



topschoools

Admissions
Consulting Services
2017/2018





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HI!

Looking for a school in Hong Kong?

WE CAN HELP!

We are completely independent education experts.

We work with clients and parents to develop a strategic, realistic and flexible approach to choosing a school...and having that school choose your child!

We specialise in school placements and this is all we do. We are focused, and small enough to deliver a personal service.

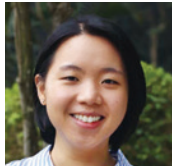
“Good knowledge of and contacts at HK primary and secondary schools. Made school selection process a lot easier. Don't think I would have gotten acceptances without her help. Highly recommend!!”
- AE, Hong Kong





Ruth Benny, Head Girl

The founder of Top Schools. Ruth is a former teacher, teacher trainer and mother of two primary school children. With 20 years' experience of the education system in Hong Kong, she thoroughly understands its complexity and fierce competition. Ruth mostly works with families of preschoolers to plan for entry into the primary school of their choice. She has particular expertise in advising families on bilingual education.



Jacqueline Yung, Consultant

Jacqui is born in Hong Kong and educated in Hong Kong and the UK. She speaks fluent Cantonese, English and Putonghua.



Jessica Yuen, Consultant

Jessica was born and raised in Hong Kong. She attended firstly an ESF primary school and, later, Australian International School before leaving to continue her education in Australia. She obtained a Bachelor of Education (Honours) and went on to study for two further degrees in Education in Hong Kong and Australia. Jessica has worked for the English Schools Foundation (ESF) as an administrator and as an educator. She speaks English, Cantonese and Mandarin.



Nicola Lewis, Consultant

With a legal background, Nicola has more recently been working for a multinational company specializing in school placements across Asia. She has an excellent understanding of different curricula and the challenges of moving families across continents. Nicola has spent nearly two decades in Hong Kong and with three children she fully understands the need for proper planning to meet the individual requirements of families. She has personal experience of navigating both the local and international schools in Hong Kong and transitioning between these systems.



Sarah Bowler, Consultant

Sarah has held positions as Head of Admissions and Admissions / Business Development Director at schools in the UK and Singapore. The mother of a 9 year old boy in an ESF school, having previously attended a local school in Singapore, she understands both systems well. Sarah holds a Montessori Teaching Diploma and has worked in the education field for more than 7 years. She has particular expertise in advising on special needs support and therapies.



Sophia Liang, Consultant

Born and brought up in Hong Kong, Sophia went to various schools with Mandarin, Cantonese and English as the medium of instruction. She has a degree from Hong Kong and an MBA from Warwick Business School in the UK. Before taking a few years break from her career, Sophia worked in a bank for many years, lastly as a Relationship Manager providing consultancy services to senior colleagues. Sophia is mother of one daughter attending international primary school in Hong Kong. She speaks Cantonese, Mandarin and English at native levels and is keen on building trusted relationship with families to help their children get into the best fit schools.



Maureen Ho, Executive Assistant

Maureen is an experienced administrator and office manager with over 9 years' experience. She holds qualifications in Business Administration and Business Studies from the University of Wales (UK) and Charles Sturt University (Australia). She speaks English, Cantonese and Putonghua.

① Initial discussion and questionnaire

We prefer to meet you face-to face.

We'll ascertain how much you know about the options available and fill you in where you have gaps. We'll then guide you through a questionnaire to understand your family background, current schooling situation and expectations.

② Analysis and follow-up discussion

We'll analyse your responses to the questionnaire and generate a 'long list' then speak with you again to discuss and shorten the list.

③ Shortlist

Next, we'll draw up a list of schools and send the detailed information to you in a comparable table format. We'll arrange for you to visit the schools. We have developed good relationships with the schools and can often arrange visits outside their normal schedule.

④ Timeline

We'll make sure that you don't miss any application deadlines, based on your child's date of birth and each specific school's requirements.

⑤ Applications

We can check and advise you on your applications and supplementary information to give you the best chance of success. We can advise on debentures.

⑥ Interview preparation

We'll advise on the format of child assessments and parent interviews and brief you on what to do/say and what not to.

⑦ Follow-up

Once an application is submitted, we can check with the school to understand actual vacancies and the waitlist situation.

Lastly, we can advise on choosing a school, if multiple offers are received (as they often are!).

"Ruth was a huge help with her advice and steer in respect of navigating the minefield that is HK education. Ruth is an absolute professional and knows all there is to know when it comes to HK schools. I have absolutely no reservations in endorsing her and would recommend you reach out to her for advice or assistance to help secure the right school for your children."

