

Coming to Showa Junior High School for the first time was really nerve-wracking. I had to introduce myself to everyone in a language I could hardly speak. At first, I thought it would be tough to make friends because of the language barrier, but I quickly settled into class 1 and made many friends who are very funny and thoughtful. The new changes to my school schedule were quite a big change, with four extra school hours in addition to Australia's six. However, I quickly got used to it and the longer school hours started to feel normal. Showa Junior High School is very different from my school in Australia.



Here, we have a set schedule for what lunch we are to eat everyday, while in Australia, every day, the students have to buy their own food and make their own lunch. Here at Showa Junior High School there is a variety of delicious foods that we eat at lunch time. I personally like how there is a lot of everything, like soup, rice and some salad and meat. One thing that surprised me about Showa Junior High School is how disciplined and organized it is. There are rules for everything, from how we begin the class to how we order our food after we finish eating. It took me some time to get used to, but now I understand that these rules are in place to create a respectful and orderly/organized learning environment. The academic expectations at Showa Junior High School are also higher. We have a lot more work to do and learn at a faster pace than Australia. However, the teachers are very supportive and always willing to help. They take the time to explain things thoroughly for me, Harry and Aiden and make sure that we understand completely. I found the classroom clean up everyday after school to be very interesting. In Australia, we have a different way as we normally hire janitors/cleaners to keep schools clean. But seeing everyone in the school community working together to clean up after the day was over was really inspiring. It was amazing to see students and teachers working together to sweep the floors, clean the rooms, and keep a nice environment around the school.



Even though I had trouble with the language at first, I've been able to improve through practice and talking with my classmates. They've been patient and helpful with my Japanese. In return, I've been able to help them with their English, which has been great for both of us. One thing I find interesting about Japanese school culture is the focus on club activities (Bukatsu). Showa Junior High School has a lot of different clubs, like sports, and academics. With me, Harry and Aiden doing the Judo Bukatsu, we were able to meet and train hard with many other fantastic students.



One of my favorite memories here at Showa Junior High School is having a snowball fight with everyone during break time. Back in Australia where I am from, we get no snow at all, so it is definitely one of the experiences I'll never forget. Being at Showa Junior High School overall has been such an awesome experience, and I'd personally like to thank each and every one of the students and teachers for being very supportive and inclusive to me, Harry and Aiden, I hope to come back one day!