education
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This guide aims to help those who come into contact with a school for the first time and those who are not familiar with the Spanish educational system. It is meant to provide you with some guiding information that will increase with your own experience. It also serves to welcome you and to wish you and your families all the best.

Living together peacefully and respectfully, preparing for life and work, and assuring a better future for our sons and daughters are the main goals of our educational system and an aspiration we all share.

School opens doors for us so that we can achieve all of these goals. For this reason, it is important to understand how school works, what is studied there, what grants we have and how to apply for them.

José Valverde Serrano
Councillor of Education and Sciences
# Table of Contents

1.- How can I apply for and enroll in school? 07
   a) The Application
      Who should apply for school? 07
      Where do I apply? 07
      When should I apply for school? 08
      Where is each Department of Education? 08
   b) Enrollment
      How do I enroll? 09
      In which level should I enroll? 10
      Do I have to pay? 10
      How can my previous studies be applied? 11

2.- What is the academic calendar and schedule? 13

3.- What do students learn at school? 15
   Pre-school Education 15
   Primary Education 15
   Compulsory Secondary Education 15
   Vocational Training 16
   Non-Compulsory Upper Secondary Education (Bachillerato) 17
   Adult Education 17

4.- How are schools organized and what do the teachers and tutors do? 21

5.- How are the students evaluated? 23

6.- What other services are offered to the students? 25

7.- What type of financial aid or grants can I apply for? 27

8.- How do parents and children participate in school? 29
   Rights and Obligations 29

9.- Basic Vocabulary 33
How can I apply for and enroll in school?

THE APPLICATION

Who should apply for school?

In Spain, education is compulsory for children from ages 6 to 16, although in some cases, the age can be extended to 18. All children can start their education as early as age 3 in Pre-school Education.

Families with children between the ages of 3 and 16 have the right to apply for school. They can choose between Public Schools, Charter Schools, and Private Schools. You should keep in mind that Public and Charter Schools offer free education from 3 years of age on.

If you have any questions about Student Admission, please contact: admision.edu@jccm.es; Tel: 902267090.

or consult the following webpage: www.jccm.es, under the section Admisión de alumnos.

You can also apply for Post-Compulsory Education and Adult Education.

Where do I apply?

For Compulsory Education:

• When there is only one school in your community, you must go directly to that school.

• When there are several schools in your community, you have to submit your application to the community’s Provincial Department of Education. The Department will assign you to the school that is closest to your home and best adapted to the needs of the students, while also considering each school’s availability.
For Post-Compulsory Education and Adult Education:

You must submit your application to the assigned schools.

You should keep in mind that some Post-Compulsory Education for adults is taught in Secondary Schools.

When should I apply for school?

You may apply upon arriving in Castilla-La Mancha. The acceptance process is fast. Those who already live here should apply between February and June for the following academic year, depending on the province.

Where is each Department of Education?

You can learn about all the requirements and the deadlines that you need to know to enroll by checking with the Provincial Departments of Education listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALBACETE</th>
<th>Delegación Provincial de Educación y Ciencia. Avda. de la Estación, 2 02071 ALBACETE TEL -967596300</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIUDAD REAL</td>
<td>Delegación Provincial de Educación y Ciencia. Avda. de Alarcos, 21 7th Floor 13071-CIUDAD REAL TEL - 926279124</td>
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<tr>
<td>CUENCA</td>
<td>Delegación Provincial de Educación y Ciencia. Avda. República Argentina, 16 16071 CUENCA TEL - 969176300</td>
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<tr>
<td>GUADALAJARA</td>
<td>Delegación Provincial de Educación y Ciencia. Avda. Castilla, 8 19071 GUADALAJARA TEL - 949887900</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOLEDO</td>
<td>Delegación Provincial de Educación y Ciencia. Avda. de Europa, 26 45071 TOLEDO TEL - 925259600</td>
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ENROLLMENT

How do I enroll?

For compulsory education:

Once the Department of Education has assigned you to a school, you must formalize your enrollment.

