



## Informations about the School system in Niedersachsen

### **Our Children, our Future!**

- Child Day care / Nursery School
- School system
- Primary School
- Post-primary schools
- Post Secondary school / Occupational Training
- Recognized Foreign School Certificates



## Dear Parents,

the arrival of immigrants and refugees in Germany opens the door to their integration processes and these pose great challenges to them. Everything is new and strange at the same time.

The future of the children and their integration in the school occupy the parents in a great measure. All parents wish their children a better future. The educational system in Germany differs from that of many other countries. It is based on the participation of the parents and the support of their children as well as on the constructive cooperation between teachers and parents. This is why parents need correct and dependable information about the education and school system in Niedersachsen. We issue the first information in this booklet. We know, however, that not all questions could be answered.

For more information you can turn to the office responsible, e.g. Education Authority at your town council, or you can ask for information directly at your child's school.

## Who are we?

The MigrantenElternNetzwerk (MEN) Niedersachsen has the following objective: Improving the school chances of children with an immigration background through the participation of parents by supporting their competences / abilities in order to reach the required level of commitment at the school.

At the same time, we are representing the immigrants' interests compared to politics, administration and decision makers at state level. This information is available also in the form of short films on our homepage ([www.men-nds.de](http://www.men-nds.de)).

## Information for Parents with Children aged 1 to 6

### At what age can your child be registered in a day care?

#### Day care Centre / Child Day care, aged 1 to 3

When your child is a year old, you have the right to register the child at the day care center. Working parents, studying parents have priority when assigning vacant places.

### Why should my child go to Kindergarten / Nursery School?

#### Kindergarten / Nursery School age: from 3 to 6

- Children learn German faster.
- If required there are special linguistic supports / language training for your child.
- They learn to play together.
- The children are supported and are prepared for school.

At 5 the child should at least be in the nursery school.

### Right to a place in a Nursery School

For children between 1 and 6, there exist legal claims to places in kindergarten / nursery school. The place might turn out to be beyond your residential area / district.

### How do I get a place?

The parents can apply to the Town Education Council e.g. Youth Welfare Department, known as and called Jugendamt in Germany or directly to the nursery school. As soon as the place is available, you will be informed in writing. You should submit your application at the earliest possible date, at least 3 months before your child starts kindergarten / nursery and it is appropriate to submit several applications to different nursery schools at the same time. Working parents, studying-student, sick parents are considered first when assigning vacant places.

### What must you present when submitting your application?

Personal Data (names, address) will be asked and a birth certificate of your child, translated as an accredited copy, should be presented.

### How many hours a day will my child be cared for?

The hours differ. They depend on the facilities available and the places offered. There are full-day and only morning or afternoon places. Ordinarily, the care time is from half past 8 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Parents must bring their children there on time and also pick them up themselves.

### Will my child be fed there?

There are fixed hours for breakfast and lunch. You should inquire in the nursery school if the child should come with a breakfast box or pay the equivalent sum in Euro. A reduction is planned for parents who are under social welfare. The lunch depends on the care-hours of the child. Most times the organizations offer alternative to pork.

## Information for Parents with Children aged 6 to 10

In Germany there is a compulsory 12-year period of education for all children aged 6 to 18. The school enrolment takes place after the summer holidays in August / September.

### At what age should your child start school?

All children who turn 6 by September have reached the school age. At the request of the parents the children can be enrolled earlier or later. In both cases the school decides on the applications. Children who are not yet fully mature for school (physically, spiritually or socially) are enrolled a year after.

### Before the enrollment

The children should have attended the nursery school at least from the age of 5. We recommend that the child starts nursery school at the age of 3. Before the enrollment three examinations are required: The pediatrician will carry out the 8<sup>th</sup> general examination, known as and called 'U8' in German, in the fourth year of the child to ascertain his / her developing state. 15 months before the enrollment, the child will undergo a language test in the nursery school. He / she will be linguistically supported, in case the result turns up bad. Your child has to undergo a first school medical examination to ascertain his fitness for school. You will receive a written invitation by the Town Education Council on that behalf.

### Enrollment

Before the school begins you will receive a written invitation from the corresponding / appropriate school. If the distance from home to school is long, the child will be given a ticket. You can still go to the school for further information. You can also register your child in a private school, if you can afford it. You will receive lists of the required materials (school bag, books, pencils, note books). Destitute families receive 100€ support yearly.

### School Lessons

According to school rules and regulations, lessons start from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. All children are expected to go to school early every day from Monday to Friday. If your child can not attend lessons, inform the school immediately on phone. If in case your child is absent for more than 3 days, you should write a letter of excuse to the school or present a medical report.

In classes 1 and 2 "Learning Development Reports" are provided by the teachers. The children start receiving school marks (1 – 6) from class 3. For example, 1 means "very good". Your child can receive language support lessons if necessary. Make inquiries.

