses.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	61/100
Academic outcomes	68/100
University placement	64/100
Prestige & heritage	76/100
Alumni network	27/100
Facilities	60/100
Transparency	58/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

St. Paul’s College sits in a rare category in Hong Kong: a historic boys’ day school with real civic weight, not borrowed prestige. Founded in ****1851****, it is the city’s oldest continuously run school, and that matters because institutional memory shapes culture. The school’s identity is not vague. It runs the HKDSE, teaches in English and Cantonese, and keeps a house structure built around six tree-named houses. That combination gives it a clear profile: **old-school discipline**, **ritual without gimmick**, and a **deeply rooted sense of place** on Bonham Road.

What puts it on a parent’s shortlist is not novelty but continuity. In a market crowded with newer

international and bilingual brands, St. Paul’s offers something harder to replicate: a long-settled academic culture, a recognisable local reputation, and a social fabric that has had more than ****170**** years to harden into tradition. Parents looking for a school that feels **serious, exacting and established** will find that here. The Anglican/Catholic foundation also sets a distinct tone, though this is not the school for families seeking a secular, loose, pick-and-mix model of schooling. It belongs to Hong Kong’s traditional academic mainstream, and it does not dilute that character to chase fashion.

The right student for St. Paul’s is a boy who thrives with structure, expects standards and does not need hand-holding to find his footing. He will value **institutional pride**, respond to competition that is channelled rather than chaotic, and want a school where belonging carries obligations as well as benefits. A child who wants maximum curricular flexibility, a progressive classroom atmosphere, or the softer edges of newer private schools will find stronger fits elsewhere. St. Paul’s suits families who want a school with **earned authority**, cultural ballast and a record of staying power from ****12-18****.

STRENGTHS

- One of the oldest continuously operated schools in Hong Kong, founded in 1851, with a 175-year institutional history and strong alumni network.
- Notable alumni network includes historical figures such as Wu Tingfang, Sir Sze-yuen Chung, Jasper Tsang and architect I. M. Pei.
- Direct Subsidy Scheme status gives the school more flexibility over curriculum and admissions than a fully government-funded aided school.
- Offers both the HKDSE and, from 2018 onwards, the International Advanced Level (IAL) curriculum alongside it, giving senior students an alternative exit qualification.
- Reports a majority of students meeting the core JUPAS entrance benchmark, with the school stating 77.9% of students met the '3322' requirement for local university admission.

TRADE - OFFS

- Single-sex boys' school only, which will not suit families wanting co-education.
- As a DSS school it charges tuition fees on top of any government subsidy, with published rates up to roughly HK\$44,000 a year at full fee, unlike fully free government-aided schools.
- Curriculum is predominantly HKDSE-oriented; the IAL option is a comparatively recent addition and does not offer the breadth of an established IB or A-level programme.
- Entry is competitive and based on interview/assessment, so places are not guaranteed even for families in the local school net.

ADMISSIONS

St. Paul's College is a Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) boys' school taking students from Primary 1 through Form 6. Secondary Form 1 places are allocated partly through the standard Hong Kong Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) system and partly through the school's own discretionary places, with interviews and assessments used to select candidates. The primary section runs a separate application process with two rounds of interviews for Junior Class One entrants aged roughly 5 years 8 months to 7 years. Given its Band 1A reputation and long history, competition for places is significant, and places for non-local or mid-stream applicants without an HK primary school record are limited.

WTS RATING 

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