



# Starting School in Stuttgart

Information for newly arrived  
parents in simple language

STUTTGART





*Dear Parents,*

*Welcome to Stuttgart! It's great to have you here!*

*Your child will be going to school in Stuttgart.*

*You probably have a lot of questions, such as:*

*What types of schools are there?*

*What does a school day look like?*

*What is expected of your child at school?*

*How can you support your child at school?*

*This brochure contains a lot of information  
about schools in Stuttgart.*

*Do you have any further questions?*

*We are happy to help. You can find information about who to ask on  
pages 22-25.*

*We hope that you and your family quickly settle into life in Stuttgart  
and feel at home!*



# IMPRINT:

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# 1. School system and everyday school life

## When do children in Germany have to go to school?

### In Germany, school attendance is compulsory.

This means:

Children must start school when they are six years old.

Compulsory school attendance is required by law and all parents have to comply with it.

### Parents are responsible for their child going to school.

#### What if the child is sick?

Then the parents have to excuse their child.

The parents have to inform the school immediately.

They have to report that their child is sick and cannot come.

### Parents may only take their child on holiday during the school holidays.

Attendance is compulsory on school days.

This means:

Children must attend school every day.

### Children are not required to attend school during major religious festivals.

Parents must excuse their child from school in writing in advance.



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## Children can go to school even if they do not speak German.

There are special classes for this.

**They are called preparatory classes (Vorbereitungs-Klassen).**

**This is abbreviated as VKL.**

In preparatory classes, children from different countries learn German together.

There are no grades in preparatory classes. In addition to German, there are also lessons in democracy and other subjects (such as mathematics).

The aim is for the children to learn German quickly.

Once they know German well enough, they move up to a normal class.

## Where can parents register their child for school?

### Is your child 14 years old or younger?

Please contact the Migration Coordination Office of the State Education Authority.

✉ [Koordinierung.Migration@ssa-s.kv.bwl.de](mailto:Koordinierung.Migration@ssa-s.kv.bwl.de)

☎ Telephone: +49 711-6376-400

🌐 <https://s.schulamt-bw.de/Lde/Startseite/Uebersicht/Koordinierungsstelle+Migration>



### Is your child between 15 and 18 years old?

Please contact the Registration Office for Vocational Schools.

✉ [meldestelle-bs@stuttgart.de](mailto:meldestelle-bs@stuttgart.de)

☎ Telephone: +49 711-216-60277

🌐 [www.farbgestaltung.de/meldestelle-berufsbildende-schulen/](http://www.farbgestaltung.de/meldestelle-berufsbildende-schulen/)



## How much does school cost?

In Germany there are state schools and private schools. Both types of school are very good.

For private schools, parents have to pay money each month. Attending state schools is free of charge.

The children receive their school books from the school. Parents do not have to pay for them. The children return the books to the school at the end of the school year. For some things, parents have to pay money. This includes:

- School materials, such as exercise books and pens
- School trips and excursions

However, parents can get financial help through the **'Education and Participation Package'** and the **'Bonuscard + Culture'** (see page 13). For example, there is support for:

- School trips and excursions
- School materials, such as school bags, pens and exercise books
- Travel costs to school
- Lunch
- Tutoring
- Membership fees for sports clubs
- Music lessons
- Participation in leisure activities

