



ADVICE FOR PARENTS ON THE TRANSITION

FROM KINDERGARTEN TO PRIMARY SCHOOL



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHAPING THE TRANSITION TOGETHER	6
THE TRANSITION TALK	9
THE SCHOOL ENTRY PHASE	10
THE CURRICULUM FOR KINDERGARTENS IN LOWER AUSTRIA	12
THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAYING	14
FIELD OF EDUCATION: EMOTIONS AND SOCIAL SKILLS	16
FIELD OF EDUCATION: ETHICS, SOCIETY AND RELIGION	18
FIELD OF EDUCATION: LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION	20
FIELD OF EDUCATION: EXERCISE AND HEALTH	24
FIELD OF EDUCATION: AESTHETICS AND DESIGN	26
FIELD OF EDUCATION: NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY	28
QUESTIONS ABOUT KINDERGARTEN	32
QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL	33
REFERENCES	34
READING MATERIAL FOR PARENTS	35

SHAPING THE TRANSITION TOGETHER



„DISCOVER MANY THINGS ON THE JOURNEY FROM KINDERGARTEN TO SCHOOL“

When you think back to your first day at school, perhaps you are reminded of the pride you felt of finally being able to go to school or of the concern you had about whether the children and teachers would be nice to you. It will be no different for your child now, who will be dealing with a range of thoughts and feelings associated with the upcoming start of school.

While, for the majority of children, a mixture of joy and curiosity prevails, some children may also experience some degree of anxiety or fear, which is always associated with more significant changes, because **the transition from kindergarten to school also means that a number of development tasks need to be addressed:**

- ▶ Saying goodbye to some children and adults at kindergarten
- ▶ Establishing new relationships with children and adults at school

- ▶ Dealing with the different expectations associated with being a “schoolchild”
- ▶ Finding one’s way around the new building and learning the daily routine at the school
- ▶ Learning to read, write and count

Coping with these development tasks is a challenge for every child and his or her family. Being able to deal with these positively emboldens children and furthers their development.

Your child has already gained experience in dealing with changing situations, such as when they started going to kindergarten or if a new brother or sister was born. Children grow stronger with every change that they successfully master and it becomes easier for them to deal with additional changes. Support your child and have faith that they will master this transition as well.

Be aware of how you speak about school. Statements such as: “Now life gets serious!”, “Just you wait until you go to school...” cause anxiety and put children under pressure.

Your own positive attitude towards school and learning rubs off on your child. Treat the start of school as something to be greeted with happiness, curiosity and optimism.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN OFFER SUPPORT TO YOUR CHILD:

- ▶ **Supporting your child's development:** There are so many different ways to encourage the overall development of your child in the course of daily family life which help in preparing for school. You can find ideas and suggestions on how to do this in this brochure.
- ▶ **Preparing for daily school life:** Attending kindergarten regularly; getting dressed and undressed by themselves; doing small, age-appropriate tasks and chores; doing the journey to school; letting them choose their own school bag; preparing the "work area" together; going to bed and getting up at appropriate times.

- ▶ **Familiarising the unfamiliar:** Support cooperation between the kindergarten and the school. Talk to your child about the upcoming start of school and answer their questions – suitable picture books could be of use here. Take advantage of trial days and school open days so that your child can get to know the "new world of school".



WHAT KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN SAY:

At kindergarten, I have learnt:



"to draw, build and climb well." (Kerstin, 6 years old)

"that I can do a lot." (Julia, 6 years old)

"to listen when someone else is speaking." (Fabian, 6 years old)

"to be patient." (Milena, 6 years old)

At school, I want to learn:



"to do craftwork and count." (Max, 6 years old)

"everything I can't do yet." (Kerstin, 6 years old)

When I go to school, I would like:



"to get good grades." (Jakob, 6 years old)

"my school to be especially friendly." (Perdita, 6 years old)

"to get new friends." (Julia, 6 years old)

THE FINAL YEAR AT KINDERGARTEN

The learning process at kindergarten starts on the very first day of attending kindergarten, and with it the work to prepare for school.

The final year at kindergarten is particularly important as children are given specific support and encouragement with regards to the transition from kindergarten to school.

THE OBLIGATORY FINAL YEAR AT KINDERGARTEN

In order to ensure that every child has access to this education, thereby creating more equal opportunities, it is mandatory for children to attend the final year of kindergarten before starting school.



The obligation to attend kindergarten in the final year before starting school **means** attending a kindergarten free of charge for at least **16 hours a week** on at least four days during teaching times.

THE FINAL YEAR AT KINDERGARTEN

- ▶ Specific educational activities for “the older ones”
- ▶ Pedagogical involvement to assist in the transition process (e.g. talks with the children on this subject, parent talks, parent evenings, cooperation with the school)
- ▶ Transition talks in order to discuss questions regarding the start of school



Kindergarten children visiting a school during a collaborative project

THE TRANSITION TALK

The transition from kindergarten to school is a smooth process for the majority of children.

