

STATE SCHOOL TEACHING ADVANTAGES



Our state school placements give graduates the chance to gain a unique insight into one of the most highly-regarded education systems in the world. These placements, though challenging, offer an unforgettable and rewarding experience.

Lauren Pettit, our Programme Director, worked at a state school in Jinan, Shandong Province 2015-16. Here, she talks about the top 5 advantages of state school placements.

#1 More independence

Although state schools provide their foreign teachers with basic teaching materials and a curriculum, teachers are largely responsible for planning and delivering their lessons in a way they see fit. This independence is a great advantage for those looking to try out new ideas in the classroom and use their creative flair to deliver fun and engaging lessons.

The flexibility teachers have in deciding what they teach also helps increase motivation and encourage good behaviour among students, helping to create a good atmosphere in the classroom.

#2 Choice of location and age group

As Chinese citizens are all entitled to state funded education, numerous state schools can be found in all towns and cities across the country. As English becomes ever more important, an increasing number of these schools are looking to employ foreign English teachers, meaning that anyone looking for a state school placement has a huge variety of schools and areas to choose from!

State schools tend to be divided into kindergarten, primary, middle and high school and university and therefore employ teachers to teach only one of these groups. This enables teachers to decide which age group they wish to teach and ensures there won't be any hopping between levels, which is particularly good for those who know which age group they wish to teach.

#3 Cultural immersion

State school placements not only give teachers the chance to gain a fascinating insight into one of the world's most revered education systems, but also to interact with and work alongside local people from various walks of life and backgrounds.

In contrast to private language schools, each state school typically employs only a few foreign teachers each year. Though there are usually many foreign teachers in Chinese cities to socialise with, teachers on state school placements get the chance to truly immerse themselves in the culture whilst at work – and maybe even learn some Mandarin!

For most people, going to China is all about experiencing a new culture and way of life - what better way to do this than by working in a state school?

#4 Variety of students

The cost of private tuition means that language institutes tend to attract students from more advantaged families, who perhaps have a lot of exposure to English and foreign travel. In contrast, state schools are free for all, meaning that students come from various social and economic backgrounds and many of them are unlikely to have ever seen a foreigner before!

A state school placement gives teachers the chance to make a real difference to the education and lives of a wide range of students, which is undoubtedly one of the most rewarding parts of the job!

#5 More free time

Much like in the UK, state schools in China run to a certain schedule all over the country, meaning that the days and terms are very structured. Teachers are issued a weekly timetable that applies throughout the school year and there is rarely any deviation from this. Foreign teachers are expected to teach 15-25 hours per week on Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm and both students and teachers have the weekends off.

Two long school holidays take place each year; one in January/February to celebrate Spring Festival and the other during July/August at the end of the school year. Combined with the various national holidays that take place throughout the year, state school teachers can receive up to 11 weeks holiday in total per year! The perfect chance to explore more of China, or even Asia!

If you have any questions about state school placements, Lauren will be happy to help. Just send an email with your questions to lauren@teach-english-in-china.co.uk.