

# Welcome to primary school

Information - explained simply



## From what age does my child have to go to school?

From the age of six, all children in Germany have the right and obligation to go to school. Each year in March there is a date for registering your child for primary school. Once your child reaches school age, you will receive a letter telling you where to register your child for school. Compulsory education lasts until the age of 18.

## How much does school cost?

It doesn't cost anything to send your child to a state school. Textbooks are also free of charge. However, there are many things necessary for school or part of school life that the parents do have to pay for. These are items such as exercise books and pens, sports clothing or the cost of school trips. After-school care and hot school lunches also cost money. Families on a low income can receive support through the benefits for education and participation.



[Benefits for Education and Participation](#)

## What equipment does my child need for school?

- School bag
- Sports bag with PE kit for sport
- Drink and snack for breaktimes

Textbooks are given out at school. Parents will need to buy exercise books and stationery. Your child will find out what they need from the school.

## How long is the school day?

In most schools, lessons start at 7:45 or 8 am. The time at which school finishes varies and depends on the timetable. At half-day schools, lessons mainly take place in the morning. Pupils can go home for lunch.

In an all-day school, pupils stay at school until 4 pm. They have the same amount of lessons as pupils at a half-day school, but they also eat lunch there and have time for learning, resting and playing. You do not have to pay for your child to be educated at an all-day school.



[All-day Schools in Karlsruhe](#)



## My child needs day care. What childcare options are available?

At an all-day school, your child will stay at school until 4 pm. They will also be provided with a hot school lunch there.

After 4 pm, your child can continue to be looked after if necessary.

There is also childcare for school children who do not go to an all-day school: They can go to supplementary childcare until 1 or 2 pm or they can be enrolled at an after-school centre, if requirements are met. If you only need childcare on certain days, some schools offer flexible after-school care. In the pamphlet "School education and childcare provision" you can find out which childcare options are available at the individual schools. You can also enquire at the school.



**Pamphlet School Education and Childcare Provision**



## How will my child get to school?

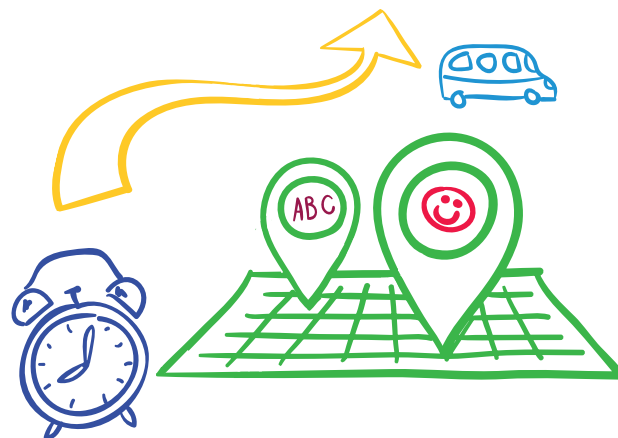
Children can walk to their primary school. Many pupils also go by bike or scooter. There is a school route map for every primary school, which shows the safest route from home to school. Parents can practise walking this route with their children, so that they learn the safest way to get to and from school.



**School Route Maps for Karlsruhe**

Pupils may have to travel further to get to their secondary school. If your child has to travel by bus or train to school, you will be reimbursed for part of the cost. Please enquire about this at your child's school office.

If your child has a disability or has to attend a special school, the travel costs are fully covered.



## Is food served at school?

Pupils bring their own food in for the morning breaks. They also have to bring their own drinks. Many schools have a water dispenser, where children can fill up their water bottles.

Hot meals are available at all-day schools and after-school centres. Many other schools have a canteen, where pupils can get lunch. Lunch is free for pupils who receive benefits for education and participation.



All-day Schools



After-school Centre



Benefits for Education and Participation



## Homework?!

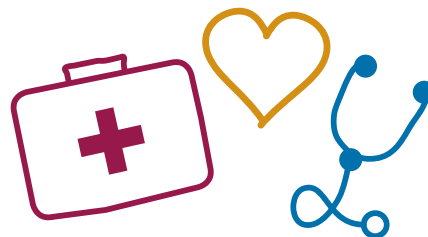
Homework allows the pupils to practise what they have learnt at school. Homework assignments are listed in the homework book or the weekly schedule. Children should complete their homework by themselves. However, they can ask for help if there is something they don't understand. If your child needs support with their homework, there are different options. Many schools, for example, offer homework supervision sessions. Please enquire at your child's school. Children who attend an after-school centre, do their homework there. Children rarely have homework at all-day primary schools. It is important that your child completes their homework and does it properly. You can talk to the teacher if your child is having difficulty with homework.

## What should you do if your child is ill?

If your child is too ill to attend school, you will need to inform the school. Your child will need to provide a reason for their absence.

Please ask the school how this should be done. For example, is it possible to phone the school or should you send an email?

If your child is ill for a longer period of time, the school may ask for a doctor's certificate. You can get a certificate from your child's doctor. If your child has a contagious illness, they must stay at home until they are healthy again.