- JB, Hong Kong

What We Do...

Strategise

We guide parents through a confusing array of options. We give honest, unbiased advice on the probability of acceptance for immediate arrival and the following few years.

We can plan viable alternative options, including an interim placement, local school or a school providing additional support for ESL, or other individual learning needs.

We understand that the “perfect school” doesn't exist, so we look to match family and school, based on their priorities. If a compromise is necessary, we advise on where, when and how this should happen with the family's best interests and mid, or even, long-term goals in mind.

Customise

We get to know each of our families well and understand their preferences as well as their child's academic, emotional and social needs. From there, we manage expectations throughout the process with one dedicated consultant. We can modify a plan at any stage to suit changing preferences and expectations.

Empathise

Our senior consultants are all parents too and we've been through the process. Between us, we have - or had - our own children in seven of Hong Kong's top schools.

The Top Schools' Difference

We have a **100% success rate**.

Our small team collectively boasts **70 years' of Hong Kong-specific education experience**.

Our services are **entirely personalised** and **fully flexible** to accommodate each client's unique requirements.

We have **verifiable, in-depth knowledge** of the Hong Kong education system (local and international); we make recommendations based on fact, not hearsay or personal opinion!

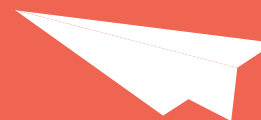
We maintain good relationships with schools, parents and other stakeholders are regarded as **influencers in the industry**.

As seen on/in:



Our consultants speak English, Cantonese, Putonghua.

For Families...



If you are:

- Hong Kong parents of children aged up to 16/17
- Expectant parents
- Parents relocating to Hong Kong
- Hong Kong Chinese, Mainland Chinese, Expats and everything in between!

or

- applying late
- frustrated/confused/stuck/stressed
- keen on a "local" school...
- concerned about Chinese proficiency
- in need of English support
- on a budget



Type Of School

Type of School	Curriculum	Funding	Fee Range (approx)	Admissions Policy
Government	Hong Kong	100% Government Funding	\$0	Primary One Admissions (POA): Discretionary Places Central Allocation Door Knocking
Aided				
Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)	Hong Kong, with some flexibility to offer alternate curricula to a minority of students	Partial Government funding	\$1,000 - 105,000	Selective: Apply directly
ESF Schools	Non - local: International Baccalaureate, IGCSEs, BTEC	Partial government funding for students joining prior to 2016 and those joining in higher grades. Mostly funded by tuition fees	\$83,000 - 123, 500	Non-Selective: Apply directly.
Private				
Private schools	Mostly Hong Kong; also non-local curricula	100% funded by tuition fees/ fundraising	25,000 - 95,000	Selective: Apply directly
International Schools	Non - local: International Baccalaureate, IGCSEs, A Levels, International Primary Curriculum, Montessori, Advanced Placement, Own, etc		\$72,000 - 200,000	Selective: Apply directly. Newer international schools are required to admit a minimum number of students holding foreign passports. The percentage varies from 50-80+ %
Private Independent Schools	Non - local: International Baccalaureate, IGCSEs, Advanced Placement, etc		\$58,000 - 200,000	All PIS schools are required to admit at least 70% of local students ie permanent residents

As at September 2015, the total number of DSS schools is 73; 12 primary, 52 secondary and 9 through-train schools.

Grade Calendar

Academic Year 2017/18

Child Born In	Age	Hong Kong	Australian	England	USA/ Canada	IB	
2015	2	PN	-	-	-	-	
2014	3	K1		Reception/ Transition	Nursery	Foundation Stage	-
2013	4	K2			Reception		Pre-K
2012	5	K3	Preparatory	Year 1	Key Stage 1	Kindergarten	
2011	6	P1	Year 1	Year 2		Grade 1	
2010	7	P2	Year 2	Year 3	Key Stage 2	Grade 2	
2009	8	P3	Year 3	Year 4		Grade 3	
2008	9	P4	Year 4	Year 5		Grade 4	
2007	10	P5	Year 5	Year 6		Grade 5	
2006	11	P6	Year 6	Year 7	Key Stage 3	Grade 6	
2005	12	S1	Year 7	Year 8		Grade 7	
2004	13	S2	Year 8	Year 9		Grade 8	
2003	14	S3	Year 9	Year 10	Key Stage 4/GCSE/IGCSE	Grade 9	
2002	15	S4	Year 10	Year 11		Grade 10	
2001	16	S5	Year 11	Year 12	A Level/ BTEC	Grade 11	
2000	17	S6	Year 12	Year 13		Grade 12	

* This applies to schools accepting children born 1 Jan - 31 Dec into the year group, whereas not all schools do.

