

Yokkaichi Municipal Elementary and Junior High
School Guidebook for Foreign Children and Their
Parents

がいこくじんじどうせいと ほごしや よっかいちしりつしょう・ちゅうがっこう
外国人児童生徒と保護者のための四日市市立小・中学校ガイドブック

Yokkaichi City Schools
Welcome You!

よっかいちし がっこう
ようこそ四日市市の学 校へ



Yokkaichi City Board of Education
よっかいちしきょういくいいんかい
四日市市教育委員会

Introduction

Welcome to Yokkaichi !

In order for your child to enjoy school life every day, it is necessary for him or her to understand Japanese school life.

We hope that the parents of foreign children entering elementary and junior high schools in Yokkaichi City will also deepen their understanding of Japanese school life.

For this purpose, we have prepared this booklet, "Welcome to Yokkaichi City Schools".

This booklet contains only some of the common aspects shared by elementary and junior high schools in Yokkaichi City.

There are some differences from school to school. Each school has its own unique characteristics, so if you would like to know more details, please contact the school.

If you want to know more details, please contact each school.

March 2019

Yokkaichi City Board of Education

1 For Parents

(1) Cooperation with Schools

It is important for schools and families to cooperate with each other in the education of children. To this end, we ask for your cooperation in the following matters.

① Going to school

Going to school on class visit days, etc. will help you deepen your understanding of children and schools.

② Reading documents from the school

Translated documents such as school newsletters and grade reports contain news and requests from the school.

③ Involvement with children

For children who do not fully understand Japanese, school life in Japan can increase stress. Please encourage your child by doing homework with him or her and listening carefully to what he or she has to say about what he or she is learning and school life.

④ Payment of school collections

Compulsory education is free of charge only for tuition and textbooks. Other expenses such as school lunches and educational materials necessary for school life are to be paid by the parents. Delayed payment of these fees will hinder the operation of the school, so please be sure to pay them in the prescribed manner.

【collection of money】

- The school plans to regularly collect monthly fees for teaching materials such as practice/workbooks (“drills”) and drawing paper, field trips and school trips, and school lunches (which account for about 70% of the total amount collected).
- The collection method is basically an automatic account transfer from a bank, post office, or other financial institution.

⑤ Cooperate in PTA activities

Please participate as much as possible in the activities (weeding, bazaars, etc.) of the PTA, an “association of parents and teachers” to support children’s school life. Please also pay the PTA membership fee that is used to support children’s school life.

(2) Do not let students miss school

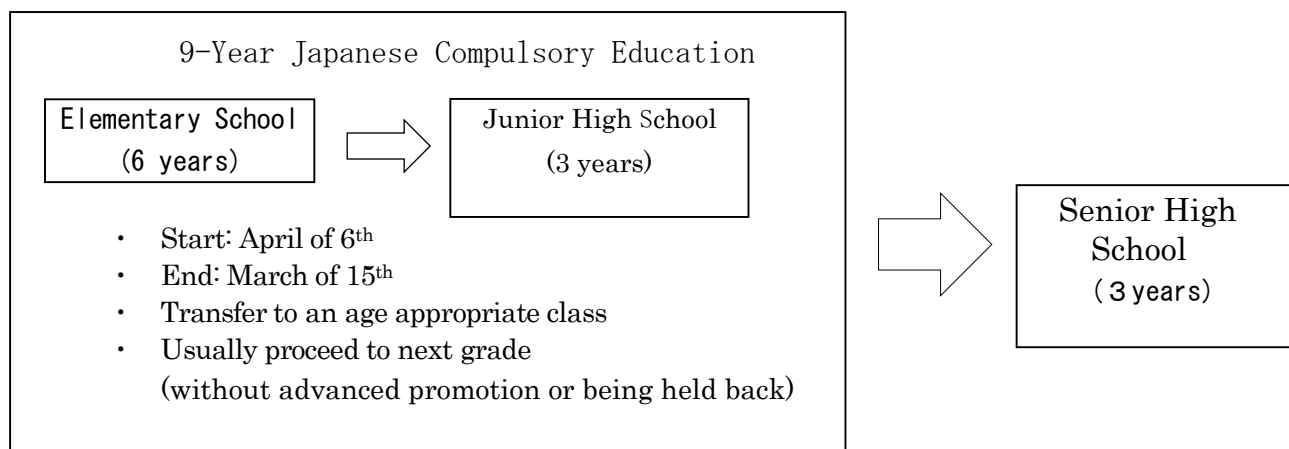
In order to continue learning, it is important that students attend school every day without fail. Unless there are special circumstances, such as illness, students are expected to attend school every day. If a student is absent due to illness or other reasons, he/she must notify the school by the time specified in each school's rules.

