

MLC School

Sydney, Australia



In Burwood since 1886, founded to ready girls for University of Sydney entrance just as women won degree rights.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	72/100
Academic outcomes	75/100
University placement	72/100
Prestige & heritage	72/100
Alumni network	72/100
Facilities	73/100
Transparency	68/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

MLC School occupies a clear niche in Sydney’s girls’ schools market: a long-established, non-selective day school with serious academic ambition and none of the entry-bar theatre that defines parts of the sector. Founded in ****1886**** in Burwood, with roots in preparing girls for university at a time when that itself was contested, it still trades on that original seriousness of purpose. The school now offers the Australian curriculum and, in the senior years, both the HSC and the IB Diploma. That dual-pathway structure matters. It gives sixth-form students real choice rather than forcing every family into one academic model. For parents who want a girls’ school with history, scale and a modern examination offer, MLC belongs on the shortlist.

What distinguishes it is not mystique but range. MLC talks plainly about educating **fearless thinkers**, and the public-facing offer backs that up with breadth: a substantial co-curricular programme, visible strength in music, dedicated facilities that include an Aquatic Centre and gymnastics provision, and a campus culture built around girls staying the course from the early years to Year 12. The school is expensive, as established independent Sydney girls' schools are, and it leans heavily on the language of confidence, courage and leadership. Still, there is substance beneath that house style. A non-selective school willing to publish that fact, and to pair it with an HSC/IB choice, makes a concrete claim: student development matters as much as filtration. That is a **serious proposition**.

The right student for MLC is a girl who wants both structure and room to stretch: academically capable, not fixated on a single narrow definition of success, and ready to make use of a broad school day. She will profit from an environment designed for girls from ages ***4-18***, and from a culture that prizes **moral courage**, performance, participation and continuity. This is not the school for families hunting a hyper-selective badge or a minimalist, purely academic setup. It is for those who want a well-resourced girls' education with **institutional confidence**, visible traditions and enough curricular flexibility to support different senior pathways. In that market position, MLC is **hard to dismiss**.

STRENGTHS

- MLC School was founded in 1886 to prepare students for entrance to the University of Sydney, which had only admitted women to degrees four years before, giving it a long-established academic tradition among Sydney girls' schools.
- MLC School was among the first in NSW to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, over 20 years ago, so senior students can choose between the HSC and IB pathways.
- In the 2025 HSC, 49 students (59% of the HSC cohort) were placed on the Distinguished Achievers list, with 131 mentions overall on the list.
- Entry is not academically selective, which widens access compared with academically-selective rival schools.
- The School accepts enrolment applications any time after birth, though families are advised to contact the Registrar for applications submitted less than two years before the required entry year, giving flexibility for early planning.

TRADE-OFFS

- The school is single-sex (girls only) and day-only; boarding is not applicable, as MLC School operates as a day school for girls from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12.
- The school has a documented history of leadership instability: in 2015-16 a principal resigned after 30 staff left the 129-year-old school following allegations of questionable workplace practices, low morale and teachers being forced to leave, and parents ran a public *#ReclaimOurMLC* campaign.
- The campus is in Burwood, in Sydney's inner west, about 11 kilometres from central Sydney, which may be less convenient for families based on the North Shore or Eastern Suburbs.
- As with comparable independent girls' schools in Sydney, tuition is layered with separate non-refundable enrolment charges; the Final Enrolment Fee is AUD 3,500 for Australian students and AUD 5,900 for overseas students, in addition to term tuition fees.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is non-selective and open from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12; applications can be lodged any time after birth, with early lodgement recommended for popular entry years such as Kindergarten and Year 7. The process requires an online application, a non-refundable application fee, supporting documents including a birth certificate, and a parent interview once a place is offered. Places are managed via a waiting list, with limited preference (not guaranteed) for daughters of Old Girls or current families. Competitiveness varies by year level and is generally lower than at academically-selective Sydney day schools.

WTS RATING 

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