Information about school attendance in Stuttgart

Dear parents,

In every country schooling and school systems are different. In Stuttgart, we have a wide range of schools. There are numerous questions related to schools, the school system and school attendance, also outside the classroom setting. To make it easier for you, we have put together the most important information in this flyer. If you have any additional questions, please refer to the end of the contact flyer for useful contact addresses. I wish your child a successful school start in Stuttgart!

Isabel Fezer
Deputy Mayor for Youth and Education

At what age does compulsory schooling begin?

Normally, children start school at the age of six. In Germany, every child has the right to go to school. This right is also an obligation, what we call compulsory schooling. Parents must ensure that their child attends school.

What types of school do we have?

All children in Germany start by attending primary school [Grundschule] for four years (children aged ca. 6-10). After primary school, they transfer to one of four different types of secondary school: technical secondary school [Werksrealschule], secondary modern school [Realschule], grammar school [Gymnasium] or comprehensive school [Gemeinschaftsschule].

My child cannot speak German yet. Can my child still attend school?

Yes. In that case, your child will attend a preparatory class [Vorbereitungsklasse]. In the preparatory class, your child and other children learn the German language. Preparatory classes are set up at primary schools and at secondary schools. For further information, please contact the school in your district or the educational authority [Staatliches Schulamt Stuttgart] or visit www.schulamt-stuttgart.de.

When and where do I enrol my child for school?

After your move to Stuttgart, please enrol your child in the secretariat of a school in your residential district. At the enrolment meeting, please take your child along with you and bring an official identity document of your child with you.

What is a school readiness health check [Einschulungsuntersuchung]?

Before your child enters the 1st grade, a comprehensive health check is completed at the Public Health Office [Gesundheitsamt]. It is the aim of the exam to identify any health restrictions at an early stage. This school readiness health check helps to determine if your child’s development is at a physical and psychological level for school attendance.
What type of school does my child attend between the ages of 6 and 10?
Your child must attend a primary school near where you live. To find the right primary school for your child, please ask the pre-school educators in your child’s kindergarten. You can also get information from the school in the district where you live. An overview of all schools in all city districts can be found at www.stuttgart.de/grundschulen.

What type of school is suited for my child at the age of 10 and beyond?
Your child has to attend a secondary school. You must enrol your child in a secondary school. An overview of all secondary schools in Stuttgart can be found at www.stuttgart.de/weiterfuehrende-schule.

What is expected of me as the child’s parent?
Parents and the school share the responsibility for the children’s education and development. This is why the school will regularly invite you to individual parent-teacher talks with your child’s teacher. You and all the other parents from your child’s class are invited to attend parent-teacher evenings at your child’s school.

How long does a school day last?
The duration of a school day depends on the age of your child and the type of school chosen. At primary school, most classes are held during the morning hours. However, there are also all-day schools, and different types of before and after-school care available. Depending on your preferences, your child can remain at school in the afternoon. In most instances, your child can also have lunch at school. For more details, please inquire with your child’s school about available options.

What is an all-day school?
In addition to the normal curriculum, all-day schools offer additional programmes for children. In Stuttgart, all-day schools are free of charge for children (except for lunch). Normally, lessons start at 08:00hrs and last until 15:00 or 16:00hrs. You must enrol your child in the all-day programming. Your enrolment is binding for the entire school year. For more information, please visit www.stuttgart.de/ganztagesgrundschule.

What type of care is available?
At Stuttgart’s primary schools, different types of care are available. Most schools offer pre-school care starting at 07:00hrs and after-school care until 17:00 hrs. If you wish to make use of this option, you must enrol your child and pay for it. Your enrolment is binding for the entire school year. We recommend that you get information from your child’s school about the options available as early as possible or visit www.stuttgart.de/schule. If you have any questions, you can also phone the Stuttgart Schools Administration Office [Schulverwaltungsamt] at 0711-216-88250.

When are school holidays?
During school holidays, children do not have any regular classes. For a list of the school holidays in Stuttgart, please visit www.stuttgart.de/schulferien. During school holidays you have the option to enrol your child in a holiday activity programme. This programme is offered at the school or at another location. You are required to enrol your child in this programme and pay a fee for your child’s participation. For further information about the programmes and fees, please ask the school of your child or visit www.stuttgart.de/ferien.
Does your child have disabilities or a chronic disease?
There are several options: Your child can attend primary school or a secondary school and be eligible for various types of support. Or else your child can be educated in a school with a focus on special needs. These schools are Special Education and Consulting Centres [Sonderpädagogische Bildungs- und Beratungszentren (SBBZ)]. You can obtain further information from the school or from the educational authority at phone 0711 6376-200.

Do I have to pay school fees?
In Germany, attendance at state schools is free of charge. This does not apply to private schools. You have to pay fees for care outside school hours and for lunch. In Stuttgart, numerous families are eligible for the Family Card and Bonuscard programmes. These families pay less for lunch and for care outside school hours. For further information, please visit www.stuttgart.de/familiencard or www.stuttgart.de/bonuscard.

What types of secondary schools are available after primary school?
After the 4th grade, children transfer to a secondary school. The most common types of secondary schools are:

- technical secondary school
- secondary modern school
- grammar school
- comprehensive school

A number of secondary schools offer an all-day curriculum targeted at the younger pupils (up to the 7th grade). Please contact the respective school or the Stuttgart Schools Administration Office. You will find all the important information at: www.stuttgart.de/weiterfuehrende-schulen.

How do I make the right choice for my child?
Once your child has reached the 4th grade, your child’s teacher will give a recommendation for a school where your child will go into the 5th grade. This is called a transfer recommendation [Grundschulempfehlung]. You, as parents, can decide which school your child will attend after primary school: technical secondary school, secondary modern school, grammar school or comprehensive school. You can obtain further information at events carried out at primary or secondary schools.

What happens if my child takes a different development?
Whatever choice you make, your decision need not be a final one! A transfer to another type of school is possible. After your child completes one school or drops out of school, there are various options to complete his/her schooling. For further information, please visit: www.bildungsnavi-bw.de/schulsystem.

Further information about primary and secondary schools in the districts are published in the Official Journal of the City of Stuttgart [Stuttgarter Amtsblatt]. A special supplement provides you with an updated overview of the local schools for each school year. Information about the schools can also be found here: www.stuttgart.de/schule (Stichwort Publikationen").
In a personal visit, the team of the Welcome Center Stuttgart will help you as you start out in Stuttgart and be happy to give you advice. The team members speak German, English and many other languages. For more information, please visit welcome.stuttgart.de/schule

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