



Admissions Policy

All students are welcome to apply regardless of language, religion, sexual orientation, physical and cognitive abilities, gender, race, or culture. We are a welcoming community to all. Our goal through our admissions process is

to clearly communicate with potential families about the familial involvement in the IB learning process and to be sure that we welcome those who are supportive of the IB, accept our school policies and mission, and appreciate and acknowledge the educational structure it provides. The IB is rigorous and we require students and guardians to agree to an inquiry-based education. It is our mission to find students and families who want to fully participate in our school community.

Families are invited to attend our Open Door Day in the fall usually around September or October of the previous school year their child would attend. At the Open Door Day, the PYPC and Head of School take time to discuss the framework of the IB and answer questions about our school. It is during this day that we begin to make connections with the parents and students who have an interest in our school. Because we are a public institution, we cannot conduct an interview/screening process before the official registration begins. In November, the official school registration can happen via the Abteilung here:

https://www.graz.at/cms/beitrag/10027079/7745020/Tagesbetreuung_an_Schulen.html. We will then invite accepted families for an in-person interview which will be conducted by our admissions committee in English or in German which take place in January called the "Schuleinschreibung."

During this time, we clarify our concept and look for agreement from the families that they understand and have a wish for our program.

What will be assessed from the admissions process:

1. Why does the student and family wish to be a member of the Volksschule Smart City community?
2. Does the student have the support at home necessary to successfully participate in the VSC program?
3. Does the student exhibit already or have the ability to learn the behavior necessary to succeed and allow others to succeed in the VSC program?
4. Can VSC successfully support the student if they require learning and/or emotional support?

For Transferring students:

5. Are spaces available in the class?
6. How will the child's admission to the school influence the group dynamic and the progression of our program?

If there is more interest than we have spaces for, the following will be considered:

1. The distance to the school from where the child lives.
2. Has the child spent time in an international school previously?
3. Is the applicant committed to staying for an entire school year?
4. Does the student require services beyond what we can provide?

5. Does the Austrian School system meet the needs of the child?
6. Does the applicant have family members already in the VSC program?
7. Does the child need afternoon care?

Final decisions rest with the administration team and families will be notified via email of their acceptance status from our school.

Waitlisted Students

After admissions decisions have been issued and places accepted or denied by accepted applicants, VSC will offer available places to waitlisted students in each class for the following school year. During the school year, when open places become available, waitlisted students will be offered admission according to VSC admissions criteria.

Class Assignments:

In parallel classes, students will be mixed in the third year based on a variety of factors. Many considerations are made to place each student appropriately as we reorganize classes in the third year. Some of the philosophies that ground these decisions are:

- Greater socialization through new friendships and extended friendships
- Resolving potential conflicts without spotlighting an individual
- Developing balances in friendships, academics, and personal needs across grade levels
- Developing resilience to change through adaptability and exploring learner profiles and attitudes

There is input from grade-level teachers when reviewing class placements that include:

- Working relationships
- Social relationships
- Academic proficiency
- Social-Emotional requirements

Age Requirements:

Children are typically sorted into classes based on age. For example: a child must be 6 by September 1st of the academic year to enter grade 1. Other factors we take into account is language ability and if the child needs more support than the class can offer and if the child will be successful with the German language in a higher level class. There are some exceptions to the September 1st rule. This will be evaluated by VSC and the child's readiness for school, physical maturity, emotional maturity, language development, and cognitive ability will be taken into account.

School Visits:

Local families are encouraged to visit our school during Open door days (Tag der offenen Tür,) and during informational evenings (Info Abend.) Parents who are not local will be handled on a case-by-case basis. It is important for us to get to know the families before applications are done.