If it is the first time you are enrolling in a school in Castilla-La Mancha:

- You must fill out an application form at the main office of your assigned school. You will need to bring information such as the Passport or Resident Card Number of the child’s parents and your address in Spain ... If you have it, they would also like to see what school work has already been done in your country.

- The enrollment can be processed at any time. For those who already live in Castilla-La Mancha, you can enroll from June 30th on.

If you are already enrolled in a school in Castilla-La Mancha and would like to continue there:

In Primary School:

- Enrollment is automatic and you do not have to fill out any forms or hand in any documents. The school will do it for you.

In Compulsory Secondary, Non-Compulsory Upper Secondary, and Adult Education Schools:

- Information can be found in each school’s main office. In Adult Education Schools, certain subjects, such as Spanish, have open enrollment during the entire academic year.
In which level should I enroll?

In general, children enroll in the level that corresponds to their age according to the Spanish Educational System.

In special cases, the team of professors at the school can make exceptions so as to adapt the student to the class.

For Non-Compulsory Upper Secondary School, Vocational Training, or University studies, you must prove your level by validating your prior studies.

For Spanish classes in Adult Education Schools, the level will be determined by taking a placement test. However, in compulsory education, the evaluation will be made using the documents presented or through tests.

Do I have to pay?

In Castilla-La Mancha education is free between the ages of 3 and 16; neither in Public Schools nor in Charter Schools. You only have to pay for Private Schools.

The Regional Government provides books to children between the ages of 6 and 16. The mother or father should pick up their children’s books at their primary or secondary school, or they will receive a document telling them how to pick up the books for free at a book store. The books should be given back at the end of the school year in the same condition they were received so that they can be used again by other students.

You should purchase other school supplies yourself, such as notebooks, pencils, and pens.

For Secondary Education, you must pay a small amount at a bank for school insurance.
How can my previous studies be applied?

To start Pre-school, Primary, or Compulsory Secondary School, you do not need to provide any proof of prior studies nor do you need to hand in any documents.

You do need to have your studies validated to start Non-Compulsory Upper Secondary School, Vocational Training, or University studies.

For information about documents and requirements needed to validate studies and to get your foreign diploma or degree legally validated in Spain, you should consult your local Government Office or the following web page:

www.mec.es, under the section Títulos
What is the academic calendar and schedule?

The academic calendar establishes the first and last day of school as well as vacation days. Although these dates tend to be the same for all schools, different provinces and even towns can have different dates to include local holidays, for example.

School always begins in September and ends in June. Vacation is in summer, during the months of July and August. The school year is divided into three terms and after each term there is a break for vacation.

There are usually three evaluations that coincide with each term, although this can vary depending on the school:

- 1\textsuperscript{st} term: From September until Christmas time (December).
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} term: From the end of Christmas time (January) until Easter (March or April).
- 3\textsuperscript{rd} term: From the end of Easter until the end of June.

The academic schedule can vary from school to school, but in most Pre-schools, Primary and Secondary Schools, the school day takes place in the morning. There are also schools in which the students attend class in the morning and in the afternoon.

The following could be an example of a school with a morning schedule:

- Primary School and Pre-school – Classes usually start at 9:00 a.m. and end at 2:00 p.m.
- Secondary School – The schedule tends to go from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.

There is always at least one break or intermediate period of twenty minutes or half an hour in the morning to rest. This break is called “recreo (recess).”

When classes end, schools that have lunch service or offer their facilities for certain extracurricular activities extend their hours.

For Adult Education, morning, afternoon, and evening classes are possible depending on the school.
What do children learn at school?

**PRESCHOOL: AGES 3, 4, AND 5**

This phase includes 3 academic years which correspond to the ages of 3, 4, and 5. It is not compulsory, but it is very important to familiarize children with the school system as soon as possible to help ease the transition into Primary School. It aims to contribute to the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of boys and girls.

