

Education Guide Japan

2014-2015

A comprehensive guide to schooling
in the Tokyo area

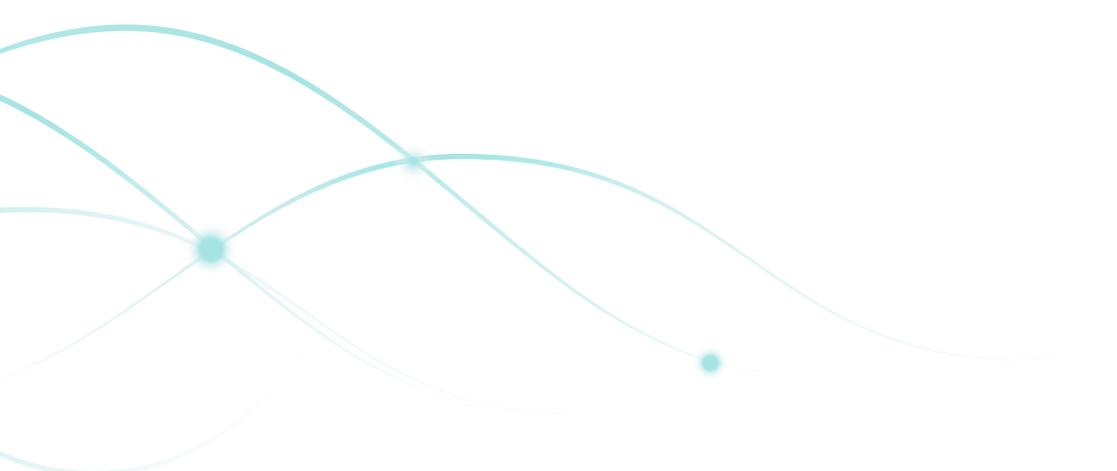


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Introduction

Great schools with a choice of curriculum are the reason many families decide to relocate to the Tokyo/Yokohama area.

Global corporations, major embassies, famous and high-level universities and a healthy entrepreneurial environment have combined to produce some of the biggest, best, newest and oldest international schools in the APAC region.

Children in international schools typically begin preschool at two to three years old. Primary and secondary school years follow, and most expatriate children will leave Japan to complete their schooling in their home country aged 17 or 18, although there are universities in Tokyo that offer undergraduate as well as graduate degree programs in English (more on that later).

Although the Japanese are very committed to educating their children, the legal requirements for schooling do not apply to foreigners. Non-Japanese can enroll in public schools at the discretion of the school principal. A Japanese public school tends to see its role as facilitating assimilation into Japanese society, not preparation for an international life. Support for students who are not fluent native speakers of Japanese is limited, and those students may be seen as impediments to group academic excellence. Certain local public schools are more open-minded and will assist returning Japanese children with their transition from overseas back to Japan.

Private schools and international schools provide variety. International schools can be independent or affiliated with universities, churches, or international organizations, offering traditional and alternate curriculums. Some of these schools have been established for over 100 years, serving the expatriate, Japanese and local foreign communities.

As anywhere, private school choices cost money. Most employers assist with or cover the cost of the school fees, although the starting age for company support may vary. Please confirm your support plan with your company's HR department. Some schools have corporate contribution programs (please enquire directly with the schools). Privacy protection covers details of school assessments and the final enrollment paperwork, but Crown Relocations is glad to discuss priorities with parents and arrange for appointments at schools that may have a good "fit" for both parents and children.

Schools in Japan are very aware of accreditation, and strive to obtain one or more accreditations as quickly as possible, in particular:

- The Council of International Schools, (CIS)
- The Western Association of Schools & Colleges (WASC)
- The International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Recognition by the Japanese Government*

Primary and secondary schools vary widely with regard to location and facilities. Several of the larger schools have relocated outside the center of Tokyo in order to have room for sports and other special facilities. These schools generally run bus transportation services for their students. This may affect your choice of housing, so it is important to coordinate the two decisions.

Preschools are by legal definition businesses, and vary widely in program, atmosphere and operating philosophy. A good place to start is the Tokyo Association of International Preschools (TAIP) website which lists many, but not all, of the preschools in the central Tokyo area. Please be sure to visit your shortlisted preschools and do not make a choice without having viewed the preschool.

