

SERVICESTELLE

ELTERN

MANNHEIM²

MEKI FAQs
Meldesystem Kinderbetreuung
(Childcare Registration System)

STADT MANNHEIM²

Tageseinrichtungen
für Kinder

MEKI FAQs

1. Where can I receive information about childcare?

Please contact Servicestelle Eltern in Stadt Mannheim by phone or e-mail:

Q 5, 22
68161 Mannheim
Tel.: 0621 293-3888
Fax: 0621 293-473859
E-mail: 56.servicestelle.eltern@mannheim.de

2. What is MeKi?

Stadt Mannheim uses MeKi to centrally record all of the childcare requests from parents in Mannheim for nursery school, kindergarten, day care, before-school and after-school programs, or *verlässliche Grundschule* (VGS) (an elementary school offering childcare before and after school up until roughly 1 pm). The MeKi request forms contain important information for the city that allows it to realistically assess the childcare need and further develop its childcare offer. For this reason, it is important that all parents register their childcare requirements with MeKi. The request can be made either online OR in paper form. If the request is made on paper, we recommend sending it directly to Servicestelle Eltern. The request is made in accordance with § 3, para. 2a of the German Childcare Act (KITAG) by the parents or a legal guardian.

3. Do I absolutely have to submit a request to MeKi?

Yes. Every request, be it for a city-run facility, an independent facility, a facility run by another operator, or a daycare has to initially be recorded in MeKi.

Please note that registration for before-school and after-school programs in all-day elementary schools is not handled by MeKi. For this type of childcare, please contact the education department (*Fachbereich Bildung*) directly. More information about before-school and after-school childcare in all-day schools is available here:

<https://www.mannheim.de/de/bildung-staerken/die-ersten-schuljahre/betreuungsangebote-an-schulen/randzeitenbetreuung-an-ganztagsgrundschulen>

4. How do I register?

Please complete the MeKi registration form *Formular zur Aufnahme in das Meldesystem Kinderbetreuung (MeKi)*. You can do this online at www.mannheim.de OR on paper. You can find the registration form to download at www.mannheim.de. The form is also available from nursery schools, kindergartens, the office of childcare (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*), Servicestelle Eltern (MeKi), and other locations offering municipal services.

5. What kind of childcare can I register my child for?

You can register your child for nursery school, kindergarten, day care, before-school and after-school programs, or *verlässliche Grundschule* (an elementary school with before-school and after-school childcare up until 1 pm) with various supervision times.

Please note that registration for before-school and after-school childcare at all-day elementary schools is not handled by MeKi.

6. What information do I have to provide?

In addition to providing us with information about the childcare facility, type of childcare, and length of childcare you would like, we require information about the scope of your employment (it is a must for you to submit documentation of your employment) and whether you are a single parent. You will also be asked to indicate whether there is already a sibling in childcare or if a spot is also being requested for a sibling at the same time. Please also indicate if your child is already attending nursery school if you intend for the child to switch to the kindergarten part of the program. Furthermore, please indicate if your child is not attending any childcare facility and will be required to attend elementary school the following year. This information is relevant when assigning spots.

Please note when indicating the desired start date that this is the earliest possible start for introducing your child to the facility. Please also note that children who are three years old can be accepted into kindergarten. Children younger than three years of age are cared for in a nursery school or day care.

Moreover, please note that to register a child who at the time of the desired start date is already of school age written notification is required indicating that your child is being held back. This ensures your child will still be noted as needing a kindergarten spot.

If you are not yet a registered resident of Mannheim, you are required to confirm your intention of moving to Mannheim by submitting, e.g., a copy of your rental or purchase agreement so that your request can be entered into MeKi (see number 23).

Parents are required to inform Servicestelle Eltern immediately of any changes to the information submitted. This is particularly important when it comes to the information that we require you to disclose because it is relevant for allocating spots.

7. How many childcare facilities can I register my child for?

You have the option of listing five childcare facilities. Please indicate the names of the childcare facility/offers in the order you prefer¹.

We recommend that you take advantage of listing five facilities. The more preferred facilities you have, the higher the chances of receiving a spot soon.

