

St. Christopher's School

Manama, Bahrain



Founded in a church hall in 1961, this Isa Town school remains among the Gulf's longest-established international institutions.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	51/100
Academic outcomes	55/100
University placement	50/100
Prestige & heritage	58/100
Alumni network	35/100
Facilities	60/100
Transparency	48/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

St. Christopher's School occupies a rare position in Bahrain: an English-medium, non-religious British day school founded in **1961**, with a reach from age **3-18** and accreditations from COBIS and British Schools Overseas. In a market crowded with newer entrants, that longevity matters. It signals institutional memory, durable demand and a school that has had decades to refine its systems. The strongest point in its favour is stability. Parents who want a school with an established place in the Manama market, rather than a fast-built operation still defining itself, will find that *hard to ignore*. This is one of the Gulf's longer-established international schools, and that alone gives it *serious weight*.

Its appeal rests less on novelty than on consistency. A British curriculum in English from early years through sixth form gives families a clear through-line, which matters for expatriate parents who value transferability and for local families targeting British-pattern university preparation. The BSO and COBIS accreditations add external scrutiny, which is more valuable than glossy claims because it signals that the school has opened itself to formal inspection and peer comparison. That does not make it exceptional by default; it makes it credible. In practical terms, St. Christopher's belongs on a shortlist for parents who want *proven infrastructure*, *institutional steadiness* and a school that sits firmly in the mainstream of British international education rather than at its fringes.

The school will suit students who thrive in a structured academic environment and families who prize continuity over experimentation. It fits children who need a clear framework, steady expectations and an English-speaking setting from nursery to pre-university years. It also suits internationally mobile families who want to avoid curriculum disruption. The less obvious strength is cultural: a non-religious school in Bahrain with this history offers a *grounded cosmopolitanism* that many parents want and few schools sustain over decades. Families hunting for radical pedagogy, a niche educational philosophy or a boutique specialist identity will find stronger options elsewhere. Families wanting *long-tested credibility* and a straightforward British pathway should keep St. Christopher's near the top of the list.

STRENGTHS

- Founded in 1961 as a small villa school, it now provides education to over 2,300 children and young adults, aged three to eighteen, from around seventy nations, giving it deep institutional history in Bahrain.
- The school was awarded "Outstanding" in all standards during its February 2023 Penta International inspection, marking the fourth consecutive "Outstanding" rating from this UK Government-accredited British Schools Overseas body.
- It is also rated "Outstanding" by the Bahrain Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), giving convergent external validation across two separate inspection regimes.
- The school offers GCSE, BTEC, A-Levels, and IB Diploma pathways, giving sixth-form families a wider choice of exit qualifications than schools offering a single track.
- In 2025, 91 per cent of students accepted an offer from their first-choice university; 45 per cent received offers from Russell Group universities; and 11 per cent received offers from Ivy League schools.

TRADE-OFFS

- Annual tuition ranges from BHD 2,007 to BHD 8,826 for 2026/27, with a non-refundable BD100 application fee and, if a place is offered, a one-off registration fee of BD1,250 per child — a meaningful up-front cost for relocating families.
- St Christopher's has significant waitlists for Year 1 and Year 7, and starting a search in February or March for September entry is already late at the popular schools, so late applicants may be shut out of preferred year groups.
- According to one fee-comparison guide, the school offers no sibling discounts and no school transport, which adds to the effective cost of attendance versus rivals that bundle these in.
- Independent aggregator reviews are mixed and based on small samples — a rating of 3.8 out of 5 based on 5 existing reviews on one site — with at least one unverified parent review alleging the school has "gone down hill over the last 5 years or so"; this cannot be corroborated against inspection data.

ADMISSIONS

Entry points cluster at Nursery, Reception, Year 3, Year 7 and Year 12, per school and third-party guidance. Younger applicants undergo play-based observation; from Year 3 onward, tests in English, maths and general ability are used, occasionally alongside an interview and prior school reports. Applications are not accepted more than a year ahead of entry, and Year 1 and Year 7 places are frequently waitlisted, so early registration -- ideally before relocating -- is advised. A BD100 non-refundable application fee applies, plus a BD1,250 registration fee if a place is offered.

WTS RATING 

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