Those parents with children of preschool age will probably choose their housing first and then find a preschool in the area. For parents of primary/secondary school-age children, the choice of school comes first, followed by finding housing in a compatible area.

The international school year starts toward the end of August and finishes in June. Most international schools do not follow local national holidays, but have winter, spring, and summer breaks. Please consult before scheduling a visit to make sure the school is open, and staff available.

The Japanese school year starts in April and ends in March. A few international schools follow this pattern, and most allow for adjustments to accommodate Term 1 and Term 2 enrollment.

School days are fairly standard for all types of schools. The day starts between 8:00—8:30 am and ends between 3:00—3:30 pm, Monday to Friday, with extracurricular programs following for older children at extra cost. Class sizes vary but range from 20 to 35.



International School of the Sacred Heart



School options

Top tier schools in Tokyo

The following primary/secondary schools are generally considered “Top Tier”:

- The American School In Japan (ASIJ)
- The British School in Tokyo
- International School of the Sacred Heart (ISSH)
- Nishimachi International School (Nishimachi)
- Seisen International School (Seisen)
- St. Mary’s International School. (St. Mary’s)
- Tokyo International School (TIS, TokyoIS)

All are excellent schools with their own distinctive ‘flavor’.

ISSH, Seisen, and St. Mary’s are single-sex Catholic schools K-12 with no requirements regarding religious affiliation. Seisen and St. Mary’s are located on the western suburban edge of Tokyo, and share a bus service into central Tokyo; ISSH is located in central Hiroo and has no bus service.

Nishimachi is co-educational, covering grades K-9 with strong expectations of bilingual competence in its graduates, who must transfer to other schools for High School.

The British School in Tokyo has a dual campus – lower grades are based near Shibuya station, while the upper grades share part of the Showa University Campus in the Sangenjaya suburb of Shibuya.

Tokyo International School is a Pre-K-8, IB curriculum school with a new campus built in 2013 in very central Minami Azabu, and a bus service inside Tokyo.

Tuition and fees at these schools runs between 2 and 3 million yen per year, excluding building fees, capital assessment fees, bus fees, technology fees, uniforms and special program fees.

International schools in other languages of instruction

There are international schools in Tokyo where the language of instruction is not English. Small embassy schools (not listed) also exist. The most well-known international schools are:

- Lycee Français International de Tokyo (Tier 1)
- Deutsche Schule Tokyo Yokohama (Tier 1)
- Tokyo Chinese School 東京中華学校 (Tier 2)
- Yokohama Overseas Chinese School (Tier 2)

Top schools in Yokohama

The two international schools in Yokohama are located in the Yamate area, and are among the oldest in Japan.

- St Maur International School (English and French programs, founded 1872)
- Yokohama International School (IB, founded 1924)

