



This newsletter is published by Naka Ward in English and Chinese to provide foreign nationals with useful information on topics such as municipal administration, social programs and rules for everyday living in the community.

Preparing to Attend a Japanese School

Leaving your home country to attend a school in a foreign country is a major undertaking. If you are considering sending your child to a Japanese school, it is important that both you and your child understand the circumstances of moving up the education ladder in Japan. This issue presents information about preparing to attend a Japanese high school as well as basic information you should keep in mind about entering or transferring to a public elementary or junior high school in Yokohama.

Getting Ready for High School Entrance Exams

High school in Japan is not compulsory and requires passing an entrance examination.

We asked one of the international class teachers at Yokohama's Minato Junior High School about the situation for children who have overseas ties.



Ms. Kaneko, a guidance teacher for the international class

Entrance Exams for Students in International Classes

One in four Minato Junior High School students has connections to a foreign country. China, for example, also has high school examinations, which students naturally study for, with entrance determined by a clearly defined passing score. On the other hand, Japanese high schools have fixed intakes with the passing score adjusted accordingly. Students sometimes ask me, "What score do I need?" But it depends on the admission round and other factors, so it takes times to understand this system.

Overcoming the Language Barrier

Students in the international class also attend Naka International Lounge after school on specific days for extra help with their studies. Even when an international student can handle mathematics and English with limited Japanese, other subjects such as social studies and Japanese require deeper understanding of the Japanese language: some students manage by visually memorizing Japanese kanji characters without knowing their reading—for example, the names of historical figures. Some students may find it difficult to pass the exam for their preferred school. In some cases, students end up studying at their second-choice school then retake the examination for their preferred school the following year. We hope students will study well so they can be satisfied with the results of their hard work no matter what school they end up attending.



Advice from Teachers

I try to respect the student's feelings when I am giving guidance on their next educational step, but as they make their decisions, I hope they will also include post-high school plans. Do they really want to go to a Japanese university or would a vocational school be better? Their answer changes the choice of subjects studied in high school. Also, many parents or guardians with limited Japanese often do not attend school tours or briefing sessions, but I hope they will proactively take action in this regard.

1 Types of High Schools

There are three types of styles of high school: full-time, correspondence and part-time. Most commonly, students attend school full-time during the day, but some schools also have a correspondence system in which students mainly study at home. Part-time high school, which is held at fixed times (most often in the evening) is for people who have difficulty attending full-time. Part-time programs are also attended by those who find it difficult to attend school during the day.

Students also study according to their selected stream within the school. There are general courses, specialized courses (agricultural, engineering, etc.), as well as integrated courses (electives) in various subjects to meet students' varied interests.

It is possible to apply for both public and private high schools at the same time.

2 Kanagawa Prefecture Public High School Enrollment Guidebook

This is an essential reference that provides basic information on examination schedules, qualifications to apply, etc. Available in 10 languages.



3 Educational Support Groups

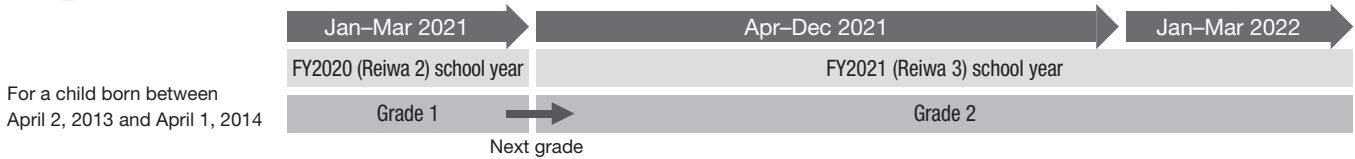
ME-net is an educational support group for children with overseas ties. ME-net provides a popular guidance program for entering high school. Although this year's programs have been cancelled due to Covid-19, multilingual information on high school entrance examinations is available on the ME-net website. <http://me-net.or.jp/guidance/> NPO Multicultural Education Network, Kanagawa (ME-net) office
TEL: 045-896-0015 (Mon/Wed/Fri, 10 a.m.– 5 p.m.)



Before Entering a Yokohama Public Elementary and Junior High Schools

Many foreign nationals are not sure about Japan's school system or don't know where to begin their information search. Please check whether or not you know the information below.