(3) We will not let them stop school

It is very difficult for children to learn in a school where they do not understand the language. However, if they stop learning at an age when they should be learning, they will not be able to go on to higher education or get a job. This can lead to a loss of hope for the future.

2 Japanese Schools

(1) The Educational System



- Lessons and textbooks are free
School provided lunch (elementary schools only) and costs for materials like drill books are not free ⇒ Payment needs to be made at your child's school.
- As lessons are taught according to Ministry of Education guidelines, lessons are the same from school to school.
- The number of students per class is less than 40. The classes are mixed-generated.
- Special education will be provided to students requiring particular needs.
- Student employment of all kinds is prohibited.

(2) Advancing to higher education

- More than 95% of students who graduate from junior high school in Japan go on to senior high school.
- In order to take the entrance examination for high school, students must be at least 15 years old and must have graduated (or be recognized as having academic ability equivalent to graduation) from a junior high school in Japan or a foreign country.
- In order to pass the entrance examination of the high school of your choice, you need to acquire the necessary academic skills.
- Some high schools charge more than 300,000 yen per year for tuition, textbooks, uniforms, etc.

- Graduation from high school allows students to increase their employment opportunities and to take entrance exams to universities, junior colleges, and other schools.
- Every year in the fall, a guidance event for higher education is held in the city, so please attend this event and ask for more details.

3 About Elementary and Junior High Schools in Yokkaichi

(1) School Zones

There are 37 public elementary schools and 22 public junior high schools in Yokkaichi. Please note that when a student transfers to a school, they must do so according to the particular area in which they live.

(2) School Assimilation

- Yokkaichi City has adaptation counselors who can speak Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, and other languages. The adaptation counselors provide support for Japanese language instruction and guidance in adjusting to school life.
- When a student who has not fully mastered the Japanese language transfers to a new school, an adjustment instructor may be dispatched depending on the situation of the student and the school.

(3) Selected schools for Non-Japanese Students

- This is a school that accepts non-Japanese students with a low level of Japanese language ability.
- There is a Japanese Language Class at such selected schools that provides extra assistance in the Japanese language for smooth adaptation to the school.
- The selected schools in Yokkaichi are: Sasagawa Elementary, Chuo Elementary School, Nishisasagawa Junior High, and Chubu Junior High School
- Teachers and instructors who can speak Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, and other languages will provide the instruction at these selected schools.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for the safety of their children to and from the base school. If transportation to and from school is necessary, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost.
- Once the student is deemed to have mastered the Japanese language, he/she will return to the school of the school district in which he/she resides after the completion of the school year.

(4) Initial Adaptation Guidance Class “Izumi”

- This classroom is designed to provide intensive initial Japanese language instruction and guidance in adapting to school life for foreign students who have difficulty learning Japanese. It is located in Chubu Junior High School.
- Students will be treated as commuting from their current school.
- The period of attendance is approximately three months, and students return to their school after a maximum of six months.

4 School Life

(1) Major School Events

School in Japan begins in April and ends in March. In Yokkaichi, the school year is divided into three trimesters. The main events of each term are as follows:

1st Semester April ↓ July	Opening ceremony	Ceremony to start the 1st semester
	Entrance Ceremony	Ceremony to welcome and celebrate 1st grade students. The students and parents usually wear formal clothes.
	Physical check-up	Check of body height, weight, eyesight, seated height, and hearing. NOTE: May be scheduled up to 3 times a year.
	Health checks	Doctor performed health check. This includes a check of internal, dental, vision, hearing, and heart conditions. Further tests: Urine; for tuberculosis
	Parents' day	To establish mutual understanding between school and family. Parents observe school life and meet with the class teacher.
	Home visit	The class teacher visits the student's home to update the family on school life.
	Excursion	Students enjoy nature, history and culture by visiting parks and/or places of natural beauty and of historical interest. Lunch is the responsibility of the student and their family.
	School excursion	The sixth grade elementary school students will have a school trip of two days and one night in the first or second trimester. Junior high school 3rd graders have a 3-day/2-night school trip in the first trimester.
	Evacuation drill	Students will be trained how to handle natural emergencies such as earthquakes and fires.
	Advisory Meeting; Delivery of report card	Parent-teacher meeting to discuss the student's progress over the course of the 1st semester.
Closing Ceremony	Ceremony to close the 1st semester.	