If there are any issues to discuss regarding the development of your child or if there are any specific questions concerning schooling opportunities, then **a transition talk** can be held.

WHO IS PRESENT DURING THE TRANSITION TALK?

The parents and people responsible for the kindergarten and school establishments take part in the transition talk. If required, other people who look after your child can also attend the talk.

HOW IS A TRANSITION TALK ARRANGED?

If you as parent would like to have a transition talk, then please make this known to the kindergarten administration. They will then take the appropriate steps.

If the request for a transition talk comes from the kindergarten or the school, then the responsible kindergarten will contact you as the parent of the child. A date for the talk will be arranged with your consent.



Drawing: Hannah

“PLANNING THE
START OF SCHOOL
TOGETHER”

WHAT DOES A TRANSITION TALK CONSIST OF?

- ▶ Talk about the development level of the child (What are their strengths? Where do they need support? What do they need to learn well?)
- ▶ Information and decision support regarding school entry
- ▶ In the event that additional support or special conditions are necessary, these can be discussed and planned together.

THE SCHOOL ENTRY PHASE

STEP 1: ENROLMENT AT SCHOOL

If your child turns six on or before 31st August, then they are required to attend school as of 1st September of this year.

Every child required to attend school is admitted to a school, where their talents and needs are nurtured.

Your child is enrolled for school at the respective school in the judicial district. You can find out from the respective school or the town hall when enrolment begins at your school and which documents you need to take with you.

It is important that you take your child with you when enrolling. Aside from the formal admittance to the school, it is an opportunity to get to know each other and to assess whether a child is able to follow lessons in the first year without being overwhelmed.

The child should have the time and opportunity to get to know the other children and the teachers in the very first weeks at school, as well as to become familiar with the school building and the daily routine.

“A POSITIVE START
AT SCHOOL FOR
EVERY CHILD”



STARTING SCHOOL

A positive start to school has a positive effect on the child's future attitude to school and their enjoyment of learning.



Children are very different when it comes to the speed at which they learn, their willingness to learn, their ability to communicate or their level of independence. They have different interests and have had different life experiences.

The teacher concentrates on each child's individual learning requirements and accounts for these in the lessons.

The children are gradually introduced to a new form of learning, different to the familiar form of playing.

The school-entry phase gives the children three years to enable them to work through the learning material

of the first two academic years (Grundstufe I) depending on their own speed of learning.

If it becomes apparent that a child finds or will find first-year lessons to be too difficult, they will be assigned to the pre-school level (Vorschulstufe).

The pre-school level is part of Grundstufe I and can be held:

- ▶ as a stand-alone pre-school class
- ▶ or together with school years 1 and 2 as a joint class

Attendance of the pre-school level will be added to the school obligation.

In order to prevent a child either from being overwhelmed or under-challenged, it is also possible to switch academic years during the school year.

The legal provisions may be found in the Federal Law on Compulsory Education (1985 Compulsory Education Act), BGBl No. 76/1985 in its current applicable version.

Further information available (in German) at:
http://www.bmukk.gv.at/schulen/service/schulinfo/aufnahme_vs.



Drawing: Sophie



THE CURRICULUM FOR KINDERGARTENS IN LOWER AUSTRIA

KINDERGARTEN - A PLACE TO PLAY, LEARN AND FEEL COMFORTABLE

Important foundations are laid for education and learning during early childhood. Kindergarten represents an important step in the educational journey of children.

THE CURRICULUM:

- ▶ highlights how children receive support and encouragement in their development at kindergarten
- ▶ is not a classic school syllabus but rather a basis for the pedagogical work with children
- ▶ gives insights into the educational work and processes at kindergarten
- ▶ contains pedagogical suggestions and methodology
- ▶ creates a bridge between kindergarten and school

The following pages contain explanations, proposals and examples of how children are supported and encouraged during their development in the fields of education listed in the curriculum.

The curriculum for kindergartens in Lower Austria:
<http://www.noel.gv.at/Kindergaerten>



Field of education:
Emotions and social skills
p. 16



Field of education:
Ethics, religion and society
p. 18



Field of education:
Language and communication
p. 20



Field of education:
Exercise and health
p. 24



Field of education:
Aesthetics and design
p. 26



Field of education:
Nature and technology
p. 28

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAYING

Playing is one of the most important activities for a child. Experts believe that children (have to) play for around 15,000 hours by the time they are six years old. That is between 7 and 8 hours every day!

After all, not only is playing fun, but it also the child-appropriate way to:

- ▶ gain and practice skills and abilities
- ▶ deal with feelings
- ▶ overcome conflicts
- ▶ develop endurance, concentration and a positive attitude to work
- ▶ learn social skills (e.g. listening, keeping agreements)
- ▶ deal with impressions
- ▶ improve both motor skills and their body control
- ▶ test ways of behaving
- ▶ making abstract concepts comprehensible

When playing, children acquire fundamental experiences needed to acquire academic skills and abilities.