Number of schools in HK: 1,652 (give or take)

All children 6 - 15 are required to go to school.
All children legally resident in Hong Kong are entitled to free education.

Call us today on 3565 5867 for an initial, no-obligation conversation or email hello@topschools.com.hk

From local to international

In April 2014, Mrs F contacted me, her son, C, had almost finished a whole year in a "good" local school and the family was miserable. He was spending hours each night on homework and becoming less motivated to learn every day.

The family spoke Cantonese at home and C's school conducted most of the lessons in Cantonese. His English was OK, but he was shy to speak and far from native level.

The parents felt that they'd prefer to switch him to an international school with English as the medium of instruction. They had vague plans to move to Canada at some point in the future since they had Canadian citizenship.

Because C was born in October and younger in his year, we advised the parents that they had some choice in whether they preferred him to continue on to the next grade, or "repeat" the year

in a school with an August cut-off.

Since it was already April, the parents applied to more schools than would have been necessary had they started the process earlier. They had applied to seven schools in total. Since C's English language proficiency wasn't native level, these seven included a few schools with good ESL support.

C was invited for six assessments. He attended five, failed one and passed four. He received four offers. We were able to manage the offers such that the parents didn't need to lose any money by securing offers with deposits before making their final decision. They chose the best by far of the four offers - a school running the English National curriculum where C would repeat his P1 year by entering Year 2.

After the first year, C and his parents are happy with the school, with C's progress and with the decision to switch into an international school.

"The whole application process was very stressful, but with Ruth's help and advice, it made school selection process so much easier. After our first meeting, Ruth was quick to analyze and generate a long, detailed list of international schools meeting our requirements. Ruth was a huge help throughout the process and gave me a lot of support."

- Mrs Fung, Hong Kong



Relocation

Family D was a British expat family living in Tianjin, China with two young girls, aged 7 and 4.

Mr D, a senior manager; being moved to the company's Hong Kong office was entitled to a full relocation package with a company based in Hong Kong. Their services included Hong Kong schooling placement.

Mrs D contacted Top Schools in March 2015 as she felt dissatisfied with the school advice given by their relocation agent. The relocation agent had suggested three schools for the D family to consider; none of which matched the family's preferences and priorities. The relocation agent recommended that the D family apply to these schools based on the fact they had the shortest wait list(s). Mr and Mrs D were not comfortable with this approach. They successfully convinced Mr. D's HR manager to engage Top Schools to provide school consulting services for their family.

The D family wanted a top notch international school in Hong Kong offering a British style curriculum as their children had been going to a similar school in Tianjin. They also wanted their children to be in the same school, as both were still so young.

The biggest challenge was timing, as their applications for the new school year were so late. The other challenge was getting both children in the same school.

We were quick to understand their needs and immediately organised meetings with four suitable schools for Mr and Mrs D within three weeks of their initial contact with us. We accompanied Mr. and Mrs D to the schools and provided valuable insights on each of the schools.

A top choice emerged very quickly - a school that their relocation agent had never mentioned.

We assisted in submitting urgent applications to their top school choice and another equally popular school which fulfilled their requirements, and we diligently followed up on all the necessary paperwork and payments. We kept in close contact with the admissions officers at both schools and kept Mr and Mrs D updated on the status of their applications.

We provided guidance on the assessments for their children who were interviewed by their first choice school via Skype.

In May, the younger sibling received an offer from their first choice school. There was still no space available for the older child so we kept in close contact with the school. One month later in June, an offer came through for the older sibling.

Mr and Mrs D are very pleased that both their children will be attending a school that they truly feel is best for their family.



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Late Application

A parent contacted us in late June 2016 seeking a place for September. M, was studying in a local international kindergarten in K3 but the mother, a single parent, was keen for her to secure a place in an international school. She had submitted very late applications to five schools amounting to over \$10,000 in application fees. M held only a HK passport.

We checked all submitted applications and quickly ascertained that the chance of an interview in the next few months was slim.

We conducted a mock assessment with M and, based on that, quickly selected a few schools for the mother to consider. One school in the New Territories would very likely accept M but

would require her to purchase a non-refundable debenture of \$600,000. Another school on Hong Kong Island indicated a possibility that they may interview M and we pursued this fervently.

