

School

IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING
COMMUNITY

Information
for immigrants



BERATUNGSSTELLE FÜR MIGRATION UND INTEGRATION

Belgisches
ROTES KREUZ 

PROFESSIONAL WORLD

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N
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A
R
Y

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C
H
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O
L

6th y
5th y
4th y
3th y

A levels	A levels	A levels	profes- sional education
General education	Technical education	Technical and profes- sional education	

2nd y
1st y

OBSERVATIONAL STAGES
(A- and B-divisions)
A-General education / B-technical education

P
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6th y
5th y
4th y
3th y
2nd y
1st y

PRIMARY SCHOOL
(up to 6 years)

3th y
2nd y
1st y

NURSERY
(up to 3 years)

University studies
of long duration
University outside DG

University studies
of short duration

Master-
training

7th year of
sec. school

Part time
education

Master
training

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Why is school so important?

In the German-speaking community it is essential to read, to write and to speak German or French. So you can **do many things independently**: go shopping, take the bus, understand rules and speak with public authorities.

Moreover, you learn a lot of things in school that you will need to **find a job** later.

It is essential for a child to go to school. There he can **achieve a certificate or a diploma**. The diploma shows that you are a qualified person. You have a degree and it shows your skills.

What does “compulsory education¹” mean?

All children living in Belgium between the age of 6 and 18 years are obligated to go to school or to follow a course, regardless of their nationality. The state of Belgium wants to provide the same opportunities for all children. So, they can find a job easily later on.

From the age of 3 years, children can go to nursery schools. In the nursery children already start learning the language and they are also prepared for the school (by doing different activities).



¹ In Belgium education is compulsory, but not attendance. It means the children can also be taught by their parents at home under strict regulations.

What are parent's rights and duties²?



YOUR RIGHTS (=WHAT PARENTS ARE ALLOWED TO DO):

- Parents are allowed to **select a school of their choice**.
- Parents can make an **appointment with the director³** or with the teachers to get detailed information.
- If the children have **any difficulties in the school**, you can ask for help at “Kaleido”⁴ services or you can talk to your school director.
 - > Kaleido: they help for health-, psychological-, social issues and learning difficulties.
 - > Director: he can help if the child has problems in the school or with the teachers.
- Parents can participate and work together in the “**Elternrat**”. The “Elternrat” is similar to a parent committee. These are parents of pupils from different classes. They help in different school activities. They discuss different things of school life.

YOUR DUTIES (=WHAT PARENTS HAVE TO DO):

- Parents have to make sure **that their child goes to school on time**. If your child can not go to school on one day, you must inform the school on the same day. You have to explain the reason of the absence.
- Parents have to make sure **that their child does the homework regularly**. It is possible that you do not know enough French or German to help your child with their homework. Then it is important to ask your child if he needs help. Otherwise, there are some homework schools⁵ where you can ask for help.
- Parents have to make sure **that their child takes care of the school books, copies and stationary**. It is very important that the child takes everything it needs with him for that school day (books, copies, stationary, sport bags, etc.).
- Parents **should check the diary of their child**. Teachers share information through the diaries and you can also write down your concerns or messages in these diaries. Parents should read all information from the school. You also receive letters that inform you about different things.
- Parents **are not allowed to disturb the teachers** during the class. They are not allowed to take their child out of the class without permission.
- Parents have to make sure **that their child sleeps well and enough**. Children need lots of sleep. It is essential for (studies) concentration.
- Parents must know the **rules and regulations of the school** and must know about the school project.

² The guardians of the children are also addressed with/by parents in this document.

³ To simplify matters, the use of the male gender in this document applies to both males and females.

⁴ Description of Kaleido services on p. 20.

⁵ Addresses of the home work schools on p. 21.

What are the *rights* and *duties* of a pupil?



