



Parents' Information Entry to Primary School

Dear Parents,

After attending kindergarten, entry to primary school for your child is now approaching. Surely you and your child await this change full of suspense. But just as in every change, questions arise, there are uncertainties or even doubts. Is my child ready for school? How is s/he going to handle the new situation?

This brochure would like to give you some basic information on school entrance.

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Office for Public School (Amt für Volksschule)
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School Aptitude

The question of school aptitude is certainly of special importance to you, as parents. Is my child ready for school? Can s/he fulfill the required tasks? Should s/he eventually attend the special class during 1st grade (Einführungsklasse) or even enter school earlier than usual?

The idea of school aptitude has immensely changed in the last years. While until a few years ago "school readiness" was discussed and, therefore, the personal level of development of the individual child was especially emphasized, it is assumed today that "school aptitude" is not dependent on only one factor, but on different areas.

Development and Performance Level of the Child

Each child is unique. S/he has different strengths, abilities and talents. His/her development takes its course very individually.

Learning Conditions and Requirements of the School

The school demands certain requirements from the children. These depend mainly on the teaching curriculum and the organization of the school. The learning conditions are also influenced by the composition of the class, the size of the class and the different support services offered.

Family Background

Children grow up in individual families and environments and, in that way, they gain different experiences.

School aptitude is not an absolute amount that can be measured. That is why several forms of assessment and observation are used in kindergarten. Central to this point, however, is the exchange and discussion between you, as parents, and the kindergarten teacher. Should you not agree on a clear assessment, many more experts (persons responsible for school entrance, school remedial educators, School Psychological Service, etc.) are available.

Forms of School Entrance

Parents and kindergarten teachers find great individual developmental differences, particularly with children in school age. In order to adequately take these differences into account, different forms of school entrance are possible.

Regular School Entrance

On 1 August, after turning 6, children are required to attend school and, as a rule, enter first grade primary school after summer vacation.

Special Class during 1st Grade (Einführungsklasse)

Children, who are only to some extent, capable of attending school at the time of the school entrance, can attend the Einführungsklasse. This takes two years and has between 10 to 15 pupils. The topics of the first grade primary school will be spread over two school years. Transferring to the second grade primary school usually follows. In other local schools, special forms are also introduced, like for example, the year of the school entrance.

Early School Entrance

Children, who are capable of attending school before the regular time, can have an early school entrance.

The kindergarten teacher or the School Psychological Service, with the approval of the parents, can apply for this.

Postponing Compulsory School Attendance

In special cases, children, who are not yet capable of attending school, will stay for another year in kindergarten. They will be further supported, if required.

Small Class B (Kleinklasse B) or Special Schooling (Sonderschulung)

Some children will go directly to a Kleinklasse B or a Sonderschule (for example, Language Remedial School / Sprachheilschule/).

Cooperation

The kindergarten teacher will be in constant contact with you and inform you, on time and comprehensively, about the status of your child and, in general, about school entrance. Sometimes the decision about the right form of school entrance is not easy. As parents, you know your child particularly well. For this reason, the kindergarten teacher will take your assessment very seriously and compare her observations with you. In some particular cases, it can be that in spite of intensive discussions and further clarifications, you do not come to an agreement. Here the school board will decide after listening to all the participants. The definite decision on school entrance will be made not later than three weeks before the end of the term. Should you have any questions concerning school entrance or the school aptitude of your child, try to have a talk with the kindergarten teacher or with other experts.

We wish you and your child a good start in his/her new period of life.