



Stadt Chur

Deutsch für die Schule

**Learning German in the year before
kindergarten**

Information for parents

January 2018



Unterstützt durch die Integrationsförderung des Kantons
Graubünden und den Integrationskredit des Bundes (SEM)

When a four-year-old child enters kindergarten (Kindergarten), he or she should be able to communicate in German. If a child has insufficient knowledge of German, the city offers a programme for early language acquisition. The children are cared for in a German speaking center together with German speaking children in the year before kindergarten for two half-days per week. The parents participate in an education programme and actively support their child during the language promotion year. What does this mean for the children; how must parents act and what costs are involved? An overview.

Why learn German before kindergarten?

For success in school knowledge of German is very important. Children who enter kindergarten speaking no or practically no German, begin their school career with poorer qualifications than their German speaking school mates. It usually takes several years for children to become proficient in local German. This often has a negative effect on academic performance. That is why it is important that they are able to learn German before kindergarten.

The municipal school of Chur has discovered that more than 20% of the children lack an adequate knowledge of German when they enter kindergarten. Therefore the Chur Education Act (Art. 39) created the opportunity for these children to have special assistance, and also to be able to declare participation of parents and their children as obligatory. The Chur local council enacted the programme „Deutsch für die Schule“ at their session of 8 May 2014.

How do small children learn German?

Small children learn languages through contact with role models in everyday situations and with persons of the same age. Many qualified persons in playgroups (Spielgruppen), day-nurseries (Kinderkrippen) or day-care families (Tagesfamilien) are specially trained to encourage language development precisely and playfully.

There are many other reasons for participating in such offers besides improving the use of German. In such organizations the children play together, become integrated in a group, develop their personalities and become more independent. Emphasis is placed on an extensive development of the children.

How can it be determined if my child has a sufficient knowledge of German?

Specialists from the University of Basel have scientifically developed a questionnaire. With its help parents can accurately assess their child's knowledge of German, even if they do not speak any German themselves. The questionnaire is available in many languages. In January it will be sent by post to all parents of children who will be entering kindergarten in 18 months.

All parents in Chur with children born in 2014 must complete the questionnaire truthfully and return it by 05.02.2018.

The answers are evaluated by the University of Basel. Parents are informed in writing about the results in March by the Chur social services as well as about further proceedings. If the evaluation shows that a child's knowledge of German in respect of entering kindergarten is insufficient, a recommendation to participate in the programme „Deutsch für die Schule“ will be made.

A recommendation – what now?

If a child receives a recommendation to learn German, the parents should look for a suitable place in a programme. Experience shows that most parents send their children to a playgroup (Spielgruppe). However, day-nurseries (Kinderkrippen) or day-care families (Tagesfamilien) are also possibilities. The administration of „Deutsch für die Schule“ help parents find places.

When the parents have found a place, they and the administration of the organization fill in a proof of membership form and send this to the programme management.

How often must my child attend?

The programme obliges the children to learn German two half-days per week in the year preceding entrance into kindergarten. Half a day in a playgroup lasts at least three hours. Regular attendance is obligatory. The school holidays are those of the City of Chur. The parents agree to the administration informing the management of the programme if the child does not attend regularly, or if the fees are not paid.

How much do the parents pay?

If a child attends a playgroup (Spielgruppe), a day-nursery (Kinderkrippe) or a day-care family (Tagesfamilie) within the framework of the programme on two half-days per week, the City of Chur pays a part of the costs in the form of reduced fees. These are graded according to taxable income and assets and are between 20% and 80% of the respective fees.

Fee reductions by the city are on the condition that the organization has a co-operation agreement with the Social Services. Additional hours or half-days are paid by the parents themselves.

What does parent training mean?

Parents whose children participate in the programme „Deutsch für die Schule“, agree to attend eight parent education events during the 2018/2019 school year. These events help parents to support their children in language learning and provide information about the school system as well as other useful topics. The parent training events are designed so that working parents and parents without a knowledge of German can participate. The parent education events are free of charge.