HIS RIGHTS (=WHAT A PUPIL IS ALLOWED TO DO):

- The pupil **can ask for an appointment with the principal** of the school and with the teachers to talk about his concerns.
- The pupil is allowed to **ask the teacher**, if he does not understand something.
- The pupil is allowed to **say his opinion**. He has to remain respectful.

HIS DUTIES (=WHAT A PUPIL HAS TO DO):

- The pupil has to **go to school on time**.
- The pupil has to **do his homework**.
- The pupil must **keep his school material proper**. He must bring everything to school that he needs for class.
- The pupil gets **a school regulation** at the beginning of the year. He must know it well and has to respect it.



In a school regulation you usually find following points:

- > Respect for everyone (for teachers and for co-students)
- > No violence (physical or verbal)
- > Insulting and racist taunts are forbidden.
- > The school material must be kept properly. Otherwise you may have to arrange yourself or pay back for the things.

What are the *responsibilities* of the school and of the teachers?

- Schools have to admit every child unless they have no more free places. Please note! Each school has his own rules and regulations. Parents and pupils have to agree on them and have to respect them.
- Teachers must care for a **good learning atmosphere**. They are not allowed to harm pupils verbal or physical.
- Teachers have the right to expect **respect from their pupils**. They are allowed to give punishments if there is a valid reason and they can ask parents for a talk.
- Teachers check the homework.
- If a pupil is often absent without any excuse, the school ministry will be informed.
- If a pupil doesn't respect the rules and regulations of the school, he may be expelled⁶ from school.

ABC

⁶ If the attendance law is not respected, the matter could be referred to the juvenile court judge.

Some more questions?

Here are some responses

Must I pay for school admission?

No, there is no fee. Perhaps you have to pay little amounts sometimes.

For example:

- For some activities, for example school trips etc.
- For sport or swim accessories (clothes, swimsuits, shoes etc.)

In secondary schools you have to pay for books sometimes, for photocopies or for stationary. A pupil is still allowed to go to school if the parents cannot afford everything.

Parents can ask for a **study grant** at the ministry of the German-speaking Community⁷ **for secondary school children**.

Which school should I select for my child?

Parents can select a school of their choice. In the German-speaking Community you have a choice between the catholic schools, community schools (run by local government authority) and municipal schools (organized by provinces and municipalities)

- Catholic schools: They affiliate children of all faiths. Parents and children have to agree with the school agenda.
- Community and municipal schools: In these schools, you have a choice between ethics (not related to a particular religion) or a religion class. Classes in different world religions are offered.

It is essential to inform yourself good about schools before you select one. Parents can visit any schools and make an informed decision for their children. They can ask different things about school projects, schedules, school transportation, about Kaleido, about communication between parents and schools etc. There are some special schools for children with special needs⁸ (children that need more help).

⁸ The special need is to be determined by Kaleido. More on this on p.22/23.

Do all schools offer the same lessons/have the same curriculum?

Yes, in nursery schools, in primary schools and in the first and second grade of the secondary schools. From the 3rd grade on, there are some differences: some schools give general-education, others technical and professional education. Some schools offer all three types of education⁹. You have the right to choose your particular course.

At special schools, lessons are adopted to the needs and the ability of the children.

⁹ See list of schools on p.22/23.

In which language is my child taught at school?

In a lot of primary schools in the German-speaking Community, the school language is German. French is taught as second language in these schools. At the École Communale d'Expression Française (ECEF) in Eupen the school language is French. German is taught there as second language. At the following primary schools you have German and French divisions. Here you can choose between German or French as first school language and the other one as second language.

- Königliches Athenäum in Eupen (KAE)
- César-Franck-Athenäum in Kelmis (CFA)
- Community schools in Kelmis
- Community schools in Herbesthal

Some secondary schools in the German-speaking Community offer an increased support in French. These are: the Königliches Athenäum in Eupen (KAE), the César-Franck-Athenäum in Kelmis (CFA) and the Pater-Damian-School in Eupen.