We arranged the interview within a few days and accompanied M and her mother, having fully prepared them. M completed the assessment and was offered a place the next day. She started Year 1 in mid September, having missed just two weeks of term.

“As we were moving countries I just saw it as a necessary cost but I did wonder if you were the best out of all the services. Your quick response times and availability to chat etc assured me we made the right choice. I appreciated your capacity to calm me down on the occasions I thought I was not applying to enough schools and generally panicking about things generally. Thank you for being sensible and straightforward.”

- SM, London, UK



Perfect Timing

Family A contacted us late in June 2016. They were seeking advice on whether it was possible to move their Year 5 daughter, C, from a private primary school to an international school. Prior to being at the private primary school, C had attended a prestigious local primary school and, although C's parents are native Cantonese speakers and, although, their daughter was doing very well in the local primary school they were concerned about her standard of English.

The parents' top choice was a large top tier IB school. They'd applied, C was assessed and was not successful. Therefore, they came to us for alternative schools for 2016/17 or even the following year.

After reviewing all school reports and talking with the teachers, we agreed C would have a good chance to enter ESF.

We advised the parents to try for an immediate Year 6 place at their catchment ESF school. If unsuccessful, she could apply for secondary entry the following year (Year 7).

We moved quickly to organise the paperwork. As it was, her application was submitted in July, way past the deadline. We followed up diligently and learned that an assessment could be scheduled for the following week.

By then, we were engaged by one of C's classmates, J, and urged them to submit an application immediately. Although the school had explained it was useless to the parents a week earlier, they trusted us and submitted.

Both children were invited to the assessment on 10 August and received offers on the same day. Both accepted and started Year 6 the following week.



“The application process for your child's education in Hong Kong can be overwhelming and stressful. With Ruth's help, my wife and I were able to eliminate a lot of the uncertainty and most importantly achieve peace of mind that we're doing what's best for our child. With Ruth's expertise, we have avoided a lot of wasted time and energy.”

- EP, Hong Kong

Never Give Up

Family B's son, J, was in K2 in an international kindergarten for the academic year 2015/16. The parents, both local Cantonese speakers, had been confused about when their son would start school - at Year 1 (5 years old) or Primary 1 (6 years old). When they realised that they were late to apply for international school, they panicked and were very seriously considering a very small, low-profile school.

Family B contacted us late in November 2015. They felt they had no option but this one school and were desperate.

Both B's mother and father were both native Cantonese speakers, but spoke to J in English. As such, J had little to no exposure to Cantonese. Additionally, he only held a Hong Kong passport and many of the international schools have a limited quota for these children.

We evaluated J and found he was a near native speaker of English. We then suggested a few schools for the parents to consider - the top

choice was a top-tier international school but had no space.

We duly submitted applications for two other schools while all the time, following up with the preferred school almost daily.

J attended assessments for the two other schools and, while we were waiting for the result, he was invited to assess at the preferred school. This was at the very end of January, almost 3 months after submitting the application.

J subsequently passed and the school made a straight offer without any need to purchase a debenture (usually required for HKSAR passport holders).

J started at the International School in August 2016.

"I was very worried that we'd either end up having no school for my son, or getting him into the wrong school out of no choice. What I appreciated the most about Top School's service is how much empathy you have shown to us. You understood my anxiety as a mother, you understood our desire of wanting to find the best school for our child and you were very patient with us. It was definitely worth the investment, not only buying piece of mind but, more importantly, the reassurance that Top Schools will always have your child's needs at heart."

- Mrs B

Early Planning

Family E contacted Top Schools in Sept 2012 to start planning for their daughter, J, aged almost one year.

At that time, J was enrolled in a playgroup taught entirely in English. While Mum spoke fluent Cantonese, she had left HK at the age of 10 and her written Chinese was weak. Dad was English and Hebrew speaking. The parents really wanted to try to have J fluent and literate in Chinese.

Family E were able to secure a PN place for J in a trilingual kindergarten with priority to a through train to primary and secondary.

Mrs E participated fully in kindergarten life and J enjoyed her PN and KI there.

We advised Mr & Mrs E that it wasn't safe to rely on only one primary school and they therefore submitted two other applications - one to a bilingual international school and another to an immersion Chinese private independent school.