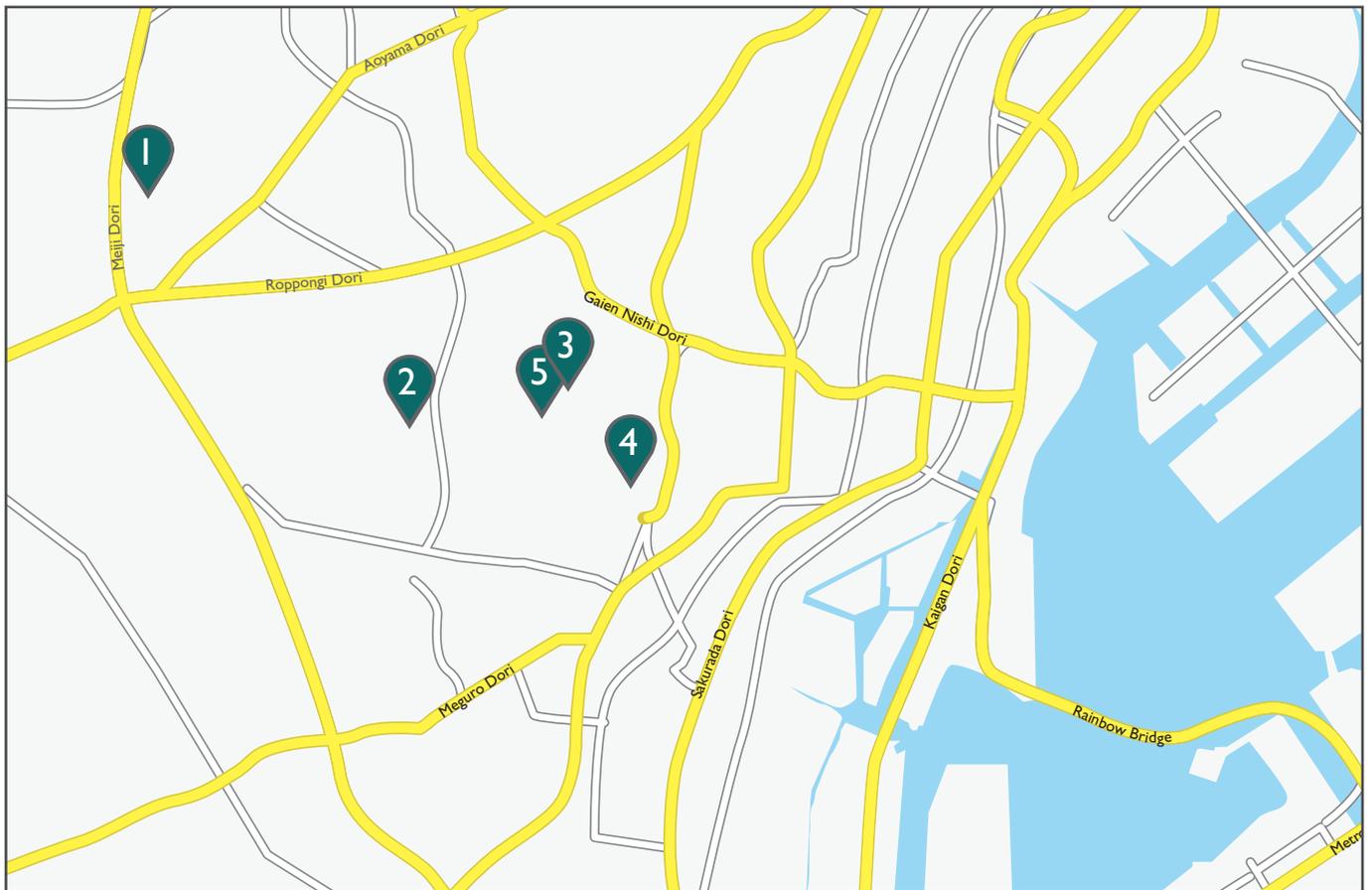
Tier two international schools

These are international schools for families seeking a less pressurized, slightly more affordable international education for their children. Given the legal status of international schools, start-up is not difficult but new schools will need data from three to four years of operations before they can apply for accreditation or recognition by the Japanese government. The better-known Tier Two schools include:

- Aoba-Japan International School (CIS/NEASC, founded 1976)
- K International School (IB, founded 1997)
- The Canadian International School (PYP, founded 1999)
- New International School (*,MSACS, founded 2001)
- Horizon Japan International School (*, Founded 2003)
- India International School in Japan (Founded 2004)
- Global Indian International School, Tokyo (CBSE, Founded 2006)
- Jingumae International Exchange (UKNC, Founded 2007)