**PRIMARY EDUCATION: AGES 6 TO 12**

This phase is compulsory and it is free. It aims to provide all children with basic education that will help them reinforce their personal development and welfare, allow them to obtain basic cultural skills related to oral expression and comprehension, reading, writing, and mathematics. It will also develop their social skills, work and study habits, artistic sensibility, creativity, and emotional growth.

An academic year can only be repeated once.

There are three cycles with two academic years in each cycle:

- First Cycle. Ages 6 to 7.
- Second Cycle. Ages 8 to 9.
- Third Cycle. Ages 10 to 11 or 12.

**COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION (ESO): AGES 12 TO 16**

This phase is divided into four academic years. It aims to succeed in providing students with the basic elements of culture, especially the humanistic, artistic, scientific, and technological aspects; to develop and consolidate study and work habits; to prepare the students for their subsequent studies and incorporation into the workforce and to exercise their rights and obligations in life as citizens.
Upon completion, students receive the degree of Compulsory Secondary Education Graduate. This degree allows them to continue with their studies either in Non-Compulsory Upper Secondary Schools or in Vocational Training.

If the compulsory secondary education is not successfully completed, the student can still apply for Professional Qualification or Social Guarantee Programs which offer basic professional knowledge or the possibility of joining, through an entrance examination, an Intermediate Level Vocation Training Program.

**VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

This phase prepares students to perform a specific job. There are two levels:

**1. Intermediate Level Vocational Training**

Students can enter with the degree of Compulsory Secondary Education Graduate or by means of an entrance examination that can be taken if you are at least 18 years old in the year you take it (under the new Education Law, those who are 17 can also take the test).

This training lasts for one or two years and has a period that includes internships in companies. There is a wide variety of courses providing good professional opportunities.

Upon finishing these studies, students receive the title of Technician.

If you are 18 years or older, with this title you can take an entrance examination to enter Senior Level Vocational Training within the same professional group.

**2. Senior Level Vocational Training**

Students can enter with the title of Non-Compulsory Upper Secondary Education Graduate or by means of an entrance examination that can be taken if you are at least 20 years old in the year you take it (under the new Education Law, those who are 19 can also take the test). The training lasts for two academic years and
includes a section that includes internships in companies. Students receive the title of Senior Technician, a very prestigious professional qualification.

NON-COMPULSORY UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (BACHILLERATO)

This phase prepares students for University studies or Senior Level Vocational Training.

It consists of two academic years and various disciplines are offered. Students must take general class subjects which are the same for all disciplines, specialized class subjects which vary according to the course of study or according to the superior formative cycle that the student plans to continue with, and finally they must also take optional class subjects.

These are the disciplines:

- Bachillerato in Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Bachillerato in Science and Technology.
- Bachillerato in the Arts.

ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education Schools tend to help groups or social sectors lacking basic training, as well as training that focuses on the working world.

Who has access to Adult Education?

People at least 18 years of age.

People older than 16 and younger than 18 with one of the following circumstances:

- Those who have a work contract.
- Those who have obtained the title of Secondary Education Graduate.
• Those demonstrating the impossibility of continuing their education by presenting an Educational Inspection Service Report.

• Foreigners who have not previously been educated in the Spanish Educational System.

What can you study?

• Initial Studies (Primary levels).

• Secondary Education for Adults (Compulsory Secondary Education levels).

• Preparation for University Entrance Examination for students over the age of 25.

• Preparation for Secondary Education Challenge Test.

• Preparation for entrance examination into Intermediate Level Vocational Training and Senior.

• Level Vocational Training.

• Spanish as a foreign language.

• Professional courses.

• Social guarantee programs.

• Courses on personal and community development.
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Pre-school Ed.
Ages 0 to 6

Primary Ed.
Ages 6 to 12

Compulsory Secondary Ed. (E.S.O.)
Ages 12 to 16

Without Secondary Education
Graduate Degree

- Working world
- Social Guarantee Program
- Entrance Exam for Intermediate Level Vocational Training
- Other Possibilities
  - Adult Education
  - Career Training
  - Workshops

With Secondary Education
Graduate Degree

- Working world
- Intermediate Level Vocational Training
- Upper Secondary Education
- Other Training

- Senior Level Vocational Training
- University Studies
How are schools organized and what do the teachers and tutors do?