We assisted with providing support on providing essay questions in advance and checking all application forms. After several rounds of revision, the parent questionnaire was thoughtful and authentic. We gave guidance on all assessments and parent meetings. J passed the assessment, Mr & Mrs E felt comfortable about how the parent interview went and J was placed on the reserve list.

So, we proceeded to submit further applications to the other primary schools on the list. At the same time, we advised on submitting PN applications for the younger daughter.

While J was waiting to attend further assessments, she received an offer from one of the parents' top choices. It was clear that they would accept. We then advised on how to inform the kindergarten that she would be leaving whilst preserving the relationship for the younger daughter to enter later that year.

J started in a fully bilingual through-train school in Sept 2015.

"We would like to thank you very much for your help with finding a new school for P. You have been professional, efficient, informative and reassuring throughout this search and we really value the personal touch you have."

- Mrs F



Switching From Local to International School

One of the most common quandaries parents find themselves in is choosing between a local school and an international one. We often advise families to start in the local stream and apply to international school later. But how does this work? What are the risks? And can they really make it into international school?

Common reasons for children – or their parents – wanting to move to international schools include:

- Concerns about the standard of English-language teaching and learning
- Struggles with the style of teaching, homework and testing
- Getting ready for school or university overseas

More often than not, the children are doing well academically and are happy at school. Only occasionally do we find an unhappy child, or one who is “failing” – at least, according to their school.

So, when is the right time to apply to an international school? Years 1 and 7 are obvious entry points. For a child finishing K3 in a local kindergarten, it's tough to find a spot in Year 2. In that scenario, it's common for a child to spend one or two years in a local primary school and apply to international school after P3 and hope to switch before the next Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA).

In local schools, the TSA is administered in June at P3, P6 (on odd-numbered years i.e. 2015, 2017) and S3 in local government-subsidised schools and is much dreaded for the additional intensity it involves in preparing for it. Applying to Year 7 in an

international school is a good idea. This means the application is submitted soon after the child begins P5. Many parents get confused about when primary ends and secondary starts in both systems. They may prefer to finish primary in local school, which isn't a good idea since it means they will usually miss the Year 7 application. Many schools have a new intake in Year 7, making it a good entry point.

After Year 7, Years 8 and 9 are also good times to enter an international school. If it's a school that does the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), entering in Year 9 is advisable, since the IGCSE course starts in Year 10. Students in Year 9 choose their subjects and will be able to use the year to adjust before school gets more serious. Entering a school running IGCSEs is usually not possible at Years 10 and 11. Likewise, entering a school running A-levels or the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) is usually not possible at Years 12 and 13 since these are both two-year courses. In some schools, however, this doesn't apply.

Which international schools accept children from local schools or children with Hong Kong passports? The answer is, they all do! International schools do not mind

where children have been studying previously as long as they meet the entry requirements. Whilst it's true that foreign nationals do receive priority at certain schools, children with Hong Kong passports should not be dissuaded from applying to international schools and they are not discriminated against.

By far the most common challenge for local school students applying to international schools is that of meeting the required English-language proficiency. Children who have been used to lessons in Cantonese may struggle to express themselves in English. In writing, they are often great at grammar but less able to analyse and generate different genres of text. They often find creative writing a challenge. We've found this to be the case even amongst native-English speaking children, since local schools generally teach English as a second language, with lots of grammar and prescribed tasks that don't encourage creativity in using language. Maths is also tested, but rarely causes any problems.

In fact, the required level varies from school to school. It's important to assess the school's requirements and realistically assess a child's chances of gaining acceptance. Some schools, for example, will have support for children needing additional support, while others won't. In some cases, we do recommend a tutor or preparation centre to help the student understand the

requirements of the entrance test, and be best prepared to do well in it.

Children usually transition well into international schools. They find the style of teaching more engaging, the homework load less and the culture more creative, relaxed and fun. Of course, the ease of the transition very much depends on the timing of the switch and the student's personality. Some older students suffer something akin to culture shock.

Having spent many years in a local school, some may find it overwhelming being put in a situation where model answers don't exist. They may feel less secure and find it hard to adjust to the different learning methods, especially when it requires a great deal of self-initiative, abstract thinking and synthesising of information.

But children whose parents have examined the situation thoroughly, and ensure they taken all the right steps, should be able to make a seamless transition to a new learning environment, equipped with the necessary skills to succeed academically.

Originally published in the Education Post here: <http://www.educationpost.com.hk/resources/parents-guide/151112-international-schools-guide-steps-to-follow-in-switching-from-local-to-international-schools>



Debentures 101

Debentures 101

A debenture is the traditional name given to a loan agreement where the borrower is an institutional borrower: i.e a school. For parents, it means a large lump sum payable to the school on – or before – admission, regardless of what the school will do with our money.

