

Country	Grade 4		Grade 8		Information About Age of Entry, Promotion, and Retention
	Country's Name for Fourth Year of Formal Schooling*	Average Age at Time of Testing	Country's Name for Eighth Year of Formal Schooling*	Average Age at Time of Testing	
Armenia	Grade 4	10.0	Grade 8	14.6	Children must be 6 years old to begin school the following December 31st. The age of entry policy has changed within the past ten years. Promotion is automatic for Grades 1–5, but dependent on academic progress for Grades 6–8.
Australia	Year 4	10.0	Year 8	14.0	Varies by state, but children generally must begin school by age 6. Most children actually begin school at the minimum age of 4.5–5, and the age of entry policy has been revised within the past ten years. Policy on promotion and retention varies by state but, generally, there is automatic promotion for Grades 1–8.
Austria	Grade 4	10.3			Children must begin school in the September following their 6th birthday, but parents can request early admission for children who turn 6 by March 1st of the following year. Automatic promotion for Grade 1, but there is retention in Grades 2–4 for students failing one or more compulsory subjects.
Azerbaijan	Grade 4	10.2			Children must be 6 years old by the end of September to begin school on September 15 of that year, but children the Ministry of Education identifies as talented who are born before the end of November can begin school in September of the year they turn 6. Promotion is automatic for Grades 1–4, but is dependent on academic progress for Grades 5–8.
Bahrain	Grade 5	10.4	3rd Intermediate	14.4	Parents must register their children at school when they are 7 years old. Children must be 6 years old by the end of June to begin the following September. The age of entry policy has changed within the past ten years. Promotion is dependent upon passing Arabic, Mathematics, Science, and English.
Belgium (Flemish)	Grade 4	10.0			Children must begin school on September 1st of the year of their 6th birthday. Parents can keep their child in kindergarten until age 7, with approval. Promotion is decided by each school and/or parents; students not having fully attended preprimary education must pass a language qualification test to begin primary school.
Chile	Grade 4	10.1	Grade 8	14.2	Compulsory schooling begins at age 6. Children must be 6 years old by March 31st to begin in March of the same calendar year. Promotion is dependent on academic progress for all grades.
Chinese Taipei	Grade 4	10.2	Grade 8	14.2	Children must be 6 years old before September 1st to begin school in the September of the same calendar year. There is automatic promotion for Grades 1–8.
Croatia	Grade 4	10.7			The age of entry policy, which has changed within the past ten years, says that all children must begin school by 7 years old. Although children must be at least 6 years old by the end of March to begin the following September, children typically begin school at age 7. Student promotion is dependent on meeting minimum standards in Grades 1–8.
Czech Republic	Grade 4	10.4			Compulsory schooling begins at the beginning of the school year (September 1st) following the child's 6th birthday unless granted a postponement, which an increasing number of parents are seeking. Promotion is dependent on academic progress in all compulsory subjects, but is automatic for students who have repeated a year.
Denmark	Grade 4	11.0			Children begin preprimary education the year they turn 6 and primary education the following year. Delaying entry by a year requires municipal board approval, but parents can have their child begin a year early. This policy has changed within the past ten years. There is automatic promotion in Grades 1–8, though in special cases students may be promoted or retained based on individual assessments, with parental consent.
England	Year 5	10.2	Year 9	14.2	Children begin school the term (typically September, January, or April) of their 5th birthday. Many local authorities make provision for all children to begin in the September of the school year in which they will turn 5 and some have changed the discretionary time so that children can begin at a younger age, although all of this is subject to parental discretion. There is no policy on promotion and retention.
Finland	Grade 4	10.8	Grade 8	14.8	Children begin school the autumn of the year of their 7th birthday, although it is possible to enter school either one year earlier or one year later than the official policy, following discussions with an expert (e.g., school psychologist). There is automatic promotion for Grades 1–8, with retention only in extreme situations.
Georgia	Grade 4	10.0	Grade 8	14.2	Compulsory schooling begins at age 6 according to the Law on General Education, which has been updated within the past ten years. Promotion is automatic for Grades 1–4, and dependent on academic progress for Grades 5–8.
Germany	Grade 4	10.4			Compulsory schooling begins the year a child turns 6. Children must be at least 6 years old before a statutory qualifying date (which varies by state; in most states the date falls between June 30th and September 30th) to begin on August 1st. The official policy grants parents the right to request early admission or postponed enrollment, but the school administration has the final decision. The policy on age of entry has been revised within the past ten years. There is automatic promotion in Grade 1, and promotion policies differ between states for later grades.

SOURCE: IEA's Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study – TIMSS 2011

* The TIMSS target population is the grade that represents four years or eight years of schooling counting from the first year of ISCED Level 1. However, IEA has a policy that students do not fall under the minimum average age of 9.5 years old (Fourth grade) or 13.5 years old (Eighth grade) at the time of testing, so England, Malta, and New Zealand assessed students in their fifth year or ninth year of formal schooling.

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