Stadt Leipzig
Referat für Migration und Integration

# Welcome to school

## Information for parents

ENGLISCH

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## Information for parents

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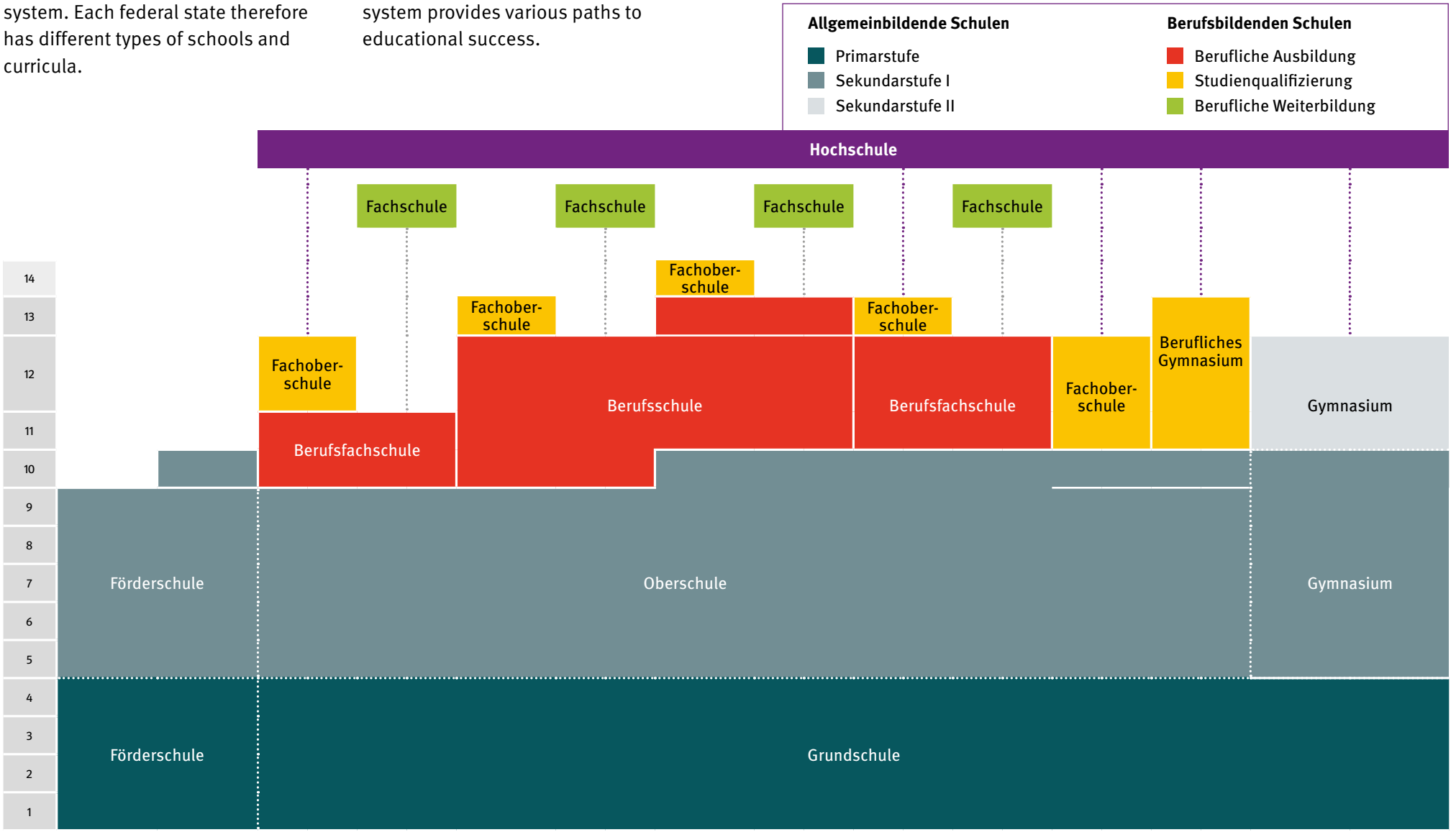
# How does the school system work in Germany and Saxony?

Leipzig is in the federal state of Saxony. Saxony is one of 16 federal states in Germany. The federal states are responsible for the education and school system. Each federal state therefore has different types of schools and curricula.

The structure of the school system in Saxony is shown in the diagram. Since every child has different abilities and interests, the Saxon education system provides various paths to educational success.

The system is flexible and allows for transitions between different types of schools at different stages.

Educational counselling is an opportunity for you to discuss your child's individual educational pathway. You can find more information about this later in this brochure.



## Where can I find more information about school and school integration?

**“Many roads to success” [1]**

**Migration and integration into the education system [2]**

## Does my child have to go to school? Yes, there are laws regarding the right to education and compulsory schooling

Every child has the right to education and a non-violent upbringing. Therefore, every school-age child is both permitted and required to attend school regularly.

Children who turn six years old by 30 June of the current calendar year are required to start school at the beginning of the school year.

Younger children can be registered at the request of their parents if they are ready for school.

If it is not yet certain that a child is ready for school, they may start school a year later.

Lessons include sports and swimming. Compulsory school attendance also includes participation in activities such as school trips, project days and other school events.

Parents share a significant responsibility with the school for their child’s educational success.

They are required to ensure that their children attend school and actively support their educational development.

[1] https://publikationen.sachsen.de/bdb/artikel/38411

[2] https://migration.bildung.sachsen.de/index.html

# How does my child start school? Registering for school and educational counselling

## Registering for the first school year

Children who are due to start school must be registered at their designated local primary school between 1 August and 15 September of the year before they start.

Before school starts, all children undergo a school entry assessment. You must book an appointment for this online before registering your child for school.
You can find more information about the school entry assessment and school registration here:

**Registration of school starters – City of Leipzig** [3]

All children who are of school age are registered in Year 1. Children attend primary school from Year 1 to Year 4.

The school management decides whether to admit the child to their selected school. Parents will be notified of the decision in a letter of acceptance between May and June before the school year begins.

