

Day care for children living in Bremen

Some keywords and details



Early childhood care for children under 3

Children that are at least one year old are entitled by law to early childhood support that can be carried out:

- a) **in private homes in the hands of registered childcare professionals (so-called childminders)**
- b) **in a day care center**

The educational purpose of these two types of day care possibilities is to complete the care, upbringing and education that takes place in the respective families with an independent contribution.

Day care in private homes in the hands of registered childcare professionals

a) If you leave your child in the care of a **registered childcare professional**, a so-called childminder, the care of your child will either take place in your own home or in the home of the childcare professional. A childcare professional can take care of up to 5 children at the same time.

A special form of childcare can occur when 2 childcare professionals (child-minders) share an external site together. They work together – as in a day care center – with up to 10 children together.

All childcare professionals that PiB (Pflegekinder in Bremen) work with have an **official permit** and are required to undergo constant and continuous training in their field.

There are about **320 registered childcare professionals** offering their services in private homes in the municipal area of Bremen.

Day care centers for children under 3

b) In **day care centers** children will be taken care of in groups of up to 10 children. In addition, some kindergartens offer mixed-age groups. These groups offer room for 15 children between the ages of 1 and 6, where 5 of these children will be under 3 years of age.

You will often find that day care **facilities near specific firms** will offer opening hours that correspond to a firm's working hours. These opening hours have been arranged especially for the children of the staff, but are also open to other children in the surrounding area.

A further possibility of early childhood care is the so-called socially **educational play group for toddlers and their parents (Sozialpädagogische Spielkreise)**. They presently offer care and support 2 or 3 days a week for 3 to 4 hours each day.

Altogether, there are approximately **258 institutions** in Bremen.

The agencies that support these establishments are:

- parents-associations and other (free) agencies
- church organizations
- charity organizations
- KiTa Bremen – the kindergarten organization of the city of Bremen

On the first day of August, children change the place from early day care to kindergarten, which will become 3 years old up to the end of the year. For those who start for the first time, they will begin with the kindergarten. All day care centers – except for a few commercial agencies that are privately owned and operated – are financially supported by the city of Bremen.

A fully-trained staff of **pedagogically trained professionals** is responsible for the early childhood care, education and support of the children in each institution.

The day care centers run by parent associations call for the active participation of their members (i.e. the children's parents) in both administration as well as in the daily tasks and chores that have to be taken care of in such centers.

Opening Hours and Length of Supervision

a) **Childminders (private home care):** These childcare professionals are **very flexible** in arranging their supervision times so that they can more easily adapt to the individual needs of each family. The maximum possible supervision time is 60 hours a week.

Because childcare professionals also need a period of leave to be able to take a holiday, there is a period of **4 weeks per year** that they **will not be available**.

b) **Day Care Centers:** As a rule the opening hours of the day care centers are Monday to Friday and correspond to the longest period of care available to the children.

They usually offer a period of care for 6 to 8 hours, 5 days a week. In most of the centers near specific firms, you can have your child registered for **less than 5 days a week**. In this case 2 children share, for example, one place and come to the center at different times.

Most centers open at 8:00 a.m. In larger centers **earlier or later supervision** can be arranged.

Day care centers will remain open during the **school holidays**, with the exception of a 4 week closing period, throughout the year.

Day care centers organize their closing times in close cooperation with one another. This means that if one day care center is temporarily closed, a neighboring institution will remain open.

Registration

When you register your child for a day-care center or a childminder, you **always** need to provide your "**Kita-Pass**". This of course means that you can only register your child for the one or the other **alternative: not both**.

Please register your child during the official registration period between the **8th and 28th January 2016**.

You can also register your child to begin day care at another time of the year. If this is the case, please register your child **at least 3 months in advance** so an available position can be allotted to your child.

All day care centers and child-minders, however, have a limited number of positions available. For this reason it may not always be possible to accommodate your child in the institution of your choice.

It is therefore important to list alternative day care centers or childminders on the registration form if this is of interest to you.

If you are registering your child for the beginning of the next school year, then his/her first day of care will be **after the end of summer vacation**.

Settling-in period

Going to a day care center or a childminder is a giant step in the life of a child. Each child needs his own individual time to settle into this new lifestyle. In the company of his parents he/she becomes acquainted with the new situation, rooms, children and adults. Settling in can take up to 6 weeks, depending on the individual child. During this time parents will not yet be able to leave their child alone in the new surroundings.

Fees

a) a) The fees charged for childcare professionals depend upon the parents' income and the time of supervision. As in day care centers, they are based on the city of Bremen's current table of fees. The Agency for Maternity/Paternity Pay (Elterngeldstelle) will send you the necessary information in due time concerning the fees involved.

b) In day care centers parents have to **pay a fee** if their child is in daily care **for 4 or more hours**. The **socially educational play groups for toddlers and their parents** (Sozialpädagogische Spielkreise) are free of charge.

The costs for day care are calculated as a **yearly fee** that is paid in monthly installments.

The amount of the fee depends on the family income and on the hours of care being used in the center by the family. You can get a copy of the table of fees at the individual centers.

There is a calculator available to you at www.kinderbetreuungskompass.de. It will provide you with a rough estimate of the fees that are to be expected.

In the case of 5 hours of supervision daily, you have the choice of two offers – one **with and one without lunch**. If your child is registered for care that takes place over a period of more than 6 hours, lunch is obligatory. The costs for lunch (which are currently 22€) can be waived upon special request.

The kindergarten organization of the city of Bremen (KITa) will notify you of the parental pay fees. The municipal child care centers as well as the child care centers run by church or charity organizations determine their fees according to the same table of fees that KITa Bremen does and will send you an invoice accordingly.

The fees charged by the parent associations are determined by their respective institutions. In special cases an application can be made to social services for help with this payment. The extent of this help is calculated based upon the table of fees.

Parent committees

Every year each day care center elects representatives that meet in a committee to represent the interests of the parents. The central committee, the **ZEV (Zentralelternvertretung)** meets regularly in Bremen to talk about the interests of all parents.

If you need any further information please contact your day care center or go to: www.zev-bremen.de.