Grade The Japanese school year begins in April. What grade will my child be?



Children born from April 2 through April 1 of the next year are placed in the same grade, so your child may be in a different grade compared to your own country. In principle, repeating a grade is not allowed, but a parent/guardian who wishes to place their child in a lower grade because of Japanese abilities should consult with the school principal. Skipping grades is also not possible during the nine years of compulsory education during elementary and junior high school.

School Districts What about school districts?

The school your child attends is decided according to the school district you live in. Attending another public school in a different school district may be allowed when the child's individual situation warrants it. So if your child would like to attend an out-of-district school, consult with both the district school and the school you hope to enroll your child at. Note that it is difficult to change schools once enrolled, so it is important to prepare ahead of time—that is, before entering elementary school or before starting junior high school.

Information Welcome to the Yokohama School

This comprehensive guidebook has a wealth of information about schools in Yokohama, from before enrollment to during enrollment. The information is available in eight languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese and Tagalog. Download the guide from the City of Yokohama website.

- Procedures for transferring
- Volunteer support in your native language
- After-school activities (elementary school), etc.



Language Support Himawari, a facility for base support of the Japanese language

When a child enrolled at a Yokohama public elementary or junior high school is an overseas returnee or newly arrived in Japan and requires Japanese language instruction, Himawari provides intensive instruction three times a week over a period of four weeks. Students receive not only basic language instruction, but also guidance on school life and instruction focused on the Japanese used in school instruction. In the school guidance program, parents/guardians also receive explanations on admission procedures and support for completing the related documents.

To attend Himawari classes...
Please consult with the school your child attends or is planning to attend.



Financial Support

Elementary School, Junior High School

There are no school entrance fees, tuition fees and textbook fees for public elementary and junior schools since they are part of Japan's compulsory education system. However, parents/guardians are responsible for paying school lunch fees and school excursion fees, which will differ slightly from school to school. If you are having difficulty paying these fees, financial support programs are available. Application for such support is made through your child's school, so please consult directly with them.

High School

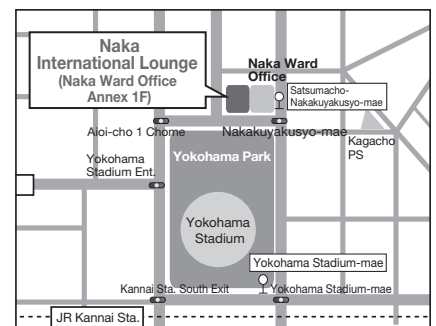
All high schools have entrance fees, tuition fees and entrance exam fees, whether the school is public or private. For reduction of/exemption from an examination fee, please consult with the office of the applicable high school at an early date. For educational expenses, there are a number of support programs such as the 横浜市高等学校奨学生 (Yokohama City high school scholarship) program, 神奈川県高校生等奨学給付金 (Kanagawa Prefecture High School Supplemental Scholarship Fund) and 神奈川県高等学校奨学金 (Kanagawa High School Financial Aid) and 高等学校等就学支援金 (High School Tuition Support Fund), which do not require repayment of tuition fees. Each program has its own conditions, so please inquire with the school for details. There is also a subsidy program for entrance fees and tuition fees for Kanagawa residents who attend a private high school within Kanagawa Prefecture (this subsidy does not have to be repaid). Please contact each private school for details.

Naka International Lounge Japanese Classes

Enjoy learning practical Japanese for everyday life.

- Tue/Thu from November 17 to March 18 (30 classes, includes winter break), 10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.
- Fee: 6,000 yen
- Eligible persons: Japanese beginners living or working in Naka Ward who are at least 16 years old
- Style: Small group classes of about four students
(Because of Covid-19, classes may be held online. In such cases, Zoom will be used.)
- To apply: Please phone or visit the lounge to arrange an interview to determine your group
- Lounge hours: 10 a.m.–5 p.m. (8 p.m. on Tue/Sat). Closed the third Sunday of each month.

<Naka International Lounge TEL: 045-210-0667>



Have you returned your National Census form? Submission deadline: October 7th (Wed)

The National Census collects the data of everyone living in Japan. You can reply to the census online in Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish and Portuguese.

Please call Navi Dial on 0570-07-2020 or our IP phone number 03-6636-9607 if you have any questions. (Daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. until October 31. The above languages are supported.)