# 1. School system and everyday school life

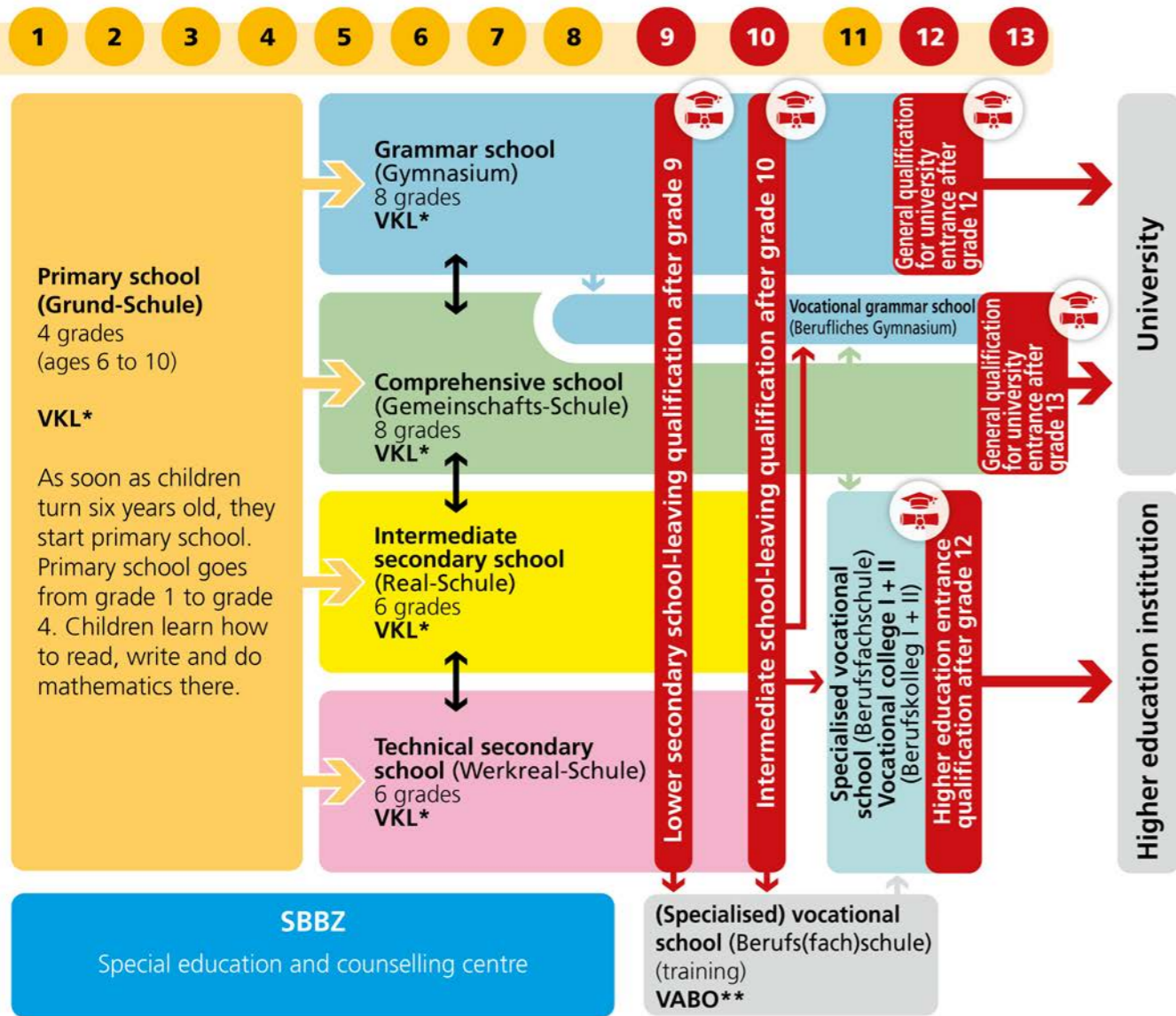
## What types of schools are there?

Children in Baden-Württemberg first attend primary school (grades 1-4).

After that, they switch to a secondary school (starting in grade 5).

In secondary schools, children learn at different speeds and to different extents.

They finish school with different qualifications. This allows them to learn different professions.



\* VKL stands for preparatory class (Vorbereitungs-Klasse). Children who do not yet speak much German attend the VKL. There they learn German.

\*\* VABO stands for pre-qualification year for work/profession (Vorqualifizierungsjahr Arbeit/Beruf) with a focus on acquiring German language skills. Young people who do not yet speak much German attend the VABO class. There they learn German. They are also introduced to various professions.

**What's important:**  
The German school system offers many different ways to earn a qualification. You and your child can always decide which path is best.

**This means:**  
Is a school too easy for your child?  
Then your child can switch to a different type of school.  
Your child will progress faster and learn more there.