You will find all of the facilities in the Kitafinder of Stadt Mannheim:

<https://www.mannheim.de/de/bildung-staerken/vormerkungen-fuer-die-betreuung-von-kindern>.

Please note that before-school and after-school childcare programs and groups in *verlässliche Grundschulen* (elementary schools with before-school and after-school childcare up until 1 pm) that are located right in the school building may only be used by children who are students of the school.

You can find the elementary school designated for your area/child here:

<https://www.gis-mannheim.de/mannheim/index.php?service=gfinder>

8. When should I register my child?

Parents looking for a childcare spot for the coming year should submit their request with all of the necessary documents by 15 February to Servicestelle Eltern (MeKi) (the “childcare” year starts in September).

Requests can also be submitted during the year.

The times when spots are assigned are usually coordinated by the operators. When it comes to independent facilities or other operators, please contact them about the deadline for submitting requests to be on the safe side.

¹ Note: In accordance with §5 of Book VIII of the German Social Code (SGB VIII), you are entitled to make a request and choose from among the childcare offers and facilities of various operators. If you prioritize a list of municipal childcare offers/facilities, this is regarded as you exercising your right to make a request and choose.

9. How do I know that my request has reached Servicestelle Eltern (MeKi)?

Servicestelle Eltern (Meki) sends written confirmation (possibly by e-mail) to confirm receipt of your request.

10. Do the childcare facilities receive word that I'm interested in having my child attend? Do I have to introduce myself to the facility?

Your requests are automatically forwarded by MeKi to the facilities or the office of childcare (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*). We recommend that parents view the facilities beforehand. This allows you to see them for yourself and consider which will work best for your child.

In day cares, the right childcare worker for parents and child can only be assigned if you arrange an appointment with the offices of childcare/youth welfare and health (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege/Jugendamt und Gesundheitsamt*).

You can find out more information about childcare in day cares here:

<https://www.mannheim.de/de/bildung-staerken/kindertagespflege>

Independent day cares or those run by other operators might require additional information to that which is on the request form in order to enroll a child in their facilities. Please get in touch in advance with the operators or manager.

11. My child is currently being looked after in a nursery school and will need a spot in kindergarten when he/she turns three. Do I have to submit another request?

Yes. Another request is needed when going from nursery school to kindergarten. This also applies when switching from nursery school to kindergarten in the same childcare facility.

12. My child is not yet three. Can I still submit a request for childcare now for when he/she turns three?

Yes, this is possible. However, please note that a request is only possible at the earliest two years before the desired start date.

13. My child is going to be born soon. Can I still make a request for childcare?

Yes, essentially you can. Please indicate the expected due date as indicated in the maternity booklet. It is absolutely necessary to inform us of the actual birth date. However, please note that it is only possible to make a request for childcare at the earliest two years prior to the desired start date.

14. Can I also switch childcare facilities through MeKi?

Yes. In your request, please indicate the previous facility, the facility/facilities you would like to switch to, and the desired date.

15. I have several children. Is one form enough to register all of them?

No. A separate form is required for each child and each type of childcare. Only one request form can be used to register one child for his/her age-appropriate childcare.

16. How do I receive a spot?

MeKi records all incoming childcare requests electronically and automatically forwards them to the childcare facilities, the education department (*Fachbereich Bildung*), or the office of childcare (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*) as per the preferences of the parents. The request is then handled by each childcare facility, the education department, or the office of childcare. Please note that the assigning of spots is done by the operators/respective facilities.

Please note: **Servicestelle Eltern does not assign any spots.**

17. Who assigns childcare spots?

Childcare spots are assigned directly by the childcare facilities of the respective operators (municipal, private, religious, or business operators) or by the education department (*Fachbereich Bildung*).

Servicestelle Eltern does not assign any spots!

18. How do I find out if I have received a spot?

You will receive confirmation from the childcare facility or the education department (*Fachbereich Bildung*) by e-mail or letter mail. Servicestelle Eltern MeKi does not send confirmation; this is usually done by the childcare facilities.

The office of childcare (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*) only assigns a spot in personal contact with you.

