

K-12 EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE 2022



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INTRODUCTION

Education is changing in Singapore, and indeed, throughout the world. This is an exciting time for expat children and parents because now, they have a choice of where they can enrol for a holistic learning and growth experience.

According to the Singapore International School Market Intelligence Report, nearly 10% of the international schools in Southeast Asia are located in Singapore.

10%

SOUTHEAST ASIA
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOLS
ARE LOCATED
IN SINGAPORE

For the 1.64 million foreigners who live here, this presents a positive outlook for choosing a future-focussed international school for their child.

Through this e-book, we will guide you through the international school landscape in Singapore and help you to decide on the right private school for your child.

OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EDUCATION TRENDS IN SINGAPORE

Some of the trends in international school education in Singapore are seen throughout Asia as well:

Whole child development

There is a shift in focus from rigorous academia to the holistic development of children in some international schools. This is achieved by an overall commitment to the child's holistic development. Inquiry-led curriculum, personalised learning and balanced development through exposure to the arts, physical education, service projects and opportunities to build 21st-century life skills all play a part in this.



The value-for-fee equilibrium

School costs are no longer an effective judge by which a parent can determine the value of a child's education. Some institutions may still be focused on outmoded methods of instruction and may not be transparent in their fees and where the money goes. A parent should feel confident in asking for a breakdown of fees and how they pay for components of their child's education and other activities, including sports and hobbies.

Schools that effectively merge quality and efficiency can, and do, top the rankings for student academic achievement and well-rounded education.



Co-production

This refers to parents, schools and students all taking responsibility for the child's education. Schools that support parent involvement increase learning outcomes and produce socially and academically adjusted students. Further, schools that understand this concept also offer professional development for their instructors and support quality teaching. Parents, teachers and students can then work on learning collaboratively and with open communication between all parties. This approach has seen success in achieving improved learning outcomes.



OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE

Singapore has a robust and reputed education system, comprising public schools for locals and private educational institutions for international families. There is an option of schools in each region of the country for each level of education:



AGE 18 months-6
CHILDCARE
OR PRESCHOOL
(not mandatory)



AGE 6-12
PRIMARY
SCHOOL

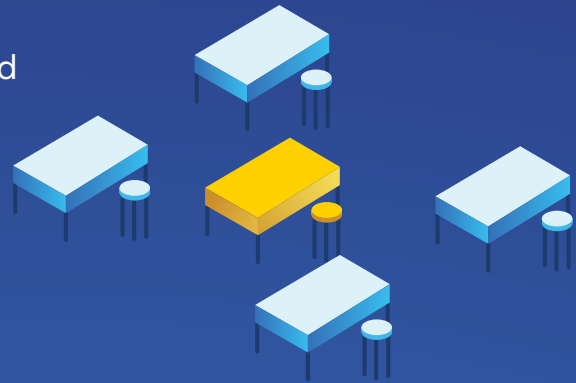


AGE 13-18
SECONDARY
SCHOOL

Although it's not the only reason why families would choose to move to Singapore, the nation's excellent educational system is an important motivator for many expat families.

State-Run Schools

In terms of state-run schools, Singapore's government offers schools that are intended for native Singaporeans and permanent residents. It's important to know that there are limited spaces for children from expat families, and the competition for a spot in these schools is very competitive.



Privately-Funded Schools (PFS)

There are also three privately-funded schools intended for returning Singaporeans, with oversight from the Ministry of Education.

Singapore's International School Landscape

Singapore has over 50 Foreign System Schools (FSS), also known as Private Educational Institutions (PEIs) or simply international schools. These schools are primarily intended to serve the children of expatriate families living in Singapore.

If a Singapore Citizen (SC) wants to attend an FSS, they are required to obtain an exemption from the Ministry of Education (MOE). International schools typically serve students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

The national government has established the Committee for Private Education (CPE) to oversee all the private schools in Singapore.



Comparison between Public and Private Schools in Singapore



Public Schools



Private Schools



Who do the schools cater to?

