

## WELCOME TO THE BRITISH SCHOOL IN TOKYO

Dear New BST Family,

Hello and welcome to The British School in Tokyo (BST) and BST's Parents' Association (PTA). At BST all parents and teachers are members of the PTA. One of the PTA's primary objectives is to build and foster a sense of community at the school which includes welcoming new families and providing support for their transition to BST and Tokyo.

### **New Joiner Buddy System**

If you are new to BST and Tokyo or just new to BST, we are happy to match you with a seasoned BST parent who can help answer any questions you may have when you first join. **Please click on the following link to send an email to [pta-welcome@bst.ac.jp](mailto:pta-welcome@bst.ac.jp) requesting a buddy.**

### **PTA Coffee Mornings**

Quite frequently (twice a month) throughout the school year the PTA holds coffee mornings for BST parents on both Azabudai and Showa campuses. This is for both Primary & Secondary parents & it is a great opportunity to meet new friends over some coffee, tea and pastries and sometimes an opportunity to have informal chats to the teaching staff as well.

### **Opportunities to Meet Other Parents**

Every term the PTA organises welcoming activities for parents new and current to get to know each other.

Please feel free to follow and join the PTA Facebook [Bst Pta](#) and Instagram page [bst\\_pta](#), as well as [The British School in Tokyo Mums & Dads](#) Facebook page – they are incredibly valuable sources of information regarding updates and events organised by PTA.

Lastly, we have compiled the following list of what we hope are helpful tips for preparing for your move to BST and/or Tokyo. Please do not hesitate to email us at [pta-welcome@bst.ac.jp](mailto:pta-welcome@bst.ac.jp) with any questions you may have and we will do our best to answer them for you. Should you require support in Japanese, please use the same email address and someone will be in contact.

Looking forward to meeting you and your family.

**The Welcome Committee, the BST PTA**

## **NEW to BST/Moving to Tokyo – Helpful Tips**

### **School Uniforms**

New school uniforms can be purchased from Top of the Class ([www.schooluniform.jp](http://www.schooluniform.jp)). There will also be an opportunity to buy new and second hand uniforms (at second hand uniforms sales organised by the PTA) during the school year.

If possible, purchase leather school shoes before arriving in Tokyo. These can be difficult to find in Tokyo. They are also very expensive to purchase locally and shipments of leather goods to Japan are heavily taxed.

### **Items to Bring with You**

While most of these items are available here in Tokyo, the choice is very limited and expensive. Having a small supply of these items will make your life easier from the outset –

- Toothpaste (Colgate is not available in Japan)
- Deodorant (Japanese deodorant is milder compared to those in the UK)
- Basic medicines – Nurofen, Paracetamol, Calpol, cold and cough, allergy
- (Sudafed & Vicks Inhalers are [illegal in Japan](#))
- Nit (hair lice) shampoo

### **Medical Clinics and Hospitals**

Should anyone in your family need medical care, English speaking services are available through Tokyo Medical and Surgical Clinic located across from Tokyo Tower ([www.tmsc.jp](http://www.tmsc.jp); 32 Shiba koen Building 2F, 3-4-30 Shiba-koen, Minato-ku, Tokyo). Appointments are available by phone 03-3436-3028.

Other hospitals and clinics which provide English speaking services are as follows:

[Japanese Red Cross Medical Center](#) (Nihonsekijūjisha Medical Center) in Hiroo is also a good place to seek medical assistance (4-1-22 Hiroo, Shibuya, Tokyo 150-0012; 03-3400-1311)

[Tokyo Toranomom Hospital](#) in Toranomom (2-2-2 Toranomom, Minato-ku, Tokyo; 03-3588-1111)

[Sanno Hospital](#) in Roppongi (8-10-16, Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 107-0052; 03-3402-3151)

[International Health Care Clinic](#) (Sueyoshi Bld.3F, 2-10-5 Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo,105-0004; 03-3501-1330)

[Tokyo Midtown Clinic](#) (Midtown Tower 6F, Akasaka 9-7-1, Minato-ku; 03-5413-0080)

[Tokyo Saiseikai Central Hospital](#) (1-4-17 Mita, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 108-0073;03-3451-8211)

[Hiroo International Clinic](#) (4-14-6 Minamiazabu Minato-ku;03-5789-8861)

[National Medicial Clinic](#) (#202 5-16-11 Minami Azabu,Minato-ku; 03-3473-2057)

## Electronics in Tokyo

Japan is on a 100v voltage system versus 110v in North America and 230v in Europe so please consider this when deciding whether to bring electronics (for more info go to [www.into.go.jp/eng/arrange/essential/electricity.html](http://www.into.go.jp/eng/arrange/essential/electricity.html)). Japan may also be on a different region for DVDs and Apple TV (and like products) than your home country so you may find it helpful to bring a DVD player from your home country along with any internet-based entertainment platform like Apple TV.

