

The education system in Russia

Education in Russia is organised and coordinated by the state, which ensures that general education is free and available for everyone. Most schools are state schools but private schools have also been established in recent years.

Education usually begins with pre-school before the age of six, although it is not compulsory. Children typically go to kindergartens or other pre-schools which focus on both intellectual and physical activities. The next step is primary school, which is part of the general education programme.

General education in Russia comprises three stages: primary education, which lasts for four years; basic general education lasting for five years and secondary education which lasts for two to three years.

Russian general education is aimed at the intellectual, emotional, moral and physical development of the individual. It aims to develop the abilities that will allow a student to adapt to life in society as well as helping individuals to make conscious choices concerning professional education.

General education normally consists of 34 weeks of study per year and 27 to 36 hours of study per week. The academic year typically runs from 1 September to the beginning of June. School examinations are in June.

The language of instruction is Russian in all state-accredited educational institutions, except in pre-schools. Citizens of the Russian Federation also have the right to receive their basic general education in their native languages.

General education is compulsory. The basic curriculum for has some compulsory fields of study such as the Russian language, foreign languages, mathematics, history, politics, natural sciences etc. Every school designs its own curriculum, which is based on state requirements, and there can be some extra or optional disciplines. In Moscow, there are also schools that specialise in certain subjects, such as maths, music, arts, and sports. These schools can also offer extra education for children, alongside the general courses.

After completing primary and basic general education, the students participate in final examinations. They are awarded a Certificate of Basic General Education, *Attestat ob Osnovom Obshchem Obrazovani*, which entitles the student to be admitted to either secondary general education, to vocational education or to non-university level higher education.

After completing the secondary general education, the students need to pass the State final attestation (final examinations), after which they will be awarded a Certificate of Secondary General Education, *Attestat ob Sredem Obshchem Obrazovanii*. This school leaving certificate will allow students to continue to higher education: either vocational education or both non-university and university level education.

Recently, new types of secondary schools have emerged called gymnasium and lyceum, which can be both state owned or private. The duration of studies can exceed that of secondary general schools, and the educational programmes can be more advanced.

In total, general education takes 11 years to complete. Children are enrolled in schools at the age of six and normally they finish school by the age of 17.

If Russian poses a language barrier, there are also a number of international schools in Moscow offering education in English or in other languages.