Special arrangements for children who have moved to Leipzig after the registration deadline for children starting school, or who are joining Year 1 during the course of the school year:
You must also register your child directly at the primary school in your school catchment area.

The school registration ceremony takes place on the Saturday before the start of the new school year.

Did you know that the first day of school in Saxony is a major celebration with friends and family? Since the 19th century, it has been tradition to give school starters a *Zuckertüte*, a cone filled with surprises.



[3] https://www.leipzig.de/jugend-familie-und-soziales/schulen-und-bildung/schulen/grundschulen/anmeldung-der-schulanfaenger/

## Registering older school-age children for school

To start school in grade 2 and higher, you must register your child for school via the online portal if your child's native language is not German or not exclusively German.

**School registration for migrant children – Educational counselling** [4]

Once you have completed the online school registration, you will receive an invitation to your first Special Educational Counselling Session.

This session takes place either at the designated office of the Saxon State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB) or at an assigned school, usually the school your child will later attend.

Address of the Leipzig Office of the State Office for Schools and Education: Nonnenstraße 17–21, 04229 Leipzig.

## What is educational counselling?

During your first Special Educational Counselling Session, you will receive information about the educational pathways and types of schools in Saxony. In addition, the adviser will explain how your child will be supported with learning the German language as part of their school integration. You will be given individual advice on choosing the right educational path for your child.

The school and year group that your child will join depend on their previous schooling and educational background. You will also receive information about how school qualifications from your home country can be recognised.

Educational counselling will continue as an ongoing process throughout your child's education in general schools in Saxony until they complete their school education.

[4] https://www.schulportal.sachsen.de/bildungsberatung/

# How will my child learn at school if their native language is not German?

At the beginning, your child will focus on learning German at school. They will learn both everyday German and academic language. This is essential for understanding lessons and integrating well into school life.

The subject is called *Deutsch als Zweitsprache* (DaZ; German as a Second Language).

Learning German is divided into three stages:

- In the first stage (DaZ 1), your child will acquire basic everyday German skills. They will attend a special German preparation class with other children whose native language is not German.
- In the second stage (DaZ 2), your child will continue learning German in the preparation class. At the same time, they will join selected lessons in their new class (their regular class), where they will begin to integrate and meet their new classmates.
- In the third stage (DaZ 3), your child will join their regular class and will be able to participate in all subjects. If needed, they will continue to attend DaZ alongside their other lessons to support their progress.

If your child is in Year 1, they will not be placed in a preparatory class but will join a mainstream class from the start.

If your child does not yet have sufficient German language skills, additional German as a Second Language (DaZ) lessons are offered to support their language acquisition.
German preparation classes are offered at both general schools and vocational schools.

The preparation classes at secondary schools and grammar schools are not linked to a particular educational pathway. This means that a decision about whether your child continues their education at a secondary school or a grammar school is not made until they complete the second stage of DaZ.

The decision is based on an assessment of your child's learning progress and performance by the teachers' conference (*Klassenkonferenz*).
The teachers' conference is formed of a team of teachers who have taught your child during partial integration.

Your child's educational background and achievements in their home country are also taken into account in their assessment. The assessment also considers your child's proficiency in German as an academic language, which is evaluated using the DaZ level descriptors.

If you want your child to attend a regular class at a grammar school after the preparation class, you and your child will first attend educational counselling. The school will then send its assessment to the Grammar Schools Department of the Saxon State Office for Schools and Education, where the final decision is made.

If your child is already 16 years old or older when you arrive in Germany, they will attend a German preparation class with a vocational training focus at a vocational school.

# What subjects are taught?

## The following subjects are taught at primary school:

- German
- Mathematics
- General Studies
- English
- Religion/Ethics
- Drawing/Art
- Handicrafts
- Music
- Sport

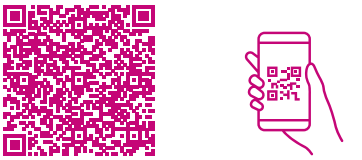
## The following subjects are taught at secondary school and grammar schools:

- German
- Mathematics
- Chemistry/Physics/Biology/ Computer Science
- History/Geography/GRW (Social Studies, Legal Studies, Economics)
- English as a First Foreign Language
- Second foreign language: options vary by school and may include French, Italian, Latin, Russian or Spanish
- Music/Art
- Religion/Ethics
- Sport

## Lessons in your child's language of origin

Saxony supports the multilingual development of children and adolescents. Children and adolescents whose native language is not German or not exclusively German are therefore also offered lessons in their language of origin. These lessons aim to develop proficiency in their language of origin.

For information on lessons in the language of origin offered in Leipzig, please refer to the download section of this web page:



**Instruction in the language of origin** [5]

[5] https://www.leipzig.de/jugend-familie-und-soziales/schulen-und-bildung/schulen/deutsch-als-zweitsprache-und-herkunftssprachlicher-unterricht#c65510

# What happens after primary school?

After attending primary school (Year 1 to Year 4), your child will transition to secondary-level education at an Oberschule (secondary school), a Gymnasium (grammar school) or a Gemeinschaftsschule (an integrated school that offers various types of education at a single site).
At integrated schools, children learn together for longer.

A secondary school can lead to different types of school-leaving certificates: the Hauptschulabschluss or Realschulabschluss.

To gain the Hauptschulabschluss, pupils must successfully complete Year 9. This qualification allows pupils to begin vocational training after they finish school.

To gain the Realschulabschluss, pupils must successfully complete Year 10. It provides access to a wider range of vocational training opportunities. Pupils can also attend a general or vocational grammar school or a Fachoberschule (a technical secondary school). This allows them to pursue the Abitur (see below) or the Fachhochschulreife (general entrance qualification for universities of applied sciences). To do so, they must meet specific performance requirements.

Attending a grammar school enables your child to achieve the Abitur after successfully completing Year 12.

The Abitur is a general qualification for entrance to university. With the Abitur, students can start university studies or vocational training, either as a dual training programme or a school-based programme.