Summer holiday	Extended vacation period from the 21 st of July to the 31 st of August. Summer school will be scheduled on an as-needed basis. School club activities will be held in junior high school during this time.
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2nd Semester September ↓ December	Opening Ceremony	Ceremony to open the 2nd semester.
	Athletic Meeting (sports festival)	Events include racing competitions, relays, Tamaire (a Japanese basketball game), dancing and cheerleading. At some schools, there are games in which parents can take part. Students and families can enjoy lunch together on the school grounds.
	nature class	Outdoor activities such as mountain climbing, orienteering, and cooking rice in a pot deepen students' personal relationships while familiarizing them with nature. Both elementary and junior high school students are required to stay overnight.
	Field Trip	Students visit important points of culture, economy, industry, and politics related to their social studies lessons.
	Cultural Festival	An opportunity for students to showcase their talents. Events include chorus competitions, theatrical performances and exhibition booths (Junior high school only)
	Advisory Meeting & Delivery of Report Card	Classroom teachers will inform parents about their children's studies and school life in the second semester, and exchange information about their children's activities at home.
	Closing Ceremony	Ceremony to close the 2nd semester

Winter Break	Students have a 2-week holiday to enjoy the year-end and New Year's holiday with family. The period is from December 24th to January 7th. School club activities will be held in junior high school during this time.
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3rd Semester January ↓ March	Opening Ceremony	Ceremony to open the 3rd semester
	Graduation Ceremony	Students at each school celebrate the graduation of seniors. Students and parents usually wear formal clothes.
	Closing Ceremony	This is the final event of the school year.

(2) School life

① Daily routine

- The school schedule changes depending on the day of the week and time of the year. Typically, however, students will have about 4 to 6 lessons a day and a lunch break.
- The length of 1 lesson is usually 45 minutes at elementary school and 50 minutes at junior high school. A break is scheduled between lessons.
- In junior high school, club activities are scheduled after regular school hours.

Sample Schedule: *Elementary School*

8:35	8:45		12:25	13:20	13:40		15:15	15:25
Morning Meeting	1st to 4th Period		Lunch	Cleaning	5th and 6th Period		Afternoon Meeting	

Sample Schedule: *Junior High School*

8:35		9:00		12:50	13:30		15:25	15:40	15:55	*
Morning Meeting and Reading	1st to 4th Period		Lunch	5th to 6th Period		Cleaning	Afternoon Meeting		Club Activity	

* Club activities are held from 16:30 to 18:00.
Finishing times depend on the season.

② Morning and Afternoon meeting

- Students have a meeting in the morning and afternoon. These meetings last for approximately 10 minutes every day.
- During morning meetings, a teacher or instructor will talk with students and check on everyone's general condition.
- During the afternoon meeting, the teacher will review the main points of the day, the next day's schedule, and provide explanations on particular points. Students will also organize their personal belongings in preparation to return home.

③ Lessons

- There are two categories of study.
 - 1.) Formal: national language, arithmetic, mathematics, social studies and natural science
 - 2.) Informal: morality, class activities, and general study.
- Instruction is provided mainly by the class teacher in elementary school and a subject-based teacher in junior high school.

【 Coursework 】

【National language】

The study of listening, speaking, writing, and understanding of Japanese sentences. Students also practice penmanship and creative writing.

In some schools, students are allowed to read and check out books from the library.

【Arithmetic, Mathematics】

Arithmetic applies to elementary school and mathematics to junior high school. Students study numbers versus calculation, quantity versus measurement, and graphics versus equations.

The teacher will inform students and parents in advance of the need for special materials such as compasses and protractors.

【Life】

Students in the 1st and 2nd grade of elementary school take Life-Environmental Studies.

They study the relationship among themselves, society, and nature through their activities and experiences.

【Social studies】

Students study social studies from the 3rd grade of elementary school.

They investigate current social issues and study the geography and history of Japan and the world. Students visit particular sites to investigate issues in greater detail.

From junior high school, students begin their study of economics and politics.

【Science】

The science course begins in the 3rd grade of elementary school.

Students observe plants, animals, the sun, moon and stars. They begin to experiment with air, water, light, sound, electricity and melting points. Students have some opportunities to study not only in the classroom but also in the laboratory and the outdoors such as in a rice field or park.

【Music】

Students practice how to sing and listen to various kinds of music and play instruments such as the harmonica, key board and recorder.

At times, students will study the basics of music such as how to read musical notation. There are also chances to purchase musical instruments.

【Drawing & Crafts / Art】

We apply the word drawing & Crafts to elementary school and Art to junior high school.

Students study drawing, carving, designing, and enjoying art using everyday materials.

