

**DEPARTEMENT  
BILDUNG, KULTUR UND SPORT**  
Abteilung Volksschule

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Englisch

**INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

**“Schemes to boost German language skills before kindergarten” (pilot projects)**

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**Getting all children off to a good start at kindergarten**

It is important to ensure that all children have the best-possible German language skills by the time they start kindergarten. Good German language skills improve the learning success of children, at kindergarten and at school.

For this reason, the Canton of Aargau is conducting pilot projects to boost German language skills together with a number of municipalities. The aim is for children with insufficient German language skills to attend schemes to boost their German skills during the year before kindergarten. Depending on the situation in the various municipalities, this may take the form of a play group (Spielgruppe), a nursery (Kita) or possibly a German-speaking daycare family.

Further information about the goals and background to the project “Boosting German language skills before kindergarten” (“Deutschförderung vor dem Kindergarten”) is available here: [www.ag.ch/bks](http://www.ag.ch/bks) > über uns > Dossiers & Projekte > Deutschförderung vor dem Kindergarten.

**Questionnaire to determine German language skills**

All parents of children who are about 18 months away from starting kindergarten are asked by the municipality to complete a questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the German language skills of the children. The questionnaire has been developed by the University of Basel (Centre for Developmental and Personality Psychology), which is also responsible for evaluating the questionnaire.

The questionnaire will help to identify which children speak no or only very little German. The municipalities will contact the parents of these children to inform them about the opportunity to attend schemes to boost their German language skills during the year before they start kindergarten. Attendance is voluntary, although it is highly recommended. Parental contributions for the attendance of such schemes to boost German language skills will be kept as low as possible. The municipalities are responsible for the details and for making these known to parents in good time.

**All parents are kindly requested as follows:**

For the scheme to be successful, it is important that **all parents** complete the questionnaire. This will enable the municipalities to obtain the most comprehensive possible picture of how many and which children could benefit from a programme to boost their German language skills.

For this reason, **German-speaking** parents are also kindly requested to complete the questionnaire. In the case of German-speaking children, only five questions need to be answered.

**Careful handling of data**

Information in the completed questionnaires will be handled with care and in accordance with cantonal data protection provisions.

The University of Basel will evaluate the data in anonymised form as well as for scientific purposes. Only anonymised evaluations will be made available to the Canton of Aargau for statistical purposes and to evaluate the pilot project.

The municipalities – or the organisations they have commissioned – will inform the parents if it has been ascertained that the child would benefit from a scheme to improve their German language skills. The municipalities can use the contact data of the children who would benefit from such schemes in order to inform the institutions providing the programmes to improve German language skills, such as nurseries (Kita) and playgroups (Spielgruppe), which children would benefit from such schemes, or to learn which of these children have already been registered to attend such schemes. All information contained in the questionnaires may be used only within the context of the pilot project and not for other purposes. The completed questionnaires will be destroyed once the pilot project has ended.

**Information if you have any questions or are uncertain**

Each municipality that offers “schemes to boost German language skills before kindergarten” within the context of the pilot project has a contact office or a contact individual to whom parents can turn if they have questions or are uncertain about any aspect. Details of these individuals or offices and further information about the pilot project will be forwarded to parents in a letter sent by the municipality.