doris

How Parents Search for International Schools in Hong Kong

Insights from 26,000+ parent searches



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1. Introduction

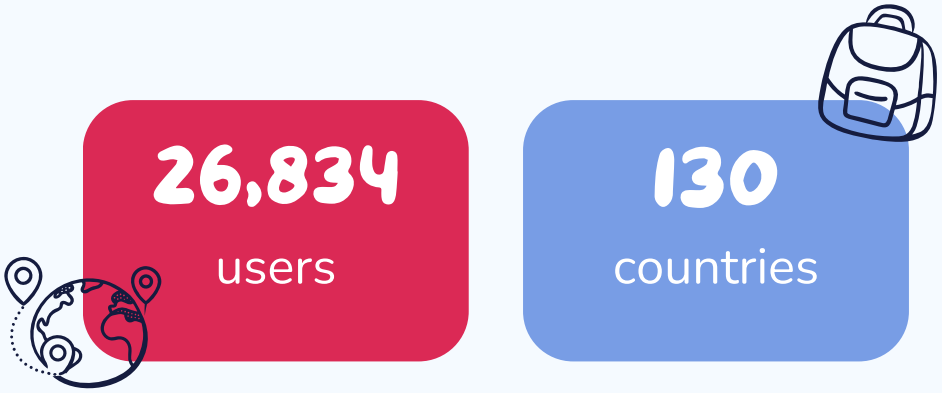
Hong Kong is one of the most crowded international school markets in the world.

Families have a lot of choice, and schools work hard to stand out in a city where competition for attention has never been tougher.

For all that's at stake in choosing a school, there's little public data on how parents make this decision, and assumptions are often based on small-scale surveys and feedback collected post-enrolment. What families do while they research stays mostly hidden.