## When does the school year begin and when are the school holidays?

In Baden-Württemberg the school year begins in September. It ends the following year in July. That is when the summer holidays begin. There are other holidays throughout the school year. There are public holidays on which the schools are closed. You can find out at school or in the holiday calendar when the school holidays are.



Dates of the School Holidays in Karlsruhe



## Does my child have to attend school on religious holidays?

Pupils who belong to a religious community do not have to attend school on important religious holidays. However, a child's absence on these days must first be authorised by the headteacher of the school.

To find out which religious holidays this applies to, please refer to the school attendance regulation of the state of Baden-Württemberg. You can also ask at your child's school.



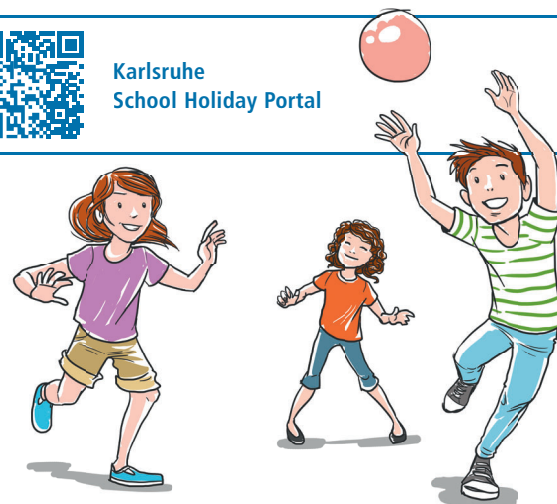
School Attendance Regulation of the State of Baden-Württemberg

## What can my child do during the school holidays?

All-day schools and after-school centres offer childcare during the school holidays. There are also other organisations that run lots of different activities for children in the holidays. You will need to register for most of these activities. You can find information by visiting the Karlsruhe School Holiday Portal.



Karlsruhe School Holiday Portal



## How do I find out about what's happening at school?

If you have any questions regarding school, lessons or your child's progress, you can always ask your child's teacher. You will also receive regular information from school, for example, on class activities and about your child.

Ways in which you can receive information or speak to the teacher:

### Parents' evening

At the start of a new school year, there is a parents' evening for every class. Parents' evenings normally take place in October. This is when you can meet the teachers and receive important information about the lessons. A parent representative is also elected at parents' evening. There are often trips and celebrations organised for parents and children to enjoy together.

### Parent Consultation

At parent consultations you have the opportunity to speak to the teacher about your child. Parent consultations take place regularly at primary schools. You will receive an invitation to attend the consultation.

If necessary, you can get an interpreter who speaks your language for parent consultations. This is free of charge. Ask the teacher about this.

If you are worried about your child or have questions about school, you can always ask to meet the teacher.



[Interpreters for Parent Consultations](#)

### School Letters

Pupils are often given letters to take home. These contain important information for the parents. Sometimes there is a slip that the parents have to sign. The pupils then bring the signed slip back to school.

### Home Book

Primary school children often have a home book in which you can write messages to the teacher, for example, if your child has a problem with their homework, or if you'd like to arrange an appointment with the teacher.

### Email or Telephone

Some schools also contact parents via email or telephone.





## What does the school expect from me as a mother or father?

Parents and school are jointly responsible for the education and upbringing of the child. As a parent, you are the most important partner for the school when it comes to the development of your child. Therefore, it is very important that you attend parents' evenings and parent consultations. It is also important that you are available when the school needs to contact you.

As a parent, you are responsible for ensuring that your child comes regularly and punctually to school and that they are excused in case of illness. The school also expects that your child completes all their homework and that they come to school with all the necessary equipment.

Parents play an important role at school. They help to shape life at school. Parents contribute their ideas and help out at school celebrations, events and activities. They help in ensuring teachers, children and parents work together as a team.

## How can I support my child at school?

Parents can do a lot to help their children feel happy and learn well at school.

You can support your child by making sure that they can concentrate well at school. For example, sufficient sleep, regular meals and plenty of exercise in the fresh air all play an important role. You can also help your child by making sure that they do not spend too much time on their phone, computer, gaming or watching TV.

Your child will enjoy going to school if they have friends there. You can support your child if you enable them to make friends with other children at school. Often, friendships and interaction with other parents also develop in this way.

By taking an interest in how your child is doing in school, you will also be supporting your child. You can always talk to the class teacher if you are worried or if you think your child needs help. However, you also support your child if you encourage them to do the things themselves that they are capable of doing.



## Who can I turn to if my child has problems at school?

The class teacher is the first point of contact if your child is having problems at school. At every school there are also specially trained school counsellors. They can offer advice on, for example, learning difficulties or unusual behaviour.

If there are problems at school or within the family, you can also contact a school social worker. They can help if, for example, your child does not feel happy at school or if you have any parenting questions. School social workers can also tell you what options are available if you or your child needs help.



[School Social Work Service in Karlsruhe](#)

## Notes





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Editorial: Hopfengärtner

Layout: Streeck

Pictures: [www.hob-design.de](http://www.hob-design.de) | page 14 P. Mohila

Print: Rathausdruckerei, recycled paper

As of: January 2020