### Parental co-operation

Parents-teachers association is expected to be formed in the school. Parents' Evening and talks will be held in every class and parents' representatives will be elected by the parents.

### Questions?

For more questions or information please turn to the class teacher of your child.



## Information for parents: Further school (Post-primary School) after Primary School

The child changes to a post-primary school after the 4<sup>th</sup> basic school class. At this level you as parents will decide on the form of school your child should attend from class 5. The teachers are there to direct and support you in your decision. Therefore consultation is important and necessary. The performance of your child should be up to the requirement of the school form you choose. It includes: the marks, the interests of the child and the existing relationship between him / her and other school children.

- 1 – Secondary School (Hauptschule)
- 2 – Intermediate Secondary School (Realschule)
- 3 – Grammar School (Gymnasium)
- 4 – Comprehensive School (Integrierte Gesamtschule)

### Secondary School - Hauptschule

The secondary school form covers the school year from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> class. The schools system provides a basic general education and an individual occupational / vocational orientation for the students. After the 9<sup>th</sup> school year O' Level School Certificate Examination (Hauptschulabschluss) can be acquired.

### Intermediate Secondary School - Realschule

The intermediate secondary school form covers the school year from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>. This school provides a wider general education and a general occupational / vocational orientation for the students. O' Level School Certificate Examination can be acquired after the 9<sup>th</sup> school year, and an O' Level (intermediate) School Certificate Examination (Realschulabschluss) can also be acquired after the 10<sup>th</sup> year. The School Certificate Examination enables the student to attend a vocational / occupational high school.

### Grammar School - Gymnasium

The grammar school form covers the school years from 5<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>. The grammar school provides the students with a broad and deepen general education and it enables the students to acquire general study ability. At the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> school year, the students are issued with school certificates according to their performances. After the 12<sup>th</sup> class, the students have the option of attending University of Technology / College of Higher Education (Fachhochschule). The School Certificate Examination (A' Level) known as and called Abitur in German will be acquired at the end of the second year of the qualification phase (13<sup>th</sup> class).

### Comprehensive School – Integrierte Gesamtschule (IGS)

The comprehensive school provides the students with a basic wide and a deep general education and it also enables them to continue with their education: occupational / vocational training or studies.

The comprehensive secondary school also known as and called Gesamtschule in German covers the school period from 5<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> class.

This school form is not operated in many other countries. It can issue the same type of school certificates as secondary, intermediate and the grammar school, according to the performance of each student.

### What is good for my child?

The performance ability of your child should be up to the requirement of the chosen school form. This combines the school marks and the interests of the child. Meeting with the class teacher and web pages of the respective schools help parents to choose the right school.

### Parental co-operation

The mutual information and consultation serve as parents' evenings, opening days, information organizations and one-on-one talk.

Make an appointment with the appropriate subject-teacher or the class-teacher in case you have a question.



**Information for Parents and Youths –  
Post Secondary School – Vocational / Occupational Training**

**Occupational /  
Vocational  
Training**

After the school is successfully completed, it moves further to the next step – vocational / occupational education or study. In Germany it is not easy to find a job, especially for those without training.  
The vocational / occupational training is judged according to the performance of the youth in question: results after the school certificate examination, the interest and ability of the youth are considered.  
A vocational / occupational training has a special value in Germany and it is a gateway or a key to a professional career.

**Dual  
Occupational  
Training**

The dual training is the most frequent system of vocational / occupational education in Germany. Dual means that one part (e.g. 4 days per week) of the training is done in a firm and the other part (1 day per week) in a vocational / occupational school.  
That enables the connection between theory and practice. Approximately 2/3 of the employed persons in Germany, except the academicians, are trained through the dual occupational / vocational system of education.

**Time and duration of the vocational / occupational training**

The training lasts for 2 to 3 years according to law. Special departmental courses and general skills (German, Politics, and Sports) are imparted in the school.

**Choice**

In Germany there are approx. 400 occupations / professions and indecisions arise when making a choice. The Jobcenter advises and supports the youth on the right vocation to choose.

**Place of training / admission**

According to law and regulation, the application normally takes place in a company / firm. A monthly allowance (amount between 400€ and 600€) which differs from profession to profession is being paid to the trainee and it increases with each training year.  
Linguistic proficiency, step B2 is necessary.

**Technical  
Vocational  
Institute**

A contract with the training-firm will be entered. A registration in a vocational institution is required.

**Study**

Besides the training in the dual system some occupations can also be learned in the Technical Vocational Institute. The lesson is conducted on a full time basis. The cost of training in the state school is free while that of the private school is not.

A requirement for a study in a university is an Advanced School Certificate Examination (A 'Level'), known as and called Abitur in German. The study is free and its good standard is worldwide recognized. Persons with refugee status are entitled to study-aid known as and called Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz (BAföG).