Please note that the national census will not ask you for your bank details, PIN number or demand payment.

<Somu (General Affairs) Division, Naka Ward Office, TEL: 045-224-8116>

Enrolling your child in day care from April 2021

A day care center is a facility that takes care of children when their parents are working or sick, etc. and can't look after them at home during the day. Children can be enrolled from 57 days old to preschool, but the age of enrolled children may differ depending on the center or kindergarten.

▶ Applications to enter day care from April 2021

Applications by mail: October 12 (Mon) to November 9 (Mon)

* It must be postmarked by November 9.

If you applied for day care in Reiwa Year 2 (FY2020) but were not accepted, you should reapply for Reiwa Year 3 (FY2021).

<Kodomo Katei Shien (Children and Families Support) Division, Naka Ward Office, TEL: 045-224-8172>

Vaccinations for seniors before the start of flu season

Influenza can be serious for seniors and the immunocompromised, so vaccination gives security of mind. You can be vaccinated at cooperating Yokohama City medical institutions (***) for 2,300 yen.

Eligible: Persons aged 65 and above

Period: Until December 31 (Thu)

* Please bring something to verify your age, name, and address, such as a residence card.

** Please visit Naka International Lounge (1F Naka Ward Office Annex, TEL: 045-210-0667) to find out which cooperating medical institutions provide services in English/Chinese.

<Fukushi Hoken (Health and Welfare) Division, Naka Ward Office, TEL: 045-224-8332>

Rubella antibody test and vaccination

Rubella is highly infectious. If a pregnant woman is infected, she can pass it on to her unborn child who may develop congenital rubella syndrome. Eligible persons should take this opportunity to get vaccinated, so they don't infect any close friends or family. Please contact the Yokohama Vaccination Call Center for details. TEL: 045-330-8561/FAX: 045-664-7296

Eligible persons: Men born between April 2, 1962 and April 1, 1979

Fee: Free

Period: Until March 31, 2022

<Fukushi Hoken (Health and Welfare) Division, Naka Ward Office, TEL: 045-224-8332>

Readers' Voices

Here are recent opinions from some of our readers

I was worried about whether I should send my children to a Japanese school when they can't speak Japanese. I want to know more about the schools.

The articles about Japanese events stick out in my mind. The local information is very useful.



Calling on our readers!

Naka Ward Town News would like to know your views on the information you'd like us to publish, and which aspects of Japanese life have recently caught your eye.

Please send ① comments with your ② name, ③ contact info (phone number or email address) and ④ country of origin to na-koho@city.yokohama.jp, Kusei Suishin (Ward Admin Promotion) Division, Naka Ward Office.



- Comments received may be summarized for publication due to space constraints.
- The sender's initials and country of origin will be shown along with the comment.
- Personal information received will not be used for purposes other than those stated.

<Kusei Suishin (Ward Admin Promotion) Division, Naka Ward Office, TEL: 045-224-8123>

International Service Staff

Naka Ward Office, Counter 23 (2nd floor)
English 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

International Service Staff provide assistance with matters such as guidance on Naka Ward Office activities, interpretation at various ward office counters and support for filling out certificate applications. Stop by if you would like assistance.

Help Me Know

Q&A



Do high schools have special admission exams for foreigners?

⇒ Kanagawa's public high schools have a special admission system for selecting entrants called Zaikenwaku (Special Admission for Prefectural Foreign Residents). Foreign nationals or persons who were granted Japanese nationality within 3 years as of February 1 in the year they sit the exam, and who have lived in Japan for 3 years or less, can use this system.



▶ How are candidates assessed?

There is an academic ability test and interview. The academic test includes Japanese, English, and Maths with furigana text above the kanji in the questions.



▶ Which schools accept admissions within the prefecture?

In FY2021, there are recruitment fairs in Yokohama City at the Kanagawa prefectural schools of Tsurumi Sogo High School (Tsurumi Ward) and Yokohama Seiryu High School (Minami Ward), and at the municipal schools of Minato Sogo High School (Naka Ward) and Yokohama Commercial High School (Minami Ward).

▶ Are there any other special ways to sit the exams?

Persons who have immigrated to Japan from overseas within 6 years as of February 1 in the year they sit the exam can apply for a special exam method to public high schools that accept general admissions. If they submit a form beforehand, they can take the exam with furigana text, get more time for the academic ability test and be interviewed in simple Japanese.

