



BRIGHTON  
COLLEGE

BRIGHTON COLLEGE  
UNITED KINGDOM  
SCHOOL OF THE DECADE

THE SUNDAY TIMES



“One of the  
hottest tickets  
in independent  
education.”

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**We were delighted to be named England's School of the Decade by The Sunday Times. Here are some of the lovely things they had to say about us:**

“ Under the leadership of Richard Cairns, Brighton College has emerged as one of Britain's top institutions, earning recognition as The Sunday Times Independent School of the Decade.

When Cairns took over in 2006, the school was ranked 147th in our schools guide. By 2010 it was 41st in England and its sustained improvement has made it a regular in our top 10, reaching third place in 2019 – its highest position and the best yet achieved by a co-educational school. Between 2010 and 2019, the proportion of A\* grades at A-level rose from 28.4% to 44.2%. Brighton was named our Independent School of the Year in 2011 and 2018.”





# “Brighton College turns out good human beings, not just clever ones.”

“Its students head to top Russell Group universities and 30 or more have won places at Oxford or Cambridge each year since 2016 (up to a record 37). Just four were offered Oxbridge places in 2006. More Brighton pupils are also choosing to study in America, at prestigious institutions such as Columbia and NYU.

The school's high achievement is driven by inspirational teaching and its emphasis on kindness and tolerance.

**“Inspirational teaching and an emphasis on kindness and tolerance are the key to Brighton College's success.”**

The school wants to turn out good human beings, not just clever ones. “At the end of our lives we will be judged not by what car we drove, what house we owned or job we held but by how we made people feel,” says the Head Master, who has established a maverick reputation for his initiatives.

In 2006 the college became the first independent school to make Mandarin compulsory in year 7, and brought in a policy of taking the entire Lower Sixth form to Auschwitz each year. Entrepreneurship is a key part of the post-16 curriculum and teams compete to win £10,000 to develop an idea.





The school has constantly adapted to address the many and varied challenges of the past decade, ensuring that children are not simply equipped with great GCSE and A-level results but understand the challenges facing the world today and stand ready to play their part.

**“Under the inspiring leadership of Richard Cairns children are taught kindness and respect for one another.”**

Children who are happy in their own skin, valued for who they are and valued by their peers will achieve more than their parents ever thought possible – and that really is the story of Brighton.

Expectations are high for everyone, including the teachers. While waiting to apply to join the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Cairns had started a job at his old school and fell in love with teaching instead. “I never lost sight of that and as soon as I became head, I thought every child deserves to be inspired in every lesson by every teacher. A school is only ever as good as its teachers.”

Brighton, which turned 175 years old in November 2020, now has 1,175 pupils and just under a quarter of its 450 boarders come from abroad.

There are three applications for every place at 13, the main entry point, although the school does admit pupils from the age of 11 and in the Sixth Form. The school’s two largest feeders outside its own prep schools are Thomas’s Clapham and Thomas’s Battersea in London, where Prince George and Princess Charlotte are pupils.

Weekly boarding is hugely popular among London parents. Children can do four nights at school and three nights at home. It works brilliantly for children who get all the benefits of boarding without missing out on quality time with Mum and Dad. Families love it, particularly where both parents are working.

**“One of the top schools in England for rugby, cricket and netball.”**

Brighton is one of the top schools in England for rugby, cricket and netball – not to mention its niche dominance in beach volleyball. It boasts more than 30 Old

Brightonian sportsmen and women who have represented their country in the past decade. Alumni include England cricketers Matt Prior and Clare Connor. Rugby star Marcus Smith and athlete Toby Harries also went to the college.

The focus is not exclusively on elite sport. During his tenure, Cairns has made sports more inclusive by increasing the number of weekly sessions from two to six so pupils of all abilities benefit from the expertise of the school's top coaches, not just its stars.

Stereotypes don't get house room here. Dance is a thriving activity for all and about 100 boys take part in dance groups and lessons. Construction is due to start next year on a performance art centre, the final piece of the jigsaw in the masterplan to redevelop the campus near the seafront in Kemptown. The music school was opened by Pink Floyd's David Gilmour in 2015.

Brighton was a founder of the London Academy of Excellence Stratford, set up to help youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds get to leading universities. On

home ground, the College runs a scholarship programme offering 20 free Sixth Form places to disadvantaged local youngsters, including refugees.

Brighton is keen to nurture a strong social conscience in its pupils. They help a diverse range of community projects all over Sussex on the annual Make a Difference Day, and volunteer each week for charity.

"I love the school I am in, and really wish I had been a pupil here," says Cairns. "I love the multifaceted nature which you can only get from a co-ed school. I love all the mixes of individuals." Cairns believes that girls and boys bring out the best in each other. He adds: "I think the great joy of a co-educational school is you watch girls and boys learning how the other gender operates and they begin to absorb that and emulate that, and that is a good thing so that when they go to university they are not fazed by the fact that there are women in their class, or men in their class."

Brighton has demonstrated to parents that you can have inspiring teaching and terrific results in a coeducational environment. ”





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## Top 75 Independent Secondary Schools

RANK	NAME	RANK	NAME
1	St Paul's Girls' School	39	Whitgift School
2	Godolphin and Latymer School	40	Merchant Taylors' School
3	<b>Brighton College</b>	41	St Helen and St Katharine
4	King's College School, Wimbledon	42	Channing School
5	Wycombe Abbey School	43	The Manchester Grammar School
6	Magdalen College School	44	Abingdon School
7	Guildford High School	45	Ruthin School
8	St Mary's School Ascot	46	Putney High School GDST
9	St Paul's School	47	Queen Ethelburga's College
10	King Edward VI High School for Girls	48	Reigate Grammar School
11	Eton College	49	Alleyn's School
12	Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls	50	Trinity School
13	Cardiff Sixth Form College	51	St Catherine's, Bramley
14	Westminster School	52	St Michael's School
15	City of London School	53=	Dulwich College
16	North London Collegiate School	53=	Notting Hill and Ealing High School
17	Concord College	55	Bancroft's School
18	Sevenoaks School	56	Stephen Perse Foundation
19=	Hampton School	57	Kingston Grammar School
19=	The Perse School	58	Royal Grammar School, Newcastle
21	Withington Girls' School	59	Manchester High School for Girls
22	University College School, Hampstead	60	Radley College
23	The Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	61	St John's College, Cardiff
24	City of London School for Girls	62	Epsom College
25	Highgate School	63	Downe House
26	South Hampstead High School GDST	64	St Mary's Calne
27	Latymer Upper School	65	City of London Freeman's School
28	James Allen's Girls' School	66	St Swithun's School
29	Oxford High School GDST	67	Wellington College
30	Eltham College	68	Westbourne School
31	Cheltenham Ladies' College	69	The Abbey School
32	Winchester College	70	Sydenham High School GDST
33	St Albans High School for Girls	71	Sir William Perkins's School
34	Tonbridge School	72	Caterham School
35	Lady Eleanor Holles	73=	Ibstock Place School
36	Wimbledon High School GDST	73=	Immanuel College
37	Royal Grammar School, Guildford	75	Badminton School
38	King Edward's School, Birmingham		

Source: *The Sunday Times*' top independent secondary schools, November 2020.  
 Ranking based on A-level and GCSE results.



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