**Has your child finished a school?**  
Then your child can go to a more advanced school. There your child can continue learning and get a higher-level school-leaving qualification.

**Secondary schools (Schools after primary school)**  
After the 4th grade, a counselling session with the parents takes place at the primary school. Parents and teachers will discuss together which school the child should attend after primary school. This decision depends on the child's performance.

Mathematics, German and English are taught in all secondary schools. In addition, there are other subjects such as chemistry, biology, physical education, music and art.

**Grammar school (Gymnasium)**  
Grades 5 to 12. **Qualification: Abitur.** This qualification is required to study at a university. At a grammar school (Gymnasium), pupils study at a high level and in different languages. Children learn a lot about natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics) and humanities (such as history and politics). They also receive music and art lessons.

**Comprehensive school (Gemeinschafts-Schule)**  
The same curricula as technical secondary schools (Werkreal-Schulen), intermediate secondary schools (Real-Schulen) and grammar schools (Gymnasien). All school-leaving qualifications are possible. All children study together and help each other with their learning. In each class, there are different learning levels. This allows each child to learn at their own pace. **It is only in the 8th or 9th grade that the children decide with their parents which school-leaving qualification they want to obtain.**

**Intermediate secondary school (Real-Schule)**  
Grades 5 to 9 or 10. **Qualification after grade 9: lower school-leaving qualification (Hauptschul-Abschluss).** **Qualification after grade 10: intermediate school-leaving qualification (Mittlere Reife).** After that, children can start vocational training or go on to a vocational secondary school.

**Technical secondary school (Werkreal-Schule)**  
Grades 5 to 9 or 10. This is where the children's practical skills are developed. They do internships and are introduced to different careers. After graduating, pupils can start vocational training or go on to a vocational secondary school.

**SBBZ**  
SBBZ stands for special education and counselling centre (Sonderpädagogisches Bildungs- und Beratungs-Zentrum). These are special schools that focus on different areas. They are for children who have problems with learning, speaking, or their emotional and social development. There are also schools for children with visual or hearing problems. The classes are small and specially trained teachers help the children.

# 1. School system and everyday school life



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## What does a typical school day look like?

School starts between 7.45 and 8 am. The school day is based on a **timetable**. Each class has its own timetable.

There are **short breaks, long breaks or lunch breaks** between lessons. Please provide your child with a snack and something to drink for the breaks.

Lessons always take place in the morning. Afternoon lessons vary.

There are not always afternoon lessons. It depends on the timetable.

Whether or not **lunch** is provided at school varies from school to school. Please ask the class teacher about this.

Pupils are given **homework**. They should do this at home. The aim is for them to repeat and practise what they have learned at school.

Two important school rules are:

- Pupils must arrive on time for lessons.
- They are not allowed to use mobile phones.

## Report cards and grades

The grades given in school range from 1 to 6:

- 1 means **very good** (sehr gut)
- 2 means **good** (gut)
- 3 means **satisfactory** (befriedigend)
- 4 means **sufficient** (ausreichend)
- 5 means **poor** (mangelhaft)
- 6 means **insufficient** (ungenügend)

The children take tests. They are given grades for them. The children also have to participate in class by answering questions and expressing their opinions. They are also given grades for this.

After the first half of the school year, they receive half-year report cards.

**At the end of the school year, they receive year-end report cards.**

**Report cards are important. If the children have grades that are too low, they do not move up to the next year.**

## Who works at school and who can parents contact?

The **secretary** works in the secretary's office. The secretary's office is an office at the school. Parents can call this office if they have any questions. This is where parents report their child's absence and submit the sick note.

The **head teacher** runs the school and makes all important decisions.

The **class teacher** teaches the children and is the most important point of contact for questions about the child.

Parents can contact the class teacher if they have any questions.

The **school social worker** does not teach, but is an additional person at the school. The school social worker supports children and parents in dealing with concerns and problems at school.

The **caretaker** is responsible for the school building and the schoolyard. The **caretaker** repairs broken things and ensures that everything in the school building and the schoolyard is safe and clean.