For Hong Kong schools, parents need to be aware of lump sums called

- Capital Notes
- Nomination Rights
- Capital Contributions/Levies

...and other creative names. They all amount to the same thing – a lump sum in addition to tuition fees.

While not all schools have debentures, some schools offer a variety of debentures.

How do schools use debentures?

Most schools will state that the fees cover the school's running costs, but not its capital costs. So, debentures are how parents of students contribute to the long-term funding of the School.

While most schools (even some pre-schools!) in Hong Kong require that the parents of new students pay a debenture on admission, parents can sometimes buy a debenture before beginning the admissions process and earn some priority in the selection system.

How much is a debenture?

The range is vast. Some are as low as \$25,000 a year. The maximum is around \$25M (paid by companies). Some schools reduce the price for the second and third child entering the same school.

You may also be able to buy a debenture on the 'second-hand market'. This means that the school has 'sold out' and existing holders can transfer them to others. The price of this transfer may be set by market demands or the school may cap it. The school may also take a cut of the sale price.

What kind of debenture do I need?

Common types include:

- Individual/Corporate
- Refundable/non-refundable or depreciating

Individual/Corporate

An individual debenture applies to one child in a family and cannot normally be transferred.

A corporate debenture is held by a corporation and can be used for a child of an employee. The corporation may transfer this debenture to another employee at any time if the employee leaves their employ. Some schools will allow flexibility in allowing the child to stay at the school and some schools will insist that the child withdraws immediately s/he is no longer associated with that corporate debenture. Children covered by a corporate debenture mostly receive priority at admissions. Corporate debentures are the most expensive type running into tens of millions.

Refundable/Non-refundable/Depreciating

Some schools will refund the full amount of the debenture, without interest and less any transfer fees/penalties, to the parents once the child leaves the school.

In some schools, the debentures depreciate over a certain number of years; sometimes to zero. In a few schools, the debenture depreciates to zero in just seven or eight years.

What if I can't afford a debenture?

Some schools offer parents the option of paying an annual levy instead of a debenture. This is different from a debenture in that it is paid yearly and is not refundable. It may amount to the same or more than the debenture over the course of the child's schooling.

Not all schools require a debenture, so you can look for one that doesn't.

In 2016/17, out of 92 placements, just two needed a priority debenture. Both of these were less than \$1M.



Some schools in Hong Kong accept applications from birth. As soon as you have the birth certificate, you can apply. And, in the majority of cases, the date of receipt is important in determining your place in the queue - strictly chronological.

Listed below are primary schools you can apply to from birth. Where they have preschools attached, you'd normally apply for the lowest grade available, but not necessarily.

Other schools will accept applications only within a prescribed period - usually one or two years before intended entry.

Schools you can apply to from birth:

Canadian International School (CDNIS)

Whilst CDNIS does accept applications any time after birth, the date of application is not a factor considered. As long as the application is in by 31 Oct of the year prior to entry, it will be considered.

Discovery Bay International School (DBIS)

Primary school starts at Year 1 (5 years old), and the associated kindergarten starts at K1 (3 years old).

French International School (International Section) FIS

Primary school starts at Reception (4 years old).

German Swiss International School (GSIS)

Primary school starts at Year 1 (5 years old), and the associated kindergarten starts at K1 (3 years old).

Japanese International School (JIS)

Primary school starts at Reception (4 years old).

International College - Hong Lok Yuen (ICHK - HLY)

Primary school starts at Reception (4 years old), and the associated kindergarten and playgroup starts at 18 months.

International Montessori School (IMS)

Preschool and Primary school. Starts at 2 years old.

Kellett School (Kowloon Bay)

Kellett School (Pokfulam)

Primary school starts at Reception (4 years old).

Kiangsu Chekiang International School (KCIS)

Primary school starts at Year 1 (5 years old), and the associated kindergarten starts at K1 (3 years old).

Kingston International School

Primary school starts at Year 1 (5 years old), and the associated kindergarten and playgroup starts at 12 months.

