

Dear Sir or Madam,

in Germany there are two official, state-regulated options for childcare: parents can take their children either to a childminder (Tagesmutter) or to a kindergarten (Kindergarten/Kindertageseinrichtung).

The care provided by a childminder is referred to as family day care (Kindertagespflege).

Starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2022, as the soonest option, your child has the opportunity to visit a kindergarten or to be taken care of by a childminder.

In order to participate in one of the above mentioned possibilities it is mandatory to register your family's requirements via the registration portal at

<https://kitaplatz.herzogenrath.de>

The registration period starts on the the 1. of September and ends on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2021.

Within the registration portal you'll find, on the one hand, detailed information about available family day care and kindergarten in your vicinity. On the other hand you can register specifically for a childminder or a kindergarten:

a) Registration for kindergarten

The website provides the opportunity of allocating priorities to the kindergarten of your choice. You may, for example select kindergarten A as your first and kindergarten B as your second choice. According to your selection of priorities your request will be transferred to kindergarten A first. Subsequently kindergarten A will check for available places. If none are available, your request will be forwarded to the kindergarten with the consequent priority. In our example kindergarten B.

In any case, whether your request is met or whether your request is forwarded to the next prioritized kindergarten, you'll be informed about the current status of your registration. Of course you'll find the option to select more than two kindergarten and make a prioritization that fits your family's needs.

In the unlikely case that all the kindergarten you selected can't provide a place, the youth welfare office (Jugendamt) will contact you directly. These contactings will commence in march 2022.

b) Registration for family day care

If you newly register for family day care, your request will directly be forwarded to the special services of the youth welfare service (Jugendamt). Also starting with march 2022 our employees will make an approach to you about offering possible matching family day care facilities. Of those suggested possibilities you may than select the family day care of your choice.

If your child is already participating in family day care there is the option of simply extending your contract. The necessary forms to apply for prolongation are provided by your childminder.

Further information about the registration process itself or the use of the registration portal can be obtained on <https://kitaplatz.herzogenrath.de> or under the phone number 02406/83-555.

If you lack access to the internet please do not hesitate to contact the closest kindergarten or call our hot-line (see above)! The employees there will support you in order to place your registration.

Additional information about the kindergarten- and childminder-system are enclosed.

Due to the fact that the most actual information about the status of your registration can only be received via the registration portal, I personally recommend to sign-up there and create your personal account.

**Please note that your requirements concerning the participation in childcare need to be stated within the period from September 1. to September 15<sup>th</sup> 2021!**

Important notice:

Even if your child is already registered in kindergarten or on a waiting list for kindergarten, it is necessary to state your requirements again via the registration portal.

Finally I'd like to give the hint that your child cannot make use of a place in kindergarten or in family day care until the conclusion of the necessary contract.

Provided that you haven't received any reply from a kindergarten despite placing a registration until april 2022, I'd like to ask you to directly contact the kindergarten of your choice.

Thank you very much for your assistance!

Yours sincerely

# Childcare for Children from Age One: Family Day Care

Playing and learning together with other children in a small group. Being safely and regularly cared for by a well-trained childminder. This is family day care. This is where children feel good.

In Germany there are two official, state-regulated options for childcare: parents can take their children either to a childminder (Tagesmutter) or to a kindergarten (Kindergarten).

The care provided by a childminder is referred to as family day care (Kindertagespflege).

The main difference between the two options lies in the size of the group: a childminder looks after no more than five children, whereas kindergarten groups are larger. Almost all children from age three attend kindergarten. Younger children are looked after in a day nursery (Krippe) or by a childminder. For smaller children it is better if they are looked after in groups containing only a few children.

## Taking time for parental responsibilities

Parents have many responsibilities. They may be in work or looking for a job or training. They keep their apartment tidy and care for their family. Living in Germany, they know it is good to learn German and attend courses. For all these things parents need time during which their children are in good and dependable hands. Then they do not need to worry about their children and know that they are all right.

"Leaving our child in the hands of a childminder was a good preparation for school."

## Education and play for children

Children want to play. They want to learn and grow. Children at play learn everything they need for their future lives. Childminders (Tagesmütter) support and encourage them. It is good for your child to learn to speak German, because then it will get along better in Germany. Through close contact with other children and the childminder, children can learn the German language easily.

"Our childminder took care of our older son (four years) and our younger daughter (one year) in the same group – we liked that a lot."

## What is a childminder (Tagesmutter)?

At the childminder's, children can play and learn. They are well cared for while their parents do other important things. All childminders have attended special courses to become qualified childcare providers. They have a permit from the authority responsible for children (the Youth Welfare Office – Jugendamt) and are regularly monitored and checked. Their premises are inspected too. Childminders enjoy helping children to develop and they steer them with valuable ideas. They also prepare older children for going to school. To children, the childminder means dependability and safety. Each childminder cares for a small group of no more than five children and pays attention to the wishes of all the children and their parents.

"Because of the small group, our childminder could address the children's needs and parents' wishes in a very individual and flexible way."

## **What does a normal day at a childminder's look like?**

In the morning, the parents bring their children to the childminder. Usually, the day starts with having breakfast together. Afterwards, the childminder plays and sings with the children.

She fosters the children's language development, encourages them to learn and goes outdoors with them. Here the children learn important things, such as the traffic rules, and encounter nature and the environment. While playing inside, they develop skills and competences.

They learn everyday procedures. They eat together with the childminder and take their midday naps. The childminder also changes the children's diapers. In the afternoon, the parents come to pick up their children. A childminder has the same responsibilities as those performed by staff at a kindergarten. The children feel good and enjoy having fun together with other children and developing themselves through new experiences.

"Our son quickly formed a stable and trusting relationship to his childminder and liked going to her."

## **Where can you find a childminder (Tagesmutter)?**

The official bodies and authorities (Youth Welfare Office – Jugendamt; Special Service – Fachdienst) put you in touch with childminders. The staff there are the people you should contact, as is the case if you need a kindergarten place. All children in Germany have the right to care and education and are entitled to visit a childminder or kindergarten, even if their parents do not have a job.

"To us as parents, it is a good feeling to know that the German state and authorities make possible such dependable childcare."

## **What does childcare cost?**

The amount parents must pay for childcare can differ slightly according to region. The amount depends on the parents' income. If the parents have little money, they do not have to pay any charges. In some regions childcare is free of charge for all children.

**Please contact your local authority (Youth Welfare Office – Jugendamt; Special Service – Fachdienst) for more information.**