My child cannot speak German or French. What should I do?

If a child cannot speak German or French, it can be inscribed to a transition class arranged for new arrival immigrants. In these classes students learn the German language first. Many children visit these classes for one year. There, the children are also prepared for general education.

The transition classes are not organised by every school. So, parents can inform themselves about the different possibilities in the school of their choice.

When can I inscribe my child to a school?

Registrations take place in the first week of July and then in the last two weeks of August. You have to make an appointment or come during the opening hours.

If the families arrived during the year, they should directly go to the school of their choice for information. If the parents cannot speak German or French, they should ask someone for translation.

Is the previous school education of my child recognized?

To recognize the previous education, you have to present the following documents to the school director:

- A copy of the school report card from the last passed academic year
- A translation by an authorized/attested translator
- A copy of the identity card

It can take 2 to 4 weeks for the examination.

How does my child reach the school?

If the school distance is more than 4 km (for children in primary school), more than 12 km (for children in the lower cycle) or more than 20 km (for children in the upper school) from the residence, a child can get a discount on bus transportation or a free offer from TEC (public bus service).

Some information about TEC:

- children under 6 year use transportation for free
- for children between 6 and 12 years there is the "HORIZON+" card
- students between 12 and 24 years have the option to buy an annual or monthly ticket.



In my absence, who can look after my child outside the school time/hour?

There are extracurricular care centres out-called "AUBE"¹⁰. These are either in the school building or outside the school. They take care of children before and after school hours, on Wednesdays afternoons, on conference days and partially also in the holidays. The children can do their homework there. The prices depend on the income of the parents.

In the summer holidays (July/August) there are a lot of other activity offers. For example: summer camp, sport camp etc. It is important to inform yourself about these activities as soon as possible and to register for them in time¹¹.

Is the sport class compulsory?

Sport classes (also swimming classes) are a compulsory part of school, just like the other classes. The pupils have to take part in it. Only if a pupil is ill, he is free from participation. But he has to bring an attest from the doctor to confirm his illness.



My child is disabled/handicapped. Can he still go to a school?

Yes, all children are obliged to take part in courses, even the children with disabilities. In the German-speaking Community there are 4 special primary schools. (2 in Eupen, 1 in St. Vith, 1 in Bütgenbach) and there is one secondary school for children with disabilities. Parents have to contact Kaleido to get a document that confirms the disability. The admission in special schools is possible with this document.



¹⁰ Ask for more information in the school of your child.

¹¹ You can find the "Holiday-and Leisure-Calendar" on www.jugendinfo.be/freizeit/agenda.php

What else should parents know about...

What are parents' meetings days?

Parents can make an appointment on these days, to know:

- If their child is doing well in school
- If he needs help
- How is his behaviour in school?

You can also discuss other school matters. Sometimes teachers also ask for a meeting when they want to talk to the parents about their child. Parents meetings (evenings) are very important for the school. So they can work together and find the best decision for the child.

Does my child get something to eat at school during the lunch break?

You can give your child lunch boxes with toasts, fruits etc.

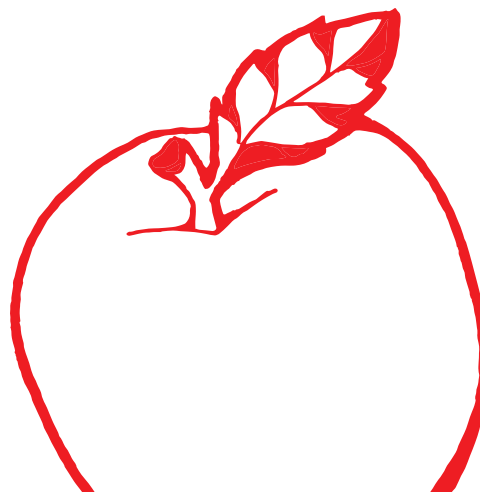
A child can also buy a meal in the school. For that you have to subscribe in the morning. You have to pay for it. The prices are fixed in all schools.

