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Education

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We aim to develop global leaders capable of leading positive changes in the world. With support from our partners, we encourage an entrepreneurial spirit, innovation and social responsibility.

—Ken Sell,
head of school



Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS)

By applying a Blended Learning approach to the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, A-JIS adds value to the traditions of a liberal education. A-JIS is all about intellectual rigor and building student self-efficacy.

+81-3-6904-3102
inquiry@aobajapan.jp
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Synthesizing the best practices from Japanese and global curriculums, CHIST prepares our students for their academic futures.

—Hirokazu Osako
head of school



Chiyoda International School Tokyo

Under the guidance of Musashino University, CHIST opened its elementary school in April 2018. The middle and high school opened in April 2019 and soon after became a candidate school for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years, Middle Years, and Diploma Programmes.

+81-3-5530-740
chist@musashino-u.ac.jp
www.chist.jp

At Gymboree, we give children the opportunity to discover their talents in a fun environment. Our Mommy & Me and drop-off programs encourage children to think and explore on their own.

—Nicole Yamada,
vice president



Gymboree Play & Music Japan (Kids Learning Network Company)

Gymboree was founded in 1976 by Joan Barnes, a mom from California.

We currently have more than 750 locations in over 50 countries, and our brand is respected by families around the world.

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We belong to this community. Our students and teachers live together on the same campus. Thanks to this, children are allowed and encouraged to grow in all sorts of ways—in their own ways.

—Michael Rob Gray,
school adviser



Jinseki International School

Located in the beautiful surroundings of Hiroshima Prefecture's Jinseki Kogen, Jinseki International School offers a unique learning environment—Japan's first European-style boarding school for grades 1–6.

Opening April 2020

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Laurus International School of Science gives students the opportunity to think scientifically and to acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Our mission is to create future innovators to change the world for the better.

—Mami Hioki,
head of school



Laurus International School of Science

Laurus International School of Science

Laurus International School of Science began as an English language school in 2001. Since then, we have expanded to include six established preschools and kindergartens in the Tokyo–Kanagawa area, and in 2016 opened the Laurus International School of Science primary school.

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At Summerhill, we see children as strong, capable, and resilient—rich with wonder and knowledge.

—Anita Sutton,
director



Summerhill International School

Summerhill is a learning environment filled with beauty and wonder that awakens the imagination, invites interaction. Through play and inquiry-based learning, Summerhill develops the attributes children need to become global citizens.

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EARLY ADVANTAGE

Aoba-Japan International School
prepares young learners for bright futures

The importance of kindergarten classes can't be emphasized strongly enough: children's experiences at this stage of school can shape the rest of their educational careers. A leader in early education, Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS) offers learning opportunities that help young minds blossom.

NATURAL LEARNING

Explaining A-JIS's kindergarten curriculum, kindergarten three (K3) teacher Teresa Velez said that children are encouraged to learn in a natural way, motivated by their own curiosity. "We carry four themes throughout the entire year. These are: who we are; how we express ourselves; where we are in place and time; and how the world works. We teach children to inquire and to ask questions. It's not spoon-feeding; it's more experience-based. I think Aoba is a good place for them to learn because of this." Learning goals at the school are achieved using a variety of approaches—literacy, numeracy and other skills are introduced at learning centers located within classrooms.

Kindergarten classes are grounded in inquiry-based lessons, where the teacher encourages the students to learn through questions. Talking about some recent lessons, Velez explained how play-based learning was used to develop understanding. "The children discovered how to make toys out of recycled materials. Another example was when we were playing rock-paper-scissors. Instead of using their hands, the children used their bodies, so they were jumping around. That was really fun."

The kindergarten children at A-JIS spend plenty of time outside, and sessions to develop motor skills take place every morning. The children go outside to play, so they feel alert

and awake before they enter the classroom. "Even if it rains, even if it's snowing, we still go outside," Velez said.

FAMILY FRIENDLY

In addition to providing ample opportunities for kindergarten-aged children to explore, gain knowledge, and express themselves, A-JIS prides itself on offering services that give parents peace of mind. "One of the unique things we offer is our afterschool program," Velez explained. The afterschool program gives children whose parents are working, or who are unable to pick them up, a place to stay and enjoy themselves.

Velez also spoke about an app called Seesaw that the kindergarten teachers can use to keep parents informed about their child's activities throughout the day. "Whatever activity that we have at school, we update it on Seesaw so parents will know what we are doing. It's really easy for them to access as well, because they can use it on their phones. We can send videos, pictures, and updates on what we are doing. It is very effective."

BUILDING FUTURES

The kindergarten teachers at A-JIS form strong bonds with their classes every year. As A-JIS teaches children from kindergarten to high school, teachers are able to watch children grow into globally minded learners. Velez explained that the most important part of kindergarten is setting the stage for children's development. "I think children should be enjoying their stay in kindergarten, so they can feel confident pursuing their studies in grade school. We prepare the children with life skills that they will need wherever they go—how to be independent and how to be global citizens." ■



Aoba-Japan International School

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Meguro campus: (Age: 1.5–6 years old)
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CREATIVE GROWTH

Summerhill International School encourages curiosity and imagination in young learners

The early years are crucial in a child's education. Inspiring a love of learning at this age creates a foundation for a great academic future. One place where curiosity is nurtured in an internationally minded environment is Summerhill International School. Known for its high-quality learning approaches, Summerhill, which is based in Azabu-juban, teaches children from 15 months to five years old. Stressing the importance of children's formative years, Anita Sutton, director of Summerhill, spoke about how the school guides children towards a lifetime of learning.

GLOBAL MINDS

Summerhill focuses on basic skills in preparation for International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. Sutton explained: "In our junior infants' classes, we have a big focus on physical development, which is in line with international research as an area that is lacking in children under the age of three. To be able to read and write for extended periods of time, children need time to develop their fine motor and gross motor skills, and to be a part of environments that encourage their curiosity."

Summerhill children and their parents can expect the same type of challenging approaches to learning that would be offered in other countries. As Sutton said: "We do not make up a pretend curriculum. We understand developmentally appropriate practices in the early years and ensure that our children have the best start to meaningful development in their early years—the most formative years of their life." At the school, children ranging in age from 15 months to three years do not receive an official IB accreditation. However, the learning methods are inspired by IB and Reggio techniques, which are practiced around the world and encourage a collaborative approach. "The teachers are not teachers—they are seen as facilitators in the children's learning," Sutton explained.

STEAM

Children have a natural disposition towards science, which they express through their sense of curiosity and creativity. Summerhill has incorporated science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) approaches into all of their classes. As Sutton pointed out: "STEAM is just as relevant in the junior infant classes as it is in the older classes. Following natural research, it makes sense to implement these concepts in the younger years. STEAM, however, is not delivered in set-out 'lessons.' Our approach to learn-



ing and exploration of STEAM concepts is through play, throughout the day.

"Mixing colors is a scientific approach to experimentation, because children are watching and trying to process what is happening. They don't have to know what the names of the colors are, they just know that something happens when you mix two chemicals together. It is science—we just do it in a childlike way that is safe and that they're able to understand."

Sutton strongly believes in the importance of looking at young children's education with a long view in mind: "Childhood is not a race. It is a small window to explore the world in wonder, at your own pace." Summerhill, which encourages children to "learn how to learn" and grow into globally minded individuals, is a school that takes this spirit to heart with every student. ■

Summerhill International School

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