



**Kanton Zürich  
Bildungsdirektion  
Volksschulamt**

# **Learning starts well before kindergarten**

**Recommendations for transferring  
from pre-school to kindergarten**



**englisch**

**Are you keen to get your child ready for kindergarten and for their coming school years?**

It doesn't take anything out of the ordinary: Showing interest as you spend time with your child and involving them in everyday situations is the best support you can give. It gives children a chance to learn important lessons that can support their development and prepare them for their learning at kindergarten and at school. Forty short films, available at [www.kinder-4.ch](http://www.kinder-4.ch), show lots of ways in which everyday family life can be a great place for every child to learn. In general, parents know instinctively what's right for their children. The following suggestions serve as some ideas to complement what you already do as parents.

What's important is that you share your child's joy when they succeed, that you encourage them and that you let them do and experience as much as possible themselves.

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| <p><b>Speaking</b></p>         | <p>Do you communicate with your child? When speaking with your child, do you speak the language you think in?</p> <hr/> <p>Children's language skills develop as long as you involve them in conversation and give them a chance to join in too.</p> <p>If children learn the language their parents feel most comfortable speaking, they will develop a solid foundation for further languages. If more than one language is spoken at home, it can help to agree clear rules about which language is spoken and when.</p> |
| <p><b>Listening</b></p>       | <p>Do you look at picture books with your child; do you read them out loud and talk to them about the stories? Do you tell them fairy tales and other stories?</p> <hr/> <p>Listening carefully and concentrating are important skills for learning at school. When the time comes for your child to learn how to read and write, it'll be easier for them if they've been introduced to books, pictures and stories from an early age.</p>   |
| <p><b>Understanding</b></p>  | <p>Do you let your child take hold of everyday objects as often as possible and use all their senses to learn more about them (eg furniture, clothes, cutlery, food etc)? Do you explain what they are and say what they're called?</p> <hr/> <p>Children are full of curiosity and want to get to know more about the world. It's important to understand that 'getting to know' can happen in two ways: through touch and through understanding.</p>  |
| <p><b>Building I</b></p>     | <p>Do you let your child play with water, sand, stones, fallen leaves, snow, shovels, buckets and beakers etc?</p> <hr/> <p>This kind of play helps your child get a taste of mathematics and materials (eg through filling and refilling buckets and beakers, creating shapes).</p>  |

## Building II



Does your child get a chance to build things using building blocks, lego, boxes etc?

This kind of play helps your child learn more about and tell the difference between shapes, sizes and amounts.

## Painting



Do you give your child paper and paints and let them get creative?

Painting helps children practise different movements with their arms, hands and fingers. This will also help them develop their writing skills later on.

## Crafts



Do you give your child paper, fabrics, boxes, sellotape, scissors, glue and other things and do crafts with them? Or can they join in when you're baking cookies or doing some DIY?

Your child develops a feeling for working with their hands etc; they can develop their imagination and turn their ideas into reality.

## Discovering



Do you go outdoors with your child? Do you take your child shopping, or to your workshop or hobby room or to the laundry room? Can they touch things and use what they find there and even get themselves dirty in the process?

In this way your child can gain new experiences in different environments and also learn to keep to the rules.

## Doing things on their own



Is your child allowed to do things on their own – even if it takes them a little longer or they don't get it right first time (eg getting dressed, going to the toilet, laying the table, peeling apples etc)? Do you encourage your child to work out solutions on their own and support them as they try to overcome any difficulties?

Children need the time to get the hang of things on their own. Being able to do things by themselves will make it easier for them when they're at school and will also increase their self-confidence.

## Playing with others



Does your child get the chance to play with other children on a regular basis?

By playing together, children can learn a lot from each other: they learn to be considerate, to stand up for themselves, to get along with others and to help. All these things will help your child settle in in their class and find their place later on at school.

### **What should my child be able to do when they start kindergarten?**

There are no special entry requirements for kindergarten – with the exception of your child's age. But it helps if your child has already done some of the following:

- Spent time with other children playing, running, climbing and balancing,
- Been separated from their parents for some hours,
- Used scissors to cut paper, drawn with pens and pencils and stuck some things using glue.
- Got themselves dressed or undressed,
- Gone to the toilet themselves,
- Washed their hands themselves, their mouth and nose and cleaned their teeth,
- Been able to understand simple things in German and to follow instructions,
- Been able to work on something for some time and become absorbed in it,
- Take care of living things as well as materials,
- Tidy up after playing and help if necessary.

### **Questions?**

If you have any concerns about your child's development please contact a specialist (eg family counselling, pediatrician), the school management or the kindergarten teacher or the person leading your child's play group. If you find out that your child may have a developmental delay of some kind, please contact the kindergarten teacher or the school management early on – before your child starts school. This is the only way to ensure that your child has the best possible support from the outset.

### **Further reading/sources**

- «Lernen ist schon für kleine Kinder sehr wichtig!» (Flyer der Schule Buchs SG)

These recommendations were developed in cooperation with the 'Zurich Association of Kindergarten Teachers' (Verband Kindergarten Zürich VKZ) and the 'Zurich Association of Teachers (Zürcher Lehrerinnen- und Lehrerverband ZLV).



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### **Contact:**

Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich  
Volkschulamt | Pädagogisches, Unterrichtsfragen  
Phone 043 259 22 62, E-Mail: [unterrichtsfragen@vsa.zh.ch](mailto:unterrichtsfragen@vsa.zh.ch)