



# Growing up together!

**Information for parents**  
Englisch







Illustration: © Marika Hausten

## What is nursery entry and what is done in Hamburg?

The federal nursery entry programme informs you about the nursery and assists you in answering questions and solving problems.

A nursery offers your child many opportunities.

Children can be with other children there and learn important skills for school.

### We support families

In Hamburg, nursery cultural guides help you and accompany you through all the steps of your child's nursery entry. They fill out forms, make phone calls, come along to appointments and explain everything calmly. If you need an interpreter for conversations in the nursery, the

nursery cultural guides will take care of it.

The nursery cultural guides also organise play groups or excursions. Here children can play, and parents can talk to other parents. You will find the contact details on pages 12 and 13 in this issue.

### Hamburg nursery entry online

Do you have questions and want to learn more about nurseries?

On the website [www.kitainfo.hamburg.de](http://www.kitainfo.hamburg.de) you will find information and videos in several languages.



## What is a nursery?

A nursery is a place where **children** are cared for **outside the family**. In Germany, children can attend nursery from the **age of 1 year**. If the parents are working, attending school or on a language course, a child can go to nursery earlier. People who know children very well work in the nursery. They have been trained or have studied for it. They are called **educators**.

### Why is nursery important for my child?

Before children go to school, they should be able to do certain things. **For instance, these are the things they learn in the nursery:**

- Being attentive
- Observing rules
- Concentrating
- Answering questions
- Being independent
- Listening to others
- Finding their way in a group

In addition, children make friends and learn a lot of new things in the nursery. Parents are relieved and have time for work, for studying or for a language course, for example.



Foto: © Julia Kneise

## Language learning in the nursery

In the nursery, children learn the German language quite incidentally. In some nurseries they also learn several languages. There are lots of great opportunities to learn words there: singing circle, finger games, movement games, reading aloud and storytelling, theatre games, picture books and much more.

### **Learning German as a first language**

In the early years, children learn their first language. Children can also learn several languages at the same time. Some children speak a different language at home than at the nursery.

It is important for children to learn the language of their family. In the nursery they get help with learning German. When a child learns German as a first language, he or she sometimes needs support.

### **Language support in the nursery**

The educators in the nursery are well acquainted with language development. They help and support children in learning the German language. If a child has problems with the language, the educator takes care of the child directly in the nursery.



## Children with special needs

Some children need more help than others. For example, because they have a disability or could get a disability. There are 2 ways for children to get extra help at the nursery: **Early intervention** or **inclusion support**.

### **Early intervention (children from 0-6 years)**

For early intervention, it doesn't matter whether the children are attending a **nursery** or staying **at home**. It can take place in almost every nursery. **Special needs educators** take care of the child. They come to the nursery or the home. Or they

come to an **early intervention centre**. This is a place where children with specific developmental disorders go to get special help.

### **Inclusion support (children from 3 years)**

Children from the age of 3 can receive inclusion support. This is only possible in **special nurseries**. These nurseries employ people who are well versed in looking after children with specific developmental disorders. They also do **therapies** with the child.

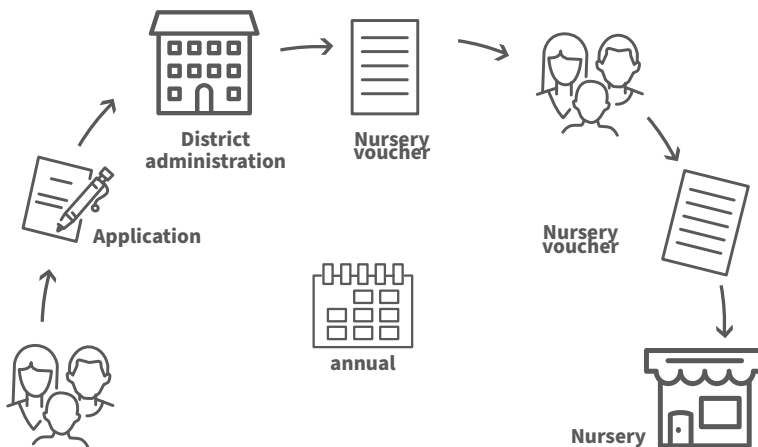
You can find **information on intervention** here:

<https://www.hamburg.de/fruehfoerderung/>

# What is done at the nursery?

This is what a day at the nursery may look like:





Simply explained: The nursery voucher

## What is a nursery voucher and how do I get one?

In Hamburg, you need a **nursery voucher** to send your child to nursery. You can get the nursery voucher from your **district administration in the nursery department (KTB)**. Or online at:

[www.hamburg.de/antraege/](http://www.hamburg.de/antraege/)

You must bring the nursery voucher to the nursery of your choice.

