

International School of Brussels

Brussels, Belgium



A 40-acre campus tucked into the Forêt de Soignes beside a UNESCO site, pairing British roots with one of the world's earliest IB programmes.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	72/100
Academic outcomes	74/100
University placement	72/100
Prestige & heritage	72/100
Alumni network	71/100
Facilities	75/100
Transparency	67/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

The International School of Brussels trades on two assets that few schools can match: a **40-acre** campus in the Forêt de Soignes, steps from a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and a long institutional memory that reaches back to 1951. That physical setting matters. Many city international schools ask families to accept cramped urban compromises; ISB offers woodland, space and the sort of grounds that change the texture of a school day. It also pairs British roots with the IB, which gives it a wider academic identity than schools that sit squarely in one national system. For internationally mobile families, that blend has real value.

This is a large, established, non-profit day school with **1,300+** students drawn from **60+** countries, taught in English and French. That scale cuts both ways. The upside is breadth: a deeper peer group, more room for niche interests, and a genuinely international social mix rather than a school that uses “international” as decoration. The trade-off is that parents looking for a tiny, tightly held environment will not get it here. ISB’s own language leans hard on personalised pathways and inclusion; the more important point is that the school has the size and programme range to make individualisation plausible. It is also an IB-accredited school, and its recent university destinations include Cornell, NYU and Columbia, which places it firmly in the bracket of schools whose graduates compete for selective US admissions.

At an average annual day fee of **€51,105**, ISB sits in the *expensive* end of the Brussels market. That price buys a rare combination: a substantial campus, a long-running international community and a British-plus-IB framework that suits families who want flexibility without surrendering academic seriousness. The school belongs on a shortlist for students who thrive in a *cosmopolitan*, full-scale environment and want choice rather than a narrow lane. It will suit self-directed children, internationally minded teenagers and families who value breadth, mobility and a *grown-up* school culture. It is less compelling for parents who want a small-school feel, heavy hand-holding or a more clearly singular academic identity.

STRENGTHS

- Belgium's oldest international school, founded in 1951 and continuously operating for over seven decades in the Brussels area.
- Accredited by both the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the Council of International Schools.
- Set on a 40-acre wooded campus in Watermael-Boitsfort bordering the Foret de Soignes, a UNESCO World Heritage forest.
- Offers a genuinely broad range of exit pathways, including the full IB continuum (PYP, MYP, DP) alongside AP, BTEC and a US High School Diploma track.
- Large, long-established expatriate community of roughly 1,300 students drawn from 60 or more nationalities.

TRADE-OFFS

- Tuition is among the highest in Brussels, with published estimates running from roughly EUR 23,000 to over EUR 45,000 a year depending on grade level, plus a EUR 2,000 non-refundable application fee.
- Popular year groups run waiting pools rather than guaranteed places, so families arriving mid-cycle may not get their preferred entry point.
- As with most large corporate-expat schools, the family population turns over substantially each year, which can affect continuity of friendships and community.
- Suburban forest-edge location means families based in central Brussels face a longer commute or reliance on the school bus network.

ADMISSIONS

Applications are submitted online through a six-step process, with report cards from the past two years, a passport or birth certificate copy and a teacher questionnaire required; a EUR 2,000 application fee applies. Entry is possible at any point in the year, typically before 1 May, but when a class is full ISB opens a waiting pool rather than an outright rejection. Families connected to EU institutions are noted to receive some priority. Merit scholarships (Grades 7-12) and limited financial aid exist, with a 31 March deadline for both.

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_d4d224c655.