## When is school closed? When are the school holidays?

Lessons take place from Monday to Friday. There are no lessons on Saturday or Sunday. The following holidays apply in Baden-Württemberg:

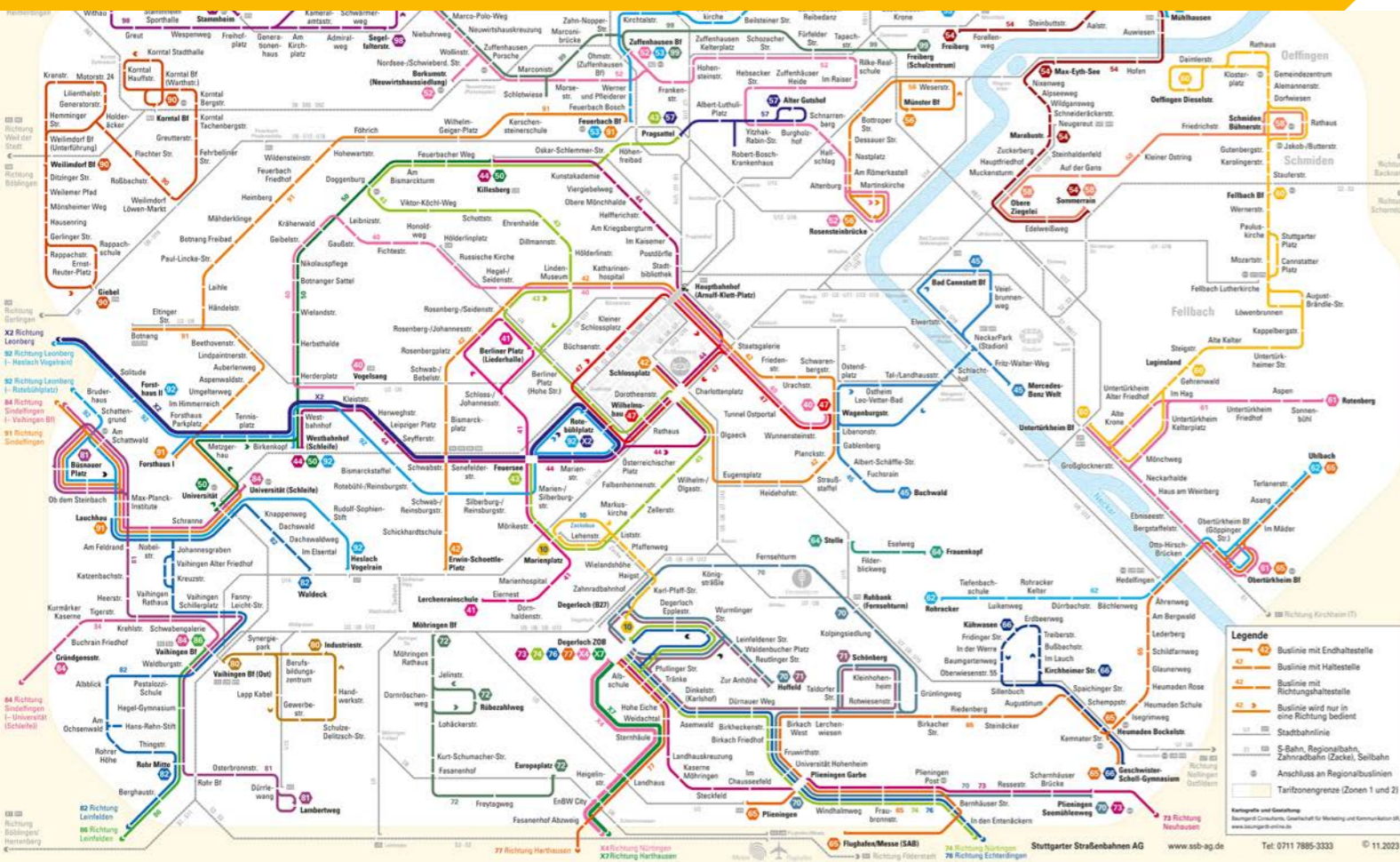
- **Autumn holidays**
- **Christmas holidays**
- **Carnival holidays**
- **Easter holidays**
- **Whitsun holidays**
- **Summer holidays**

The school provides pupils with a detailed holiday schedule.

