

## VI-4 Japanese Education System

### 1. Compulsory Education

Education in Japan is compulsory for nine years, from elementary school through junior high school. School expenses (including textbooks) in that period are free of charge and children must attend a predetermined public school. However, other expenses such as for additional material needed in lessons and for school trips must be self-paid.

#### <School Calendar>

April	Beginning of School Year
Late July - End of August	Summer Vacation
Around new year	Winter Vacation (about 2 weeks)
March	End of the term – Spring Vacation

Children with Japanese nationality will be sent a notice from the local school board informing them of the school they are to attend and the date of their first day of school. They will enter the school stated on the notice on the designated date.

You will receive a similar notification upon sending a request to the local board of education for a child of a foreign nationality to attend a Japanese public school (when they begin primary education.). Also, those who have completed their resident registration and continuously live in Osaka Prefecture will be sent a notice about school from the local school board when their children reach the age for primary education. Please hand in the notification after entering the necessary information. It is possible to enter a school in the middle of the school year. Consult with the local municipality's board of education for more details.

There are also private elementary schools and junior high schools; however, these require separate self-paid fees for courses. Inquire at schools of interest for details. Most private schools require children to take an entrance examination.

### 2. Subsequent Education

Once compulsory education is completed, children may go to high school. There are various types of high schools in Japan including "academic" high schools that offer a wide variety of courses and other types, including "technical/vocational" institutions that primarily offer learning in one area of specialty.

Direct inquiries related to entrance into prefectural and municipal high schools to the High School Education section in your prefecture or municipality. Inquiries into private high school education should be directed to the specific school.

In Osaka, there are two systems that subsidize high school tuition – the nationally financed system called the "high school tuition support fund" and the Osaka Prefecture-funded "private high school tuition subsidiary aid." Tuition for both public and private high schools will be virtually kept free for a student whose family's annual income is below a determined amount.

### 3. Supporting Children/Students at School

The Osaka Prefectural Agency of Education has established the website called "School Life Support for Students Returning or Moving to Japan from Abroad" to provide information for foreign children and students about their school lives.

URL <http://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/shochugakko/kikoku/index.html>

Content: Entering school, future course guidance

Languages: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, English, Indonesian, Filipino, Thai, Russian and Nepalese

#### **4. Lunches (Bento)**

At junior high schools where lunch is not provided, children are generally required to bring food from home. This is referred to as a “bento” (lunch box). When a child cannot bring their lunch, they can do several things such as buying bread and other food in the school or from a shop. However, because rules differ with respect to school policies it is recommended that you consult with the child's teacher.

#### **5. School Expense Benefit (allowance)**

This system aims to support children during their compulsory schooling to avoid problems due to financial hardship. Necessary goods for study, outside school activities and school trip costs will be covered by the benefit (allowance). Consult with school or the local municipality's board of education for details.