Here are two examples:

When playing with sand and water, children learn about handling measurements and quantity. The experiences acquired there help them to solve mathematical tasks.

When playing ball, children learn hand-eye coordination, among other things - this is a key element in the process of learning to read and write.

Experience the diverse ways of playing with your child: slipping into a role, playing with figures, building a dam, making a pattern with stones, playing card and board games, playing singing, dancing and rhyming games, etc.

“PLAYING IS
LEARNING”





PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

Free and guided forms of playing:

- ▶ Discovery and perceptual games
- ▶ Design and musical games
- ▶ Construction and building games
- ▶ Games of skill and movement
- ▶ Finger and hand puppet games
- ▶ Role plays
- ▶ Games to let off steam and games to calm down
- ▶ Language games, rhymes, puzzles, picture books
- ▶ Party games
- ▶ Board games and games with rules



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Give your child time to play so that they can develop and delve into the experiences they have here
- ▶ Let them finish playing when they are engrossed in a game
- ▶ Help them to meet other children. Playing with other children can help your child to acquire and practice important social skills
- ▶ Encourage the curiosity in your child. They need the chance to try things out, seek, find, collect and organise.



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

The skills and abilities acquired when playing constitute the basis for:

- ▶ Learning elementary skills (reading, writing, counting)
- ▶ Developing a joy of learning and independent learning
- ▶ A corresponding attitude to learning and work with regards to endurance and concentration, diligence, accuracy, helpfulness and thoughtfulness
- ▶ Social skills (cooperation, developing and recognising rules and norms)

FIELD OF EDUCATION: EMOTIONS AND SOCIAL SKILLS



“WHAT EMBOLDENS CHILDREN”

“In fact, children need three things,” explains Prof. Gerald Hüther. **“They need tasks that help them grow; they need role models around whom they can orientate themselves; and they need communities in which they feel comfortable.”**

The family is the first community in which children experience security, find role models and overcome their first challenges.

In order to be able to grow with tasks, children need a variety of opportunities to try out things by themself-

ves, to act independently and, in doing so, experience that their actions can have an effect.

Fetching bread from the bakery, hammering a nail or finding out for themselves why the bicycle bell does not work anymore makes children proud and increases their confidence.

Experiencing the sense that “I can have an effect on something”, “I am worthwhile”, “I am seen as a person” improves the self-esteem of children.

Children that have such a positive basic attitude view difficulties as challenges and find it easier to deal with changes, such as starting school.

The kindergarten gives children the chance to experience a larger community, to develop diverse relationships with other children and adults and to make friends. At kindergarten, there are opportunities every day to negotiate rules and to deal with conflicts. They learn to become part of a group, to assert themselves, to work together or to persuade others of their idea.

Each of these experiences, both with regards to the individual and coexisting with others, constitute an important building block for daily life and learning at school.



PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

► **Developing a picture of themselves**

Recognising their own strengths and bringing these to the group, assuming responsibility, developing a sense of how I come across to the others.

► **Experience being part of a group**

Feeling comfortable in the group, finding their place in the group, developing a sense of belonging to the group e.g. agreeing on daily activities together, playing group and social games, parties and celebrations, creating something together: planting a flower bed, designing a display, making a picture book themselves ...

► **Cooperation and conflicts**

Reaching agreements as a group, finding solutions to conflict situations together e.g. role plays, picture books, discussions



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

► **Give love and assurance**

Accept your child with all their feelings, strengths and weaknesses. Show them that you love them, trust them and have confidence in them to do things.

► **Take the time to listen**

Plan fixed times to play and talk together, eating together, going to bed

► **Set boundaries**

Reach clear agreements with the child and ensure these are adhered to with patience and consistency

► **Give freedom**

Trying things out, testing things themselves and letting them make mistakes

► **Deal with conflicts**

Arguing has to be learned: allowing them to say "No", express feelings appropriately, find compromises ...



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

► **Developing the children's personality**

Strengthening their sense of self-esteem and developing understanding towards others

► **Social learning**

Learning with and from each other, helping and supporting each other

► **Developing further behavioural skills, developing and accepting rules or organizational frameworks as prerequisites for teaching**

► **Avoiding and solving conflicts in a non-violent way**

► **Recognising and examining prejudices, creating awareness for roles of the sexes e.g. discussion groups, partner and group work, children helping children, addressing and offering social subjects during lessons**

FIELD OF EDUCATION: ETHICS, SOCIETY AND RELIGION

“Was this decision fair?” - “Who is God and has anybody seen Him before?” Children deal with fundamental questions about life - they need role models in their search for answers and support from the knowledge and experience of adults.

My opinion counts

It is important for children to know that they can contribute their opinion and ideas at home, kindergarten or school. In doing so, they learn to build their own opinion, to accept the opinions of others and to stand up for their own rights and the rights of others.

What is important to me

In every family, there are certain values, opinions and rules that are considered important. It is possible that children experience a values system at kindergarten that differs from that of their family. Thereby, they become familiar with different behavioural norms. If children feel accepted with their family's value system, it becomes much easier for them to deal critically with the values and norms of others. In this way, they can develop a fundamental grasp of ethics.