This report gives schools some of the quantitative data they're missing.

It draws on behavioural data from 26,834 users who used doris, a school discovery platform, to research and connect with schools in Hong Kong over the twelve months to November 2026.



2. Source countries

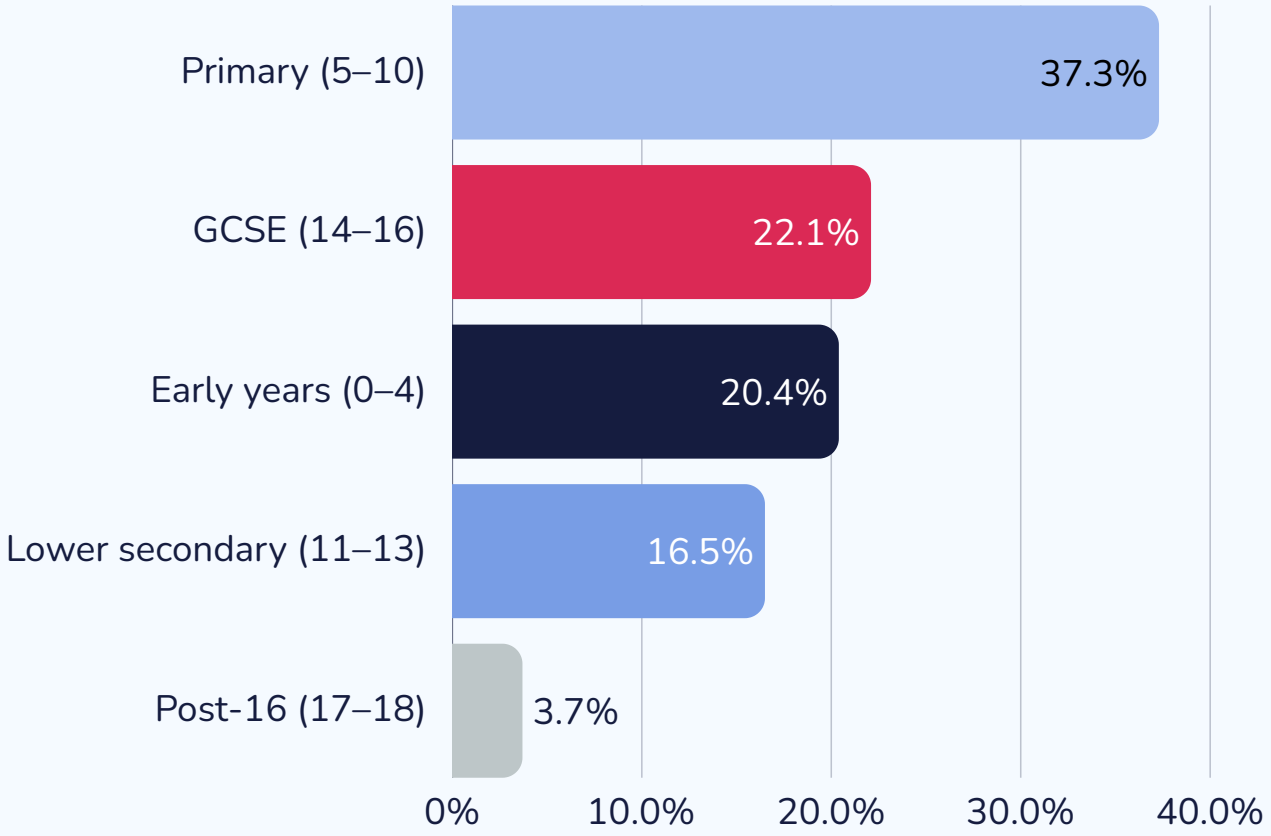
Over the period, 26,834 users from 130 different countries browsed Hong Kong schools.The biggest source of demand is local families, with 38.6% of sessions started in Hong Kong. After that comes the United States at 13.4%, Malaysia at 12.2% and mainland China at 10.4%.

