

Answers to the Questions about Schools in China

1. At what age do children start primary school? How long is primary education?

Children start reception at the age of 6.

Primary is 6 years (7 years if reception is included) But in some areas it might be one year less.

2. At what age children start secondary school? How long is secondary education?

They start school at the age 12/13. Secondary education is 6 years with 3 years of Junior high and 3 years of senior high. Again, it might be one year less for senior high in some cities.

3. How many hours does a primary/secondary school student usually spend in school?

If depends on their year and on the school. Usually primary children start school from 8.30 to 3.30/4.00. Secondary school students stay longer. It tends to be the higher the year, the longer time they stay in school.

4. Is it true that both primary and secondary school student do physical exercises in school every day?

Yes. Different schools have it in different time of the day.

5. Secondary school students hardly have any time playing basketball, table tennis etc. in school, is it true?

No, it is not true. Many students stay behind school to do all sorts of activities incl. sports, dance, singing etc. However, they will have deduct the time on it or even stop it to give way to the study when they need to prepare for the big exams particularly the last year of Junior high and senior high.

6. What foreign language do Chinese students learn and how many hours they spend time on it?

English. In secondary schools, English is a core subject alongside Chinese, Maths and Science and students usually have one lesson every day. Many primary schools are now teaching English on their curriculum as well.

7. Do Chinese students need to pay for their textbooks?

Yes, they pay for the textbooks and carry them in their schools bag to school when the subject is taught. So this is why a Chinese student's bag can be very heavy!

8. Is there any homework set for holidays?

Yes. The teachers worry that if they don't set homework, the students will forget what they have learned when they return to school after a long holiday!