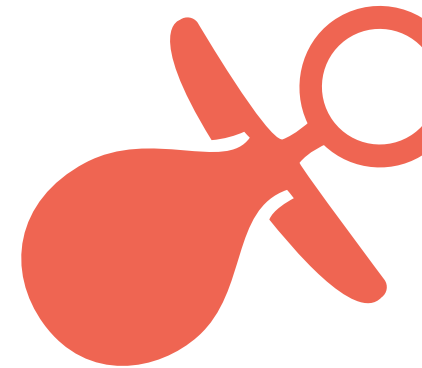
Lantau International School (LIS)

Nord Anglia International School (NAIS)

Primary school starts at Year 1 (5 years old)

Yew Chung International School (YCIS)

Primary school starts at Year 1 (5 years old), and the associated kindergarten and playgroup starts at 6 months



If you'd like your child to be bilingual (Chinese/English) AND biliterate, the obvious choice is a 'local' school. However, local schools use "Cantonese". It's used as the medium of instruction, as the playground language and forms the basis of the culture. Also, the Putonghua and English is often taught mainly by non-native speakers.

Many parents are more keen on Putonghua (Mandarin). Perhaps they are not Chinese, they are from the Mainland, or they feel that Cantonese is easy to pick up anyway.

They also prefer a more international style of teaching, perhaps according to an international curriculum too. The bad news is that very few schools are offering this!

We list here ten of the most popular:

P = Primary | **PS** = Primary and secondary

Chinese International School

| PS | Braemar Hill |

Well-established. Extremely competitive. The first school to teach an international curriculum using English and Putonghua (50/50). Two teachers – one English and one Chinese - in the class most of the time. HK\$75,000 depreciating "debenture" or non-refundable annual levy.

Singapore International School

| PS | Aberdeen |

Designed for Singaporeans. Whilst the Putonghua is strong, the majority of classes are delivered in English and written Chinese is simplified characters. HK\$200,000 debenture (HK\$120,000 for Singaporeans).

Victoria Shanghai Academy

| PS | Aberdeen |

Part of the Victoria Educational Organisation – children attending the preschool have priority admissions to VSA. Fully accredited for IB; impressive campus (undergoing redevelopment) opened in 2008. Two teachers – one English and one Chinese - in the class most of the time. All specialist lessons – PE, Art, Music – are taught in English. Class size rather large at 28. As a Private Independent School, at least 70% of students must be HK Permanent Residents. No mandatory debenture. Optional individual debenture \$800,000 (Enquire for availability).

Independent Schools Foundation Academy

| PS | Cyberport |

Established in 2003. English 30%; Putonghua 70%. All teachers are native speakers. Small classes of 18-20. The balance of English/Putonghua adjusts slowly until it reaches 50/50 at G5 and is reversed in Secondary. Impressive campus (undergoing redevelopment); IB school (MYP/DP). As a Private Independent School, at least 70% of students must be HK Permanent Residents. \$200,000 debenture (\$100,000 is refundable) or non-refundable annual levy.

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau

| PS | Kowloon |

Established in 2002; impressive campus. The students are mainly Cantonese speakers and the school uses Cantonese in P1 to teach Chinese. Thereafter, more is taught in Putonghua.

The English teaching is strong, all taught by native English speaking teachers. As a Private Independent School, at least 70% of students must be HK Permanent Residents. No debenture.

Kingston International School

| P | Kowloon |

A small private school with a small campus comprising of a few houses joined together.

Feeds into International College for Secondary (which is not bilingual) until they will open their own secondary. An IBPYP school. Debenture: HK\$40,000 - 80,000.

P = Primary | **PS** = Primary and secondary

"We would like to thank you very much for your help with finding a new school for P. You have been professional, efficient, informative and reassuring throughout this search and we really value the personal touch you have. Thank you again Ruth, you've been great and I hope that we will stay in touch."

- SF, Hong Kong

St Stephen's College Preparatory School | P | Stanley |

A well-renowned "local" school. Officially, the languages used are English and Putonghua with a little Cantonese. The vast majority of students and teachers share their native tongue of Cantonese so it is the 'playground language' and will creep into the classroom too. Debuture: \$1M (sold out)

Kiangsu Chekiang Primary School | P | North Point |

The first school to use Putonghua as the medium of instruction. Follows the local curriculum and occupies an old campus without facilities. The school fees are very low and the Chinese program is very strong. The English – up to an hour a day – is taught by non-native and native teachers. The school has a kindergarten and children do receive priority in the admissions process. No debuture.