Before the end of Year 4, your child's primary school will recommend whether your child should attend a secondary school or a grammar school. This is called a Bildungsempfehlung (educational recommendation). The next section explains more about this.

**Note:** Make sure to gather information about the different educational profiles and daily school life in the different types of secondary-level schools well in advance.

Many schools offer open information days to help families familiarise themselves. Attend these events with your child to explore the schools' profiles and facilities. It is advisable to visit several schools, as your preferred school may not always have places available.

You will find an overview of when schools hold their open information days here:

**Open days at schools** [6]

[6] https://www.leipzig.de/jugend-familie-und-soziales/schulen-und-bildung/schulen/tage-der-offenen-tuer/

## What is a *Bildungsempfehlung*?

At the end of the first semester in Year 4, your child's class teacher will invite you to an individual meeting. During this meeting, you will receive a recommendation as to whether your child should move on to a secondary school or a grammar school after primary school. This is known as a *Bildungsempfehlung* (educational recommendation). The recommendation is based on which pathway best suits your child's individual capabilities.

The educational recommendation is based on a professional assessment of your child's capabilities by experienced teachers who have taught your child and observed them closely.

Your child can still receive an educational recommendation for a grammar school even if they do not meet the criteria for this pathway until the end of Year 4.

You will receive the educational recommendation in writing.

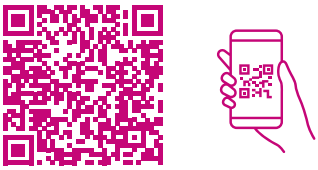
The educational recommendation serves as guidance for you as the parents.

However, you as the parents make the final decision about your child's educational pathway.

It is important to choose a type of school that aligns with your child's capabilities, interests and talents.

If you would like your child to attend a grammar school, it is particularly important that your child also wants to attend this type of school and is able to learn and work independently.

Ask your child's primary school for the deadlines for registering at the secondary school or grammar school of your choice.



**Transfer to secondary schools** [7]

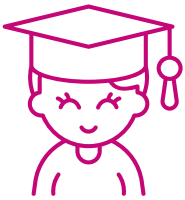


[7] https://www.schule.sachsen.de/wechsel-an-weiterfuehrende-schularten-4010.html

## Who receives an educational recommendation for a grammar school after primary school?

Your child will receive an educational recommendation for a grammar school if their average grades in German, Mathematics and General Studies are 2.0 or better. If your child has a grade of 3 in one of these subjects, it can be compensated by a grade of 1 in another of the same subjects. However, your child must not have a grade of 4 or worse in any of these subjects.

In addition, your child's learning, social and work behaviour, developmental level, academic capabilities and motivation must demonstrate that they are capable of meeting the demands of education at a grammar school.



# Can I register my child at a grammar school without an educational recommendation?

Parents of pupils in Year 4 who do not have a recommendation for a grammar school may still apply for admission to Year 5 at a grammar school. In this case, your child will need to take a written assessment. This test lasts 60 minutes. The tasks on the test are drawn up at a central level. The test is divided into equal sections on German, Mathematics and General Studies.

Following the test, parents are required to attend a mandatory consultation at the grammar school.

Please note:
If you do not attend the consultation, your application for your child's admission to grammar school will be considered to have been withdrawn.

What to bring to the consultation:

- The educational recommendation from your child's primary school
- Your child's most recent annual school report
- Their most recent mid-year school report

During the consultation, if the teachers at the grammar school remain convinced that your child should attend a secondary school, but you disagree, you must confirm your decision to apply for admission to the grammar school in writing within three weeks.

By providing this written confirmation, you assert your parental decision that your child should attend grammar school despite this pathway not being recommended for your child.
This means that, in this case, you as the parents make the final decision about this transition.

Please make this decision responsibly and in your child's best interest.

## Is it possible to transfer to a grammar school at a later date?

Yes, it is also possible to transfer from a secondary school to a grammar school after Year 5 and 6, or after Year 7, 8 or 9 (from the *Realschule* educational pathway). To do so, your child must demonstrate the required capabilities, and you as the parents must agree. Various regulations must be considered when making this transition. Please discuss your plans with your child's school in good time if you are considering a transfer to a grammar school.

If certain performance criteria are met, it is possible to transfer to Year 11 of a *berufliches Gymnasium* (vocational grammar school) or Year 10 of an *allgemeinbildendes Gymnasium* (general grammar school) after completing *Realschule*.

Students can obtain the *Abitur* (general qualification for entrance to university) at both vocational and general grammar schools.

## How do I register my child at a secondary school or grammar school?

To register your child at a secondary school or a grammar school, you must bring the following documents with you:

- Your child's most recent annual school report or mid-year report from their previous school
- Your child's birth certificate or a certified copy of their birth certificate
- The educational recommendation for your child
- If your child has an identified special educational need, you also need to bring their latest *Entwicklungsbericht* (development report) with you

# What does “special educational needs” mean?

If it is difficult for your child to learn, develop and succeed in a regular school without specific support, they may have a special educational need.

Before your child starts school, a school entrance examination is carried out by doctors from the public health department to check whether your child has any health-related or other specific needs. In some cases, support or therapy is recommended to better prepare your child for school.

**School entrance examination** [8]

If necessary, the doctors may suggest specific school support and inform the school. You should then discuss with the school how exactly your child can be supported.

Please note that this is only a recommendation. The final decision about your child’s school admission lies with the school management.

Special educational needs may also become apparent after your child begins school. If you would like your child to be assessed for special educational needs, please contact your child’s school. The school may also approach you if they believe your child might need additional support.

In either case, an assessment process will take place only with your consent. This process determines whether any special educational needs exist and recommends the necessary support. Children can then be educated inclusively at a regular school (primary school, secondary school or grammar school) or attend a special school that suits their identified needs. If special educational needs are identified, your child is entitled to receive this support.



[8] https://www.leipzig.de/jugend-familie-und-soziales/gesundheit/kindergesundheit/vorsorgeuntersuchungen-gesundheitsamt#c325050

A child or adolescent may have special educational needs in various areas, such as:

- Language and communication
- Learning
- Physical and motor development
- Intellectual development
- Emotional and social development
- Vision
- Hearing

In Saxony, the Mobile Special Education Service (MSD) assesses whether a child has special educational needs.