Source country	%
Hong Kong 	38.6%
United States 	13.4%
Malaysia 	12.2%
China 	10.4%
United Kingdom 	4.4%
Singapore 	2.7%
Vietnam 	2.6%
Canada 	2.1%
Australia 	1.5%
Japan 	1.3%

**Countries are inferred from IP location, and might occasionally not match the physical location of the user.*

3. Ages

The biggest share of demand for international schools in Hong Kong **is for the primary years**, with 37.3% of searches. It's followed by GCSE years with 22.1%, and early years with 20.4%.



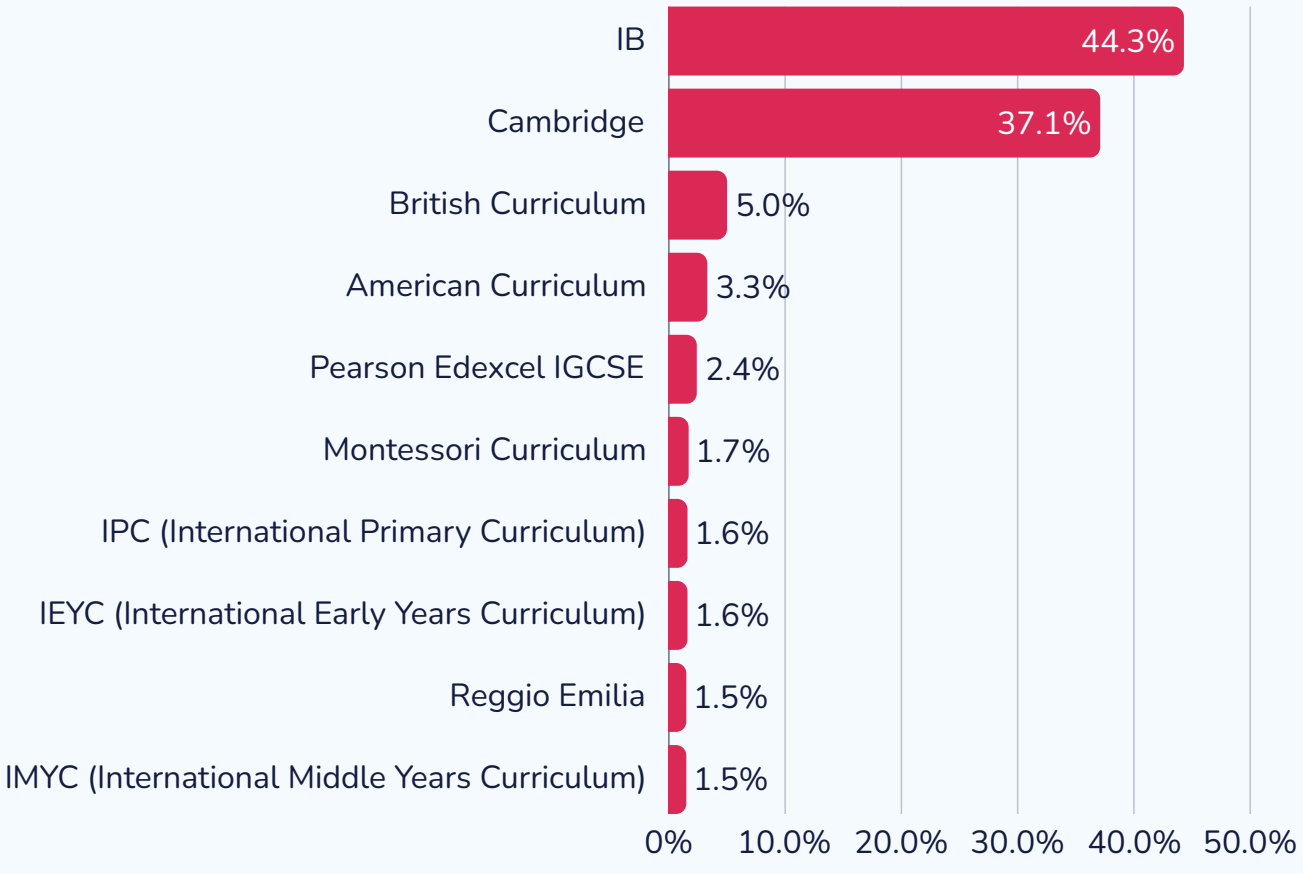
This spread provides useful context for the curriculum preferences in the next section.

4. Curricula

When parents filter their search by curriculum, the IB and Cambridge frameworks come out on top**, with over 44% and 37% of the searches respectively.**

Among early years, the Montessori approach leads over IEYC, with Reggio Emilia coming in third place for the younger demographic. It's worth noting that prospective families at the early stages of the search, particularly if they're new to it, often search for curricula they already know or have heard of before, with good name recognition and reputation.

Nicher approaches or bespoke curriculum are therefore likely to be underrepresented in these statistics.