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# 1. School system and everyday school life



© SSB-Busliniennetz

## How can my child get a school travel pass?

In Baden-Württemberg, there is the 'D-Ticket JugendBW' (Deutschlandticket Jugend BW). It costs 365 euros per year.

This allows pupils to travel by local transport throughout Germany. The 'D-Ticket JugendBW' is not valid on ICE or IC and other fast trains.

You can order the 'D-Ticket JugendBW' online at:

[www.ssb-ag.de/tickets/abo/bestellung/#bestellung/abonnement](http://www.ssb-ag.de/tickets/abo/bestellung/#bestellung/abonnement)

## SSB Customer Center Charlottenplatz opening hours:

Monday	07.30 am – 06.30 pm
Tuesday	07.30 am – 06.30 pm
Wednesday	07.30 am – 06.30 pm
Thursday	07.30 am – 06.30 pm
Friday	07.30 am – 06.30 pm
Saturday	10.00 am – 02.00 pm



You can also buy the ticket at the SSB Customer Center at the Charlottenplatz underground station.



## Who helps with questions about the Education and Participation Package?

**Jobcenter**  
Education and Participation Team  
Rosensteinstraße 24  
70191 Stuttgart

Telephone: +49 711-21694350

[www.stuttgart.de/jobcenter](http://www.stuttgart.de/jobcenter)



## Opening hours:

Monday	08.30 am – 12.30 pm
Wednesday	08.30 am – 12.30 pm
Thursday	02.00 pm – 06.00 pm
Friday	08.30 am – 12.30 pm



## Where can I get the 'Bonuscard + Culture'?



## Social Welfare Office of the State Capital Stuttgart – Voluntary Services

Schwabenzentrum B2 (Building Law Office / Social Welfare Office)  
Eberhardstraße 33  
70173 Stuttgart

Telephone: +49 711-216-57400

[bonuscard@stuttgart.de](mailto:bonuscard@stuttgart.de)

## Opening hours:

Monday	08.30 am – 01.00 pm
Tuesday	closed
Wednesday	08.30 am – 01.00 pm
Thursday	02.00 pm – 06.00 pm
Friday	closed



© Jobcenter Stuttgart

## 2. Responsibilities and rights of parents

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### ■ What is expected of parents?

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school.

Is your child sick?

Then you are obliged to **excuse** your child.

You must call the secretary's office before the first lesson in the morning.

If you don't, the child will be considered absent without excuse.

Then the teacher will call you and ask about the child.



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### ■ What rights do parents have?

Is your child having problems at school?

Do you have any questions about school?

If so, you can make an appointment with the teacher.

You do not speak German well?

An interpreter can help you.

The teacher will arrange an interpreter for the meeting.

Parents do not have to pay for this.

### ■ How do school and parents work together?

The school regularly invites you to **parent-teacher meetings**. In these meetings, you talk about your child with the teacher.

In addition, **parents' evenings** are held. All the parents of the class come together at these events. Parents' evenings deal with topics that affect the whole class.

You will receive an invitation to the parents' evenings from the class teacher.



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## 2. Responsibilities and rights of parents

### How can parents support their child at school?

Parents should take an interest in what their child experiences at school.

Ask your child:

- What did you do at school today?
- Did you learn anything interesting?
- What did you play during the break?
- What homework do you have?



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Parents buy school supplies for their children at the beginning of the school year. The school provides them with a list of the exercise books and pens they need to buy.

The lessons follow a **timetable**. The timetable shows which lessons take place each day. Parents should make sure that their child brings important items to school. This includes sportswear for physical education, a water bottle, exercise books and other books for lessons.

Parents pack something for their child to eat. This could be a sandwich, fruit or vegetables. There are breaks at school. During the breaks, children eat what they have brought from home.

