

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The COVID crisis is a major challenge for our society and our schools bear a special responsibility. Our goal as the Board of Education for Vienna is to ensure that schools operate as normally as possible, while at the same time, fulfilling the requirements for the highest possible level of health care and safety.

Therefore, over the coming months, schools will be organised according to the guidelines that have been compiled in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and the City of Vienna. These regulations are based upon the 'traffic light' system determined by the Federal Government. However, these regulations may change, depending upon the development of the number of infected persons, as well as cluster analysis and other circumstances.

To make sure that the school year starts in the best possible way, we would like to draw your attention to the current regulations regarding the start of school. Therefore, we have put together answers to a collection of frequently asked questions that will be of interest, as well as providing some orientation, to you as parents. Furthermore, you will also find the regularly updated FAQ's on the homepage of the Board of Education for Vienna (www.bildung-wien.gv.at).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is my child's health at risk while at school?	According to the information provided by the Ministry of Education, scientific studies have shown that, just like adults, children and young people can be infected with COVID-19. However, this happens more rarely, and if they do become infected, the illness, in most cases, is less serious. Furthermore, they probably play a lesser role in the transmission of the virus. The general and school-specific regulations are aimed at keeping the risk as low as possible and protecting the pupils as much as possible
2. What will the school day look like when school starts?	In general, the school will begin, operating as normal, to its full extent. This means all lessons will take place, including afternoon lessons and after-school courses, either in regular class or study groups and in compliance with the general hygiene regulations.
3. The Federal Government has developed a 4-colour 'traffic light' system (green, yellow, orange and red) that is also connected to specific school safety measures. Where can we see which colour 'traffic light' the school has?	The schools will display the 'traffic light' colour on the homepage and it will be clearly visible in the entrance area of the school. The 'traffic light' colours for the city of Vienna can be found on the website www.bildung-wien.gv.at .

4. May I as a parent/ guardian accompany my child into the school building on the first day of school?	Generally, yes. In the case of normal school operation, it should be possible for parents to accompany their children. Whether this will actually be possible, depends on the space that is available at the school. Further information can be found by contacting the school directly from the 3rd of September onwards, or by looking at the school's homepage.
5. Do I have to provide my child with a mask?	Yes, because wearing the mask may be mandatory in certain teaching/learning situations.
6. Does my child have to wear a mask in the school building?	This depends on the colour of the 'traffic light'. Wearing of masks in the classroom is planned once the 'traffic light' colour is red.
7. Does my child have to wear a mask during lessons	No.
8. Staggered school entry: Will the start of classes be staggered?	This measure can be taken, in order to avoid crowds at the beginning of the school day. The individual schools will decide if this measure will be taken at their location.
9. Will parents' evenings be held this year?	Invitations to conferences, commissions and school-partnership committees can be issued for discussions and resolutions, and these can be held as face-to-face meetings or online. However, face-to-face meetings will depend on the colour of the 'traffic light'. Resolutions may also be passed electronically or online.
10. Will parent-teacher conferences take place?	Apart from lessons, situations in which large numbers of people are present in the school building at the same time should be avoided. For this reason, more use should be made of opportunities to remain in contact digitally or by telephone.
11. Will school events still take place?	Generally, yes. However, because of COVID-19, school events and school-related events may only be planned and carried out if it can be guaranteed that the hygiene regulations will be kept to for the entire duration of the event. For each event a risk analysis must be drawn up by the school and submitted to the Board of Education for Vienna.
12. May children participate in project weeks this school year?	This decision is made by the school, in consultation with the parents and legal guardians, and will also depend on the colour of the 'traffic light'.
13. May I withdraw my child from lessons at school in the coming school year?	It is possible to withdraw pupils from lessons at school, if school attendance becomes a psychological burden because of an increase in the number of infections. This is possible even if the child does not belong to a

	predefined risk group. You may also withdraw your child from lessons at school if the pupil lives in the same household as a person belonging to a risk group. These pupils can be exempted from attending classes upon presentation of a medical certificate issued by a doctor.
14. As a parent, I am afraid of being infected with Corona, for whom must the medical certificate be issued? Child or mother?	The medical certificate only applies to the child.
15. If my child does not attend classes, how does he or she access the lesson material?	Those pupils with a medical certificate are considered excused, but must catch up with the lesson material on their own. Specific arrangements for this must be agreed upon with the teachers or the Head Teacher of the school.
16. What about Religious Education? Can this still take place as normal?	According to the current situation, Religious Education lessons can be held as normal. Religious Education lessons for denominations that have just a few cross-class participants, should be held in larger rooms, where it is easier to keep to the distancing regulations.

Of course, you might still have further questions. Therefore, we like to make you aware of other possible ways to get in touch:

For questions relating to school or education, the Board of Education has set up its own **Corona-Hotline for pupils, teachers and parents**. Hotline telephone number: **01-52525/77109** (Monday to Friday from 7.30 until 15.30).

More information can be found online here:

www.bildung-wien.gv.at (Homepage of the Board of Education for Vienna)

www.bmbwf.gv.at (Homepage of the Ministry of Education)

Important additional information: Vienna will open camps in the autumn holidays.

School is about to begin, but the next school holidays are not that far away. For the first time there will be a week-long school holiday in autumn. In order to relieve the burden on parents and provide children with exciting adventures and experiences, Vienna is continuing the successful model of the Summer City Camps in autumn and will, for the first time, offer Autumn Camps. Children may participate in one of 30 camps at locations across Vienna. The fee is 50 € per week and includes lunch and a great programme of free-time activities. Registration and further details can be found here: www.ferieninwien.at.

We hope that this information provides you with the best possible support and wish you and your children a good start to the new school year