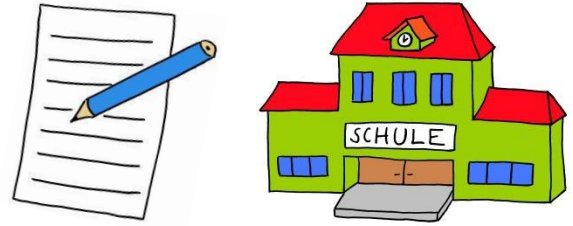


School enrolment

Information for parents whose children learn German as a second language



Dear parents,

If your child will have turned 6 by 30.6.2023 or was born before 01.07.2017, he or she will be of **compulsory school age** for the upcoming school year 2023/24 (i.e. starting September 2023). This normally means that your child will have to go to school from September 2023.

Children who were born **between the 1st of July and the 30th of September 2017 can** be considered of compulsory school age if their legal guardians **do not defer the beginning of compulsory school attendance to the next school year.**

If the legal guardians would like to defer **school enrolment** to the following school year 2024/2025, they must **inform the school in writing by no later than the 10th of April 2023. These children will still initially go through the same registration and enrolment process at the school as the other children.** The school will consult with the parents and then make a recommendation to them. Parents can then decide if they would like to enrol their child for the upcoming or the following school year. If parents don't submit a written statement by the 10th of April, their child will have to attend school from the upcoming school year 2023/2024.

All parents whose children are of compulsory school age will receive a letter from their local primary school. In it, they will be invited to register their child with the school on a specific day in March 2023. Parents and the future school children will be asked to come to the school together.

This enrolment event is very important! Definitely go, please, even if you are not sure yet if your child is already really ready for school. Since school is compulsory, the school enrolment event is compulsory, too. If anything prevents you from coming on that day, it is absolutely necessary that you contact the school.

Furthermore, any children who had their school enrolment postponed last year or who had their entry into primary school deferred last year will all have to be registered again.

Deference of school attendance

If there are any doubts about a child being ready for school, you can seek advice on whether the child should start going to school a year later.

It is always very important what the kindergarten's opinion on this is. The teachers there know the children well and are also familiar with what the requirements at school are. If you are unsure, you can also contact an educational counselling centre where your child can be assessed. Special education schools have counselling centres as well.

However, even if you are sure that your child should wait another year, do go the enrolment event and listen to what the teachers have to say. They have a lot of experience with children of this particular age and can advise you. The decision about a deference is ultimately made by the school based on all available observations

What happens during school enrolment?

To begin with, several pieces of information are recorded: Name and address but also which language is spoken at home etc.

What is especially important though is that the teachers get a first impression of your child. They try to gauge if the child is actually ready for school, if he/she will be able to follow the school lessons, but also how fluent in German the child already is. How exactly this is done, whether in form of a casual conversation with the teacher or in form of a "trial lesson" with a group of children, differs from school to school. Sometimes, parents are invited back to a second meeting to allow the teachers to get to know the child even better. There is no need to be worried about this though!

Valuable clues for the school are also provided by the form that you have completed with the teacher in kindergarten. Please bring it along to the school enrolment!

What happens after school enrolment?

Parents who at home speak a language other than German with their children often worry whether their child has already learned German well enough for school. To help with this, kindergartens have been offering a "German language preparation course" for a couple of years now which your child has most likely attended.

What is important: No or very little knowledge of German is not a reason for not being accepted into school. An exception is when the child has attended neither a kindergarten nor a "German language preparation course". In this case, he or she might be required to attend kindergarten with the "preparation course" for a year. This, however, affects only a very small number of children.

With all other children with a non-German first language, the teachers try to assess during the school enrolment event whether they might need any special additional help with learning German. There are several options for this:

- **„DeutschPLUS-Kurse“**: This means that a child attends a regular school class but is given additional German language lessons (one or more hours a week).
- **„DeutschPLUS-Differenzierung“**: This is a special learning group with children with a non-German first language who receive intensive support in German in the main subjects (German, mathematics, general knowledge) and learn alongside their German classmates in the other subjects.
- **„Deutschklasse“**: This class is only for children who do not speak any German at all because they e.g. just moved to Germany.

This special kind of class cannot be set up at every school which is why your child might have to be assigned to a different primary school.

For children who are generally a bit behind in their development or who perhaps have other special educational needs, it is possible that a "diagnosis and support class" at a special education support centre is recommended. In those classes, learning takes place at a slower pace which means that the children have three years to learn what is learned at regular schools within two years. Many children have a very good start into their school life thanks to such a "diagnosis and support class". A transfer to a regular school is possible at any time if requested by the parents.

Attendance of a special education school is, in general, voluntary and requires parental consent. In case of suspected special needs, you are also free to enrol your child directly with a special education support centre.

In order to decide on the most appropriate type of school, it might be helpful if you have your child tested and then seek further advice. For this purpose, there is an independent "Counselling Centre Inklusion (Inclusion)" at the State Education Office (Donaustauer Str. 70).

If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's entry into school, you can contact us or one of the two educational counselling centres in Regensburg at any time. Counselling there is free of charge and confidential and can be provided with an interpreter present upon request. Our telephone number is 0941/507-2762.

We wish you and your child all the best and a smooth journey towards starting school!