Prioritised for Singaporeans and Permanent Residents; expats can take the admission tests and try for admission

Mainly cater to international / expat families in Singapore



Curriculum

Local schools are known for offering a competitive education for children from preschool through secondary school. Ranked highly in maths and science, public school systems and teachers promote subject content mastery in a disciplined environment.

Each school chooses its curriculum and approach. Common curriculum pathways are IB PYP, modified Cambridge, Cambridge IGCSE, IB MYP, IB DP, and country-specific curriculum. Focus is largely on whole child development and globally recognised academic qualifications.



Admission process

Common admission tests for primary and secondary

Different schools have different assessment criteria



Public Schools

Private Schools



Fee consideration

Typically have a lower tuition fee

Vary from moderately priced to premium



Social benefits for children

Immerses children in local Singaporean culture

Introduces children to the diversity and different nationalities of the world



Class sizes

Typically about 40 students in a class with large teacher to student ratios

Typically smaller class sizes with lower teacher to student ratio



Second language

Typically the Mother Tongue Language (Mandarin, Malay or Tamil) is offered as a second language

Wider options of second languages

CHOOSING AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL IN SINGAPORE

International schools in Singapore typically offer education from early ages, including preschool (3-6) through secondary grades, based on their accreditations. Primary grades are for ages 6 through 12 and generally include Grades 1 through 5. Secondary grades include ages 12 to 18, and in most schools, they will go from Grade 6 to Grade 12. You may find some international schools that go to Grade 10, but in general, schools with an International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum will go to Grade 12.

Your family's plans are important considerations when choosing an international school.

You may have several questions to consider, including:

- ✓ How long will you and your family be in Singapore?
- ✓ Are you planning to return to your home country?
- ✓ Will you consider moving to another international destination?
- ✓ Is religious education important to your family?
- ✓ What curricula are of the greatest value to you and your child/ children?
- ✓ What is your schooling budget?



You also have a choice of educational approaches among the international schools in Singapore, depending on age/grade level.

PRESCHOOL

- ✓ Early Years Foundation Stage
- ✓ Montessori Method
- ✓ Reggio Emilia
- ✓ Singapore National Nurturing Early Learners Framework
- ✓ IB PYP (Early Years Component)

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

- ✓ American
- ✓ Australian
- ✓ French
- ✓ German
- ✓ Indian
- ✓ English National Curriculum
- ✓ International Primary Curriculum
- ✓ International Baccalaureate
- ✓ IGCSE

Limited list of international school opportunities are indicated.

FACTORING IN COSTS IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Cost is another factor in school selection.

Singapore's most costly international schools can exceed S\$ 50,000.

At the higher end of the international school market, school fees are typically broken down under the following heads:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Application fee
(Day student / Boarding) | 6 Technology devices |
| 2 Enrolment fee | 7 Educational excursions |
| 3 Tuition fees | 8 Exam fees |
| 4 Development/capital levy | 9 Uniform cost |
| 5 Boarding fees (optional) | 10 Bus fee (pick-up and drop-off) |

On the other hand, the moderately priced schools may include the cost of technology devices within the tuition fee and may not have separate fees for application and enrollment.

It is wise to research the admission fees of different private schools before finalising the schooling budget that is suitable for your family. High quality of education is not always directly correlated with a high cost. Parents can turn to moderate fee schools that provide excellent education and a strong school community without excessive additional costs.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS AND NATIONALITY-FOCUSED SCHOOLS

Singapore has a significant number of nationality-focused schools among its international schools. Many of them provide their curriculum in students' national language, but the overwhelming majority also offer instruction primarily in English.

Nationality-focused schools typically offer “mother tongue” language along with English and a country-specific curriculum in addition to internationally accepted curriculum such as IB.

While a nationality-focused school is suitable for those expat families who will probably return to their home countries and want continuity of curriculum for their children, international schools that do not have a nationality focus offer genuinely international education. They may educate children from 70 or more nationalities. Their curriculum will be offered in English, with second language instruction reflecting the needs of the multicultural and diverse community they serve.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

As an expat parent with a long-term plan, you might be looking for an all-through school for your young child, for consistency, familiarity and comfort all the way till Grade 12. Or perhaps you would prefer your older child and your younger child to go to the same school, so it builds the bond between them.



