

## Secondary School for Girls (1896)

### Abstract

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This photograph shows the second-year class of the Kramersche Secondary School for Girls in Berlin-Lichterfelde. Schools were designated as “secondary” if the level of instruction exceeded that of elementary and primary schools, and if they aimed to provide a more general intellectual education. In essence, however, girls who attended secondary schools were educated to be housewives and mothers, and instruction focused accordingly on handiwork and home economics. Parents who wanted – and could afford – an advanced education for their daughters sent them to boarding school or to private girls’ schools. In less well-to-do families, however, it was common for daughters to leave secondary school after meeting the compulsory school attendance requirement, which generally called for instruction until age 14. Since girls’ education was considered unimportant, they usually left school early in order to help out in the household. Secondary girls’ school officially ended when the students were approximately 15 or 16 years of age. Boys, however, could complete an additional grade level [*Oberstufe*] in a college-preparatory secondary school [*Gymnasium*] and then take the exam necessary for university admission. In the 1890s, as some universities gradually allowed women to study, the first specialized girls’ grammar schools and girls’ grammar school courses were organized; they provided instruction comparable to that offered in the boys’ *Oberstufe*.

### Source

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