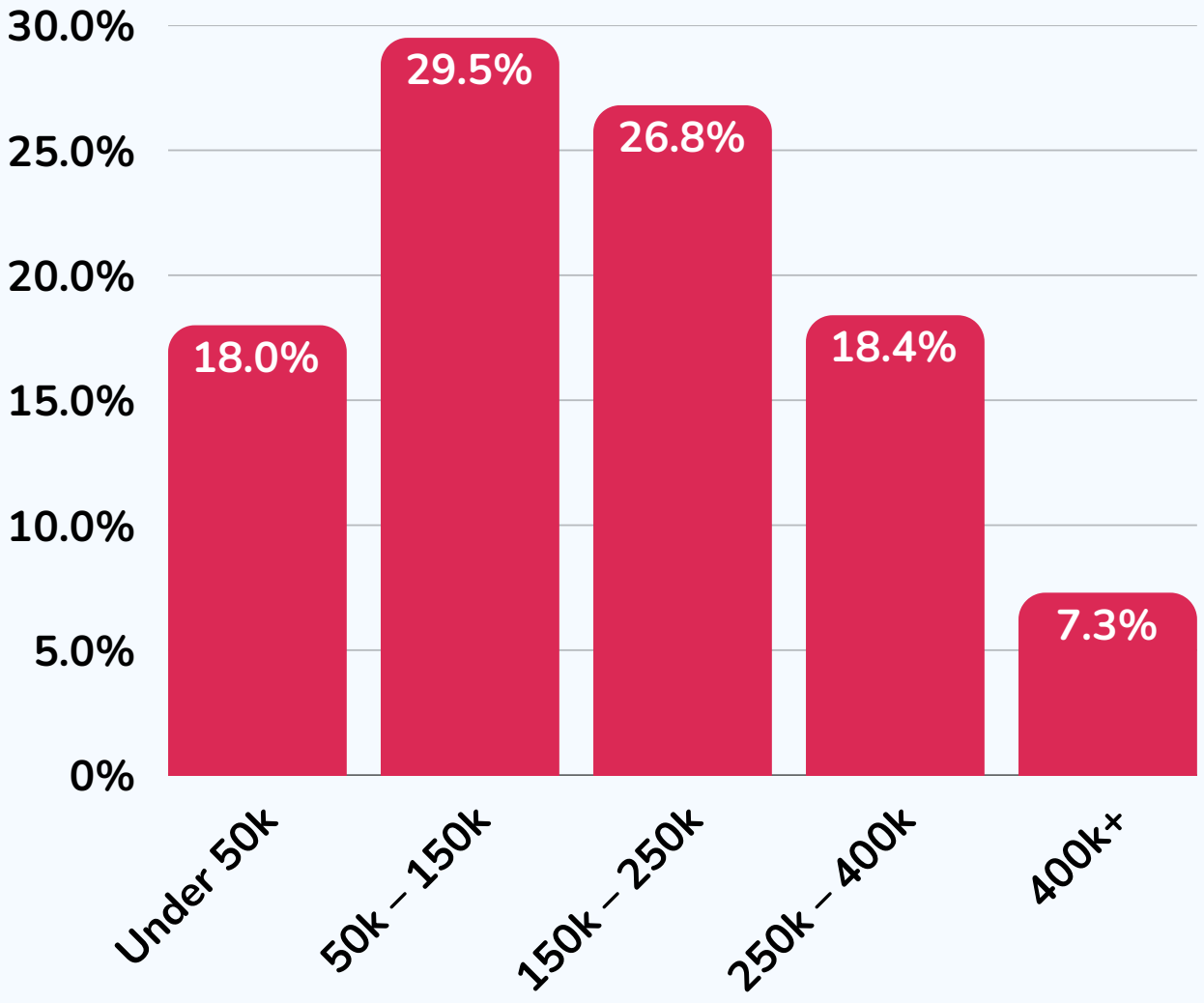


5. Fee ranges

While searches are spread out across all ranges, from affordable to premium, almost half (47.5%) of prospective families on doris are looking at fees below 150,000 Hong Kong dollars.

Mid-range (150k to 250k) sits at 26.8%, with search volume declining as we move to the upper range.

Having said that, there's real appetite for very premium education in the market, as over 7% of parents specifically select the very high end of the range (400k+ in annual fees).



All fees are in Hong Kong Dollars

6. What matters to prospective families

School profiles on doris cover information about all aspects of studying at a school, from essentials and fees, to admission information, to what the culture and "vibes" of the institution are like (for example, whether the school is a more academic environment, or whether it's more sporty and relaxed).

The profile sections doris users open, and the time they spend reading them, give us a good indication of what they consider important to inform their decision on whether to consider a school or not.