When you're considering early childhood education in an international school for your young child, it's important to understand how facilities are designed and how your child's day will go. You will want to seek a school that offers enriched environments inside the classroom and outside, including play and other areas for exploration.

Fees for early childhood programmes can vary and can go up to S\$ 41,000 at some premium-priced schools.

Young children should follow **play-based learning** in their preschool experiences.

While preschool should not be a time for formal education, young children can benefit greatly from a carefully planned day and week, with an age-appropriate curriculum that supports a lifelong love of learning and inquiry. An enriched environment and well-planned curriculum will support the social, emotional and cognitive development of the youngest learners.

While some preschools and early childhood programmes begin at 18 months, more formal programmes usually begin at age 3.

Five things for you to consider for your preschooler:

- ✓ Do you think your child could benefit from an all-through school, continuing to primary grades?
- ✓ Would your child be best served by child daycare or a more structured Kindergarten programme?
- ✓ Is cost/affordability important?
- ✓ Does your child enjoy learning and discovering through curiosity and inquiry?
- ✓ Do you want well-trained and experienced staff with supported teachers?

PRIMARY GRADES IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

You will find a common thread in many educational philosophies: students learn best through **hands-on, inquiry-based learning**. Another way to express this concept is that they learn best by doing, and they gain confidence and learn their strengths and areas needing improvement by learning together in a well-designed environment. Therefore, classrooms and exterior facilities and amenities should be well-designed and harmonious to support learning in the primary grades of 1 through 6.

Among international schools in Singapore, fees for primary grade education can vary, and at the higher end, you could find yourself paying around S\$ 43,000 as a tuition fee.

However, there are moderately priced international schools as well.



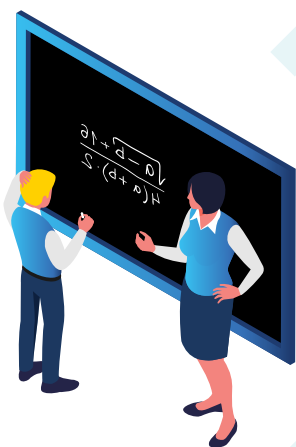
Fees for primary grade education at the higher end can go up to S\$43,000.

Children in primary grades can benefit from school days that are varied and well-structured. They learn best when their education goes beyond textbooks and engages their mind, body and social relationships. Varied types of learning throughout the week can benefit children in the primary grades. Programmes that combine Maths, English, other languages such as Mandarin, music, art and physical education provide a well-rounded experience for Grades 1 to 6. It also helps to promote kindness and mindfulness in the classroom and on campus, at meals and recess.



Five things to consider for your child in the primary grades:

- ✓ Will your child learn best through an inquiry-based approach to learning?
- ✓ Is the primary school programme affordable?
- ✓ Does your child enjoy taking ownership of their learning?
- ✓ Is your child excited about art, music, dress-up or other creative pursuits?
- ✓ Do you value well-qualified, kind and supported teachers for your child?



SECONDARY GRADES IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

After Grade 6, your child's education becomes more formal, as more knowledge in various subjects is required to advance.

Each series of grades comes with different challenges for students and parents alike. However, with a [well-designed education programme](#) and a student- and community-oriented school, completing the secondary grades can be an exciting and learning-filled journey. Secondary grades include Grades 6-8 (ages 12-14), Grades 9-10 (ages 15-16), and Grades 11-12 (Ages 17-18).

From age 12 to 16 years, students typically begin to take different subjects so they're able to determine what interests them most and the direction their future education may take. They also begin to develop their abilities to function in real-world situations.

Secondary grade education also prepares students for exams, which can include Cambridge O-levels and the IGCSE. Students in higher secondary or high school (Grades 11-12) will be taking part in a college preparation programme, such as the IB Diploma Programme (international qualification), A-Levels (UK curriculum) or Advanced Placement (US curriculum).