The organization of a school consists of various teams, groups, and personnel. Listed below are those we believe will be of interest to parents:

- Administration, consisting of the Headmaster, who is in charge of the school, the Head of Studies, who organizes academic life, and the Secretary, who is in charge of economic and administrative matters.

- The Educational Council, which serves as the governing body and consists of representatives of the teaching staff, parents, students, city hall employees and representatives, as well as the Head of Studies and the Headmaster as chair. Some of its functions include choosing the Headmaster, approving budget spending, and making decisions regarding discipline issues.

- The pedagogical team or group of teachers of different subjects who teach a group of students.

- The tutor is a teacher who, apart from teaching his or her subject, is also in charge of a group of students. It is the tutor’s responsibility to aid help and guide the students in their schoolwork, in their relationships with other students, and also to help resolve any other sort of problem that may arise. Furthermore, the tutor is the one in charge of the relationships with the parents and is regularly in contact with them to inform them about any matter concerning their children.

It is important that the parents come to the school when asked to do so by the tutor. They should also make an appointment to discuss any questions they may have or to simply check on the progress of their child.
How are the students evaluated?

Every term, the parents receive a printed document (report card) containing information regarding their child’s progress. These are the grades.

In Preschool Education, the parents receive a report card explaining their child’s progress and areas in which they need to improve.

In Primary Education, the report card contains the subjects and next to each one either an NM (Improvement Needed) if the student needs to improve his or her performance, or a PA (Satisfactory Progress) if the student has shown good performance. A more detailed report may be attached to the report card when necessary.

In Secondary Education, the report card contains grades based on the student’s knowledge of the subject matter, classwork, and attitude in class. The following system is used:

- A number from 1 to 4 or the word Insuficiente (Failed): the student has not reached a sufficient level.
- 5 or the word Suficiente (Passed): the student has a basic level.
- 6 or the word Bien (Good): The student has an acceptable level.
- 7, 8 or the word Notable (Notable): the student has a very good level.
- 9, 10 or the word Sobresaliente (Excellent): the student has a remarkable level of knowledge.

In Adult Education, information regarding grades is distributed differently, depending on the class.
Annex: How are students evaluated following the implementation of the new Organic Law on Education?

In accordance with the schedule for the implementation of the new studies contained in the Organic Law on Education, every term the parents will receive a printed document (report card) that will allow them to know their child’s progress.

In Primary Education, grades will be expressed as below:

- Insuficiente (IN) Failed
- Suficiente (SU) Passed
- Bien (BI) Good
- Notable (NT) Notable
- Sobresaliente (SB) Excellent

Moreover, in Compulsory Secondary Education, these grades will be followed by a number:

- Insuficiente (Failed): 1, 2, 3, 4
- Suficiente (Passed): 5
- Bien (Good): 6
- Notable (Notable): 7, 8
- Sobresaliente (Excellent) 9, 10
What other services are offered to the students?

**TRANSPORTATION SERVICE**

Students living far from the school or who have problems getting to school will be guaranteed a form of transportation, which the school may request from its respective Department of Education and which may be used until the completion of compulsory education.

**LUNCH SERVICE**

Lunch service may be requested by any student. Those receiving transportation benefits, who have specific economic needs, or whose parents’ timetable coincides with that of the school will have priority in the lunch service. This service will be free for those receiving transportation benefits and the price will vary for other students depending on their family income, since there is aid available for the lunch service.

Although not all schools have a lunch service, all students have the right to apply for it. A lunch at the nearest school cafeteria will be provided to those students.

Information regarding transportation and lunch services, as well as application forms will be provided at the schools and city hall.