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The City of Chur thanks the Canton of Basel Stadt and the University of Basel for their fine cooperation.

Regulations on the programme “German for the school”

Decision of the City Council on 15 February 2017

Article 1 Registration and admission requirements

¹ Requirement for the participation at the programme “German for the school” is the prior written recommendation of the programme management.

² Parents or legal guardians shall register their child through a written participation form.

Article 2 Contents and duration

¹ The programme includes visiting a playgroup, creche, or day care family for purposes of intensive language learning.

² Parents shall take part in the programme's educational events and actively participate in the promotion year of their child.

³ The programme year shall take place in the year before entrance into kindergarten and shall start every 1st of August, ending on the 31st of July. It is in accordance with the vacation plan of the city school of Chur, including at least 34 weeks of the early language training for 6 hours every week and at most 38 weeks of such training for 8 hours every week.

Article 3 Child care provider

¹ Parents shall select the institution from the list of providers of the early language training and shall meet an agreement with the child care providing institution.

² The provider of the early language training shall meet a benefit agreement with the City of Chur. This is an integrating part of the programme rules which regulates particularly the quality assurance of the early language training, the operational requirements of the participating institutions, as well as the financial support of the City of Chur on the provider.

³ The City of Chur shall pay the provider of the early language training a yearly contribution of CHF 720.00 per child for the additional expenditure.

⁴ If the programme is discontinued, reimbursement shall be made by the providers on a pro rata basis.

Article 4 Tariff reduction

¹ Parents are given a tariff reduction of 20% to 80% of the care contribution if the child attends a playgroup, creche, or day care family.

² The amount of the tariff reduction corresponds to the income of the legal guardians based in principle on taxable income plus 10% of taxable assets.

³ The tax data will be obtained by the programme management directly from the Chur tax authorities. The parents or legal guardians grant the authorization for this on the application form.

⁴ Parents or legal guardians who neither grant authorization nor submit their tax documents will automatically receive the lowest tariff reduction to the amount of 20%.

⁵ In case of a relevant change in income levels, the parents have the possibility during the duration of the programme to request an adjustment of tariff reduction from the programme management. The programme management will accordingly set the tariff on the basis of the current pay slip and possible alimony or pension dispositions.

⁶ The tariff reduction is paid directly to the providers (playgroups) or to the parents (creches, day care families). If the programme is discontinued, reimbursement shall be made on a pro rata basis.

Article 5 Amount of tariff reduction

The amount of the tariff reduction is graded as follows:

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|----|-------------------------|-----|
| a) | Up to 34,900 francs | 80% |
| b) | 35,000 to 49,999 francs | 65% |
| c) | 50,000 to 59,999 francs | 50% |
| d) | 60,000 to 69,999 francs | 35% |
| e) | more than 70,000 francs | 20% |

Article 6 Absence/absentees

¹ The parents shall inform the child care in advance about the absence of their child.

² The provider shall perform a presence control and immediately inform the programme management about absence of more than 4 half-days per year.

Article 7 Parental education

¹ Through participation in the programme, the parents oblige themselves to actively take part in events for parental education.

² If neither of the parents appears, the city can reduce the contribution. The reduction per module is 5% of the reduced invoice of the provider, or respectively, a maximum reduction of 50 francs per programme.

³ Events for parental education are free of charge.

⁴ For parents who have completed more than half of their obligatory schooling in Switzerland, participation in the parental education programmes is voluntary.

Article 8 Exclusion

The programme management can exclude a family from the programme if the parents or legal guardians refuse to cooperate with the programme management or are not able to keep the financial obligations towards the providers.

Article 9 Refund of parents' contribution

If the programme does not begin or is discontinued before its expiry despite a corresponding agreement, the city can reclaim the paid tariff reduction.

Article 10 To become effective

The regulations become effective per 01 August 2017.¹

¹ Vgl. SRB.2015.197