At secondary grade levels, students should be welcomed into well-designed classrooms and interior and exterior spaces that support learning across all of their subject areas, from Maths to Science, technology, music, art and physical education and performance. In addition, students should have the support of a pastoral care programme, so they have mentorship and guidance during their teenage years.

Among international schools in Singapore, annual fees for secondary grade education vary and can go up to and even cross S\$ 50,000.

Five things to consider for your secondary school-aged child:

- ✓ Is the school welcoming and supportive for the transition grades (6-8) and beyond?
- ✓ Does the school offer recognised degrees and transfer capability for university or home nation schools?
- ✓ Do students acquire practical knowledge and real-world skills?
- ✓ Does the school help students develop self-management skills and an open mind?
- ✓ Is university preparation training offered, such as Theory of Knowledge, essay skills and critical thinking?

RESULTS AND UNIVERSITY PLACEMENT

Parents of older teenagers will want to consider how the international school they select helps prepare students for a potential return to their home country and further education and university study - whether in their home country or abroad. Preparation for university should be integrated into an overall educational programme for students in secondary grades.

The teen years are a time of learning and discovery about self, abilities, and interests. Proper counselling and preparation can help teens and parents navigate these years successfully while ensuring a smooth transition to college or university study.

In addition to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, which is directly accepted for transfer to colleges and universities, additional advanced subjects and independent learning can help students prepare for ongoing education.



LEARNING OUTCOMES OF A POPULAR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PATHWAY

International school curricula are designed to produce optimal outcomes for student learning and growth. Starting with early learning and primary grades, moving through secondary grades, each curriculum has different goals and outcomes. Here we review one popular pathway:

IB PYP

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) covers ages 3 through 12.

It is based on a central principle of agency, which is an underpinning of school life for learners, learning and teaching, and the overall learning community.



According to the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO), outcomes of the IB PYP include:

- ✓ Higher social and emotional well-being as compared to non-PYP students.
- ✓ Significantly higher reading and expository writing scores in ISA assessments for Grades 3 and 5.
- ✓ Equal or better academic achievements on ISA assessments for Maths and science literacy.

Cambridge IGCSE



The Cambridge IGCSE curriculum covers over 70 subjects and addresses different levels of competency in English as well as learning styles and capabilities.

Schools typically choose the most relevant subjects for their students and can adapt the curriculum as per the needs of the students.

The Cambridge IGCSE is an internationally recognised qualification that encourages students to engage with subjects and make connections between them.

Some of the learning outcomes of IGCSE are:

- ✓ Understanding real-world application
- ✓ Intellectual enquiry
- ✓ Flexibility and responsiveness to change
- ✓ Working and communicating in English
- ✓ Cultural awareness

IB Diploma Programme

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP) serves students in Grades 11 to 12.
Recent studies show the following learning outcomes of IB DP students:

- ✓ Significantly higher global-mindedness (3% to 15%) than counterparts in non-IB DP programmes
- ✓ By Grade 12, 10% to 15% higher levels of critical thinking skills.



A DIVERSE EDUCATION IN LANGUAGES

Learning an additional language provides many benefits for children. Not only do they gain fluency and the ability to communicate with other language speakers, but they also build other skills. Some of the benefits of learning additional languages include:

- ✓ Memory improvement
- ✓ Improved attention span
- ✓ Stronger problem-solving skills
- ✓ Stronger critical thinking skills



Singapore's international schools offer the opportunity to gain proficiency in a second language other than English. Since Mandarin is one of the national languages of Singapore and a popular second language offering, many expats are eager for their children to start learning the nuances of this rich language while they are here.

A good international school should provide inquiry-based, engaging and levelled learning in the **second language classrooms** to create a personalised learning experience. Some international schools also offer **bilingual programmes** for children who have some prior knowledge of both languages, and when designed correctly, this is an immersive and beneficial experience.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN SINGAPORE

In addition to annual tuition, international schools also have varying application fees and admission fees. Application fees can be minimal but can also range up to or over S\$ 5,000.