### **The application for the nursery voucher**

For children from the age of 1, **5 hours of childcare and lunch are free of charge every day** in Hamburg.

Depending on their needs, the children are looked after for 5, 6, 8, 10 or 12 hours.

### **The nursery voucher specifies ...**

- how many hours your child is allowed to attend the nursery
- how much the city of Hamburg pays for it
- how much the parents pay

### **How much the parents pay depends on ...**

- how big the family is
- how much money the parents earn
- how long the child is at the nursery each day

The nursery voucher is valid for a maximum of 1 year. You have to reapply for the nursery voucher every year. Further information:

[www.hamburg.de/kita](http://www.hamburg.de/kita)



Simply explained: The start of nursery

Photo: Julia Kruse

## What does “familiarisation period” mean and how does it work?

The starting phase in the nursery is called **familiarisation period**.

Your child can **slowly settle in at the nursery**.

First together with you and then alone.

You stay with your child at the nursery initially.

The first visits to the nursery are short.

You arrange the times with the educator. An

educator takes special care of your child.

He or she is your child’s **caregiving educator**.

You can **ask** him or her your **questions**.

You and your child get to know the new environment together. And you build trust with

the educators.

Now comes the next step: You say goodbye to your child and wait in another room of the nursery. After a few minutes you come back to your child.

Your child will then stay longer and longer without you.

### **When your child cries:**

You come straight back and comfort your child. Familiarisation to the nursery can take several weeks. Until your child can stay alone in the nursery all the time.

# How do I find a nursery place?

## The way to the nursery in 6 steps



Simply explained: Nurseries in Hamburg

### 1. Getting oriented and informed:

On our site you will find multilingual information and videos on nursery in Hamburg:

[www.kitainfo.hamburg.de](http://www.kitainfo.hamburg.de)

Here you can also find multilingual information about nursery in Hamburg: [www.hamburg.de/kitaplatz/](http://www.hamburg.de/kitaplatz/)

### 2. Apply for a nursery voucher:

Fill out the **nursery voucher application** form and send it to your district administration together with a **copy of your ID card**.

### 3. Finding a nursery place:

Look for a nursery near you.

You can find nursery addresses here, for example: [www.hamburg.de/kita-finden](http://www.hamburg.de/kita-finden)

Call the nursery or send them an e-mail.

### 4. You have found a free nursery place:

Make an appointment with the nursery and get to know them.

### 5. If you like the nursery:

Get answers to your questions from the nursery and register your child at the nursery.

To do this, you sign a childcare agreement.

Please bring your child's vaccination card, the yellow examination booklet and the valid nursery voucher.

### 6. Familiarisation period

You accompany your child for several weeks until he or she is able to stay alone at the nursery.

**Tip: Nursery cultural guides will help you every step of the way.**

# What can I do

## if I can't find a nursery place?



Simply explained: The nursery place verification procedure

### **1. You must have a valid nursery voucher.**

### **2. The district administration will help with finding a nursery place.**

This procedure is called the **nursery place verification procedure**.

You can get support from the district administration at the **earliest 3 months before the start of the nursery voucher**. The (childcare) start date is written on your voucher.

### **3. Write down at least 5 refusals from nurseries.**

A telephone refusal is sufficient.

The nurseries do not have to sign the refusal.

### **4. Make an appointment with your case worker from your district administration.**

You will find the name and contact on the top right of the nursery voucher.

### **5. The district administration looks for free nursery places in your area.**

You should also keep looking yourself.

### **6. The search may last up to 3 months.**

The case worker will write to you when a free nursery place has been found.

### **7. You can refuse a nursery place 2 times.**

After that, the district administration will no longer help you with your search.

# Choosing the right nursery

## Conditions

1. Does your child need special offerings? (for example, physiotherapy)
2. Do you need specific opening hours at the nursery?
3. Are the nursery staff friendly?
4. Do you think your child will feel comfortable there?
5. Are you receiving good advice?
6. Do you get a lot of information and answers to your questions?
7. Can you and your child have a look at the nursery and its daily routine?

## Raum und Ausstattung

1. Is there enough space and different rooms?
2. Is there a space for individual children or groups to rest?
3. Is there a garden to play in outside?  
Do the groups often visit playgrounds and parks?

## Food and cleanliness

1. When is food served? Do all the children eat together or in small groups?
2. Is the food healthy?
3. Does the nursery cater to your meal preference? (For example no pork, allergies, vegetarian etc.)
4. Is the nursery clean?

## Information and offerings for parents

1. Are there regular discussions with the parents?
2. Do the parents have a regular contact person for their child?

# Our nursery cultural guides

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Kita-Einstieg Hamburg

**A joint project of Hamburg's nursery providers:**



**Diakonie**   
Hamburg



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