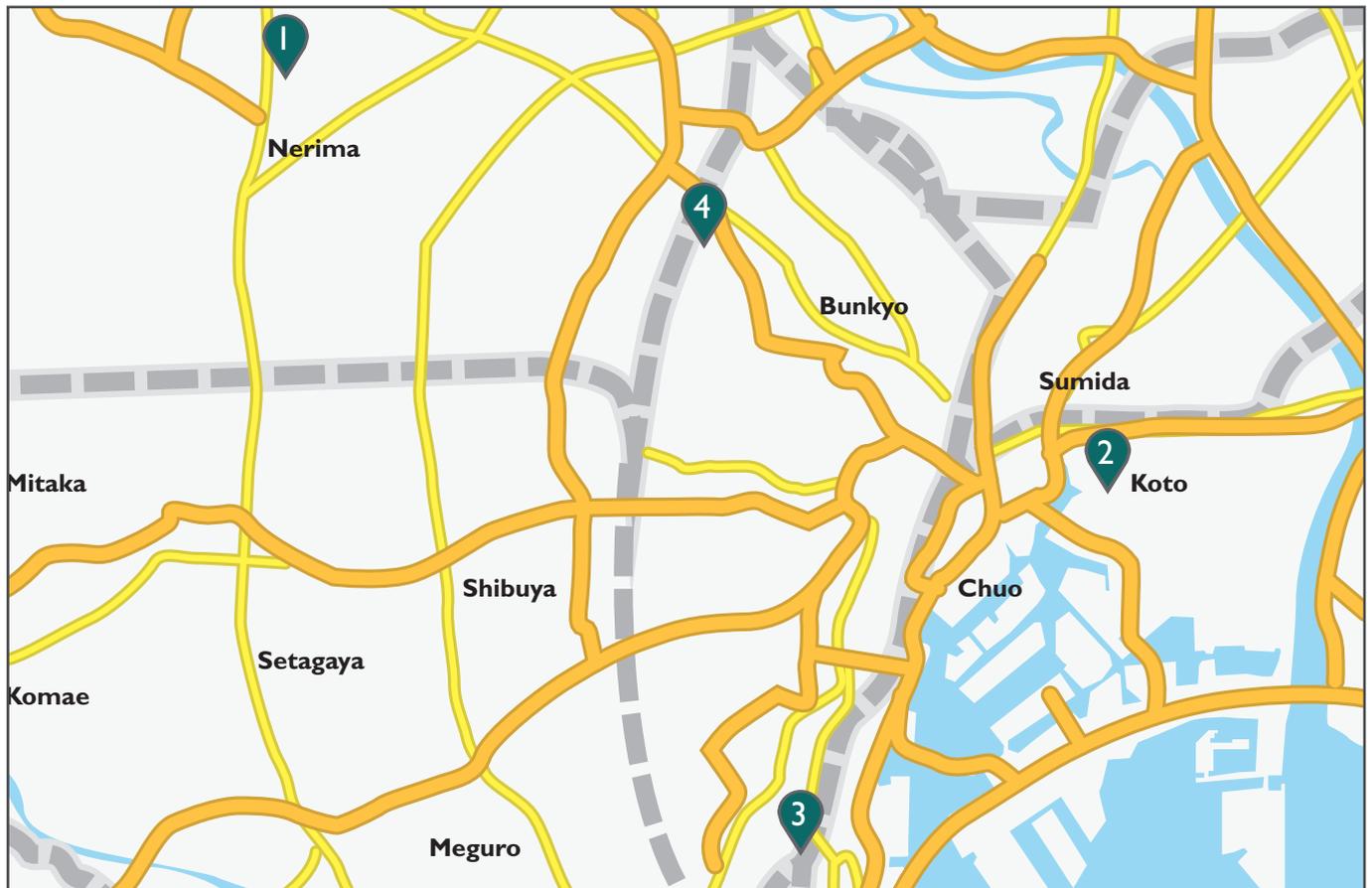
*Recognition by the Japanese Government noted on website

Top tier schools in downtown Tokyo



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|---|--|
| 1. The British School in Tokyo | www.bst.ac.jp |
| 2. International School of the Sacred Heart | www.iss.ac.jp |
| 3. Nishimachi International School | www.nishimachi.ac.jp |
| 4. Tokyo International School | www.tokyois.com/new |
| 5. The Montessori School in Tokyo | montessorijapan.com |

Other schools in the Tokyo area



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Aoba-Japan International School | www.aobajapan.jp |
| 2. K International School | www.kist.ed.jp |
| 3. The Canadian International School | cisjapan.net |
| 4. New International School | newis.ed.jp |