Further information on this topic is available here in several languages:

**On the right path – Information for parents on the identification of special educational needs** [9]

[9] https://publikationen.sachsen.de/bdb/artikel/42520

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# The school day

## What if my child is ill and cannot attend school?

If your child is ill or cannot come to school for another reason, you must inform the school. Ideally, you should inform the school before the start of the school day, but no later than the end of the first lesson.

Please check with your child's school to find out how absences should be reported. Many schools use digital portals exclusively for reporting absences. If your child's school does not have a digital portal, you can call the school office, leave a message on the answering machine or send an email. Please provide the following information: your child's full name and class, the expected duration of the absence and the reason for the absence.

If you do not use a digital portal to report the absence, you must also provide a written note. This written note (signed by the parents) must be submitted to the school no later than the third day of the absence.

If your child is ill for more than five days, the school may request a doctor's certificate, particularly in cases of frequent absences.

Please note: If the school has not been informed of your child's whereabouts by the start of the second lesson, the school management will decide at its discretion whether to call the police to search for the child.

## Can I temporarily excuse my child from school?

Pupils can be excused from school attendance only in justified exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence must be requested in writing and in advance.

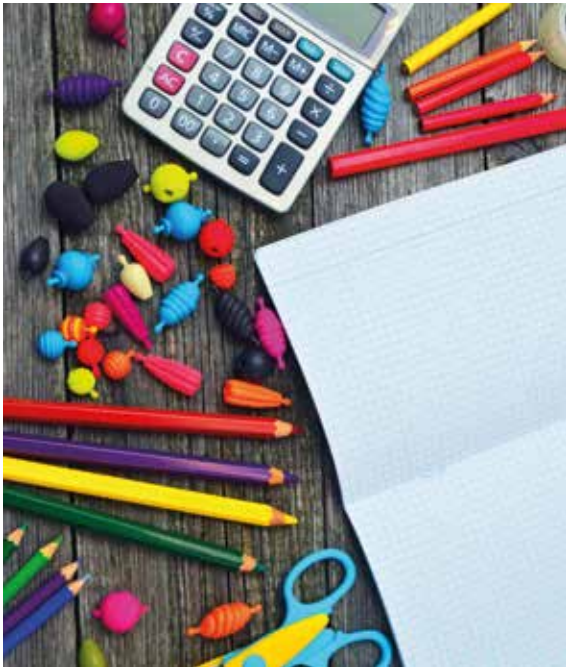
Your child's class teacher can approve up to two days' absence per school year. The school management makes the decision if the absences are for three days or more.

## What happens if my child is absent without an excuse?

If your child is absent without an excuse, the class teacher will first speak with your child to understand the reasons for the absence. You as the parents will be informed of this discussion. If absences continue, a meeting with you will be arranged to find solutions together. If your child continues to miss school without a valid excuse, the school may involve the Youth Welfare Office, and fines can be issued. In extreme cases, the police may escort the child to school.

All unexplained absences will also be noted in your child's school report.

As parents, please work closely with the school to ensure that absences do not occur in the first place and that they do not escalate into chronic school refusal in the worst-case scenario.



## What school supplies does my child need?

In order to learn properly at school, your child will need the necessary learning materials. The school will provide some items, but you will need to supply others. The school will give you a list of the materials required for each subject.

## What supplies will the school provide or loan to my child?

### Textbooks and workbooks:

In Saxony, state schools provide free learning materials. This means that textbooks, atlases, workbooks, dictionaries, legal references, and formula booklets are generally provided free of charge. Loaned textbooks must be handled with care and not lost. At the end of the school year, they must be returned to the school so that the next class can use them.

### Calculators:

Free learning materials also include calculators with specific functions required from Year 8 onwards, as outlined in the curriculum.

## What materials do I need to buy for my child?

- Writing, drawing and painting supplies
- Pencil case
- Ruler, compass and set square
- Exercise books, binders, notepads and report folders
- Protective covers for exercise books, workbooks and textbooks
- Homework planner
- School rucksack or bag, and a sports bag
- Sports clothing and swimming costume
- Musical instruments (unless learning standards and the curriculum state that they are required for lessons)

## Timetable and substitute timetable

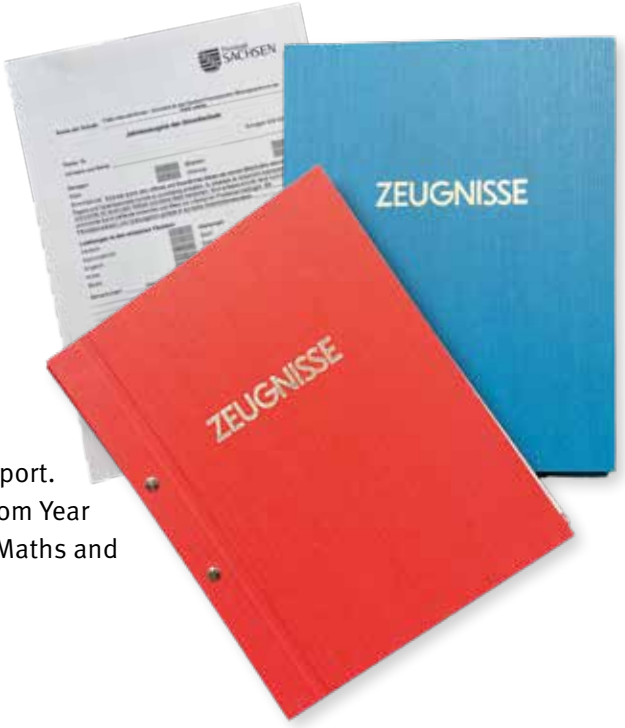
Children attend school from Monday to Friday. Each pupil is given a timetable showing when lessons take place, break times and the subjects taught on each day of the week. The timetable usually applies for the entire school year. However, the timetable may change occasionally, for example, if teachers are absent. Pupils and their parents are responsible for checking for updates and any changes to the substitute timetable. The most recent version of the substitute timetable can be found on the school's website or in the school's app.

