

F.A.Q. | Servicestelle Eltern | General

Frequently asked questions about the *Meldestelle Kinderbetreuung (MeKi)* in Mannheim

1. Where can I get information about childcare?

Please drop by or contact us by phone or email at
Servicestelle Eltern der Stadt Mannheim:

in

Q 5, 22

68161 Mannheim

Tel.: 0621 293-3888

Fax: 0621 293-473859

E-Mail: meki@mannheim.de

Opening Hours of the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)*:

Mon., Wed. and Fri.: 8:00am to 12:00pm

Tues. and Thurs.: 8:00am to 6:00pm

2. What is the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)*?

At the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)*, the childcare registration office, the city of Mannheim keeps track centrally of the childcare wishes of all parents in Mannheim for children in nursery schools, kindergartens, daycares, after-school programs and in elementary school. The *Meki* forms contain important information that allows staff to realistically assess the childcare offered and to further develop it. That's why it is important that all parents register their childcare needs with the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)*.

The application is done in accordance with Section 3, para 2a of KITAG (childcare law) by the parents or by a guardian.

3. Do I have to enroll with the *Servicestelle Eltern*?

Yes. Every enrollment, be it for a city facility, an independent center or daycare has to be recorded at the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)*.

Independent centers include those operated by the Catholic and Evangelical churches as well as Waldorf nursery schools, Muslim kindergartens, *Kinderläden* (anti-authoritarian nursery schools), parent initiatives, company nurseries and so on.

4. How do I enroll?

Please fill out the form to be entered in the childcare enrollment system of the City of Mannheim - *Formular zur Aufnahme in das Meldesystem Kinderbetreuung (MeKi) der Stadt Mannheim*. You can find this form in nursery schools, kindergartens, at the childcare service (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*), in centers that care for school-aged children, at the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)* and at municipal facilities. You can also submit this form at all of these locations.

5. For what kind of childcare can I enroll my child?

You can enroll your child for nursery school, kindergarten, daycare, an after-school program and for childcare for school-aged childcare with various hours of care.

6. What information do I have to provide?

In addition to the desired center and type of care you need, we require information about the hours of your employment, whether you are a single parent and whether a sibling is already in childcare. This information is relevant when it comes to allocating spots.

7. Can I enroll my child in more than one center?

You can name up to three centers. You can find the centers in the childcare locator (*Kitafinder*) of the City of Mannheim.

www.mannheim.de/bildung-staerken/meldesystem-kinderbetreuung-meki

8. When should I enroll my child?

Applications for spots in nursery schools and kindergartens can be submitted any time, but according to Section 3, para 2a of the childcare law for the state of Baden- Württemberg (*KiTaG*) the application has to be submitted at least six months before the desired start of childcare. For children in elementary school and for nursery or kindergarten children whose childcare start is ideally to be at the start of the new childcare year, we recommend submitting the form by January at the latest. Independent centers and city facilities usually coordinate the time when they allocate spots. To be on the safe side, you should find out from independent centers when they need the application.

9. How do I know that my enrollment application has reached the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)*?

The *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)* will provide you with written confirmation of receipt of your registration.

10. Do the childcare centers receive information that my child is enrolled or do I have to go to the center?

Your application is forwarded automatically by the *Servicestelle Eltern (MeKi)* to the center or the childcare service *Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*. But when it comes to choosing your center, it is certainly helpful to get to know the center and to introduce yourself. For daycare applicants, a childminder suited to the parent(s) and child can only be determined in personal meeting with the childcare service *Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*.

Independent centers might require additional information beyond that contained in the enrollment form before accepting the child in their center. Please contact these centers in good time for more information.

11. My child is currently being cared for in a nursery school, but when he turns three he will need a spot in kindergarten. Is another registration required?

Yes, another enrollment application is required when going from a nursery school to a kindergarten.

This also applies when going from a nursery school to a kindergarten within the same childcare center (*Kinderhaus*).

12. My child is not yet three. Can I enroll her now for a spot once she turns three?

Yes, you can.