Everyone is equal

Children are keen observers. They see how people who are “different” are treated at home or at kindergarten. In keeping with the principles of inclusive education at kindergarten, the emphasis is on ensuring that each

and every child is a fully fledged part of the group in their differences and various talents. A setting in which differences are appreciated can ensure the development of feelings of belonging and security.

Diversity as an asset

As a mirror of society, kindergartens offer many opportunities to deal with cultural and religious diversity. Intercultural and interreligious work means encouraging learning process that familiarize children with different cultures and religions, that allows them to discover differences and things in common, and that enables them to meet each other with sincerity and interest.

“CHILDREN
CONTEMPLATE
THE WORLD”





PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

- ▶ Developing a fundamental understanding that every person is equal, perceiving diversity as an asset (picture books, subject-related stories, being set an example by the kindergartners)
- ▶ Being introduced to democratic attitudes and behaviour (group decisions by voting, contributing own opinion and ideas ...)
- ▶ Taking an active part in joint decisions (making joint agreements, accepting responsibility for the group)
- ▶ Experiencing religious celebrations, learning about religious stories
- ▶ Facing different cultures with an open mind (picture books, songs in different languages, and learning about the customs, food, clothing, etc of other cultures)

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Give your child age-appropriate opportunities to make their own decisions and to involve them in family decisions (What and how much do I want to eat? What shall I wear? Which friends shall I invite? Deciding where to go for a day out together ...)
- ▶ Performing smaller tasks and chores reinforces confidence and the sense of responsibility in your child (clearing plates away, watering plants, feeding cats, putting toys away...)
- ▶ Ask your child for their opinion (What did you like / not like? What could we do differently?)
- ▶ Talk to your child about what is important to them. As a parent, you play a key role in developing social norms and values.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

- ▶ Further developing knowledge, abilities and attitudes which form the basis of participation in a democratic society and of peaceful co-existence
- ▶ Further developing tolerance and acceptance, as well as the ability to distance themselves from other viewpoints and attitudes with reasons
- ▶ Finding and adhering to rules of play and work together
- ▶ Helping to shape the group, carrying out work together
- ▶ Being aware of manners (helping each other, listening, being considerate, ...)
- ▶ Contributing to the school community

FIELD OF EDUCATION: LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Acquiring language skills and learning to speak is a complex process that children go through at an amazing speed. In their first six years, children build up a range of vocabulary comprising up to 24,000 words, 5,000 of which they actively use.

How do children learn a language?

In the first few years of your child, you as a parent, together with brothers and sisters, are the most important language role models. Through playing with and speaking to each other on a daily basis, your child's brain develops structures and networks that are crucial for language development and future learning at school.

Language support assumes a central role at kindergarten

The kindergartners specifically help children to expand their range of vocabulary and expressions. There are a whole host of opportunities to do this at kindergarten: talking to other children and adults; through tales, stories, songs and rhymes; when discussing rules or dealing with conflict; when playing and doing sporting activities.

Multilingualism - a valuable asset

The foundations for learning another language are laid as soon as children recognise that the same item can have very different names. Children benefit from being in a multilingual environment from an early age.

For children that grow up in a bi- or multilingual environment, it is important for you, the parent, to speak to your child in the language with which you feel most comfortable and over which you have most command. In doing so, you create an important basis for learning any other additional language, just as for learning German. Your child needs to speak German well to receive a good education, to make friends and to feel comfortable here in Austria.

Kindergartners and intercultural specialists provide specific help to children in acquiring primary and secondary languages. At kindergarten, your child learns German when playing and talking to other children and through targeted support from the kindergartners.

Learning foreign languages playfully

The opportunity to be exposed playfully to English, as well as Czech, Slovakian and Hungarian in the border regions, forms a valuable basis for children to learn foreign languages in the future.

“LANGUAGE IS
THE KEY TO
COMMUNICATION
AND EDUCATION”





PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

Day-to-day language learning

- ▶ Environment designed to promote language learning (providing a wide range of children books, having discussions, creating opportunities to speak, the presence of other languages)
- ▶ Providing language support during activities (naming items, describing actions, discussing experiences)

Educational opportunities with a focus on language

- ▶ Reading, storytelling, looking at picture books (rousing interest in the text, giving food for thought and inviting questions during and after the reading)
- ▶ Discussions in smaller groups
- ▶ Creating, presenting and drawing stories made up by the children
- ▶ Philosophical discussions with the children
- ▶ Opportunity to learn foreign languages in a playful manner

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Take time for discussions with your child about experiences, feelings, conflicts, plans, thoughts ...
- ▶ Tell your child stories, read to them regularly (bedtime stories)
- ▶ Incorporate songs, counting rhymes, finger games or knee bouncing games into daily activities
- ▶ Come down to your child's eye level when speaking to them
- ▶ Listen to them and let them finish what they are saying
- ▶ Go to a library or bookstore together with your child and let them pick their own books
- ▶ Do not correct your child, but repeat the sentence correctly instead (e.g. "I like not that" - "Oh, you don't like that?")