Basic data on schools

School	Earliest Age, (grade range)	Cutoff date	Primary Campus	Secondary Campus	Bus Service?
The American School in Japan	3 (K-12)	August 30	Chofu, Tokyo (1-12)	Roppongi (ELC)	Chofu only
The British School in Tokyo	3 (N-Y13)	August 31	Showa (age 9-18) Setagaya	Shibuya (3-8)	No
International School of the Sacred Heart	3 (K-12)	September 1	Hiroo, Minato		No
Nishimachi International School	5 (K-9)	August 31	MotoAzabu, Minato		No
Seisen International School	2 (K-12)	August 30	Yoga, Setagaya		Yes
St. Mary's International School	5 (K-12)	August 31	Seta, Setagaya		Yes
Tokyo International School	4 (K-8)	September 30	Minami Azabu, Minato		Yes
Lycee Français International de Tokyo	3 (K-12)	December 31	Takinokawa, Kita		Yes (Partial)
Tokyo Chinese School	6 (1-12)	March 31	Gobancho, Chiyoda		No
Christian Academy in Japan	5(K-12)	August 31	Higashi-Kurume		No
Deutsche Schule Tokyo Yokohama	3 (K-12)	Consult	Nakamachidai, Yokohama		Yes
St Maur International School	2.5 (K-12)	Consult	Yamate-cho, Yokohama		No
Yokohama International School	3 (K-12)	September 1	Yamate-cho, Yokohama		No
Yokohama Overseas Chinese School	(K-12)	Consult	Yamashita-cho, Yokohama		No
Aoba-Japan International School	2 (K-12)	Consult	Hikarigaoka, Nerima	Meguro (K)	Yes
K International School	3 (K-12)	August 31	Shirakawa, Koto		No
Canadian International School	3(K-12)	December 31	Osaki, Shinagawa		
New International School	3 (K-12)	December 31	Minami-Ikebukuro, Toshima		
Horizon Japan International School	2.5 (K-12)	September 1	Tsurumi, Yokohama (K-12)	(Sendai, Miyagi)	Yes
India International School in Japan	2.5 (K-12)	October 1	Ojima, Koto (K-12)	Kirigaoka, Yokohama	Yes
Global Indian International School, Tokyo	2.5 (K-12)	April 1	Mizue, Edogawa (1-12)	Minami Shinozaki- machi(K)	Yes

School	Earliest Age, (grade range)	Cutoff date	Primary Campus	Secondary Campus	Bus Service?
Jingumae International Exchange	3 (K-6)	September 1	Jingumae, Shibuya		No
International Secondary School	11 (5-12)	consult	Musashi-koyama, Meguro		No
KAIS International School	11 (7-12)	consult	Kami Osaki, Shinagawa		No
The Montessori School in Tokyo	2 (K-6)	consult	Minami Azabu, Minato		No
Makuhari International School	3 (K-6)	consult	Mihama, CHIBA City		Yes (Chiba)
Tsukuba International School	3 (K-10)	consult	Tsukuba, IBARAKI		Yes (local)

Stages of schooling

Preschool – Nursery – Intake - Kindergarten

Once their children reach two to three years of age, parents may wish to start them in a non-compulsory “Preschool” or “Kindergarten” program.

Classes can be full-day Monday through Friday or half-day; they may be held on two or three days per week, and they take varied approaches towards early literacy and number concepts.

Programs usually follow developmental age guidelines, and aim to build children’s confidence in their abilities and develop their skills, as well as their ability to play in groups.

Administration of the preschools may be through attachment to a larger international primary/secondary school, or the preschool may be an independent local business. If attached

to a larger international school, the venue may be on the same campus, or at a separate location.

Licensing is not required for international preschools, and program accreditation is not vigorous unless part of a larger system. Preschool teachers frequently have credentials from overseas or from the Japanese authorities, and love their work.

The choice of preschool usually follows the selection of a home – whereas the choice of a primary school will almost always precede the decision of where to live.

Because of food allergies, religious considerations and health standards, most preschools ask that the students bring their own lunches from home, although some simple, healthy snacks may be provided.

This Guide does not include preschool listings – a good place to start looking is the Tokyo Association of International Preschools website: [//tokyopreschools.org/new](http://tokyopreschools.org/new)



Primary and secondary schools

Between the ages of 5 and 7, children enter “grade school” or primary school. In most international schools, the school curriculum extends through senior high school, ending at around age 17 or 18. Only a few of the 20-plus schools listed in the Basic Data on Schools will stop at the middle-school level, with two schools serving secondary students exclusively.

Competition for students between the international schools can be keen, and is often based on language learning and extracurricular activities. Campus and facility differences and the career paths of the graduates are also points of consideration.

The Tokyo area’s level of safety and its efficient public transportation are big pluses in the lives of primary and secondary school students. For younger students, living near the school or choosing a school that provides a bus service is important. High school students can usually navigate public transport without difficulty.