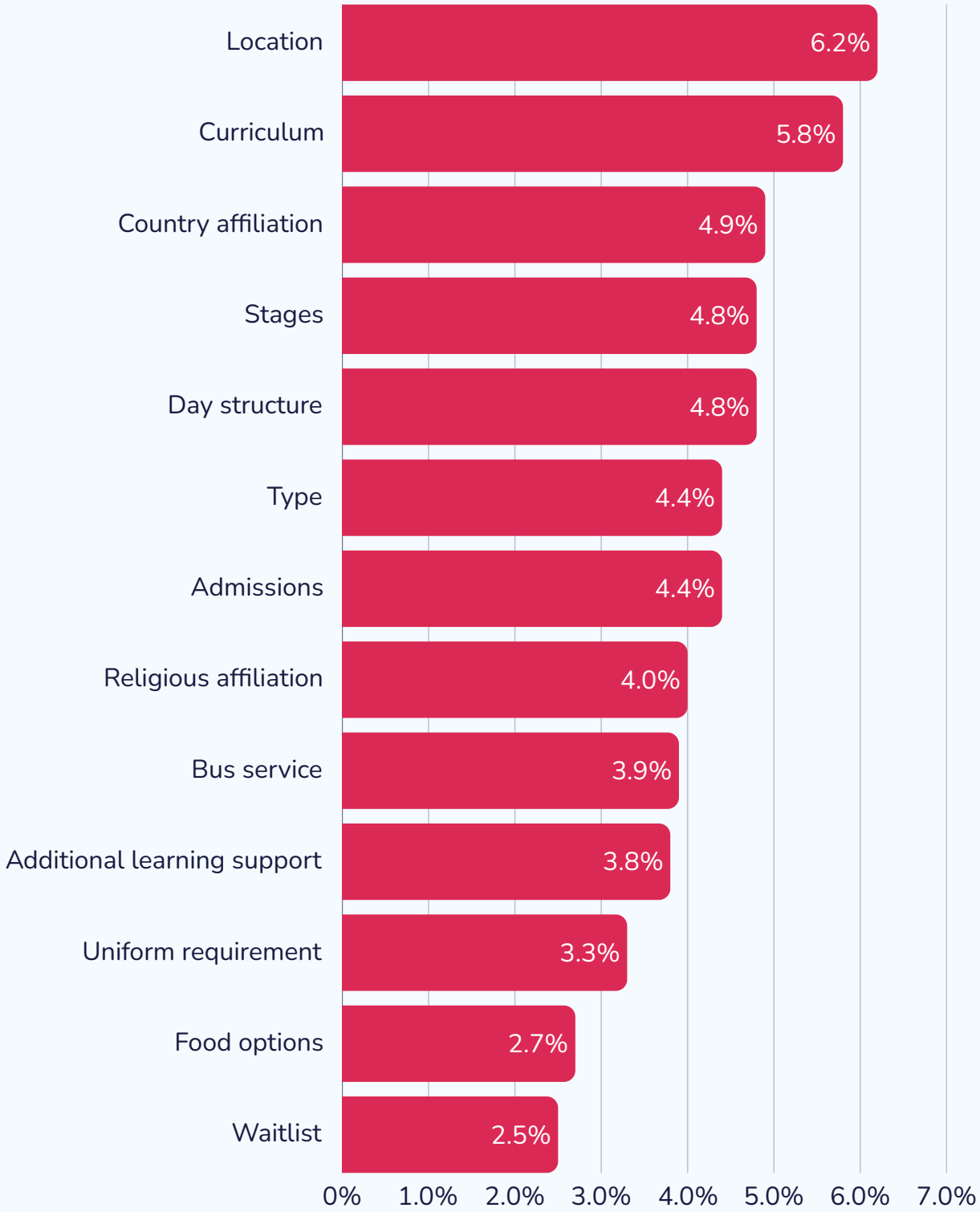
Location edges curriculum at the top, and is the most commonly opened section in 6.2% of the cases against curriculum's 5.8%

The "hierarchy" of what matters to parents is fairly logical: essentials first (to decide to enrol at a school, families need to know that they can get there, that they can afford it, and that the school offers the provision they're looking for), then information about school life and the admissions process.

But that isn't to say it's all that matters: over 60 different sections get opened across the market.

