

About Keimei Gakuin

General

Keimei Gakuin is a coeducational combined junior and senior high school based on the principals of Christianity, such as showing kindness to others and giving service to society. More than 1,200 students are enrolled at the school with roughly 500 in the junior high school and 700 in the senior high school.

In common with other schools in Japan, the school year starts in April and finishes the following March. The school day starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends with afternoon homeroom at around three or four o'clock depending on the day. The regular school week is from Monday to Friday, but there is also a Saturday College program and other events on many weekends. In addition, most students participate in club activities outside of regular lesson hours.

Location

The school is situated in Suma, in the west of Kobe. Many of the school buildings have distinct white walls and orange-red roofs reminiscent of the style in southern European countries, and the campus is overlooked by Mount Yokoo, so that nature is close by.

To get to Keimei, many students catch the subway train to Myohoji station (Seishin Yamate Line), then walk about 15 minutes to the school. There are regular bus services from Myohoji station, and from Suma that pass by the school.

Keimei Gakuin has a camp on the island of Maejima in the Setonai-kai (Inland Sea). There, various events are held each year including orientation camps for students in Junior 1 and Senior 1 grades.

History

In 2023, Keimei Gakuin celebrated its centenary. The school was founded by the Lambuth family of missionaries. Originally, it was named Palmore Institute and then Palmore Women's English Institute and the building was situated in central Kobe. Following the move to the larger campus in Suma, in 2002 the school became coeducational.

International Students

We are pleased to welcome international exchange students and visitors to Keimei from overseas. We have various connections and partnerships with schools in South Korea, Hong Kong, India, the United States, and Australia. All of these relationships are valued strongly by Keimei Gakuin and we strive to offer the best welcome to anyone coming to our school as part of such programs, as well as to other visitors. We are also pleased to host students who come to Japan for year-long study programs. Over recent years, we have hosted such students from a variety of countries including Brazil, India, the United States, Finland, and Hungary among others.

Welcome to Kobe, Japan

Kobe Overview

Kobe is a city in the western Kansai region of Japan with a population of approximately 1,500,000 people of whom about 51,000 are non-Japanese citizens from a variety of countries. It is a port city situated between Osaka Bay and Mount Rokko so that nature is on both sides of the urban area and easily accessible. Kobe is known as a relaxed and pleasant place to live in contrast to other more hectic cities like Osaka or Tokyo.

Kobe is home to big companies such as Asics the sportswear maker, Kobe Steel (Kobelco), and Kawasaki Heavy Industries. The port is also one of the biggest and busiest in Japan. Shopping and tourism are also big sources of income and employment. Popular products from Kobe include Kobe beef, cakes, and sweets.

The city also has good transportation links including as a main stop on the shinkansen (bullet train) line connecting with Osaka and Tokyo among others. As well as Kobe Airport, other nearby airports are Osaka Itamai, and Kansai International Airport, both of which can be easily reached by bus or train from central Kobe. There are also ferry links to many destinations.

Kobe is near to the other big cities of the Kansai region: Osaka, Kyoto, and Nara. Also, the famous hot spring resort Arima Onsen is a short bus or train ride away and is popular as a day trip or overnight stay.

Culture

Kobe has many festivals and traditions. In spring, cherry blossom viewing parties are widespread in parks and beside rivers with cherry trees. In the same season, the Kobe Festival has parades, music, and other cultural events at various locations. In fact, Kobe plays host to many theater and musical events throughout the year and in autumn hosts the Kobe Marathon, one of the biggest in Japan.

The Chinese community is centered on Nanking Machi, a colorful district in central Kobe. There, traditional celebrations are held at times such as Chinese New Year. In the Kitano area, just north of the city center, there is also a notable Indian and Nepali community with many restaurants, shops and other businesses selling Indian food and goods. Many other ethnic groups also have Kobe as their home.

Religion

Similar to the rest of Japan, the two main religions are Buddhism and Shinto. Many temples and shrines are visible around the city and in the mountains beyond, and local festivals are often based on these places of worship. Generally, religious practices are discreet in daily life, but many homes have small shrine cabinets inside. Kobe also has a number of Christian churches of various denominations, as well as a central mosque, synagogue, and other places of worship that serve the different resident religious communities.

Politics

Japan is a parliamentary democracy. The politics are based on the constitution of 1947 and protect the right to vote, freedom of expression, and fundamental human rights. It is also a constitutional monarchy with the emperor at its head. Article 9, aspiring to peace, renounces the right to wage war on any other country.

Cuisine

Japanese cuisine is famous for sushi, ramen, teriyaki, and many other foods. In Kobe, the marbled Kobe beef is especially famous, but a whole range of dishes are available on menus. Noodle shops like those for ramen, udon, and soba are popular and cheap. Okonomiyaki, a kind of thick savory pancake made with pork or seafood, cabbage, batter, and other ingredients is a Kansai region tradition, as is Takoyaki (squid in batter). At home, there is often an emphasis on a balance of dishes including rice, miso soup, fresh, cooked, and pickled vegetables, and some kind of meat or fish. Other common food items on the home table include tofu, fermented natto beans, and algae. A range of international foods are also regularly consumed with Chinese, Italian, and Korean foods popular in both restaurants and homes. Both the milder Japanese version of curry, and Indian curry are also well-liked.

Language

Japanese is the official language of Japan and is the dominant language of official and everyday life. English is taught from elementary school and so many people have some ability to speak or understand basic English, especially in the tourism sector. On transport services and at tourism locations, Chinese and Korean are also used, but other languages are spoken more according to ethnicity or interest.

Weather

Kobe has a generally mild climate. Winters are cold but snowfall is rare. Spring and autumn are considered the best times of year by many with pleasant cool to warm conditions, and a good chance of sunshine. June is usually the rainy season and is followed by hot, humid summers that last into September.

Money

The national currency is the yen. Cash is still widely used along with credit and debit cards. A wide variety of cashless phone app systems are also used widely in shops including those of LinePay, PayPay, and RPay (Rakuten). For transport and some other purchases, IC cards are also used.

Time Differences with Japan

Seoul: 0 hours

Singapore, Hong Kong, Taipei, Perth: - 1 hour

New Delhi: - 3 hours

London: - 9hours

Dallas: -15 hours

Seattle: - 17 hours