

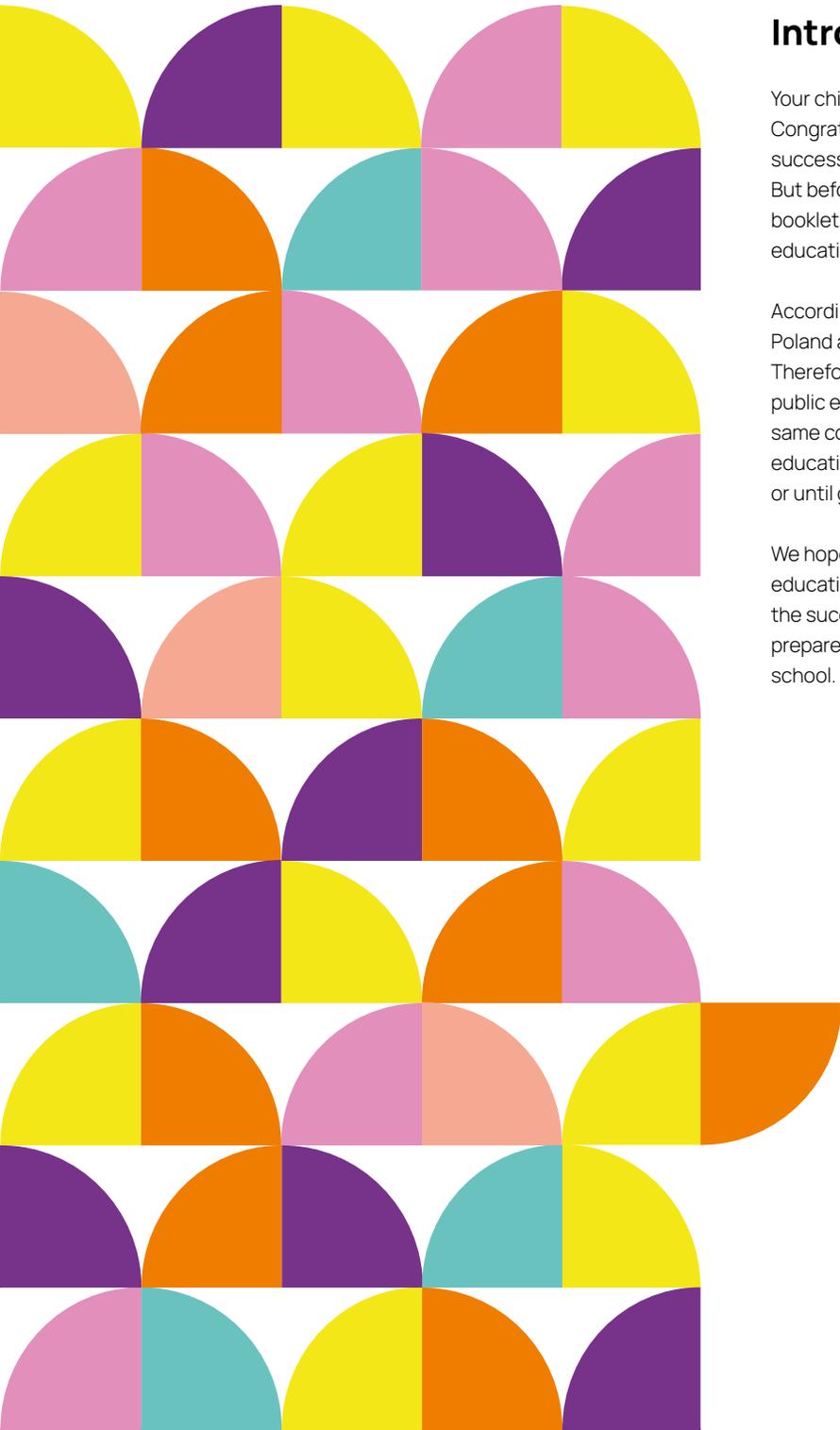
Guide to the Polish School

The stages of education in Poland, recruitment, exams, system of support, and other important issues (not only for children with migration experience).

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Introduction

Your child has just started education in a Polish school. Congratulations and we wish them every educational success!

But before the success comes, we invite you to read the booklet we have prepared for parents of students in Polish educational institutions.

According to Polish law, children who are not citizens of Poland are subject to compulsory schooling and education. Therefore, they can receive education and assistance in public elementary, art and secondary schools (under the same conditions as children of Polish citizenship). Compulsory education refers to mandatory learning until the age of 18, or until graduation from elementary school.

We hope that this booklet will be a guide to the Polish educational system. With this reading, you will learn about the successive stages of your child's education and be better prepared for the challenges that come with attending a Polish school.

Education Stages and Recruitment

Kindergarten recruitment

Recruitment rules

The recruitment process is governed by regulations of the Ministry of Education and usually takes place in February–March.

Exact deadlines may vary between municipalities, so parents should keep track of information published by education departments in the municipality and local educational institutions.

In Warsaw, recruitment is done through an electronic enrollment platform. Parents of a child must have a candidate profile in the Comprehensive Recruitment System (Polish: *Kompleksowy System Rekrutacji*).

If you live in Warsaw, use the link below:

<https://rekrutacje-warszawa.pzo.edu.pl/formico-public/>

After logging in, you should:

- enter the information about the child and parents,
- select three kindergartens,
- mark the fulfilled criteria,
- add the required attachments,
- sign the application with your Trusted Profile (Polish: *Profil Zaufany*).



The leading authority determines the rules for recruitment to educational institutions.