Outside the top 10, "intangibles," like wellbeing support, information about the parent community, notable alumni, and other sports and activities are also information prospective families take time reading and are all taken into consideration when it comes to finding the right school.

Advice for schools: if this information is easy to find on your site, you're giving parents what they came for. If it's buried or missing, you're adding friction at the worst possible moment.



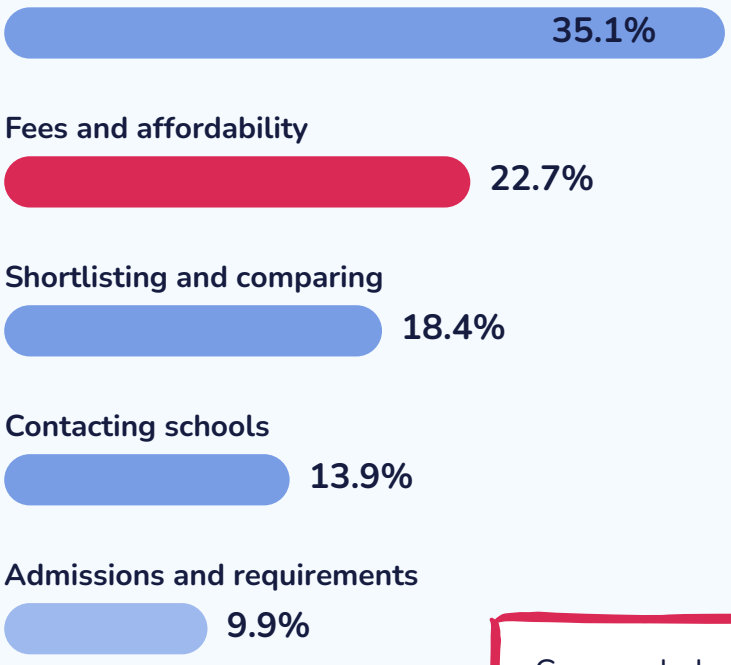
7. What families ask AI

On doris, parents can search for schools by selecting their own criteria, or by using our AI assistant, doris AI.

The figures below come from doris AI conversations across all our markets, but the chats we've quoted are from families looking for schools in Hong Kong.

We've grouped parents' questions into five categories: fees and affordability, contacting schools, shortlisting and comparing, admissions and requirements, and what a school offers.

What families ask about



Real messages

What's the most searched-for Montessori campus?

English-medium school for a child starting in [year], budget around 150k HKD, near Lohas Park.

Can you help me find a warm, welcoming international school with strong university pathways?

8. Blockers in AI searches

AI assistants don't always give you the answer you need first time, depending on their sources. doris AI answers parents' questions using school profiles and the guides and articles on our site.

When parents ask for something specific or niche that isn't on a profile (and often isn't on the school's own website either), they hit a wall.

Having these details on your website makes them more likely to be cited by AI assistants when parents ask for them, driving traffic and preventing families from getting frustrated. Just make sure they're not hidden behind PDFs, as these won't be read by AI.

Parents couldn't find	% of unanswered queries
Details about fees	31.0%
Admissions information	23.3%
Term dates and timings	15.5%
Information about uniforms	11.2%
Scholarships and bursaries	5.2%
Exam results and destinations	5.2%

9. About doris

doris is a school discovery platform that helps prospective families find the right international school for their children. It's parent-first and unbiased, matching families only with schools that fit their criteria, from location and curriculum to language and SEN support.

Since its launch in 2025, doris has been used by more than 1.1 million prospective families to research over 9,000 schools worldwide.

Because so much of that research happens on the platform, doris has access to millions of data points on how families discover and weigh up schools, including a clear view of parent behaviour during the search process in each market.

We make some of our data publicly available for institutions to better understand their market and how parents navigate the school search, alongside real parent sessions and more, at **partners.doris.school/our-audience**

Claim your school profile

Platform: doris.school **doris for schools:** partners.doris.school
Email: partnerships@doris.school