



5 Childcare

In Japan childcare facilities are in place for children who are unable to be looked after at home. There are also systems to temporarily house and look after children and facilities to support parents to know and help each other.

5-1 Accredited nursery schools (*Ninka-hoikusho, Ninka-hoikuen*)

(1) What is an accredited nursery school?

Nursery schools (*hoikusho, hoikuen*) cater to children ranging from babies a few months old to children before entering school, who are unable to be looked after at home due to the work or illness of their parents. Nursery schools consist of public and private entities, while private entities further consist of those approved by the local municipalities (*ninka*) and those not (*ninka-gai*).

Among nursery schools, public schools and accredited private schools draw many applicants, while these schools impose a number of conditions on applicants which they must satisfy, which means not everyone can enroll. Public schools and accredited private schools charge fees for user parents, depending on their household income. The basic service is eight hours a day (from 7:00 to 18:00), while some facilities look after children until around 20:00 as an extended care service (*encho hoiku*).

Non-accredited nursery schools (*ninka-gai hoikujo/hoikuen*) charge a single level of fees regardless of the income of user parents.

Materials you need to apply for public and accredited nursery schools

- Residence Record (*juminhyo*) (of the whole household)
- A photocopy of withholding tax and filing of income tax return
- At the interview after application: Maternal and Child Health Handbook