International schools in Singapore assess student admission, readiness and placement according to age and completion of grades in other schools prior to application. They may also offer assessments for language proficiency, including English as an Additional Language (EAL) or English Language Learner (ELL).

Parents should also be aware of waiting lists for admission to some international schools. For example, some very popular and well-known international schools have waiting lists of one to three terms, potentially even longer. Others accept students throughout the year, based on spots available.

ACADEMIC CALENDARS OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

Most international school calendars in Singapore typically start in August and go on till June of the following year, with breaks in between terms.

OWIS

For example, the OWIS 2022-2023 academic year is as follows:

Term 1	22nd Aug - 21st Oct
Term 2	31st Oct - 16th Dec
Term 3	9th Jan - 24th Mar
Term 4	10th Apr - 23rd Jun

Other Schools

Other school calendars are typically:

January to December	Southern Hemisphere Schools (Australian) & Singaporean Schools
April to March	Indian, Korean, Japanese curriculum schools

TRANSITIONING SCHOOLS

Changing from one school to another can be stressful for children, as well as worrisome for parents. However, there are times when it's appropriate and beneficial to transition from one school to another. There are a few reasons why you might consider transitioning schools in Singapore, including:

- ✓ The wide differences in cost between international schools
- ✓ Curriculum choice and learning approach
- ✓ The value system of the school, including anti-bullying policy
- ✓ School facilities and after-school/extra-curricular activities



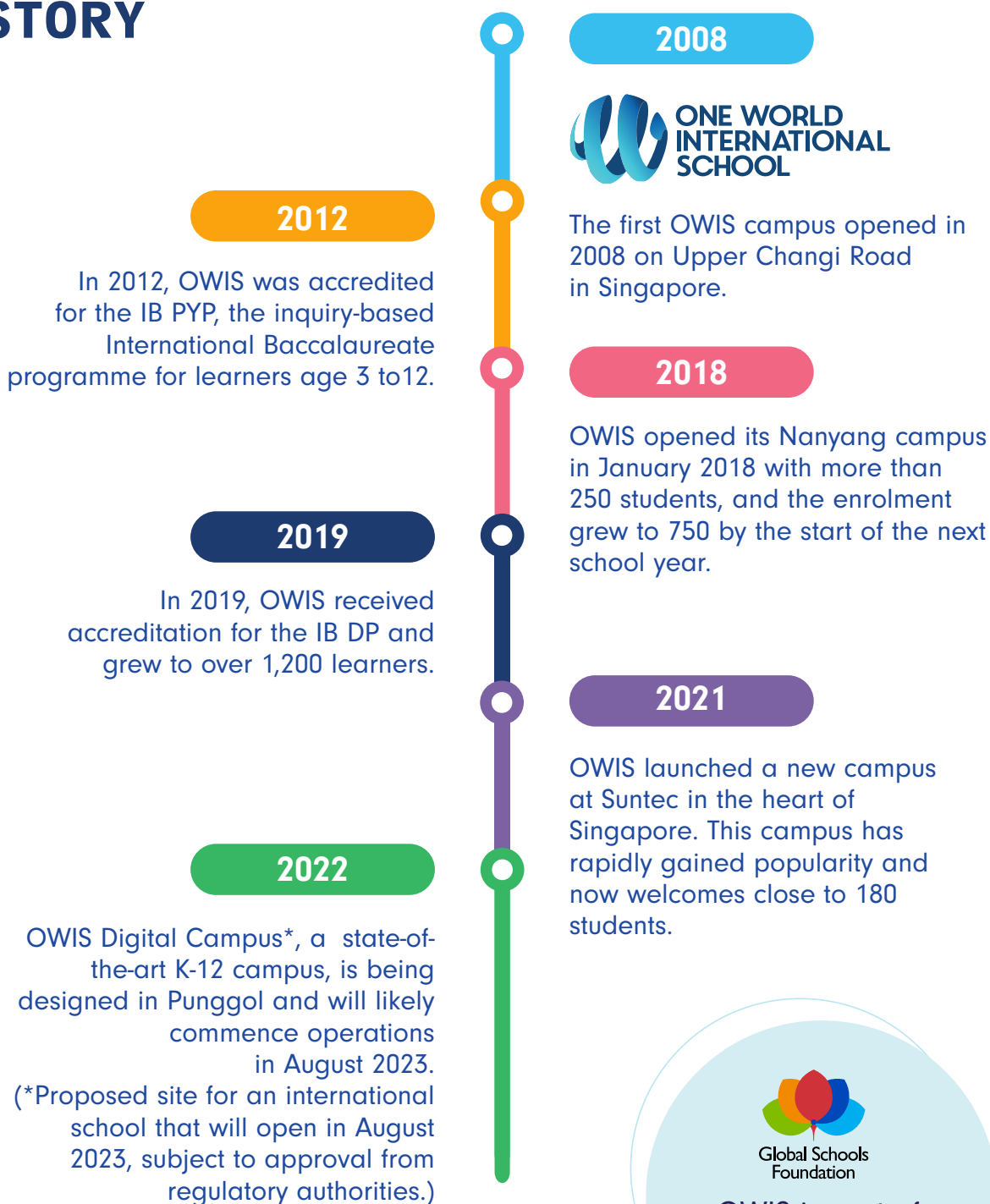
Many students and parents fear changing schools, but the reality is different from how entering a new school may be portrayed on television. The friendliness and kindness of the school environment play an important role in assisting students in transitioning from one school to another. A successful transition from one school to another has dividends far beyond the potentially improved curriculum, new friends and new extra-curricular activities. It can help to build resilience and adaptability, which will help in future life transitions.