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

These are activities that provide students with a broader education focusing on cultural aspects, insertion into society, and positive use of leisure time. Participation is voluntary and the activities are held outside of normal school hours.
What type of financial aid or grants can I apply for?

**FOR COMPULSORY EDUCATION:**

- As was previously mentioned, compulsory education is absolutely free, and if you are between the ages of 6 and 16 and you are enrolled in a Public or Charter School in Castilla-La Mancha, you will not need to pay for books. The books are loaned to the student since at the end of the year they will need to be returned.

- Furthermore, the students in Primary Education and Secondary Compulsory Education are able to request aid for class materials in addition to the aid requested for the lunch service. Requests for aid are to be made in March or April.

**FOR NON-COMPULSORY EDUCATION:**

- Aid can also be requested students in Preschool Education between the ages of 3 and 5 if they are enrolled in a private establishment. It will not be necessary to request aid for students enrolled in Public or Charter Schools since enrollment is free. Aid can be requested around June.

- Aid is available for students at post-compulsory levels who have finished Compulsory Secondary Education. This aid is granted by the Spanish Government and covers the following necessities: school material, transportation, residence, and enrollment fees ... You may request this aid at your school around the month of June.

To receive any sort of aid or grant, the student must present documents showing family income, residency permits, his/her grades from the previous year, etc.

For more information, please consult [www.mec.es](http://www.mec.es) under the section becas generales.
How do parents and children participate at school?

Parents may participate in school life through organizations called Asociaciones de Padres y Madres de Alumnos (Parent Associations) and have representation at the School Council. Education is a common goal for the school and the families. Both must collaborate to decide on the educational objectives for children at school.

Families new to town and in school can participate and make themselves heard through various activities at school. This is a great way to become integrated into society, the neighborhood, or the town.

RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

There are certain rights and obligations within the educational community that we must all take into consideration. The goal is to keep the community working well, and in order to succeed, it is important for the families to collaborate.

Rights:

• Equal opportunity in education to assure the best possible personal development in healthy and safe conditions.

• To be evaluated objectively and to receive the academic orientation and education that best suits your needs.

• To be respected with regard to freedom of thought and religion, as well as physical integrity and personal dignity.

• The parents and the children have the right to participate in school life.
Obligations:

- To attend class regularly and punctually.
- To respect and follow the instructions of the teaching staff and the rest of the staff members at school.
- To respect the other students at school as well as their families.
- Correct use of the school’s facilities and of school material and supplies.
- The parents must follow the schoolwork their children do at school to be able to help them and encourage them in their learning process.
Basic Vocabulary

**SCHOOL:**
Primary or secondary schools where students receive classes and perform educational activities. They may be public, charter, or private schools.

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS:**
Primary or secondary schools that are supported by the Spanish Government or an Autonomous Region.

**CHARTER SCHOOLS:**
Primary or secondary schools that belong to private owners or institutions, but receive public funding.

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS:**
Primary or secondary schools that belong to private companies or organizations in economical and organizational terms.

**SCHOOL COUNCIL:**
A school’s governing body formed by teacher representatives, parents, students, workers, government representatives, as well as the Head of Studies or the Principal as chair.

**PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENT OFFICE:**
The office of the provincial administration of education.

**COMPULSORY EDUCATION:**
Includes Pre-school Education, Primary Education, and Compulsory Secondary Education for students ages 3 to 16.

**POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION:**
Includes Upper Secondary Education (Bachillerato), Vocational Training, and University studies.
EVALUATION:
Process by which the progress of the students is evaluated. The exam or test given to the student in each subject is also known as an evaluation.

VALIDATION OF FOREIGN TITLES:
To validate titles, studies, or degrees from other countries.

RATIFICATION OF STUDIES:
To find the legal equivalent of studies carried out in other countries. Partially completed studies can also be ratified.

JUNTA DE COMUNIDADES DE CASTILLA-LA MANCHA:
The regional administration. It is responsible for matters concerning education.

GOVERNMENT OFFICE:
The central government’s office of representation in each province.
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