How can I help my child to learn well?

- A calm study room: television and radio should stay off. Younger sisters and brothers should not play in the same room.
- Start as early as possible: children are very tired in the evening. They can concentrate better in the afternoon or in the morning on weekends.
- Healthy diet: fruits and fresh vegetables are essential for the concentration. Water is better than soft drinks.
- Plenty of exercise: children need fresh air and exercise to learn better.
- Mother Tongue: parents should make sure that their child learns their mother tongue well. It helps to learn another language (German for example) afterwards.

What should I do if my child has problems in school or difficulties with their homework?

Some schools organize some extra tuition. Parents should inform themselves about that. There are also some homework schools that offer help in school matters¹². They are run by volunteers.



¹² Addresses of homework schools on p21.

Why are school festivals organized and why should parents take part or help with the organization?

School festivals are celebrated just like a family festival: So the principal, teachers, parents and children can spend time together and have fun together. Parents can see what their child does at school or has prepared for the festival. The income goes to the school funds which are used to buy school things or to pay for different activities. School festivals are usually organized by the "Elternrat" (parent committee). The Elternrat needs the help of other parents. So helping in school festivals always helps to get to know each other (other parents and teachers) better.

What about the week schedule?

In the German-speaking Community pupils go to school from Monday to Friday. The school time can vary from one school to another, but it is usually from about 8 to 17 o'clock. Wednesday afternoons are free.



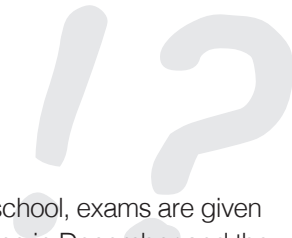
What about the yearly schedule of school?

The primary and secondary school year goes from 01st September to 30th June. During the year there are holidays and free days on different occasions.

The school is closed on these days. You can find detailed information on the web-site: www.bildungserver.be.

The longer holidays are the following:

- All Saints/ autumn holidays: first week of November
- Christmas holidays: 2 weeks from the 24th December on
- Carnival holidays: 1 week in February or in March (40 days before Easter)
- Easter holidays: 2 weeks around Easter
- Summer holidays: from 1 July until 31st August



In secondary school, exams are given twice a year, one in December and the other one in June. If a pupil doesn't pass all the exams, the class council will decide on if he should write a supplement exam in those subjects at the end of the holidays.

In case of a re-examination KAP¹³ (an institute) can provide help. It can help you in preparing for your exam during the summer holidays. If a pupil doesn't clear a lot of curriculums, he usually has to revise the year.



¹³ More information on www.kap-eupen.be

Annex

1. Definition of “Kaleido DG” services
 2. Addresses of homework schools
 3. List of schools in DG
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1. The Kaleido services of DG

KALEIDO-DG is the centre for the healthy development of children and teenagers (from 0 to 20 years). It helps parents and children with their concerns about education, difficulties in school, about health issues or in case of therapy, to decide which type their child needs.

Contact

Bütgenbach:

Wirtzfelder Weg 6a,
B-4750 Bütgenbach
Tel.: 080 44 52 83
E-Mail: buetgenbach@kaleido-dg.be

Eupen:

Neustraße 59, B-4700 Eupen
Tel.: 087 74 25 22
E-Mail: eupen@kaleido-dg.be

Kelmis:

Parkstraße 32, B-4720 Kelmis
Tel.: 087 65 89 58
E-Mail: kelmis@kaleido-dg.be

St. Vith:

Eifel-Ardennen-Straße 36,
B-4780 St. Vith
Tel.: 080 40 30 20
E-Mail: st.vith@kaleido-dg.be

Zentrale Eupen:

Gospertstraße 44, B-4700 Eupen
Tel.: 087 55 46 44
E-Mail: info@kaleido-dg.be

2. Addresses of the homework schools

Homework school in the Animation Centre Ephata in Eupen:

Where: Bergkapellstraße 46
Tel.: 087 56 15 11
When: Mo, Tue, Thu, Fri: 15.30 - 19.00
Wed: 13.00 - 19.00
Contact person: Laura Neuenhausen

This homework school helps pupils of primary and secondary schools. They charge up to 1 euro per hour. (You may ask a financial help from the ÖSHZ). The staff appreciates that the pupils attend the classes regularly.