**What must you  
observe?**

Please make consultations before making a choice of career. In addition the following information centers are available: Berufsinformationszentrum (BIZ) at Arbeitsagentur and Studienberatung.



## Recognized Foreign School Certificates

Many pupils and students who came to Germany have attended school in their home countries.

A question is asked: Which equivalent school or class should the child integrate or attend in Niedersachsen after the recognition of their school certificate? The decision of the school is based on the number of years the student / pupil attended school and the subjects he / she was taught in his country of origin.

At the 5<sup>th</sup> class the parents will decide which school the child should attend. In Niedersachsen it is so basically regulated that the concerned schools carry out the statement of equivalence of the certificates and make the decision on what class the new student or pupil is to be fixed in.

No written application is needed for the screening of results / certificate but the following documents should be presented at the Registration Office:

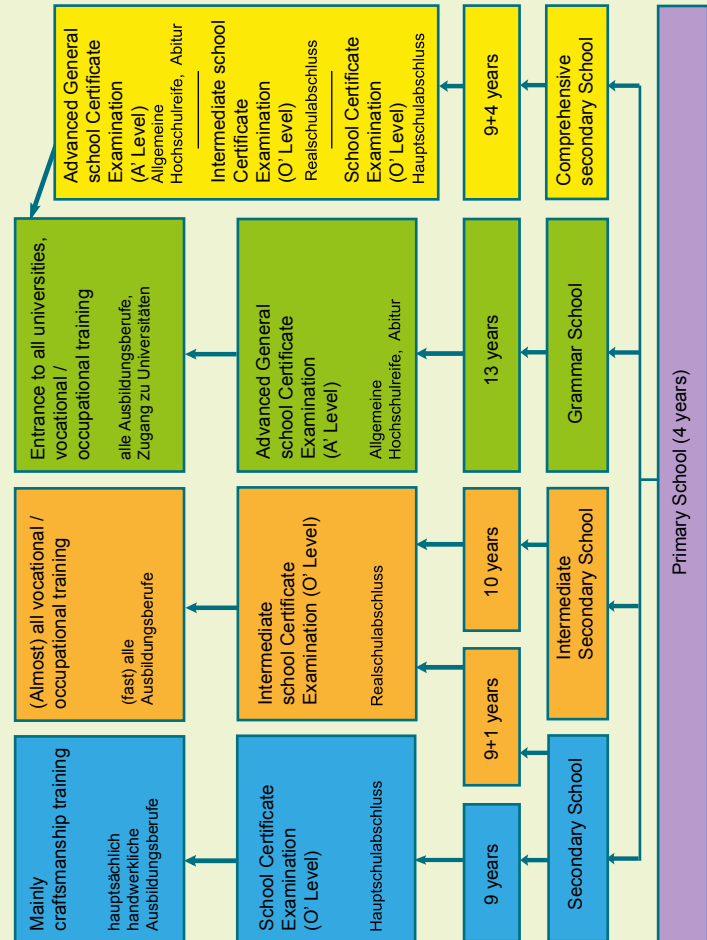
- personal identity card
- residence permit
- registration certificate from the district authority
- all original school certificates
- all interpreted documents or results (sworn in by registered interpreter)
- photocopies of all mentioned documents.

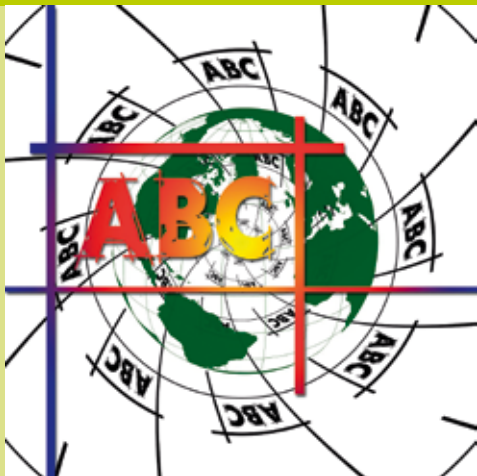
If you can't present any documents, make enquiries in the appropriate school.

If your child doesn't have a good command of the German he / she will be appropriately supported. Also in addition you will be informed by the school.



## The School System in Germany





## Kontakt:

### MigrantenElternNetzwerk Niedersachsen

Kurt-Schumacher-Straße 29, 30159 Hannover  
Tel.: (0511) 9215106 | Fax: (0511) 9215527  
elternnetzwerk@amfn.de | [www.men-nds.de](http://www.men-nds.de)

Das MigrantenElternNetzwerk Niedersachsen wird gefördert durch:



Niedersächsisches Ministerium  
für Soziales, Gesundheit  
und Gleichstellung

Das MigrantenElternNetzwerk Niedersachsen wird unterstützt durch:



Niedersächsisches  
Kultusministerium