Good schools are aware that students experience stress and can fear changing schools. They have programmes and staff in place to **help new students transition**. They also have strong relationships with current students and families, promoting a welcoming, kind and diverse atmosphere. As a parent, you can help your child transition well by showing confidence, expressing support and modelling a positive attitude that will carry over into the student's transition experience.

ABOUT OWIS

HISTORY



Mission & Vision

The mission of One World International School is to develop inquiring, compassionate, reflective lifelong learners who respect all cultures and care for our world. OWIS' vision is to be a leader in providing world-class quality and affordable education to all students, emphasising values, collaboration, creativity, and service to others.

At OWIS, the focus is on developing well-rounded students equipped to live in our increasingly complex multicultural global environment.

We strive to nurture creative thinkers, problem solvers and compassionate and kind future leaders.



Diversity & Kindness Values

OWIS serves students from over 70 nationalities and is an all-inclusive student, teacher and family community. It is a truly international, student-centred learning environment with core values of both diversity and kindness. OWIS encourages diversity and kindness in its physical environment and school culture. OWIS' values help students learn how to collaborate, take ownership of their learning and contribute to society.



Teachers

At all levels, OWIS teaching staff possess degrees in their subject areas and teaching certifications from well-established institutions of higher education. OWIS seeks faculty who are enthusiastic, globally focused, lifelong learners and dynamic. In addition, OWIS' teachers are fully committed to the school's mission, vision and values of diversity and kindness.





OWIS NANYANG^{1,2}

EC 1 - Grade 12

- 📍 21 Jurong West Street 81, S649075
- ☎ +65 6914 6700
- ✉ admissions@owis.org



² Cambridge Assessment International Education
Cambridge International School

OWIS SUNTEC

EC 1 - Grade 6

(Candidate School for the IB PYP)

- 📍 1 Raffles Blvd, Suntec City, Level 3, S039593
- ☎ +65 6914 7240
- ✉ admissions@owis.org



One World International School
CPE Reg No: 200800495N
Validity 24/02/2019 to 23/02/2023

OWIS DIGITAL CAMPUS*

EC 1 - Grade 10

*Proposed site for an international school that will be opening in 2023 subject to approvals from relevant authorities



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