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

- ▶ Activating and developing language abilities
- ▶ Speaking according to the situation: pick up on speaking situations and try out different things in a playful manner (e.g. saying sorry, giving information)
- ▶ Developing a joy of telling stories, communicating and listening
- ▶ Adhering to simple rules of discussion, using acquired language tools in conversations
- ▶ Using language in a playful and creative way



The first experience in learning to write is the experience of leaving a trace behind - the child discovers that they can “make a mark”.

Writing is a way for us to retain language in a written form and therefore keeping it visible for longer periods of time. Children are fascinated by this - they want to understand “signs from the adult world” and leave “messages” themselves.

Learning to write in a language is a key part of language development and is a process which begins long before the child starts school. Before children identify letters as being a recurring part of writing, they become aware of signs and symbols (e.g. stop signs, corporate logos) and their meaning. They recognise that reading and writing fulfil important functions in our society: We can compose messages, write shopping lists, read books, newspapers and instruction manuals or write postcards - and children want to be able to do this too.

Children need a range of skills and abilities to learn to read and write:

- ▶ Using drawing and writing instruments
- ▶ Recognising and distinguishing between forms, sizes and directions
- ▶ Recognising letters as being symbols

When acquiring this skill, factors such as patience and concentration, listening carefully, feeling and looking, as well as a good control of their body, play an important role.

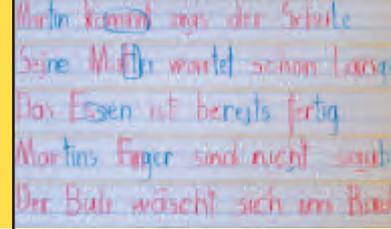


For instance, when children explore a sloping surface, they learn a lot about how to move on such a surface, which can then be helpful for them when learning to write. When writing the letter “A”, they can draw on “internal pictures” of how a “slanted line” appears.



If children demonstrate an interest in signs, symbols and letters, be sure to provide them support in their exploratory efforts.

The important thing to remember here is that this is done in a light-hearted, playful way and that children can choose their own speed for this “journey” into the world of letters and words.



PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

- ▶ **Reading enjoyment:**
Looking at picture books, reading books and stories and dealing with them
- ▶ **Ability to recount stories:**
talking about experiences, expressing their opinion, inventing stories
- ▶ **Understanding texts and their meaning:** Drawing stories, retelling and reenacting
- ▶ **Understanding symbols:** interacting playfully with symbols and letters
- ▶ **Becoming aware of the phonetic structure of language:** picking out sounds, clapping to rhythms, recognizing rhymes, jumping to syllables

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Provide your child with a wide range of pencils, brushes and paper
- ▶ Keep or hang up drawings and “products of writing” and show your child that you value these
- ▶ Draw your child’s attention to road signs and other symbols
- ▶ Use the phonetic value of letters to name them (e.g. MAX begins with the letter “M” – not with “EM”)
- ▶ Ball games, pick-a-stick, leapfrogging, spintops, plasticine, clothes pegs, puzzles

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

- ▶ Developing a lasting desire to read
- ▶ Understanding the meaning of a text and dealing with the content
- ▶ Training fine motor skills: writing letters, numbers and signs
- ▶ Experiencing writing as a meaningful activity
- ▶ Correct spelling: practice properly a limited range of words
- ▶ View of language: developing interest in using language consciously. Gaining insights into language through discovery, comparisons and observations

FIELD OF EDUCATION: EXERCISE AND HEALTH

Children love to move and, in doing so, they learn to control their body better and strengthen their muscles and joints. Not only does this keep them healthy, but it also lays the foundation for learning in a closer sense.

Every day brings new challenges: climbing stairs, jumping over puddles, running, clamouring and playing help children to explore the world.



During their development, children try to develop and perfect all of these different kinds of physical activities. This makes them more skilful and agile.

Children need space to discover and act out their physical creativity in a playful manner.

Physical and sensory experiences have an effect on development. The more these are incorporated into learning activities, the better knowledge is stored. Perception, feeling, thinking and acting are involved in the learning process.

Through physical activity, children learn to use their body, to handle materials and to use them accordingly. They also gain important social experiences when playing with, against and for each other during physical activities.