## School grades

To help you and your child understand their performance and identify areas where they need to improve, both written and oral work are graded on a scale from 1 to 6. 1 is the highest grade, and 6 is the lowest. There are subject grades for performance in the individual school subjects and behaviour grades for general learning and social behaviour, such as conduct, participation, diligence and orderliness.

**What school grades mean:**

1 = very good
2 = good
3 = satisfactory
4 = sufficient
5 = poor
6 = insufficient




No grades are given in Year 1. Instead, your child will receive a written evaluation of their performance with the first mid-year report. Grades are gradually introduced from Year 2 onwards. The subjects German, Maths and General Studies are graded first.

## Reports

Halfway through the school year, pupils receive a mid-year report summarising their grades up to that point. At the end of the school year, they receive a report with both subject grades and behaviour grades.

Reports are very important documents that must be stored carefully. The reports issued at the end of Years 4, 9, 10 and 12 are especially important and are sometimes called “final reports”. Your child will need them for admission to secondary-level education and university, or to start an apprenticeship.

## Moving up to the next year

Pupils move up to the next year if they achieve at least a 4 (= sufficient) in all subjects or if they have been able to compensate any insufficient performance in accordance with the school regulations. If a child receives a grade of 6 or has too many 5s on their report, they will not move up and must repeat the school year. As there are many rules governing moving up to the next year, please consult your child's class teacher if you have specific questions.

Years 1 and 2 are treated as a single unit to better accommodate children's individual learning needs. This means that no decision about moving up is taken at the end of Year 1. Every child moves up to Year 2. However, with parental consent and the approval of the teachers' conference (*Klassenkonferenz*), a child may spend an additional year in Year 1 if necessary.

## School holidays and public holidays in Saxony

A school year lasts from August or September of one year to June or July of the next. During this period, there are several weeks of school holidays when schools are closed. This gives the pupils and teachers time to rest.

The total holiday time per school year is 75 weekdays. The summer holidays are the longest, lasting six weeks, followed by the autumn and winter holidays, which last two weeks each. The start dates of holidays vary each year.

In addition to school holidays, schools are closed on public holidays, such as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.
Each school may also schedule a few flexible holidays at their discretion.

For the current holiday dates, visit:

**School holidays in Saxony** [10]

[10] https://www.schule.sachsen.de/schuljahrestermine-4793.html

# Who are my points of contact at school?

## The school office (*Schulsekretariat*)

The school office is usually open for several hours each day. You can contact or visit the office to:

- Register or withdraw your child from school
- Notify the school if your child is ill (including by phone)
- Get their student ID card stamped
- Hand in documents
- Request confirmation that your child is registered with the school (*Schulbescheinigung*)
- Update contact details
- Request contact with teachers

## Your child's support teacher (*Betreuungslehrerin* or *Betreuungslehrer*)

During the first two stages of school integration, the support teacher is your key contact at school.
They assist with:

- Teaching German
- Answering general questions about school life and integration
- Providing individual support and advice in the case of difficulties with learning, performance or behaviour
- Providing educational counselling until your child is fully integrated into a regular class at a general or vocational school

## Your child's class teacher (*Klassenlehrerin* or *Klassenlehrer*)

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the education of their class. They:

- Are the first point of contact for parents and children
- Liaise between the school and parents
- Organise the daily school routine
- Oversee grades and prepare mid-year reports and annual reports
- Provide individual support and advice in the case of difficulties with learning, performance or behaviour
- Mediate in the event of problems, directing parents to the appropriate points of contact
- Hold important meetings with parents and advise them on educational issues

## The school counsellor (*Beratungslehrerin* or *Beratungslehrer*)

The school counsellor is specially trained for advisory tasks, including:

- Providing guidance on educational pathways
- Providing advice in the case of difficulties with learning, performance or behaviour
- Advising on health promotion, addiction prevention and violence prevention
- Facilitating and supporting conflict resolution programmes
- Counselling at individual sessions and organising information events

# Parental involvement

Maintaining regular communication with the school is essential for you and your child. Parents' evenings are held at least twice per school year. These meetings cover topics such as planned school events, daily school life, school meals, extracurricular programmes, special events and unusual incidents. Attending parents' evenings and school events is highly recommended, as this gives you the opportunity to speak with the teachers and other parents, to stay informed and to better support your child in school matters.

During the parents' evenings, one or two parent representatives are elected from among the parents of the class. These representatives serve as contact points between parents, the class teacher and the school for general issues that arise from school life.

Parent-teacher meetings are also held. At these meetings, you can discuss your child's educational performance, behaviour and any other relevant issues with their teachers.

Teachers may also invite you to attend individual meetings to provide updates on your child's progress and advise on their educational path. You may also be invited to an individual meeting to address any school-related problems.

It is very important to attend these appointments.

If you have difficulty understanding German, you can request an interpreter or bring someone to help translate. Be sure to arrange this in advance.

## Meals at school

Between lessons, there are short and long breaks. During these breaks, children can eat food they bring from home, such as fruit, vegetables, or sandwiches.

All schools also offer paid lunches. If you would like your child to have a paid lunch, you will need to sign a contract with the meals provider. Meals providers often have menus available (for example, on their website). This allows the children to select their meals for the month. At the end of the month, you will receive an invoice from the meals provider.

## Additional important information about school

### School social work

Many schools in Leipzig have school social workers, who are there to support all pupils. They advise and support pupils in their personal development and help build their social skills. They are points of contact in the event of conflicts or bullying, school violence or family crises. School social workers aim to improve young people's ability to lead independent, responsible lives.

School social work is a voluntary service based on respect, acceptance and confidentiality. School social workers can refer children to specialist counselling centres if necessary.