13. My child is going to be born soon. Can I enroll him?

Basically, you can. Please enter the expected birth date as noted in your pregnancy booklet (*Mutterpass*). After birth, you have to inform us of the actual birth date.

14. Am I also able to change childcare centers with the enrollment?

Yes, you are. To do so, please enter the previous center, the new one and the desired date of the change in your application.

15. I have several children. Is one registration form enough?

No, a separate application is required for every child. Only one child can be registered per application along with the childcare needed to suit the child's age.

16. How do I get a spot?

The *Servicestelle Eltern (MeKi)* records all of the enrollment applications electronically and makes them automatically available in a database to the centers named by the parents or to the childcare service (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*). The enrollment applications are processed further in the centers in question or at the childcare service (*Fachdienst Kindertagespflege*). Please note that the allocation of spots is done directly by the organization that operates the centers or by the center in question. The *Servicestelle MeKi* does not allocate any spots.

17. Who allocates childcare spots?

Childcare spots are allocated by the operators of the center such as the city, a private organization, a church or a company.

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

You will receive written confirmation from the operator. The letter is usually sent by the head of the center.

19. Is there a waiting list?

The MeKi database is always changing. Every enrollment application is given a certain number of points according to a point system and is ranked accordingly. This order changes with every new enrollment.

20. Which criteria apply?

Spots are allocated in the city daycare centers and childcare for school-aged children in accordance with the uniform criteria adopted by the Youth Welfare Committee (*Jugendhilfeausschuss*) and city council, which are based on legal foundations.

Priority for spots goes to children whose welfare is jeopardized as documented by facts obtained by Social Services (*Sozialer Dienst*) and/or whose best interests need to be promoted. That is a government mandate.

The other criteria look at the employment of one or both guardians. Those looking for work and who are in training are regarded as being employed. Single parents receive a bonus.

The scope of the employment plays a role when it comes to being entitled to a certain type of childcare, such as all-day childcare.

If the same number of points is reached, a child with a sibling already in childcare will be given priority. And, finally, when it comes to nursery school and kindergarten older children have priority; for school-aged childcare younger ones have priority.

The full wording of the allotment criteria can be found at:

www.mannheim.de/bildung-staerken/meldesystem-kinderbetreuung-meki

21. By law I am entitled to a childcare spot. So why has my child still not received a spot in the desired center or for the type of care?

Since August 1, 2013, children between the ages of one and three are entitled to care in a daycare center or in daycare in accordance with Section 24, para 2 of the German Social Code (*SGB*) VIII. The scope of the daily care is geared to individual needs.

This legal right is not geared to a certain childcare center. The parents' right to choose their center is limited by the offers available. There is also no entitlement to have more childcare spots created in a center (Please refer to a verdict from the Higher Administrative Court - OVG Münster B. v. 14.08.2013 -12 B 793/13.)

Similarly, as of the age of three, children are legally entitled to care in a daycare center in accordance with Section 24, para 3 of the German Social Code (*SGB*) VIII. And here, too, there is no entitlement to care in a certain childcare center.

For school-aged children, Section 24, para. 4 of the German Social Code (*SGB*) VIII merely contains an objective-legal obligation for operators of public and youth services to provide spots in daycare centers as needed, but does not constitute a legal right for children.

22. What happens if I don't receive a spot in one of the centers I requested?

In this case, please contact the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)*. An attempt will be made to find an alternative with you.

23. With whom do I conclude an agreement for childcare?

You conclude an agreement with the center that gave you confirmation of a spot. The intake interviews and the details of the care agreement depend on the operator of the center in question.

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

Basically, you can't. The childcare spots in Mannheim are primarily available to families residing in Mannheim. Exceptions to this are daycares and independent centers with special agreements such as company kindergartens and nursery schools.

25. How long is my personal information saved?

Information provided upon enrollment will be deleted from the central office as soon as the child has been firmly enrolled at and accepted by a center. At any time though you can request that the *Servicestelle Eltern (Meki)* delete your information immediately.