19. Is there a waiting list?

There is no waiting list for spots in municipal childcare facilities. Instead, every request is given a point score based on criteria established by local council (*Gemeinderat*), and the requests are then ordered based on the score. This order can change at any time due to new, incoming requests. Waiting times are irrelevant here. However, please note the deadline for submitting the request for the new “childcare” year (see number 8).

20. What are the criteria for assigning a spot?

Assigning spots for city-run facilities and student childcare offers is done in accordance with the uniform criteria adopted by the youth welfare committee (*Jugendhilfeausschuss*) and local council (*Gemeinderat*).

- Priority goes to those children identified by social services (*Sozialer Dienst*) whose welfare is either in danger or in need of encouragement. That is an official mandate. Next, priority goes to those children who have not attended a childcare facility and are required to start elementary school the following year. Furthermore, priority goes to children who at the time of transferring to kindergarten were already in the nursery school in the same childcare facility.
- Other criteria consider the professional activity as well as the scope of employment of one or both of the legal guardians. Those looking for work or who are undergoing professional training are treated as though they are employed. Single working parents receive a bonus. There is also consideration if a sibling is in care or if a spot is being sought for a sibling at the same time.

In the event of the same number of points, the spot is given to the child whose sibling is already being cared for in the childcare facility. Finally, an older child has priority for a spot in a nursery school and kindergarten, and a younger child has priority for a spot in student childcare.

The exact wording of the criteria for assigning spots is available here:

[https://www.mannheim.de/de/bildung-staerken/vormerkungen-fuer-die-betreuung-von-kindern.](https://www.mannheim.de/de/bildung-staerken/vormerkungen-fuer-die-betreuung-von-kindern)

21. According to the current legislation, I have a right to a childcare spot. Why didn't my child receive a spot in the childcare facility/type of childcare I requested?

Since 1 August 2013, children between the ages of one and three are entitled to childcare in a childcare facility or to day care according to § 24, para. 2 of Book VIII of the German Social Code (SGB VIII). The scope of the daily childcare is geared to individual needs.

This regulation does not include the right to a certain childcare facility. There is also no right to have additional childcare spots arranged in a specific facility. Similarly, such a claim cannot be derived from the right of the parents to make a request and choose, which is limited to the existing childcare offers (for more information see OVG Münster (Higher Administrative Court Münster) B. v. 14.08.2013 -12 B 793/13).

In accordance with § 24, para. 3 of Book VIII of the German Social Code (SGB VIII), children who are three years of age have a legal right to childcare in a day care facility, meaning kindergarten. Here, too, there is no claim to childcare in a certain facility and no claim to a spot for the whole day. The right refers to a regular spot with extended opening hours.

For children who are required to attend elementary school, § 24, para. 4 of Book VIII of the German Social Code (SGB VIII) merely stipulates an objective legal obligation of the operator of public youth welfare to provide spots in day care facilities as required; it does not indicate a right to childcare.

Servicestelle Eltern is happy to assist you with your requests. Please also note that Servicestelle Eltern is not responsible for any claims involving the right to childcare. In instances like these, please contact:

FB 58 Jugendamt und Gesundheitsamt
Rechtsanspruch Kita
R1, 12
68161 Mannheim
Tel.: 0621/293-3739
58.8.RAS@mannheim.de

22. What happens if don't receive a spot in any of the childcare facilities I indicated?

Your requests will remain with the facilities you mentioned. You will automatically receive an offer from one of these facilities if a spot can be made available to your child. You don't have to resubmit a request for the same child and same type of childcare. Your request remains in the system until your child has received a spot.

23. Can I receive a spot for my child even if I don't live in Mannheim?

No, essentially you can't. Childcare spots in Mannheim are made available primarily to families in Mannheim. We can forward your request to the desired facility if your child is (already) registered as a resident of Mannheim or you have provided documentation of your firm intention to move to Mannheim (e.g., copy of a rental or purchase agreement).

24. How long will my personal data be stored?

The data from your request will be deleted centrally as soon as the child is accepted and registered at a childcare facility. However, at any time, you can contact Servicestelle Eltern (MeKi) to have your data deleted immediately.