The following are stores where you can easily purchase necessary electronic items (e.g. TVs, stereos, toasters, kettles, irons, etc.) in Tokyo –

- Bic Camera (multiple locations)
- Yamada Denki LABI ( multiple locations)
- Don Quixote (multiple locations)
- Amazon ([www.amazon.co.jp](http://www.amazon.co.jp))

## Food Shopping in Tokyo

Some international and popular places for food shopping include –

- Nissin World Delicatessen (Azabu Juban)-7 mins walk from Azabudai campus
- National Azabu (Hiroo) – stocks a wide a range of international and western foods
- Costco – approx. 30 mins drive from the Azabudai campus, wholesale/bulk
- Life – the branch nearest to the Azabudai campus is Life, Tamachi Station Tower S
- Tokyu Store-the branch nearest to the Showa campus is Sangenjaya Tokyu
- OK Store- the branch nearest to the Showa campus is OK Store Ikejiri-ohashi
- The Meat Guy - [www.themeatguy.jp](http://www.themeatguy.jp) - home delivery for a wide range of meat products, mostly frozen
- Kiwi Kitchen - [www.kiwikitchen.jp](http://www.kiwikitchen.jp) - home delivery for ‘home packs’ (ready meals) and popular for party catering
- Swan & Lion- [Swan & Lion](http://www.swanandlion.com)-bakery offers traditional British pies and pastry

Most websites for Japanese supermarkets are in Japanese only, but there are some grocery websites (which offer delivery) in English which you might find useful:

**National Azabu** offers online shopping and delivery. <http://www.national-azabu.com/>

**Nissin World Delicatessen** offers online shopping and delivery. <https://www.nissin-world-delicatessen.jp/>

Amazon FRESH offers same day delivery, one-hour delivery time slots, for a range of groceries. Delivery is free over a certain amount. <https://www.amazon.co.jp/>

**Uber Eats** is a good source of takeaway food! Shibuya Tokyu Food Show at the bottom of the Shibuya Mark City, Toyoko Noren-gai at the bottom of Hikarie and the food hall at the bottom of Shibuya Scramble offers a good selection of food, and will gift wrap food items for free – useful for gifts.

There are also local Japanese groceries in every neighborhood! The Google Translate App can be invaluable for navigating the grocery store... especially the local ones. You can photograph the packaging with the App.

### **Furniture and Home Shopping in Tokyo**

In general, furniture is pretty expensive to buy in Tokyo and the selection is more limited than, say, in London. Less expensive options can be found at these popular stores–

- IKEA (delivery available on IKEA’s website. There are also specialist services such as [www.hilomarket.com](http://www.hilomarket.com) which will assemble furniture for you)
- Franc Franc (Aoyama dori)
- Zara Home (Omotesando)
- Muji (Roppongi, Shibuya, Ginza)
- Loft (Shibuya)
- Tokyu Hands (Shibuya)
- Nitori (Shibuya, Meguro)

### **Clothes Shopping in Tokyo**

The following well-known retailers have a presence in Tokyo –

- Seiyu Sangenjaya (uniform supplies such as white socks, underwear, white shirts and indoor shoes)
- GAP, Banana Republic
- H&M, Zara
- Uniqlo
- Ted Baker, Paul Smith
- Next

**If you are above about a size 6 UK (women’s) or size 10 (men’s) you are likely to find it easier to shop for shoes in the UK (or Australia, the US etc).**

### **Online Shopping from the U.K.**

The following U.K. retailers ship to Tokyo; however, please be aware that high duty is placed on leather and lycra

- Marks and Spencer
- John Lewis (John Lewis do not offer online shopping with delivery to Japan, but you can contact [export.oxford.street@johnlewis.co.uk](mailto:export.oxford.street@johnlewis.co.uk) to arrange delivery – they will refund the VAT but delivery is expensive)
- Monsoon
- [www.nextdirect.com](http://www.nextdirect.com)
- [www.asos.com](http://www.asos.com)
- [www.boden.com](http://www.boden.com)

Import tax rules are complex but generally if you keep your order below around £100 or 15,000yen you will avoid import duty taxes

*Once you are in Tokyo – [Amazon.co.jp](http://Amazon.co.jp) is your friend....and there is an English version setting. Note though that there is sometimes more limited selection and higher prices through the English setting, and you may find it more convenient to get google chrome on your browser, and use the automatic translate option, which will automatically translate websites into English. You may find that sometimes it is cheaper to buy the same item through Amazon US or Amazon UK and pay for shipping to Japan, so do check the different Amazon websites for certain items. Amazon US offers a prepaid duty option, for example.*

## Days out with the Kids

If you are arriving before school starts and aren't sure how you will keep your kids entertained, here are some kid friendly activities:

- Kidzania
- Science Museum (Ueno)
- Ueno Zoo (Ueno)
- Miraikan Emerging Sciences Museum (Odaiba)
- Legoland (Odaiba)
- Orbi (Yokohama)
- Yoyogi Park (bike hire available)
- Niko Niko Park (1 Chome-7 Kita-aoyama, Minato-ku)
- Showa Kinen Park
- Tokyo Fire museum
- Tokyo Toy Museum
- Cupnoodles Museum Yokohama
- Heiwa no Mori Koen (Obstacle park)
- Disneyland & DisneySea (summer tends to be busy, check the crowd calendar at <http://tdrnavi.jp/forecast/disneyland?lang=en>)
- Tokyo Dome City
- Komazawa Park (bike rentals available similar to Yoyogi)
- Setagaya Park (the special bit is the Doronko Park where kids can get their hands dirty, make fire and use hammer to make crafts..etc)

## Useful community networks and blogs

Best Living Japan - <http://bestlivingjapan.com/> - Sign up for the weekly newsletters. Also a whole host of practical information about attractions and shopping in Tokyo.

The Tokyo Chapter – <http://thetokyochapter.com> - Useful blog covering child-friendly attractions, restaurants etc.

## Facebook Groups

TOKYO EXPAT NETWORK

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TokyoExpatNetwork/>

TOKYO MOTHERS GROUP

<http://tokyomothersgroup.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TokyoMothersGroup/>

TOKYO GARAGE SALE – good source of second hand goods

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/tokyogaragesalepickuponly/>

TOKYO HELPERS CONNECT – group to advertise for domestic help

Helpers - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/260093380996323/>