## Full-day programmes – *Ganztagsangebote* (GTA)

Full-day programmes are available at all schools in Leipzig. They supplement the school's standard lessons with courses that are important for the pupils at each school. This includes support such as tutoring, homework help and exam preparation. Other courses expand knowledge in foreign languages, history and German. For example, this may include clubs focused on specific historical periods, school newspapers or podcast groups. Many schools offer leisure activity courses, including sports, choir, orchestra, crafting, sewing, pottery and more.

Participation in full-day programmes is free of charge for all children and young people who attend the school.

Pupils can sign up for the full-day programme at the start of the school year and must attend regularly. To find out how to sign up and whether participation is for half the school year or the entire year, please contact your child's school.

# Childcare before and after school

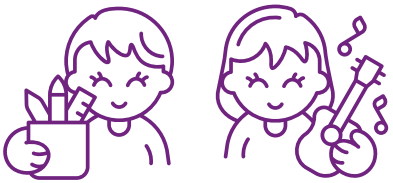
## What is a *Hort*?

A *Hort* provides childcare before and after school for children aged 6 to 10 years at primary schools, and up to Year 6 at special education centres (*Förderzentren*). This is known as “wrap-around childcare”. Wrap-around childcare centres operate outside lesson times in designated areas of the school. The rooms are designed for a variety of activities, such as sports, crafts, reading and more. Children can choose activities and decide where and with whom they want to play, based on their interests. A structured schedule provides children with a sense of security and stability. Educators ensure that the children feel comfortable and help them explore new things, taking the children’s needs and wishes into consideration. Children who do not yet speak German well can improve their language skills, get to know their new environment and make new friends at the wrap-around childcare centre. They also learn essential rules and values for living together in a community. The children can try new things and discover their interests. The educators ensure that all the children’s cultures and traditions are respected and valued so that every child feels comfortable.

For parents, a wrap-around childcare centre is a good childcare option while they are at work. It also provides opportunities to get to know other parents at the centre, to speak with them and to support each other.

The wrap-around childcare centres follow the Saxon Educational Curriculum, which outlines what children should learn in the centres.

Attending a wrap-around childcare centre is voluntary. You can find out more about wrap-around childcare contracts, childcare costs and reductions below.



## Who works at a wrap-around childcare centre?

Wrap-around childcare centres are staffed by educators (*Erzieherinnen* or *Erzieher*). They have to complete several years of training to work at the centre. In addition to the trained specialists, interns occasionally also assist. Both male and female staff members work at wrap-around childcare centres.

## Who is my point of contact at the wrap-around childcare centre?

If you have any questions about the wrap-around childcare centre, you can discuss them with the centre management or the educators.
You can approach the educators in person at the centre. Alternatively, you can use the centre's phone number or its email address to contact the staff. You can also send a letter to the centre's postal address.

## How do I sign my child in and out of the wrap-around childcare centre?

Your child must sign in every day when they arrive at the wrap-around childcare centre. They also have to sign out when leaving. This helps the educators keep track of who is currently in the centre. If your child will not be attending the centre on a specific day or for a certain period, you must inform the centre in advance. Call the centre or send an email to notify them.

## Can my child attend a wrap-around childcare centre if they are ill?

If your child is unwell, for example, with a fever or a contagious illness, they cannot attend the wrap-around childcare centre. Inform the centre by phone or email in the morning to let them know that your child is unwell.

If your child becomes ill or feels unwell while they are in the centre, they must be picked up as soon as possible. They will recover better at home and will not infect other children or the staff.

## What are the opening hours for wrap-around childcare centres?

**During the school term:** Monday to Friday from 6:00 a.m. until school starts, and after school until 5:00 p.m.

**During school holidays:** The wrap-around childcare centre opens based on demand, but no earlier than 6:00 a.m., and remains open until 5:00 p.m. During the holidays, the educators create a holiday programme with activities tailored to the children's interests.

Please adhere to the opening hours and make sure that you pick up your child on time.

**Tip:** Leipzig offers a Holiday Pass with many leisure and sports activities for pupils. The pass provides free or discounted access to the activities listed. Further information, including the cost of the Holiday Pass, can be found at:

**Holiday Pass – City of Leipzig** [11]

## When are wrap-around childcare centres closed?

Wrap-around childcare centres are closed on set days each year:

- The day after Ascension Day
- Two to three weeks during the summer holidays
- The days between Christmas and New Year
- Two pedagogical training days per school year (on these days, the educators take part in training sessions together)

During the closure for the summer holidays and the Christmas/New Year period, and on pedagogical training days, an alternative wrap-around childcare centre is available to care for your child if required.

[11] https://www.leipzig.de/freizeit-kultur-und-tourismus/ferienangebote/ferienpass#c10364

## What is a childcare contract (*Betreuungsvertrag*)?

A childcare contract is a written agreement between you and the wrap-around childcare centre. This contract is required for your child to attend the centre.
The contract includes key details, such as:

- When your child can start attending the centre
- The hours during which your child will be cared for
- The number of hours of childcare that you need for your child each day
- The cost for a place at the centre

Both parents must sign the contract. If one parent cannot sign the contract in person, the other parent needs a written authorisation (*Vollmacht* – you do not need to use a specific form for this authorisation). In addition, they will need a copy of the absent parent's ID or residence title to sign on their behalf.

Once all the parties agree, the parents and the wrap-around childcare centre sign the contract. Both the parents and the centre receive a copy. Keep your copy safe.

If there are changes within your family or to your childcare needs, you will need to sign a new contract.

This is called an amendment contract (*Änderungsvertrag*). An amendment contract is required in the following situations:

- Moving your child to a different wrap-around childcare centre
- Changes to childcare hours
- Change of address
- Change of name
- Admission of other children from your family to the centre
- Changes of marital status (e.g. marriage, separation or divorce)
- New residence title

Please inform the wrap-around childcare centre of any changes to these details.

Please note that the centre's opening hours and your contracted childcare hours may differ.

Be sure to adhere to the contracted hours and pick up your child on time.

Important: If you no longer need wrap-around childcare, the contract must be cancelled in writing. You can cancel at any time with 4 weeks' notice, effective at the end of the month.

