

Original Site of the Gakushuin

Emperor Kokaku (1771–1840), of the Kan-in no Miya family, ascended to the imperial throne in 1779. The emperor was a great supporter of scholarship and worked hard to promote the education of the court nobles. In 1845, during the reign of his successor Emperor Ninko (1800-1846), the Tokugawa shogunate permitted the construction of an educational institution in the grounds of the Kyoto Imperial Palace. It opened two years later, during the reign of Emperor Komei (1831–1867), and provided instruction in Japanese and Chinese classics for court nobles, officials of the Imperial Palace, and their children. The school became known officially as Gakushuin with the bestowing of an imperial plaque by Emperor Komei in 1849.

When the Imperial Palace moved to Tokyo at the start of the Meiji Period, the Kyoto Gakushuin was closed. However, in 1877 Emperor Meiji (1852–1912) again granted an imperial plaque bearing the name “Gakushuin” to the newly founded Peers’ School in Tokyo. The present Gakushuin School Corporation was established at that time.