Children are given **homework** to do at home. Parents should make sure that their children do their homework. It is important that they have a quiet and tidy workspace.

Spending a lot of time watching television and playing on mobile phones is harmful for children. It makes it harder for them to concentrate. Children should not spend much time watching television and playing on mobile phones. It is important that children are not exposed to violence.



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### City library

Stuttgart has a large library on Mailänder Platz and 18 district libraries.

Library cards are free for children up to the age of 18.

Children can borrow books to help them with their studies and take them home. For example, there are books to help with German, mathematics or English.


The libraries have workstations where children can also do their homework and study.

The library offers various events for children and young people. For example, there is the 'Sprachwerkstatt', a language workshop where children can learn and practise German.

There are also books with stories in many different languages. This allows children to read and learn in their native language.

Please feel free to visit a library!

The staff will be happy to help you.

 [www.stadtbibliothek-stuttgart.de](http://www.stadtbibliothek-stuttgart.de)



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# 3. Leisure and out-of-school activities

## ■ What can children do in their free time and during holidays?



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### Clubs

Many children in Germany spend part of their free time in clubs. This is where they meet other children and participate in activities like sports or music together.

There are many different kinds of clubs, such as sports clubs, music clubs, art clubs, computer clubs, animal welfare associations or nature conservation associations.

In sports clubs, children can play football or basketball, do gymnastics or swim.

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### Migrant associations

There are many migrant associations in Stuttgart. These associations were founded by people who moved to Stuttgart from different countries. Many of these associations offer activities for children and young people, such as lessons in their native language.

Would you like to get in touch with migrant associations? Then feel free to send an email to the Forum of Cultures Stuttgart:

✉ [info@forum-der-kulturen.de](mailto:info@forum-der-kulturen.de)

☎ Telephone: +49 711-248 48 08-0

A map with information on migrant associations is available here:

<https://house-of-resources-stuttgart.de/stadtteilkarte-kontakt-zu-vereinen/>



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### 3. Leisure and out-of-school activities

#### Youth farms and adventure playgrounds

Youth farms and adventure playgrounds are places where children can learn and play with other children after school. Depending on the facility, there are different activities such as

- wood and clay workshops for painting, handicrafts and woodwork
- hut building with hammers and saws
- a kitchen for cooking and baking
- an animal area where children can feed, care for and ride the animals
- a garden for sowing and harvesting.

The youth farms and adventure playgrounds are free to visit. Children and young people can come without registration.

A list with information about the youth farms and adventure playgrounds and what they have to offer is available here:



[www.jugendhaus.net/index.php/wo-wir-sind/abenteuerspielpl-jugendfarmen](http://www.jugendhaus.net/index.php/wo-wir-sind/abenteuerspielpl-jugendfarmen)



#### Playgrounds, sports fields/skate parks, calisthenics parks

There are many places in Stuttgart for playing and doing sports, such as basketball and football. These places are open to everyone.

Each place has a sign with the opening hours.



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#### Holiday activities

During the school holidays, children can take part in a holiday programme. These holiday activities take place at the school or at a different location.

Parents have to register their children for these activities and pay for their participation. However, parents can receive financial support for this.

Further information is available at:



[www.unser-ferienprogramm.de/stuttgart](http://www.unser-ferienprogramm.de/stuttgart)



## 4. Support for parents: Where can parents get help?



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### ■ Intercultural bridge builders

Intercultural bridge builders speak good German and another language. They themselves or their families come from different countries.

They help parents with many things:

- They help them communicate with teachers.
- They accompany them to meetings at day-care centres and schools.
- They help them understand the school system.
- They show them around the neighbourhood.
- They help them register their children in day-care.
- They help them find suitable leisure activities for their children.

#### **You need help?**

Then write an email to:

✓ [IBB@stuttgart.de](mailto:IBB@stuttgart.de)



### ■ Welcome Center

Do you have any questions or need help?

Then come to the Welcome Center.

The staff speak many languages and know their way around Stuttgart.