Please ensure that you submit a written cancellation notice to the centre management in good time.

If you or your child has a residence title, the wrap-around childcare contract will run until the end of the month in which the residence title expires.
This means that you must present your new residence title to the centre management to extend the contract for your child's care.

## How do I sign a childcare contract?

To make sure that your child can attend a wrap-around childcare centre, follow these steps:

1. Schedule an appointment with the centre management to sign a contract
   ☞ Interpreting for the contract: If you need help signing a contract and do not have anyone who can translate for you, please inform the centre management. An interpreter will be provided for you free of charge.

2. You must bring the following documents with you to conclude the contract:
   - ID card or valid residence title for both parents
   - Vaccination record for your child (measles)
   - Authorisation (*Vollmacht*) from the other parent if they are unable to attend, plus a copy of their ID or valid residence title
   - Giro card or current bank details (IBAN) for the SEPA mandate
   - For single parents: confirmation of sole custody (*Negativbescheinigung*), death certificate or court order + proof of residence (*Meldebescheinigung*)

### Why does my child need to be vaccinated against measles to attend a wrap-around childcare centre?

In Germany, there is a law requiring children to be vaccinated against measles before they can attend a wrap-around childcare centre. Measles is a contagious disease that can be very dangerous and lead to severe complications.
The vaccinations are administered by a paediatrician.

### What is a *Negativbescheinigung*?

A *Negativbescheinigung* is a document that confirms that only one parent has custody of the child. This certificate can be obtained from the Youth Welfare Office.

### What is a SEPA mandate?

A SEPA mandate authorises the wrap-around childcare centre to debit the monthly childcare fees directly from your bank account. You only need to provide your bank details and your permission once. The centre will give you a form to complete and send to the Leipzig City Treasury (*Stadtkasse* Leipzig).

3. When signing the childcare contract, you will need to fill out an emergency form for your child. This is called a wrap-around childcare pass (*Hortpass*). This form includes information about who is authorised to pick up your child, how you can be reached by telephone, pick-up times or permission for your child to leave the wrap-around childcare centre on their own. It is important to keep this information up to date so that the educators can reach you quickly in the event of an emergency.

4. The City of Leipzig has User Regulations for wrap-around childcare centres. These regulations outline all the basic rules. You will receive this document when you sign the contract, or you can find it on the City of Leipzig website.

All further information can be found at:

**Wrap-around childcare centres – City of Leipzig** [12]

[12] https://www.leipzig.de/jugend-familie-und-soziales/kinderbetreuung/horte/

## What are the costs for wrap-around childcare?

Parents must pay a fee for wrap-around childcare (*Elternbeitrag*). The amount depends on the number of care hours required. A current and detailed overview of fees is available at:

**Parental contributions – City of Leipzig** [13]

If necessary, the City of Leipzig can pay part or all of the parental contribution. Information about eligibility, required documentation and how to apply for a fee reduction can be found at: Parental contributions – City of Leipzig.

[13] https://www.leipzig.de/jugend-familie-und-soziales/kinderbetreuung/elternbeitraege

## How do parents collaborate with the wrap-around childcare centre?

Educators will discuss your child's progress with you and work with you to support them. Your involvement is important and one of your responsibilities.

There are one or two parents' evenings per school year that you can attend.
A parents' evening is a meeting for all parents at the centre. The educators discuss important topics with parents during the meeting. Parents can also ask questions and share ideas.

There are also festivals and celebrations that you are warmly invited to attend.
These festivals and celebrations reflect the seasons, the children's wishes, German culture and the cultural backgrounds of the families.

Once a year, you are entitled to a development meeting (*Entwicklungsgespräch*).
During a development meeting, you can discuss with the educators how your child has progressed at the centre. You can ask questions and receive information about your child's strengths and how you can support their development.

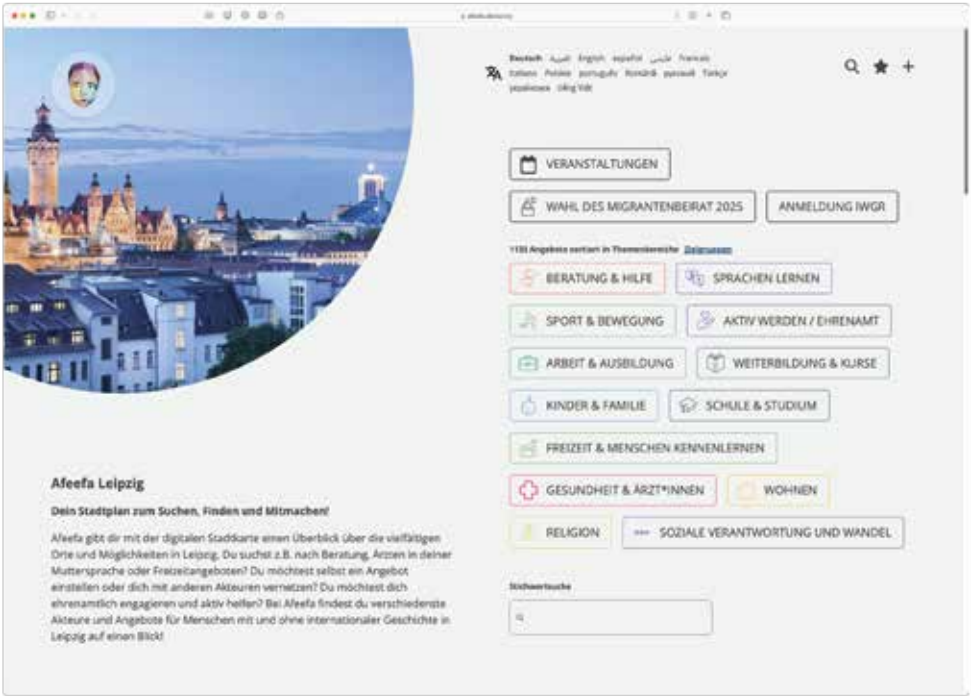
# Where can my child receive extracurricular learning support?