For further details you can refer to the "Public High School Enrollment Guidebook" introduced on page one. Interested persons should gather information early and consult with the school's teachers.



Go for a Visit

Be soothed by the fall colors

at Naka Ward's recommended autumn viewing spots



1 Yamashita Koen-dori St.

The ginkgo trees lining Yamashita Koen-dori St., chosen as one of Japan's top 100 streets, turn an intense yellow in Fall. You can also enjoy the adjacent Yamashita Park's harbor scenery.

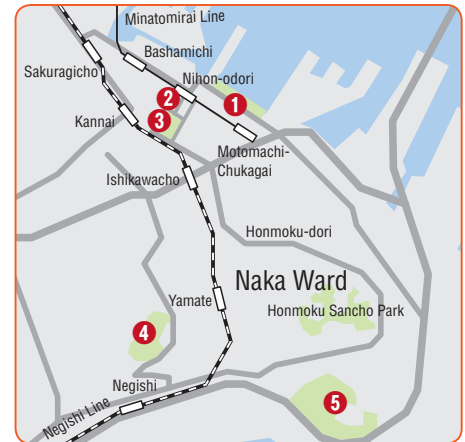


The heat of summer has at last given way to autumn's cool air. So why not experience the clear air, sounds of insects and town's scenery in the Fall? The best time to see the leaves' colors in Naka Ward's parks and streets is from around November. Enjoy the changing season while taking thorough Covid-19 infection precautions.



2 Nihon Odori

The historic buildings and cafes lining Nihon Odori, and the ginkgo trees' color add to the street's atmosphere.



3 Yokohama Park

Yokohama Park is famous for its spring tulips, but its Japanese garden is also popular as a place to admire the maple tree colors.



4 Negishi Forest Park

Formerly a horse racing track, the many trees and shrubs around Yokohama Negishi Forest Park's sloping lawns turn a deep autumn color.



5 Sankeien Garden

You can enjoy the vivid red and yellow autumn colors and beautiful Japanese architecture in Sankeien's Japanese garden, which is richly endowed with the nature of all four seasons. (Admission fee charged, opening hours 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



Thoughts of a Foreign Resident Life and Culture in Japan



The relationship between the "guardian" and the school



I think foreign parents must get anxious when their children are old enough to go to nursery, kindergarten, or school. So, I would like to talk about the relationship between the school and the parent or guardian.

If their children go to a nursery before starting elementary school (usually the case where both parents work), parents don't often get to attend nursery events. In kindergarten, however, there are lots of events for them to attend, so they can watch as their children develop. For example, kindergartens hold various open days, such as sports days, excursions, and festivals.

Compared to kindergarten, parents' involvement becomes less when their children enter elementary school, but the school still holds some events where parents can visit, such as class open days or sports days.

In addition, elementary schools have PTAs (Parent and Teacher Associations) where parents and teachers work together towards the children's sound development. There are various kinds of PTA depending on each school, and they include things like safety, environment, public information, and academic year committees.

Unfortunately, parents from overseas may not be used to involvement in such an array of activities. For example, in Chinese schools, generally only the children tend to participate, and parent-teacher's meetings are held only twice a year.

Although you may find the relationship with your children's school in Japan hard going, personally I have very precious memories of how cute my children were as I watched them develop from kindergarten through elementary school.

(Naka International Lounge Chinese Language Staff)

Good to Know! About Japanese Culture

An introduction to seasonal events and Japanese culture in terms of food, clothing and housing.

"Toji" (Winter Solstice)

The *Toji* (winter solstice) is the shortest day and the longest night of the year. On this day in Japan, people eat pumpkins and take baths with yuzu citrus peel to wish for good health.

The pumpkin is a precious winter vegetable as it is full of nutrients and can be stored for a long time. Baths with yuzu citrus peel help promote blood circulation and warm the body.

This year's *Toji* (winter solstice) is on December 21. Let's get through the cold winter while enjoying the season's events.



We are always looking for locations to distribute *Naka Ward Town News*. If you have many foreign visitors to your shop, clinic, organization, etc. and would like to make this newsletter available to them, please contact us at 045-224-8123 to arrange delivery. The next issue will be published in January.