They provide parents with information on a range of topics:

- They explain the school system in Germany.
- They know what language courses are available for learning German.
- They know where parents can get financial support.
- They provide advice on residence issues.

**The Welcome Center is located at  
Charlottenplatz 17.**



#### **Opening hours:**

Monday	08.30 am – 01.00 pm
Tuesday	02.00 pm – 06.00 pm
Wednesday	closed
Thursday	02.00 pm – 06.00 pm
Friday	08.30 am – 01.00 pm



[welcome.stuttgart.de](http://welcome.stuttgart.de)



© Martin Lorenz



## 4. Support for parents: Where can parents get help?



### Youth and family counselling centres of the city of Stuttgart

Parents can get advice or help at the counselling centres. The staff

- advise on problems at school
- offer psychological support for the development of children and young people
- provide information on financial support in various family situations.

### School psychological counselling service

The school psychological counselling service advises parents on all school-related problems.


The staff help with


- learning difficulties
- difficult behaviour in children
- fear of school
- bullying.

The counselling is free of charge.

#### ZSL/Regionalstelle Stuttgart

Bebelstraße 48  
70193 Stuttgart

 [poststelle.spbs-s@zsl-rs-s.kv.bwl.de](mailto:poststelle.spbs-s@zsl-rs-s.kv.bwl.de)

 Telephone: +49 711-6376300

### Youth migration service


The youth migration service supports children and young people between the ages of 12 and 27. It offers assistance with questions on topics such as:

- School and graduation
- Training opportunities and different professions
- Language courses
- Health
- Citizen's benefit (Bürgergeld), social benefits

#### Workers Welfare Association Stuttgart (Arbeiterwohlfahrt Stuttgart)

Olgastraße 63  
71082 Stuttgart


 [jmd@awo-stuttgart.de](mailto:jmd@awo-stuttgart.de)

 Telephone: +49 711-210610

#### IN VIA Youth Migration Service (IN VIA Jugendmigrationsdienst)

Olgastraße 62  
70182 Stuttgart

 [jmd.stuttgart@invia-drs.de](mailto:jmd.stuttgart@invia-drs.de)


 Telephone: +49 711-24893117


Families with children under 12 years of age can receive support from the migration counselling service for adults.

### Migration counselling service for adults

#### Workers Welfare Association (Arbeiterwohlfahrt)

Olgastraße 61  
70182 Stuttgart


 [mbe@awo-stuttgart.de](mailto:mbe@awo-stuttgart.de)

 Telephone: +49 711-210610

 [www.awo-stuttgart.de](http://www.awo-stuttgart.de)

#### Working Group for One World (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Die eine Welt – AGDW)

Rotebühlstraße 63  
70178 Stuttgart


 Telephone: +49 711-60144716

 [www.agdw.de](http://www.agdw.de)

#### International Advice Center – Protestant Church Stuttgart e.V. (Internationales Beratungszentrum Evangelische Gesellschaft Stuttgart e.V.)


Reinsburgstraße 82  
70178 Stuttgart

 [Maria.Bonis@eva-stuttgart.de](mailto:Maria.Bonis@eva-stuttgart.de)

 Telephone: +49 711-25248762

#### Central Stuttgart Migration Center – Caritasverband für Stuttgart e.V. (Migrationszentrum Stuttgart Mitte Caritasverband für Stuttgart e.V.)


Weißenburgstraße 13  
70180 Stuttgart

 Telephone: +49 711-6453121

 [www.caritas-stuttgart.de](http://www.caritas-stuttgart.de)

#### Bad Cannstatt Migration Center – Caritasverband für Stuttgart e.V. (Migrationszentrum Bad Cannstatt Caritasverband für Stuttgart e.V.)

Spreuergasse 47  
70372 Stuttgart

 Telephone: +49 711-550591117

 [www.caritas-stuttgart.de](http://www.caritas-stuttgart.de)

### District and family centres

Families can get to know each other and meet in district and family centres.

There is a programme for children.

They can participate in sports, do handicrafts and play with other children.

But there are also activities for parents.

For example, they can meet other parents in the parents' café, learn German or take first-aid courses.