“EXERCISING IS
LEARNING FOR LIFE”



PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

- ▶ A diverse range of physical activities help children to learn using all their senses
- ▶ Physical activities are a central part of daily activities, both indoors and outdoors: running, skipping, games of skill, swinging, rolling, sliding, skidding ...
- ▶ Dedicated physical activity areas indoors and outdoors give children the opportunity to try out, practice and develop new ways of moving

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Make the most of opportunities to move during the day: climbing stairs, walking to the bakery or to kindergarten ...
- ▶ Give your child the opportunity to spend time outdoors: in the garden, at the playground, at the park, in the countryside, at the swimming pool and in the forest
- ▶ Balance bikes, tricycles and bicycles are ideal objects to encourage physical activity
- ▶ Playing indoors: hopping balls, mattresses, hammocks, trampolines, armchairs, climbing ropes, large boxes, covers etc, encourage physical activity

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

- ▶ Develop a passion for playing and physical activity
- ▶ Include individual interests into physical education classes
- ▶ Test social behavioural patterns during physical activities
- ▶ Develop awareness of the body
- ▶ Promote a diverse range of physical movements in daily and sporting activities
- ▶ Express oneself through physical movement
- ▶ Improving coordination
- ▶ Encouraging healthconscious behaviour

FIELD OF EDUCATION: AESTHETICS AND DESIGN

Creativity means questioning established ways of thinking and behaving to discover new solutions. This ability is very useful for future daily life, at school and at work, particularly when looking to solve problems.

HOW CAN CREATIVITY BE CULTIVATED?

Identify creative moments

Every child is creative - in their own special way. Discover the "creative side" of your child.

Offer opportunities

If children are given materials and encouragement, then their interest is awoken. They start trying things out, experimenting and creating new things. It is often enough for them to have a few boxes and glue or cans, which can be turned into a musical instrument, for instance.

Step back

"You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs", literally. Children

need time and, sometimes, "disorderliness" for something to emerge.

Just be there

The fine art of being an adult is to be there for the child without disrupting their creative process. Offer only as much help as is necessary and keep your own ideas of what is "nice" and "correct" to yourself. This is the only way your child can go their own way.

Avoid correcting

By making off-hand judgements, children lose their own feeling for assessing their own ability and, consequently, lose any desire to continue with their creative activities.

Appreciate the result

Leaving a construction in place, finding a nice place to put up a drawing and keeping things made by children give them the feeling of having created something valuable and of which they can be proud.

Experience art

Getting to grips with art and artists can sharpen children's senses, stimulate their imagination and inspire them to create their own works.

"CHILDREN ARE
THE ARCHITECTS OF
THE FUTURE"





KINDERGARTEN

PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

- ▶ Doing arts and crafts (drawing, painting, working with clay, wood, sand, cardboard, fabrics, wool, natural materials ...)
- ▶ Rhythm and music (singing, using instruments, experimenting with sounds)
- ▶ Dancing, creative physical activity
- ▶ Role plays, theatre plays (role play areas, dressing up, shadow theatre, glove puppets, acting out own stories...)
- ▶ Using language creatively (inventing stories, rhymes)
- ▶ Learning about works of art, artists, cultural artefacts from their own and other cultures

FAMILY

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Create areas where your child can let their creativity run free (underlays for working at the table or on the floor, space to move, being able to be "loud", being able to get dirty)
- ▶ Provide materials (old boxes, roles, fabrics, string, catalogues, paste, glue, sticky tape, paint, pencils, brushes, plasticine, scissors, building materials, stones, chestnuts...)
- ▶ Appreciate creative ideas, solutions and products (e.g. original word creations, or new somersault styles)
- ▶ Go to the theatre, musical and dance shows

SCHOOL

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

- ▶ Solve creative tasks individually
- ▶ Gain experience using materials and tools
- ▶ Acquire basic skills (dexterity, etc)
- ▶ Develop a creative approach to physical activity
- ▶ Singing, creating music, listening attentively, moving to music and musical creativity
- ▶ Creative use of language (creating word games, rhymes, names, terms, stories)

FIELD OF EDUCATION: NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY

“How does an aeroplane fly? Why do rainbows exist and why do I ask so many questions?” asks five-year-old Nina of her mother.

Children are curious. They are keen observers and want to understand why something is like it is. From this point of view, they are born researchers.

By watching and experimenting, children learn the laws of the environment and technology. They develop hypotheses, discover connections and plan new things. When children reach their boundaries, they direct their questions to us adults, which can often challenge us considerably.

While it is important for children to get an answer to their question, it is even more important to give them the opportunity to discover the answer themselves. An answer discovered themselves often stays with them for the rest of their lives - the spirit of research for other questions is kindled.

By experiencing and dealing with processes in the environment and nature, children gain scientific insights and develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment. The child sees that the environment is worth protecting and that everyone can make a contribution to conserving it.

Dealing with the principles of how simple technical devices work helps children to develop an interest in technical matters and to feel comfortable in a world increasingly under the influence of technology and electronics.



“CHILDREN
EXPLORE THEIR
ENVIRONMENT”



PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

- ▶ Careful observation and perception (animal world, plants, weather, sun, moon, how devices work ...)
- ▶ Early insights into the laws and properties of biology, chemistry and physics (through experiments with water, air, light and shade, colours, sounds, magnets ...)
- ▶ Ability to express themselves in a language: asking questions, learning specialist terms, describing processes, formulating findings
- ▶ Treating nature and the environment responsibly
- ▶ Technical devices: learning about functions, uses and dangers when using them

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Spend time with your child in nature (every season and every type of weather offers different discovery opportunities)
- ▶ Be observant together (What has changed? What can we hear, smell, see?)
- ▶ Tip: Take containers to collect things (tumblers, magnifying glass, bags, cans)
- ▶ Help your child to understand what they have discovered (What is the flower called? Why do earthworms come to the surface when it rains?)
- ▶ Observe process in nature and the environment: Plant flowers or vegetables together, melt ice, freeze water ...