All international schools place an emphasis on charitable activities and giving back to the community, and have measures in place to handle bullying.

Graduates of international secondary schools in Japan usually are able to gain places at universities in their home. Paying attention to the accreditation of the school, testing and counselling during the secondary school years will ease this transition.

Age at Cutoff Date	UK School Level	UK System	US System	US School Level (*may vary)	IB System	IB Program	Japan	Japan School System
3	Foundation	Nursery	Preschool	-	Pre-K	PYP	Nen-sho	Yochien
4	Foundation	Reception	Preschool	-	K	PYP	Nen-chu	Yochien
5	Key Stage 1	Year 1	Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Year 1	PYP	Nen-cho	Yochien
6	Key Stage 1	Year 2	First Grade	Lower Primary	Year 2	PYP	First year	Shogakko
7	Key Stage 2	Year 3	Second Grade	Lower Primary	Year 3	PYP	Second year	Shogakko
8	Key Stage 2	Year 4	Third Grade	Lower Primary	Year 4	PYP	Third year	Shogakko
9	Key Stage 2	Year 5	Fourth Grade	Upper Primary	Year 5	PYP	Fourth year	Shogakko
10	Key Stage 2	Year 6	Fifth Grade	Upper Primary	Year 6	PYP	Fifth year	Shogakko
11	Key Stage 3	Year 7	Sixth Grade	Upper Primary*	Year 7	MYP	Sixth year	Shogakko
12	Key Stage 3	Year 8	Seventh Grade	Middle School	Year 8	MYP	First year	Chugakko
13	Key Stage 3	Year 9	Eighth Grade	Middle School	Year 9	MYP	Second year	Chugakko
14	Key Stage 4	Year 10	Ninth Grade	High School*	Year 10	MYP	Third year	Chugakko
15	Key Stage 4	Year 11/*FI	Tenth Grade	High School	Year 11	MYP	First year	Koko
16	Key Stage 5	Year 12	Eleventh Grade	High School	Year 12	IB Diploma	Second year	Koko
17	Key Stage 5	Year 13	Twelfth Grade	High School	Year 13	IB Diploma	Third year	Koko

University-level studies in Tokyo

Upon graduation from high school, most students will return to their home countries to continue their education. However, options are available if they or their families would prefer a university in Japan in English. Currently three universities, listed below, offer undergraduate degrees for English-language speakers with no Japanese language skills. For those students who have achieved a specific level of Japanese language skills, many Japanese universities have developed international departments.

- International Christian University (ICU) in the west Tokyo suburbs: www.icu.ac.jp/en (Mitaka-shi Tokyo)
- Sophia University (Jochi Daigaku) in central Yotsuya: www.sophia.ac.jp/eng/e_top (Yotsuya/Kioicho, Chiyoda-ku)
- Temple University Japan Campus (TUJ) in Minami Azabu, Minato-ku: www.tuj.ac.jp (Minami Azabu, Minato-ku)

Unmarried partners who cannot obtain dependent visas may be able to obtain a student visa for graduate studies or language studies. Several universities offer graduate degrees for MBAs and other programs in English and many other universities are open to people willing to study in Japanese. Continuing Education and Summer Courses are available as well, for those who are not interested in becoming full-time students.

- Globis Graduate School of Management: www.globis.ac.jp (Nibancho, Chiyoda-ku)
- Waseda University Waseda Business School: wasedamba.jp/international-mba (Nishi-Waseda, Shinjuku-ku)
- Hitotsubashi University Graduate School of International Corporate Strategy: www.ics.hit-u.ac.jp/programs/mba-program (Hitotsubashi, Chiyoda-ku)
- Temple University Japan Campus Beasley School of Law: www.tuj.ac.jp/law/overview/index.html (Mita, Minato-ku)



Curriculum considerations

Over the years, educators have questioned various types of methods of instruction – should the teaching be instructor-centered, or student-centered? Should the classes be organized into separate units including math, science, languages and art or should the studies focus on broad themes or topics, using all the skills needed, taught at the time they are needed?

A traditional curriculum features organized separate units of study, taught along variations of lecture and discussion

methods. Then, between 1907 and 1930, Dr. Maria Montessori developed her methods and curriculum based on students' needs. The Montessori Foundation supports schools worldwide that carry on her methods today. More recently, the International Baccalaureate programs are gaining acceptance. Curriculums based on all three teaching philosophies are available in the schools in the Tokyo/ Yokohama area.