Homework school in Viertelhaus Cardijn in Eupen:

Where: Hillstraße 7
Tel.: 087 74 33 29
When: Mon, Tue, Thu: 15.30 - 17.00
Contact person: Bianca Croé

This homework school offers help only to the primary school children that live in the Unterstadt. Parents have to pay 5 euro per month. The staff appreciates that these pupils visit the school regularly.

Homework school in Haus der Familie in Kelmis

Where: Patronagestr. 27a (JAZ Kelmis)
Tel.: 087 78 88 02
When: Tue and Thu: 16.00 - 17.00 (except on school holidays)
Contact person: Stephanie Kubeil

Homework school at Red Cross in St.Vith

Where: Aachener Straße 43
Tel.: 080 22 76 66
When: Tue and Thu: 15.30 - 17.00

This homework school offers help to Primary school children. This school is free from costs. The staff appreciates the regular visit of the homework school.

Homework school Red Cross in Büllingen

Where: in in the municipal school of Büllingen
When: Tuesdays and Thursdays afternoon

The teachers decide if the child needs help from the homework school.

3. List of the schools in DG

PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN DG

Each municipal of DG have many Primary schools. Please ask for that/enquire in your surroundings or in a social benefit office to know where the next school is situated.

You can find a list of all primary schools on www.bildungsserver.be.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Primary schools

Pater Damian Förderschule

Heidberg 16-18
Tel.: 087 30 52 00

ZFP Eupen

Monschauer Straße 26
Tel.: 087 32 93 30

ZFP St.Vith

Luxemburger Straße 2
Tel.: 080 22 73 04

ZFP Bütgenbach

Wirtzfelderweg 6
Tel.: 080 44 52 90

Secondary school

ZFP Eupen Sekundar

Monschauer Straße 26
Tel.: 087 32 92 30

SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DG

Robert Schuman Institut Eupen

(technical and professional qualification)
Vervierser Straße 89
Tel.: 087 59 12 70

Important: This school has transition classes for the student that should learn German first.

Pater Damian Sekundarschule Eupen

(catholic school, especially for general education)
Kaperberg 2
Tel.: 087 59 89 00

Important: This school has transition classes for the student that should learn German first.

Königliches Athenäum Eupen

(secondary school for general education)
Lascheterweg 20
Tel.: 087 68 03 70

César Franck Athenäum Kelmis

(secondary school for general education)
Parkstraße 32
Tel.: 087 63 92 30

Bischöfliche Schule and technical Institut Sankt Vith

(secondary school for general education/ technical and professional qualification)
Klosterstraße 38
Tel.: 080 28 07 70

Important: This school has transition classes for the student that should learn German first.

Königliches Athenäum St. Vith

(secondary school for general education)
Luxemburger Straße 44
Tel.: 080 28 03 40

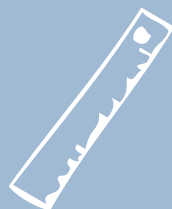
Institut St. Maria Goretti St.Vith

(catholic school, especially for general education)
Prümer Straße 6
Tel.: 080 28 04 90

Bischöfliches St. Marien Institut Büllingen

(catholic school, especially for general education)
Am Wittumhof 10
Tel.: 080 64 73 36





THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who has helped with engagement and expertise to put this booklet together.



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Belgisches
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Mit freundlicher
Unterstützung der