Yew Chung International School | PS | Kowloon Tong |

A rare education organisation that operates schools in multiple cities with provision for children from 6 months to 18 years. Offers Chinese as a First Language and Chinese as an Additional Language and children are streamed and study according to one of 12 levels. The vast majority of students share their native tongue of Cantonese so it is one of the 'playground languages'. No debuture for primary. YCIS uses the UK curriculum + IBDP. Debuture: \$200,000 (Refundable; for secondary only)

International Montessori School | P | Tin Hau, Stanley |

IMS is the only accredited Montessori Primary School in Hong Kong. A strong Chinese program with two streams: Native stream and Chinese as a Second Language stream.

Each class has two class teachers for most of the time, plus a dedicated lesson in Chinese every day for 45 minutes while all specialist lessons – PE, Art, Music – are taught in English. Debuture: \$75-100,000 (Partially refundable/non-refundable)

"Ruth's work (and passion) is in helping to navigate the complexities of the school process. Some parents have the time, resources and stamina to do it on their own, while others think having someone who has the experience, breadth of knowledge and who is in-tune with the market by their side to assist in developing a tactical plan is invaluable. Given the risks and what seems to be an increasing need to have a plan A, B, C and sometime D months (if not years) in advance, it may be worth contacting her for specific advice."

- David T, Hong Kong



ACADEMIC YEAR

2016-2017

**STUDENTS
PLACED IN TOP
SCHOOLS IN HK**

BOYS

59 

GIRLS

33 

AGED

2-17

LEVEL

PN-Y12

**OFFERS**

= 2

**PRIORITY
DEBENTURES**

100% SUCCESS

* as at 1 Sep 2016.

Placements into the following primary/
secondary schools:

American School Hong Kong

Canadian International School

Chinese International School

Christian Alliance International School

Delia School of Canada

English Schools Foundation

French Int'l School

German Swiss International School

Harrow International School Hong Kong

Hong Kong International School

Hong Kong Academy

International Montessori School

International College Hong Kong (Hong Lok Yuen)

Island Christian Academy

Independent Schools Foundation Academy

Kiangsu Chekiang International School

Kiangsu Chekiang School

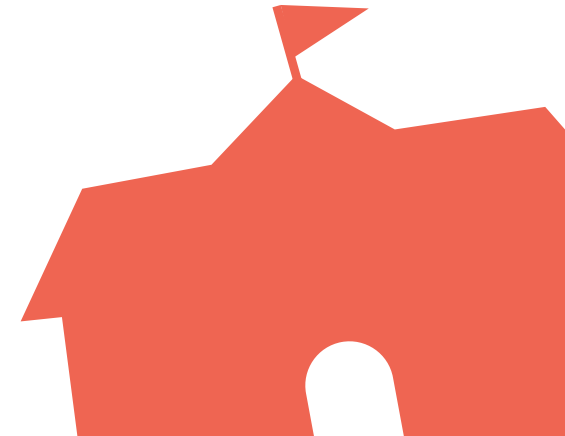
Korean International School

The Harbour School

Victoria Shanghai Academy

Yew Chung International School

...and more!



International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Results

2016			
	# of Candidates	Pass Rate %	Avg Score
CDNIS	122	98	36.4
CIS	107	100	38.32
CSS*	81	89	32
DBS	52	100	40.5
Elsa	5	100	36.2
ESF	943	99	36.1
FIS	23	91.3	36
GSIS	46	100	40.17
HKA	26	95	33
ICHK	10	100	33.6
ISF	31	100	38.1
KCIS	23		
Logos Academy*	43	100	37.5
Li Po Chun	113		
PLK CKY	70	98.57	35.76
SIS	41	93	36
St Paul's Co-ed*	34	100	40.3
VSA	92	100	36.03
YCIS	92	100	35.4
HK Total	2076	96.76	35.98
Global Total	149,454	79.28	30.14

*In these DSS schools, a minority of students take the IBDP.



topschoools



What if we don't get in?
How much do I need for
my children's education?

How do I find a
suitable school?
When should I apply?



Do you have questions?

Get answers at our regular seminars or by engaging our speakers for your company or preschool.

Preschool seminars we've run...

Southside Kindergarten, Small World Christian Kindergarten, ESF Early Learning Centre, Eton House, Safari Kid, Mills International Preschool, PIPS Parkview

...among others

Corporate seminars we've run...

Asian Bankers Club, Barclays, Davis Polk, Herbert Smith, KPMG, Linklaters, Macquarie, Morgan Stanley, Simmons & Simmons, Sun Hung Kai Private, UBS, AIA, Goldman Sachs, Wing Lung Bank

...among others

Follow us on Facebook for news or latest events!



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