International Baccalaureate Program

Schools in 150 countries across the world offer the International Baccalaureate Program. In some cases, schools offer sections of the IB Program alongside a traditional curriculum.

There are four IB programs are for students aged 3 to 19:

- PYP – The Primary Years Program for students aged 3 to 12 focuses on the development of the whole child.
- MYP – The Middle Years Program for students aged from 11 to 16 provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills, excelling in traditional school subjects.

- DP – The Diploma Program for students aged 16 to 19 is a demanding two-year curriculum leading to final examinations and a qualification that is welcomed by leading universities around the world.
- IBCC – The IB career-related Certificate is for students between 16 and 19. This Certificate increases access to an IB education and is specially designed to provide a flexible learning framework that can be tailored by the school to meet the needs of the students.

For further details on the IB programs, visit www.ibo.org

Comparison between the IB Program and the Traditional Curriculum

IB programs	Traditional curriculum
Internationally standardized and accepted curriculum.	Curriculum is standardized through programs developed either independently by the school/school system, or borrowed from a recognized overseas program.
World-wide examinations twice yearly (May and November). All examinations, grading and marking are standardized world-wide.	Standardized periodic assessments using recognized tests for all students to ensure that return to the home country will not lack documentation for re-entry into the home country educational system.
The IB Diploma is issued by the IB Headquarters in Switzerland and is designed to provide admission to universities world-wide. The IB Diploma has absolute international credibility. Some international universities consider direct entry to second year in some faculties.	University entrance assessments have different names in each system or country, and each school has staff who specialize in making sure that student scores from different states are equivalent, allowing comparative university entrance scores to all universities.
Curriculum can be delivered in languages other than English in IB programs in limited circumstances.	Most schools in all sectors offer other language studies within their curriculum. Specific foreign languages are offered by individual schools according to individual school resourcing.

Important details

Uniforms

Most Japanese private primary and secondary schools expect their students to wear uniforms. These range from a smock worn only at school for preschool students, to a fashionable array of clothing and accessories that is an added expense for parents of high school students. Each uniform is unique to its school and can be a source of identity and pride.

Most schools have a uniform corner or online shop that sells new and second hand items.

Japanese private schools have uniforms, and public schools have a hat and other accessories for elementary school students. Uniforms for Japanese middle school and high school are common.

School lunches

School lunches are not included in tuition. Preschools and grade schools alike face pressures from food allergies, religious considerations, and health department regulations. Many offer catered lunch and cafeteria choices in addition to allowing students to bring their own lunch from home.

Lunch menus are often printed on school websites. The names and websites of the catering firms providing the meals and snacks are also posted. Some schools require students to pre-order their meal online for collection at lunch time.

Sports and extracurricular activities

Gym or physical education is part of the curriculum in all schools, and extracurricular attention is paid to lessons in music, dance, traditional Japanese sports and language support for interested students. Top schools are affiliated with other international schools in the region, and athletic competition between schools is keen. Be sure to ask questions on this topic. Private lessons are also available.

Term dates

The international school academic year usually runs from late August to mid-June. It is divided into two semesters, with two terms in each and vacation breaks for spring, summer and winter. The schedule may ignore local Japanese national holidays. Days for teacher development may also be included. Please check the school calendar on the school website.

The Japanese academic school year runs from April to March, with short winter and one-month summer breaks (with homework) and a week in between school years in March. Some international schools with a higher percentage of Japanese students follow the Japanese academic school year in part or in full.

Preschools generally have shorter sessions and shorter terms than grade schools, although this may be difficult for preschools attached to larger international schools. For such schools,, the school days are the same length, but vacations are longer.

International school holidays	Month	Approximate duration
Winter	December/January	Three weeks
Easter/Spring	March/April	Two weeks
Summer	June/August	Eight weeks

Making a choice

The decision about which school is suitable for your child will be partly governed by your comparisons of the alternatives previously outlined, but you should also take into consideration your residential location requirements.

Privacy protection laws prevent third parties from mediating direct contact between parents and schools. All schools

are happy to advise incoming prospective enrollment of required procedures and accessibility on their websites, by email or by telephone. Crown can arrange appointments for face-to-face visits, as well as advise on types of schools and solutions to difficulties.