Basic supplies a student will have to prepare include: glue, paint and scissors. The teacher will inform students in advance of the need to prepare additional materials (e.g. : pet bottles, empty boxes).

【Home Economics & Technology-Home Economics】

There are lessons in Home Economics during the 5th and 6th grades of elementary school. Students study how to cook and make various accessories using sewing machines and sets. Through such activities, students get a basic understanding about what it takes to manage one' s home life.

Technology & Home Economics is used for junior high school. At this point, students study how to use the computer and produce goods using wood or metal in a workshop. In the home economics section, they study not only cooking and clothing techniques, but also basic child care.

【Physical Education (P. E.) / Health Care & Physical Education (P. E.) 】

Students learn about exercise in a gymnasium or training hall (dojo). In the summer, they take swimming lessons. Gym clothes, a red and white hat (elementary school only) and swimming wear with swimming hat are required.

Students in the 3rd to 6th grade of elementary school study how to care for a growing body and about disease prevention. The title Health Care & Physical Exercise (P. E.) is used for junior high school. The Health Care class involves students studying the growth of the human body and first-aid treatment.

【English】

Students start to study how to write the alphabet and make basic sentences. Students are given the opportunity to listen to and speak with native English instructors (e.g: from the United States).

【Morality】

Students study public morality through their daily life. It is important for them to study how to be good citizens and decide right from wrong.

【Lesson for General Study】

Based on their knowledge gained from school, students start to investigate issues in their life and answer important questions. Such kinds of investigations help form the student's future life.

Junior high school students also have the chance to experience OJT (On the Job Training). It provides an important reference for their life path.

【Homeroom Activity】

Students have meetings to solve class issues or to plan interesting events. They study matters concerning their future path and occupations.

④ School Lunch

- In all elementary schools, students eat lunch with their classmates and teachers in their classrooms or lunchrooms after fourth period class.
- Before eating, students wash their hands with soap and wipe them with a clean handkerchief.
- Students place a clean napkin on the table where lunch is served each day.
- Often, children are put on duty to prepare and clean up after school lunches.

Those on duty should wear masks, aprons, and hats. Students should bring masks from home and they should be used only by them. On weekends, the child on duty brings home the apron and hat, washes and irons them, and returns them to school at the start of the next week.

- All middle schools offer a choice of delivered lunches (with milk) or lunches brought from home. You may also order milk only.

⑤ Cleaning

Children clean up after themselves. Working in groups, they sweep classrooms, hallways, stairs, and toilets with brooms and wipe floors and desks with dust cloths.

⑥ Club activities

- In junior high school, students participate in club activities to further develop their strengths and pursue their interests.
- Club activities are held after school, before school starts in the morning, and on holidays, depending on the school and club.

【Examples of club activities】

Baseball, soccer, basketball, tennis, volleyball, etc.

Chorus, brass band, art, computer, etc.

⑦ Rules of daily life

We ask for your cooperation in understanding the differences in customs between Japan and other countries.

【Examples of rules for daily life】

- No jewelry, lipstick, nail polish, dyed hair, etc. are allowed.
- In junior high school, students are required to wear the prescribed uniform.
- Students are not allowed to bring snacks, juice, etc. to school.

etc.

(3) Commuting to school

① Elementary School

At most elementary schools, students attend school in groups with friends from nearby schools. Please be punctual and observe the time and place of assembly.

If you will be absent due to illness or other reasons, please notify your homeroom teacher through your schoolmates by writing in your contact book.

② Junior High School

There is no commuter group at the junior high school.

If the school is far from your home, you may be allowed to ride your bicycle to school.

(4) School supplies

Students are required to prepare school supplies other than textbooks at home.

Please follow the instructions given by the school.

(5) Japan Sports Promotion Center Disaster Mutual Aid System

- This system provides benefits for necessary medical expenses in the event of an injury to a child (including foreign nationals) under school supervision.
- Benefits are paid by paying a certain amount of contribution (550 yen per year), which is paid later depending on the extent of the injury. However, benefits are only provided when the total medical expenses for treatment are 5,000 yen or more. (If the guardian is covered by health insurance, benefits will be paid when medical expenses totaling 1,500 yen or more are incurred.)

(6) Schooling Assistance System

- Yokkaichi City offers a "Schooling Assistance Program" to help families who have difficulty sending their children to school for financial reasons and can pay part of the school expenses required for the nine years of compulsory education.
- To apply, please contact the school, the School Education Division of the Board of Education, or a local welfare commissioner or child welfare volunteer.

(7) Emergency dismissal from school

In the event of a storm warning, the school will be dismissed on an emergency basis or temporarily closed. Please follow the instructions from the school.

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