

Dunman High School

Singapore, Singapore



One of Singapore's original Special Assistance Plan schools, pairing six-year Integrated Programme rigor with deep bilingual, bicultural immersion.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	64/100
Academic outcomes	78/100
University placement	72/100
Prestige & heritage	74/100
Alumni network	10/100
Facilities	68/100
Transparency	52/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Dunman High School occupies a distinct niche in Singapore’s state sector: a government autonomous school founded in **1956**, with the Special Assistance Plan and a **6-year** Integrated Programme under one roof. That combination matters. It offers an academically selective route for students who want sustained rigour without the interruption of a separate post-16 admissions reset, and it does so with a clear bilingual, bicultural brief. This is not a generic high-performing secondary school. It is built for families who value *intellectual seriousness*, strong Chinese language and cultural fluency, and the

discipline of a school that has kept a defined mission over decades.

What sets Dunman apart is the pairing of Singapore National curriculum expectations with SAP identity. In practice, that gives students an education shaped by English-medium instruction and deep engagement with Chinese language and culture, inside a non-religious day-school setting for ages ****13–18****. For the right child, that is a **rare institutional fit**. For the wrong child, it will feel narrow. Parents should read the proposition plainly: this is a school for students who are academically ambitious, comfortable in a selective environment, and willing to commit to bilingual demands that go beyond box-ticking. The attraction lies in **cultural depth**, continuity, and a **clear sense of purpose**.

Dunman deserves a place on a shortlist when a family wants more than broad competence. It suits students who thrive on structure, can manage sustained academic pressure, and want peers who take study seriously. It will also appeal to children who want their Chinese language learning treated as central, not peripheral. Students looking for a loose, highly individualised, anything-goes culture should look elsewhere. Dunman's strength is not looseness; it is **focused ambition**, **scholarly momentum**, and the confidence of a school that knows exactly what it is for.

STRENGTHS

- Dunman High is one of Singapore's original nine Special Assistance Plan (SAP) schools, a status it has held since 1979, giving it a distinctive emphasis on bilingual English-Chinese education. In 1979, the school was selected by MOE as one of nine Special Assistance Plan (SAP) schools, marking the start of Dunman High's journey of refining its bilingual education both in depth and breadth.
- The school runs a six-year Integrated Programme that lets students bypass the O-Level exams and proceed directly to A-Levels. From 2005, the school implemented a customised version of the six-year Integrated Programme called the Dunman High Programme (DHP), which allows all students to bypass the O-Level examinations and directly take the A-Level examinations.
- Its Kallang campus spans roughly seven hectares, making it one of the largest government school sites in Singapore. In 2009 the school moved back to the Kallang campus, which has been expanded to seven hectares, making it one of the largest government schools in Singapore in physical area.
- Beyond core academics, DHS offers niche talent tracks including the Music Elective Programme, Language Elective Programme (Chinese) and Bicultural Studies Programme. Its SAP status promotes deep bilingual proficiency, while unique features like the School-based Gifted Education Programme, Language Elective

TRADE-OFFS

- As a SAP school the curriculum places heavy weight on Higher Chinese Language, which can disadvantage applicants without a Chinese-language home background. Renamed in 1988 to honor Thomas Dunman, Singapore's first police superintendent, the school became one of the nine Special Assistance Plan (SAP) institutions in 1979, emphasizing bilingualism and Chinese cultural heritage.
- Entry at Secondary One is highly competitive and PSLE- or talent-based, with limited scope for families arriving mid-year to secure a place. DSA applicants are assessed on demonstrated ability in areas such as sports, performing arts, academics, or leadership, with applications submitted through the MOE DSA portal typically in the middle of the year.
- Because the Integrated Programme skips the O-Level checkpoint, students who later need to transfer schools or curricula mid-secondary have fewer standard external exit assessments to rely on. No O-Level track here-it's all IP, ensuring a streamlined journey to junior college.
- It is a government (not independent) autonomous day school, so admissions and fee structures follow MOE's citizenship-based national framework rather than an open international-school model.

Programme (Chinese), Music Elective Programme, and Bicultural Studies Programme cater to diverse talents.

- Alumni include senior political office holders and business/media figures, such as Cabinet minister Josephine Teo and Sakae Holdings founder Douglas Foo. They include local Chinese community leaders Chua Thian Poh and Thomas Chua Kee Seng; political office holders Josephine Teo, Low Yen Ling and Goh Pei Ming; parliamentarians Alex Yam and Poh Li San; former nominated parliamentarian Ng Ser Miang.

ADMISSIONS

Entry to the Secondary section is mainly through the national Secondary One Posting Exercise based on PSLE results, or via Direct School Admission-Secondary (DSA-Sec) for students with academic, sports, aesthetic or leadership talents, with DSA applications submitted online in the months before the intake year. Junior College-level places can be taken up via the Joint Admissions Exercise (JAE) using O-Level results, though most students progress internally from the school's own six-year Integrated Programme. As a SAP school, Higher Chinese Language ability is a relevant admissions factor, and PSLE/JAE cut-offs shift each cycle depending on demand, reflecting strong overall competitiveness for places.

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_d438cdac19.