Challenges

Grade year enrollment is the most common difficulty. There may be space for just one of two siblings, yet the parents want both children to attend the same school. The number of children at any given age will fluctuate, and class sizes have limits. Specific grade years will experience transient and temporary unavailability. Schools will usually allow prospective students to join a waiting list, which frequently but not always results in an opening being found.

Occasionally, grade-year birthday cut-off conflicts occur – the August cut-off date in Tokyo area international schools is not shared worldwide. Children born in September coming from a school system where the cut-off is December may be asked to repeat a grade in Tokyo.

Language support is another issue faced by many families. Generally, the schools are happy to clarify the level of language ability expected of students, and the types and availability of language support.

Less predictable is the school atmosphere and the child – some children do better in single-sex schools and others in co-educational schools; some do better in a teacher-focused classroom, while others do better with student-centered

learning. This is where the parents have the advantage of knowing their children best.

Allergies are a common challenge, and most schools will be able to answer your questions about food and other allergen exposures.

If your family suddenly faces financial challenges, some of the schools have scholarship programs, but these are generally not available from the start of the enrollment.

Most schools are very clear regarding actions to prevent and resolve problems of bullying. The school staff are professionals, and you should be able to consult them with any concerns.

Although grade-year availability may be the most common challenge, the most serious challenges are faced by the parents of students with serious physical or mental disabilities. Most schools will accept students with minor disabilities only. Currently, there are no facilities for students who are seriously disabled and we recommend that families explore tutoring or home-schooling solutions.



Enrollment process

Given current privacy protection laws in Japan, parents will be the key players in enrolling their children in school.

The first step is to make some tentative decisions on what kind of school will be best. Next, visit the targeted schools' websites. The schools will want to be in direct contact with the parents, usually via the Internet. A pre-assignment fact-finding mission – actually visiting the school – will be a valuable experience, but please make sure that the school will be open. Crown's School Search program will happily assist with making appointments, discussing the possibilities, and accompanying you on the visits to the schools (not necessarily attending interviews, however).

After the visit, and once you make the decision to enroll in a specific school, the requested documents and fees must be paid. These are details will be treated as confidential.

Because direct payment of school fees can have adverse tax effects, some schools have set up Corporate Contribution programs. The company will make a contribution to the school, and scholarships for the requisite number of children will be made available. Details of these plans are mentioned generally here as privacy-protection exists between the firms and the schools.

Please confirm the required documents on the school websites – requirements may vary. Generally required are:

- Your child's/children's passport ID page scan copy
- Information release to send to the current school,
- Copies of recent school reports
- Confidential report from current teacher(s)
- Confirmation of the bank transfer payment for registration fee



Appendix A

International and bilingual schools outside the Tokyo service area:

As this Guide demonstrates, Crown Tokyo delivers services not just in central Tokyo, but in an extended service area which includes Yokohama and parts of Chiba, Ibaraki, and Saitama.

Even if your firm's facilities are located outside this area, you do not necessarily have to split your family to ensure your children can study at an international school.

International and bilingual schools, listed approximately North to south:

School name	Website	Curriculum
Hokkaido International School, Sapporo	www.his.ac.jp/	K-12, founded 1958; day and boarding, co-educational
Horizon International	www.horizon.ac.jp/sendai/	K-6, Japanese curriculum in English
Tamagawa Academy	www.tamagawa.jp/academy/ib_e/curriculum.html	IB semi-immersion)
KatoGakuen Immersion program	bi-lingual.com/school/INFO/index_EN.html	
Nagoya International School	www.nagoyais.jp/nis/	IB, K-12
Kyoto International School	www.kyotointernationalschool.org/	K-9
Osaka International School	www.senri.ed.jp/site/	IB, K-12
St. Michaels International	www.smis.org/	Ages 3-11; British curriculum
Canadian Academy	www.canacad.ac.jp/	K-12, Founded 1913, takes boarders in addition to day students
Deutsche Schule Kobe	www.dskobe.org/	K-6
Hiroshima International School	www.hiroshima-is.ac.jp/	IB, K-12
Fukuoka International School	www.fis.ed.jp/	IB +, K-12



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