Children's education and upbringing

In Germany, great importance is attached to the early education and upbringing of children. This does not begin with school, but starts as early as infancy. Two aspects are central to this:

Language: Children learn German early on and through play by interacting with others.

Social behaviour: Children learn at an early age how to live together harmoniously, tolerantly and peacefully with other children in a community.

Nursery (Kita) and childminding

Children aged between 0 and 6 can attend a nursery (Kita / Kindergarten) in Bocholt or be looked after by a childminder.

- **Care times:** You drop your child off in the morning and collect them at lunchtime or in the afternoon - depending on how many hours of care you have booked. Please always bring your child on time and adhere strictly to the collection times. This provides reliability for your child and the centres.
- **How to register your child:** If you are looking for a childcare place, you must notify the City of Bocholt electronically or in writing. This form is called **the 'Application for a childcare place**'. The Department for Youth, Family, Schools and Sport is responsible for arranging *childminding* places. To secure a *nursery place*, you must also register your child directly with your chosen nurseries. Further information can be found at www.bocholt.de/kita and kitaportal.bocholt.de/de/.
- **How much does childcare cost?** The cost of childcare depends on the childcare needs and the parents' income. **Important:** If you receive state social benefits (e.g. Bürgergeld, assistance under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (AsylbLG), housing benefit or the child supplement), childcare is usually **free of charge** for you. The local authority will inform you of this automatically as soon as your child is allocated a place. You can enquire with the local authority in advance or consult the regulations on parental contributions.

Bridge programmes

In Bocholt, there are so-called **'bridge projects'** at various locations. These are special play and learning groups for pre-school children who do not yet have a permanent place in a nursery. These schemes are aimed particularly at families with a refugee background, to ease the transition to school. The costs of lunch or excursions there can often be reimbursed via the Education and Participation Package (BuT).



School and compulsory education

In Germany, **school attendance** is **compulsory** by law. This means that all children and young people aged between 6 and 18 must attend school. Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend lessons every day. State schools are **free of charge**. A school-leaving qualification is the most important foundation for your child's future career.

What should I do if my child is ill?

If your child is ill, they must not attend lessons. You must inform the school that same morning:

Please ring the school's reception (office) **before lessons start**.

Give your child's full name and year group.

Let the school know how many days your child is expected to stay at home due to illness. Once your child has recovered, please provide them with a written note from their parents (or a doctor's certificate) for their teachers.

How does my child learn German at school?

Your child will be integrated into a standard school class (mainstream class) so that they can make friends quickly. In addition, they will receive intensive, targeted German lessons in a special support group.

Costs for school supplies and school trips

The lessons themselves are free of charge. However, there are costs associated with textbooks, pens, exercise books, school lunches and school trips. If you receive financial assistance from the local authority, you can apply for support to cover these costs through the **Education and Participation Package (BuT)**.

The Education and Participation Package (BuT)

If you receive state support, your children are entitled to additional financial assistance under the Education and Participation Package (BuT).

What costs does the BuT cover?

- Communal **lunches** at the nursery or school.
- The costs of one-day **excursions** and **school trips** lasting several days.
- Targeted **tutoring** (learning support) if your child is getting poor marks and is at risk of failing to progress to the next year.
- A financial allowance for **personal school supplies** (money for a school bag, pens, exercise books and sports kit), paid out twice a year.
- A grant for **leisure activities** (participation in social and cultural life) of up to 15.00 euros per month, for example for membership of a sports club or music school.

Who can apply for BuT support?

You are entitled to BuT benefits for your child if you receive one of the following benefits:

- Citizen's Income (SGB II)
- Social assistance or basic income support (SGB XII)
- Child supplement
- Housing allowance
- Benefits under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (AsylbLG)

Further information can be found at https://familienportal.de/familienportal/familienleistungen/bildung-und-teilhabe

Where do I submit the application? You can submit your application directly online to the District of Borken.

The Münsterland Card

For some of these services (such as school lunches, school trips or club membership fees), you will receive an electronic plastic card: the **Münsterland Card**. Credit is loaded onto this card electronically. All you need to do is show the card at school, the nursery or the sports club so that the costs can be deducted directly from the card. Further information can be found at https://www.bocholt.de/muensterlandkarte

Do you need further support? You can find information on support for children, young people and families at bocholt.de/kinder-jugend-familienfoerderung