

# Beijing National Day School

Beijing, China



*In Haidian's academic engine room, a 2011 reform scrapped fixed classes for build-your-own timetables of 300-plus electives.*

## RANKING DIMENSIONS

|                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| Overall              | 69/100 |
| Academic outcomes    | 76/100 |
| University placement | 74/100 |
| Prestige & heritage  | 78/100 |
| Alumni network       | 52/100 |
| Facilities           | 70/100 |
| Transparency         | 42/100 |

## EDITOR'S VERDICT

Beijing National Day School sits in Haidian’s most competitive education district and trades on one decisive distinction: it broke the standard Chinese high-school model in **2011**. The reform replaced fixed homeroom-style classes with student-built timetables and a catalogue of **300-plus** electives. That matters more than any slogan. In a system built on lockstep progression, Beijing National Day School gives older teenagers room to assemble an academic week around strengths, gaps and interests. The school’s own language — “a school open for everyone” — points to a layered course structure with differentiated, classified and specialised provision. For parents, the headline is clear: this is a Chinese National curriculum school that injects unusual flexibility into the final secondary years, with teaching in

Mandarin and English and boarding as part of the offer.

What is special here is not polish; it is structure. The school was founded in \*\*1952\*\* and carries the institutional weight that comes with a long state-school history in Beijing. Its public identity ties that history to ambition in science, innovation and student self-direction. The website foregrounds robotics, scientific exploration, drama, lectures and clubs, and the phrase that recurs is choice. \*That has real force.\* \*It gives the place intellectual voltage.\* \*It also raises the stakes for the student.\* A build-your-own timetable only works for teenagers who can manage freedom, plan ahead and recover from weak choices. Parents looking for tightly supervised, uniform progression should read that carefully. This model rewards initiative; it does not compensate for its absence.

In market terms, Beijing National Day School belongs on a shortlist for families who want a serious, high-performing Chinese school without the deadening rigidity that defines much of the sector. It is for students aged 15–18 who want breadth inside a demanding domestic framework, and who gain energy from \*a high-pressure, high-option environment\*. The best fit is the self-propelled pupil: academically strong, organised, comfortable making decisions, and eager to move between disciplines rather than sit inside a single preset track. It will also suit students who want access to \*a large, idea-rich campus culture\* rather than a narrow exam factory. For the hesitant, the dependent or the chronically disorganised, the same freedom can turn into drift. For the right student, though, this is \*a rare piece of educational engineering\* in Beijing: public, established, and built to let able teenagers do more than march in step.

#### STRENGTHS

- Authorized by the Beijing Municipal Education Committee to enroll foreign students since 2006, with an International Department offering Cambridge A-Level, AP and the IB Diploma Programme (IB-authorized 27 March 2013).
- Large, well-resourced site of roughly 156,000 sq m, one of the biggest school campuses in Beijing, and the international programme reports a 1:6 teacher-to-student ratio with over 70 foreign staff.
- Long-established public institution founded in 1952 with a history of educational reform, giving it deep institutional roots in the Haidian district's academic ecosystem.
- Recognised for two decades as a Beijing Model School for Sports, and its Golden Sail Orchestra and Chorus have won multiple first prizes at state and city level.
- Mainstream Chinese-track graduates have a strong record of entry into elite Chinese universities, and international-track graduates have gained places at Western universities including Cambridge and Princeton in recent years.

#### TRADE-OFFS

- The school is fundamentally a Chinese national-curriculum public school; expatriate and international families access it mainly through a separate International Department rather than the main student body.
- Published, verifiable tuition figures for the International Department are not publicly listed; prospective families must contact the admissions office directly for current fee rates.
- Enrolment is very large, with reports of around 4,000 to 5,000 students across two campuses, meaning class sizes and pastoral attention differ from smaller boutique international schools.
- Entry to the International Department involves a formal written test, interview, health certificate and visa processing, an added administrative layer compared with many purely international schools.

## ADMISSIONS

The International Department accepts applications in two windows, March to mid-July and September to mid-January. Entry requires a written test and interview, though applicants with no prior Chinese are exempted from the written component; decisions are issued within two weeks of the exam. Boarding students over 18 need a health certificate, and all foreign applicants require an X visa before enrolment. Fee schedules are not published online and must be requested from the International Student Program office, so families should budget time for direct correspondence with the admissions team.

WTS RATING 

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