



## DVD „Schools in the county of Zurich – information for parents“

Summary and supplementary information with regard to the dvd section:

# General information

### Basics

Providing everyone with a good general education is the main aim of elementary school. Every child has the right, but also a duty, to attend school from kindergarten. Compulsory education is free. All educational material is free, too. In addition, school is neutral from a political and religious viewpoint.

From primary year one, children receive a school report assessing their school performance. Grades are only awarded from primary year two. In primary year one, two parent-teacher talks are held and are recorded in the report. (In kindergarten, parents receive a report that confirms that a parent-teacher talk took place and that your child attended kindergarten for two years.)

### Organizational

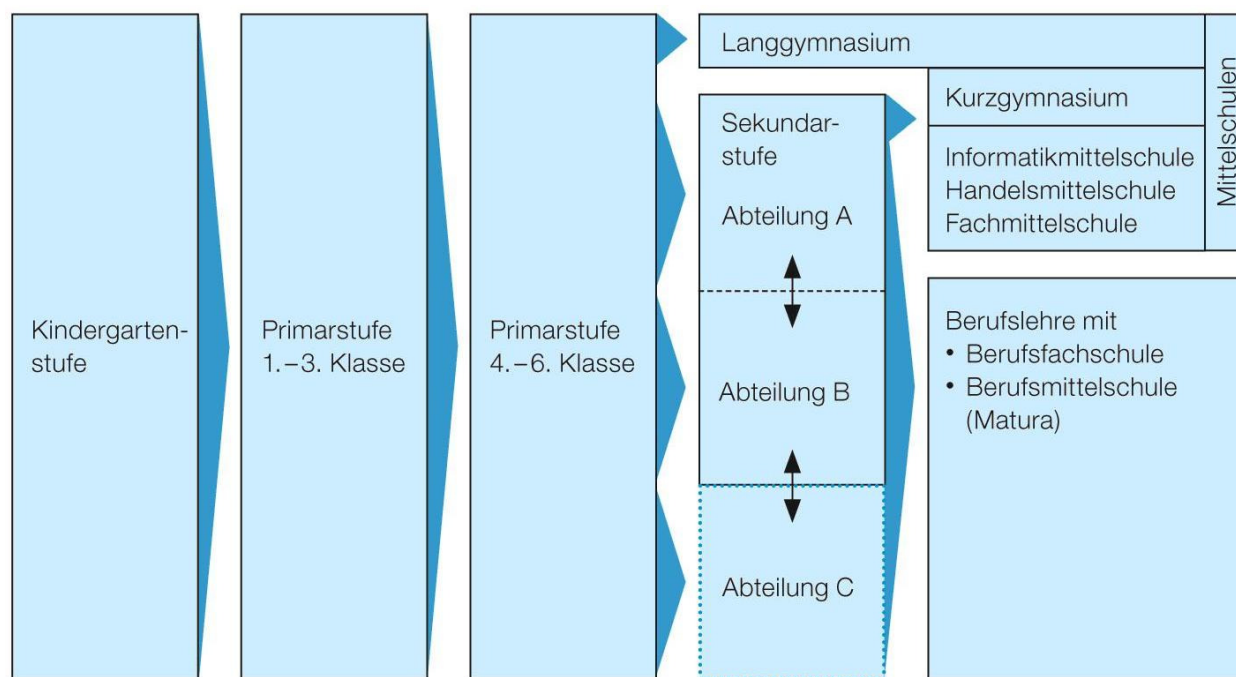
Lessons are held from Monday to Friday and take up the whole morning (from 8 until 12 approximately). Children eat lunch at home or somewhere else where they are supervised, for example, at a lunch club provided by out of school services. Lessons are held in the afternoon too with the exception of Wednesday.

There are 13 weeks school holiday a year. In addition, parents can make use of two joker days, which is a holiday allowance of two days when your child can be off school without a reason, but with advance notice of course.

### Who is responsible for what at school?

One or two teachers are responsible for each class. Every school has its own school management. It decides, for example, which class a child is allocated to. If parents do not agree with a decision taken by the school management, they can contact the school governing board. The board is a local body elected by those eligible to vote in a local community to govern and supervise a school.

## Kindergarten – primary level – secondary level



In the county of Zurich, your child attends kindergarten for two years and, after that, primary school for six years. Then, students transfer to secondary school – or to long academic high school (Langgymnasium). Following secondary school, the majority of young people do an apprenticeship. A smaller percentage attends academic high school or grammar school.

### Subjects

Our school system offers a comprehensive, balanced education. Besides languages and math, music and craft lessons are important; for example, crafts, drawing and music. The subject „man and the environment“ (Mensch und Umwelt) comprises geography, history, natural history and social themes.

### Importance of language

The school focuses on language. It is key to successful learning. As a child, one learns languages the fastest. From kindergarten, children already speak (in addition to Swiss-German) high German and from primary year two, English as well. From primary year five, French is part of the timetable. Children whose mother tongue is not German can also attend classes for their

native language and culture (Kurse in heimatlicher Sprache und Kultur - HSK). If necessary, children can take extra lessons in German as a foreign language.

#### Individual and integrated development

Children have different talents. Their aptitudes are fostered as far as possible – for example, if they are particularly talented. The format of the special development program (Begabungsförderung) differs from school to school.

Children with special needs can attend the regular elementary school. They receive support within the lesson from special needs teachers.

#### How parents can support successful learning

As parents, you can contribute to your child's success at school. Not by teaching the syllabus yourselves of course. That is the teacher's duty. Contributing to your child's success at school involves setting up a quiet workplace at home for your child to do their homework; checking that your child has done their homework; and making sure your child has enough sleep and has had a proper breakfast before school. As parents, having a positive attitude towards school, and believing in your child's skills are both beneficial.

#### Working together: parents and schools

You have the right to be well informed about your child's learning. Parent-teacher talks especially are designed to achieve this. They are held at least once a year. Mum AND dad should take part in the talk. If parents or children have any concerns, they should contact the teacher early on and arrange a meeting.

#### Rules for treating one another with respect

Our school makes an important contribution to integration every day. At school, children with varied interests and talents, different origins and native languages learn to live alongside each other peacefully. Shared rules for treating one another with respect encourage a healthy school culture.

For further information, go to: [www.vsa.zh.ch/dvdeltern](http://www.vsa.zh.ch/dvdeltern)

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