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

- ▶ Encourage creativity and enjoyment of doing things through discovering, exploring and experimenting
- ▶ Understand, explain and construe more facts about nature and the environment
- ▶ Develop a responsible attitude towards the environment
- ▶ Talk about impressions and experiences associated with the environment
- ▶ Gain basic insights into the areas of construction, living, technology and product design by dealing with materials and tools

Two steps back, three steps forwards. Children need clear experiences in order to be able to understand mathematical processes such as adding and subtracting.

CHILDREN LEARN MATHEMATICS

Children are confronted with a variety of mathematical questions and situations in daily life:

“How can we share fairly?” - “Who’s built the tallest tower” - “Only five more times to sleep until my birthday” - “I am being picked up in one hour.”

In such situations, children look for consistencies, order and connections, thereby discovering mathematical laws.

Thinking mathematically helps children to organise the world and to find their place:

The clock shows when an hour has passed. We can count the number of marbles everyone has been given to make sure it’s the same.

Children learn about mathematics through clear experiences, observations and questions that they encounter during their daily lives.

They can use these experiences to develop the ability to deal with abstract concepts such as numbers and geometric forms.

UNDERSTANDING numbers and quantities:

Four snail shells discovered

Four snail shells kept

Four snail shells held in the hand



At kindergarten, teachers seize situations from daily life and playing to familiarise children with mathematics. They give children information, motivation and support, providing them with targeted mathematical activities.

At home, you will also encounter situations that invite children to measure, weigh, compare, sort and count.

Take the time to be present during such “mathematical” investigations to answer any questions and provide help if needed.

Perhaps your child is thinking a lot about whether millipedes actually have a thousand feet or if two 5 euro notes are worth the same as one 10 euro note.





PLAYING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT KINDERGARTEN

- ▶ **Quantities:** Digging and pouring games, weighing and measuring when cooking or at the supermarket
- ▶ **Shapes and spaces:** Movement “landscapes”, construction material, drawing treasure maps
- ▶ **Time:** Measuring time with an hourglass, alarm clock, pictograms for daily routine
- ▶ **Sequences and patterns:**
 - Discovering patterns in nature, threading chains, creating patterns ...
- ▶ **Sorting and classifying:** Sorting boxes, matching exercises: All zoo animals go into the same enclosure
- ▶ **Numbers and figures:** “Hopping” numbers, feeling figures, measuring with a ruler and measuring tape ...



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN THE FAMILY

- ▶ Let your child help in the kitchen (weighing, counting eggs) or with DIY tasks (measuring tape, level)
- ▶ Ride bikes and scooters, climbing, swinging ...
- ▶ Looking for things: “The glue is in the second drawer from the bottom.”
- ▶ Building with building blocks, railway lines ...
- ▶ Reading the time together, looking at the calendar
- ▶ Tidying toys, clearing cutlery away
- ▶ Creating collections
- ▶ Playing dice games, counting plates, toys, birthday candles ...
- ▶ Discovering numbers and figures (house number, birthday card, price tags ...), starting with a countdown (10, 9, 8, 7, ...)



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AT SCHOOL

- ▶ Identify the practical use of mathematics
- ▶ Able to order and understand the surroundings
- ▶ Recognise connections and develop regulated structures
- ▶ Train critical thought and problem analysis
- ▶ Develop imaginative abilities by playing, exploring and researching
- ▶ Provide facts about the environment using figures, sizes and operations
- ▶ Develop logical thinking and a problem-solving attitude

QUESTIONS ABOUT KINDERGARTEN

Your child's kindergarten is the first point of call for you to get information and discuss matters. The teacher in charge of the group and the kindergarten administration are happy to discuss any matter with you.

If you have any other questions or matters of concern, please contact the respective kindergarten inspector for your district:

