

FAQs ABOUT SCHOOLS AND APPRENTICESHIPS



**Stadt
Wien**

Integration
und Diversität



DEAR PARENTS AND CARERS,

A good education is the basis for self-determination in future employment, careers and successful life planning.

MANY OPTIONS – MANY QUESTIONS!

Whether they are about schools or apprenticeships – this video provides some answers!

FAQs ABOUT SCHOOLS

1. How can I find the right school?

It's important to choose a school that suits your child's strengths, interests and talents. Individual open days or the Vienna Schools Day offer a good opportunity to visit selected schools in person. Careers fairs are helpful too when you and your child are trying to make the right choice of school.

2. How and when should I register my child for an upper secondary school?

Registration for upper secondary schools generally happens in February, immediately after the school holidays. In some schools it is also possible to pre-register during the first semester. You will need to make an appointment with the administrative office at the school you have chosen. Take the following items with you to the appointment: birth certificate, proof of address (Meldezettel), proof of citizenship or residence status, e-Card and school report. Some upper schools require specific grades. For some schools there are admissions procedures that take place earlier, in January. The best place to find details about these are on the school's own website. Our tip: start early with selecting a school and seek advice.

3. If my child is not happy at the school, is it possible to change to a different one at any stage?

During the compulsory school years it is not easy to change schools and this can only be done for certain specific reasons. In the case of vocational education schools (intermediate and higher – BMS & BHS) it is up to you to find a place in an alternative school (by phoning schools), and then to de-register from the old one and register with the new one. Please note: It is essential to ensure there is a guaranteed place for your child in the new school before de-registering in writing from the old one. Tip: Before you think about changing schools, you should always talk to your child's class teachers and mentors.

4. What happens if my child has not been allocated a place in our preferred school, even though he or she has fulfilled the admission requirements?

Unfortunately this can sometimes happen if the school has received too many applications. Each school has the right to make its own autonomous decisions about the allocation of places. If the school does not accept your child you will have to find a different school that still has spots available. Tip: consider alternatives to your preferred school in advance. Take a pro-active approach and ask questions.

5. My child is identified as a non-standard learner – how are the assessments made?

Your child may be assessed as a non-standard (außerordentlich, or a.o.) pupil if he or she is not yet able to follow what is being taught in the classroom, for example because he or she does not yet understand German well enough.

In subjects where it is not possible to evaluate a pupil's performance, for example because they do not understand the language of instruction, the grade will be shown as "not assessed".

At the end of term they will receive a "confirmation of attendance". This so-called AO (non-standard) status can be awarded for 2 x 12 months.

6. My child is in a German support class, what does that mean?

Pupils are assigned to a German support class on the basis of the MIKA-D test (Skills analysis and assessment tool – German).

Depending on the outcome of this testing process your child is categorised as a standard or non-standard pupil. He or she may then be assigned to a German support class or German support course. In German support classes, the majority of teaching takes place outside the mainstream class, making up around 15 to 20 hours each week. If it is a German support course, your child will attend this for 6 hours per week. Progression up to the next grade is determined by the results of a second MIKA-D test. This ensures your child's German language skills are verified. Ultimately it is the school council which decides whether a non-standard pupil is ready to move up or should repeat the year.

7. Low marks at school – does my child have to repeat a year?

In principle it is possible to move up to the next grade even with a negative assessment. This is guaranteed in Austrian education law by the so-called "Aufstiegsklausel".

If your child is generally happy at school, is sufficiently motivated, is not stressed by the idea of joining a different class group, and needs the school-leaving certificate for their chosen career, then repeating a year can be a good option.

The situation is different if your child is no longer generally content to be in school and if it is not necessary or productive in terms of their future career to remain there.

It is fundamentally an individual decision; of course the best thing of all is not to get into that position. Take advantage of free tutoring offered at school, or of tutoring options outside the school, or talk to the class teachers, and find solutions together.

8. As a parent, what do I need to know about special educational needs (SEN; German: SPF)?

Special educational needs support is intended for children and young people with disabilities, to provide additional help and encouragement. As a parent/carer you can request this or it may be requested by the school's leadership team, in consultation with you, from the Board of Education. Your child may then, for example, join an integrative class and follow a specialised curriculum.

SEN support may also be withdrawn as soon as it is clear that your child is ready to participate in mainstream classroom teaching. The Board of Education is also responsible for this decision.

FAQs ABOUT APPRENTICESHIPS

9. How can my child find an apprenticeship position?

You have to look for an apprenticeship position yourself, e.g. using job search engines on the internet. It is important to find an apprenticeship that matches your child's interests and preferences. There are over 200 skilled trades, so it is worth spending time researching this properly, for example using the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) Careers Directory or the Careers Information Computer.

10. How does an apprenticeship work?

In an apprenticeship your child is employed by a training company and much of the learning is based on practical experience. An apprenticeship contract is agreed and, since your child is still a minor, you also have to sign this as parent/carer. Your child will also attend vocational school for around one-fifth of the overall training time. An apprenticeship takes 2 to 4 years to complete – depending on the chosen profession. It is also possible to complete an apprenticeship with the Matura school leaving certificate – in principle this is possible for all skilled trade apprenticeships.

11. What should we do if any problems arise during the apprenticeship training?

You should definitely seek help. Request a meeting with the instructor, or make an appointment with your local apprentice coaching team, or you can also address your questions to the works council. The apprentice coaching team can also be helpful if you want to change apprenticeship positions. Or you can find out more from the Apprentice and Youth Protection Service or Apprentice Support team at the Austrian Economic Chambers (WKO).

FAQs GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

12. Where can I find guidance on the various different options for education and training?

There are so many options for your child's education and training. Finding out as much as you can is the key. Vocational guidance tools such as the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) careers compass can be very helpful. The Jopsy app (by the AK – Austrian Chamber of Labour) will also help your child to identify their own interests and preferences, and immediately offers suggestions about what sort of careers might suit them. Please note: in Austria it is compulsory to be enrolled in some form of education or training until the age of 18. This increases your child's chances of making a good start to their working life, to earn a higher salary and to lead a happy life. Tip: seek advice about the many different education and training options available for your child.

13. Where can I find help at my child's school?

It is important to talk to your child's class teachers. Parent consultation days offer an excellent opportunity for this. You can also get involved in the parents' association, for example. These opportunities are a valuable platform for exchanging ideas and also represent the interests of parents to the school. In addition, education advisers in schools are very helpful, and as parents you can arrange appointments with them too. If you wish you can also ask to speak to the school social worker or school psychologist.



**If you have any more questions, ask for advice and support.
We and many other advisory services will be happy to help!**