Sometimes your child may need more support than the school or a GTA programme (full-day programme) can provide. There are many free homework help programmes available in various neighbourhoods. They are organised by charitable organisations.

You can find these programmes on the digital city map Afeefa Leipzig. The information on Afeefa Leipzig is available in 14 languages. There are also tutoring services, which you will need to pay for. You can find tutoring services online.

**Afeefa Leipzig** [14]

Afeefa.de




[14] https://afeefa.de/leipzig

# Who can help me if my child refuses to go to school or stops attending?

The re:school counselling centre is a support service that can help if you are concerned about your child's school behaviour. The centre helps you understand the reasons behind school refusal or school anxiety and works with you to find solutions.

Its services are confidential.

re:school [15]

re:school
Beratung für Schulerfolg

[15] https://re-school.de/

# Who can help me if I don't know who to contact in Leipzig about specific concerns?

The Leipzig Welcome Centre is a central, low-threshold point of contact for initial orientation for newcomers and migrants in Leipzig. It acts as a gateway to various services and support options.

Support is provided in multiple languages. You can visit during opening hours without an appointment.

**Leipzig Welcome Centre** [16]

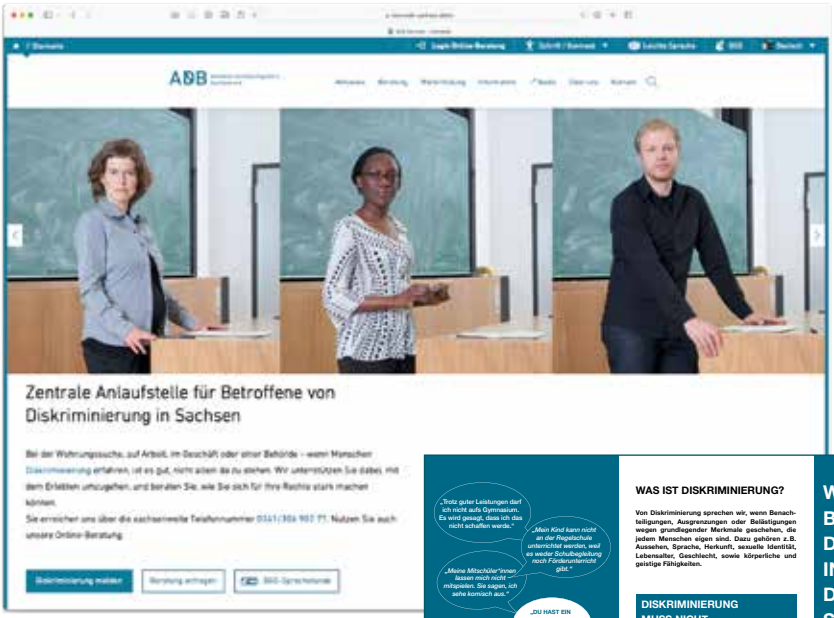
[16] https://www.leipzig.de/jugend-familie-und-soziales/auslaender-und-migranten/migration-und-integration/willkommenszentrum

# What can I do if my child is being discriminated against?

In cases of discrimination, please contact your child's class teacher, trusted teachers or school social workers at your child's school.

There are also external counselling services that provide support in cases of discrimination.

**Flyer on discrimination and school**[17]



[17] https://www.netzwerk-courage.de/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Flyer_Diskriminierung_und_Schule_Leipzig.pdf

# What is the education and participation package and what kind of benefits does it provide?

The education and participation package (*Bildungs- und Teilhabepaket* [BuT]), or "education package" for short, supports young people from low-income families. Its aim is to enable children and adolescents to participate in educational and leisure activities.

What benefits does the education package provide for pupils?

- Single-day trips and multi-day class trips
- School supplies
- Transport costs to and from school
- Learning support
- Subsidised school lunches
- Participation in social and cultural activities

Information about the eligibility criteria and how to apply for these benefits can be found here:

**Education and participation** [18]

[18] https://www.leipzig.de/buergerservice-und-verwaltung/aemter-und-behoerdengaenge/behoerden-und-dienstleistungen/dienstleistung/leistungen-aus-bildungs-und-teilhabepaket-beantragen-537af8b45c482#description

Der Inhalt wurde erstellt unter Nutzung der verfügbaren Informationen auf den/in den nachfolgend genannten Webseiten und Veröffentlichungen.

Internet:
Informationen auf der Webseite: „Sachsen.de - Schule und Ausbildung“, abgerufen am 29.10.2024 von https://www.schule.sachsen.de/
Informationen auf der Webseite: „Schule in Deutschland“, abgerufen am 28.10.2024 von https://schule-in-deutschland.de/die-bildungsempfehlung-in-sachsen/
Informationen auf der Webseite: „Sachsen.de – Inklusion“, abgerufen am 22.10.2024 von https://www.inklusion.bildung.sachsen.de/foerderschwerpunkte-4120.html
Alle weiteren Quellen sind im Text in den Fußnoten aufgeführt.

Informationen aus den Veröffentlichungen:
Broschüre „Willkommen in der Schule. Infomaterial für Eltern“, erarbeitet von der AG Willkommen, Leipzig Zentrum-Südost, 2019
Publikationen des Freistaates Sachsen/Sächsisches Ministerium für Kultus:
„Das Jahr vor Schulbeginn. Ein Elternratgeber“, 1. Auflage, 31.05.2023
„Die Bildungsempfehlung. Wechsel an weiterführende Schulen“, 1. Auflage, 15.12.2023
„Ein guter Start. Grundschulen in Sachsen“, 1. Auflage, 20.10.2023
„Viele Wege zum Erfolg. Das sächsische Schulsystem“, 8. Auflage, 31.08.2021
„Willkommen an sächsischen Schulen“, 28.02.2020
„1x1 der Schule. Fragen und Antworten zum Schulalltag“, 7. Auflage, 30.04.2024

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Stadt Leipzig
Referat für Migration und Integration

VIELFALT LEBEN

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## TIPP

Alle Inhalte auf *https://leipzig.de* werden per Sprachauswahl übersetzt in:
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