District	Location: District commission	Telephone number
AMSTETTEN	3300 Amstetten, Preinsbacherstraße 11	07472/9025 ext. 10530
BADEN (without Ebreichsdorf*)	2500 Baden, Schwartzstraße 50	02252/9025 ext. 11610
BRUCK/LEITHA (with Ebreichsdorf*)	2460 Bruck/Leitha, Fischamender Straße 10	02162/9025 ext. 11207
GÄNSERNDORF	2230 Gänserndorf, Schönkirchner Straße 1	02282/9025 DW 10226
GMÜND	3910 Zwettl, Am Statzenberg 1	02822/9025 DW 11438
HOLLABRUNN	3580 Horn, Frauenhofner Straße 2	02982/9025 DW 11317
HORN	3580 Horn, Frauenhofner Straße 2	02982/9025 DW 11317
KORNEUBURG	2100 Korneuburg, Bankmannring 5	02262/9025 DW 11217
KREMS, KREMS-STADT	3500 Krems, Drinkweldergasse 15	02732/9025 DW 11381
LILIENFELD	3270 Scheibbs, Rathausplatz 5	07482/9025 DW 11246
MELK	3390 Melk, Abt Karl-Straße 23	02752/9025 DW 11405
MISTELBACH	2130 Mistelbach, Hauptplatz 4/5	02572/9025 DW 11245
MÖDLING	2340 Mödling, Bahnstraße 2	02236/9025 DW 11495
NEUNKIRCHEN	2620 Neunkirchen, Peischinger Straße 17	02635/9025 DW 10310
SCHEIBBS	3270 Scheibbs, Rathausplatz 5	07482/9025 DW 11246
ST. PÖLTEN	3109 St. Pölten, Am Bischofteich 1	02742/9025 DW 37840
ST. PÖLTEN-STADT	3270 Scheibbs, Rathausplatz 5	07482/9025 DW 11246
TULLN	3430 Tulln, Hauptplatz 33	02272/9025 DW 11299
WAIDHOFEN/YBBS	3300 Amstetten, Preinsbacherstraße 11	07472/9025 DW 10530
WAIDHOFEN/THAYA	3910 Zwettl, Am Statzenberg 1	02822/9025 DW 11438
WR. NEUSTADT, WR. NEUSTADT-STADT	2700 Wr. Neustadt, Ungargasse 33	02622/9025 DW 11307
WIEN-UMGEBUNG	3400 Klosterneuburg, Leopoldstraße 21	02243/9025 DW 10309
ZWETTL	3910 Zwettl, Am Statzenberg 1	02822/9025 DW 11438

Office of the Provincial Government of Lower Austria; Department for Kindergartens; Wiener Straße 54, Stiege A, Tor zum Landhaus 3109 St. Pölten, Tel: 02742/9005-13238, Fax: 02742/9005-13595, Email: post.k5@noel.gv.at, <http://www.noel.gv.at/Kindergaerten> (in German)

*The municipalities of the former district court of Ebreichsdorf are called Ebreichsdorf, Günselsdorf, Oberwaltersdorf, Pottendorf, Reisenberg, Seibersdorf, Teesdorf, Trumau, Blumau-Neurißhof, Mitterndorf an der Fischa and Tattendorf

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL

For questions or concerns with regard to your child starting school, please contact the director of the school in your district.

For further information and support, the following local School Inspector branch offices are available.

Education region 1: Former school districts Waidhofen/Thaya, Gmünd, Horn, Zwettl, Krems/Stadt, Krems/Land

School Inspector for Lower Austria: branch office Zwettl

Klosterstraße 11, 3910 Zwettl, Tel.: 02742/280-9100, Email: zwettl@lssr-noe.gv.at

Education region 2: Former school districts Hollabrunn, Korneuburg, Mistelbach, Gänserndorf, including the schools in the Gerasdorf region

School Inspector for Lower Austria: branch office Mistelbach

Bürogebäude West, Gewerbeschulgasse 2, 2130 Mistelbach, Tel.: 02742/280-9200, E-Mail: mistelbach@lssr-noe.gv.at

Education region 3: Former school districts Amstetten, Melk, Scheibbs, Waidhofen/Ybbs

School Inspector for Lower Austria: branch office Waidhofen/Ybbs

Kapuzinergasse 6, 3340 Waidhofen/Ybbs, Tel.: 02742/280-9300, E-Mail: waidhofen-ybbs@lssr-noe.gv.at

Education region 4: Former school districts Lilienfeld, St. Pölten/Stadt, St. Pölten/Land, Tulln, Wien-Umgebung - not including the schools in the Schwechat and the Gerasdorf regions

School Inspector for Lower Austria: branch office Tulln

Albrechtsgasse 26-28, 3430 Tulln, Tel.: 02742/280-9400, E-Mail: tulln@lssr-noe.gv.at

Education region 5: Former school districts Baden, Wr. Neustadt/Stadt, Wr. Neustadt/Land, Neunkirchen, Mödling, Bruck/Leitha, including the schools in the Schwechat region

School Inspector for Lower Austria: branch office Baden

Wiener Straße 89, Stiege 2, Top 9, 2500 Baden, Tel.: 02742/280-9500, E-Mail: baden@lssr-noe.gv.at

School Inspector for Lower Austria, Rennbahnstraße 29, 3109 St. Pölten, Tel.: 02742/280-0, Fax: 02742/280-1111, Email: office@lssr-noe.gv.at, <http://www.lssr-noe.gv.at>

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The school. This DVD provides information about the key aspects of the Austrian school system.
Download: www.daz.schule.at, Order: office@amedia.co.at

Information about every development phase of your child. Letters from parents, advice for parents on CD-ROM.
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Order: www.bmwfj.gv.at/publikationen, www.eltern-bildung.at

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www.noe.gv.at/kindergarten