Children residing in the area of the municipality are admitted to the kindergarten in the first place. Five criteria are taken into account at the first stage of recruitment. Priority is given to a child:

- from a large family,
- with disabilities,
- whose parents or siblings are persons with disabilities,
- who is being raised by only one parent,
- who is being raised in a foster family.



Warsaw Recruitment Schedule:

<https://edukacja.um.warszawa.pl/harmonogram-rekrutacji1>

1. Pre-school and primary school offers become available in the recruitment system

2. Parents fill out and register in the system the application for admission of their child. After the registration stage is completed, it will not be possible to edit the application. Parents submit to the kindergarten/school of first choice an application for admission of their child. They attach documents that confirm the fulfillment of the criteria to be taken into account in the recruitment procedure.

All these documents can be submitted and signed with the Trusted Profile through the electronic recruitment system or on paper directly to the kindergarten/school of first choice.

3. Publication of the list of shortlisted and not shortlisted children.

4. Parents confirm their willingness to enroll their child in the kindergarten/school for which the child is qualified.

The order of admission of a child to a kindergarten does not depend on when you enter the data, print and submit the application, nor on the moment of its submission with a Trusted Profile signature. The time at which an application is approved also does not affect the order of admission.

NOTE: If you apply after the deadline specified in the schedule, your child will not be considered for recruitment.

If parents don't want to use the offered place, they should participate in the supplementary recruitment.

Submission of an application

You can apply for admission of your child to an unlimited number of institutions.

Indicate the kindergartens or schools of choice in your application for admission. Put them in your preferred order. The facility indicated first is the kindergarten or school of first choice.

Attach to your application for admission documents and statements that confirm that you meet the criteria. Remember to confirm the clause in each statement: "I am aware of the criminal liability for making a false statement".

How to fill out the application

Fill out the application in the electronic system and bring it to your first choice institution.

To do this:

- fill out the application in the system, or:
- print the completed application,
- sign the application,
- bring the application and the documents and statements that confirm that you meet the recruitment criteria for the kindergarten or school of your first choice.

Important: both parents must sign the application to confirm the information provided in it.

Parents of children who have not been admitted can apply for a statement of reasons for refusal of admission of their child and appeal against the decision of the admission committee also through the electronic system. In order to do this, log into the child's Comprehensive Recruitment System account.

Recruitment of children with special educational needs issued on the grounds of a disability.

If your child has special educational needs due to a disability, you can apply for admission to public or integrated branches. Attach a copy of the special education certificate issued for the preschool period to the enrollment application.

Safety and health procedures at the nursery.

Vaccinations

In Poland, most children going to kindergarten already have vaccinations against tuberculosis, hepatitis B, rotavirus, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, Haemophilus influenzae type b, Streptococcus pneumoniae, poliomyelitis.

Before enrolling your child in kindergarten, ask your pediatrician about mandatory and recommended vaccinations. It is important to remember that a parent can be fined for failing to do mandatory vaccinations. District health inspectors send requests to parents to vaccinate their child. If this has no effect, reminders are sent. The consequence of evading the obligation to vaccinate is the possibility of issuing a fine to the parent in an administrative procedure – under Article 26 of the Law on Administrative Enforcement Procedure. The enforcement authority is the district state

sanitary inspector, who is responsible for starting the procedure and supervising its course.

If parents plan to enroll their child in a kindergarten, they should be informed at the time of the first visit to the pediatrician or family doctor about the possibility of extending protection against infectious diseases with recommended vaccinations.

If the child is allergic (to medications or food), the tutor or headmaster should be informed of this fact.

If your child uses an insulin pump

Ask the facility what are the rules related to the assistance of the kindergarten staff in the usage of the pump.

Source:

<https://zlobki.waw.pl/rekrutacja/>

Zasady rekrutacji – Edukacja
(um.warszawa.pl)

<https://www.wroclaw.pl/dla-mieszkanca/rekrutacja-do-przedszkoli-wroclaw-harmonogram>

<https://rekrutacje-krakow.pzo.edu.pl/formico-public/menu/14>

<https://www.ourkids.net/pl/jak-zapisac-dziecko-do-przedszkola-w-polsce.php>



One-year kindergarten preparation (reception class)

One-year kindergarten preparation, otherwise known as "reception class", is a mandatory stage of education in Poland. Typically, children aged 5–6 years old attend reception classes. It is a transitional stage between kindergarten and elementary school. It prepares children for the start of grade one at elementary schools. It is a period of intensive development of four main skills: cognitive, social, emotional and physical.

Intellectual development

The reception class program focuses on developing basic cognitive skills, such as counting, reading, writing, and understanding simple math and science concepts.

Social and emotional development

Children learn cooperation, sharing, dealing with emotions and building relationships with peers and adults.

Physical development

A reception class places great emphasis on developing motoric skills, including physical exercise or skills such as drawing and cutting out.

In Poland, **a reception class can function in various forms:**

Most children attend a kindergarten–run reception class. Programs are implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Education. Some elementary schools run reception class units, making it easier for children to make a smooth transition to the first grade.

The curriculum covers a variety of areas, such as:

- language education – developing communication skills, developing habits needed for reading and writing,
- mathematical education – learning basic mathematical concepts, counting and simple mathematical operations,
- environmental and social education, which introduces basic issues related to the surrounding world and understanding of the rules of society,
- art education – develops creativity through art, music, dance and theater classes,

- physical education – mobility exercises and team games aimed at developing physical fitness.

Recruitment rules

The recruitment process is regulated by the Ministry of Education regulations and usually takes place in February–March.

The exact dates may vary from municipality to municipality, so parents should follow the information published by local educational institutions.

In large cities, recruitment is done through an electronic recruitment platform. Parents must have a candidate profile in the Comprehensive Recruitment System:

for Warsaw – <https://rekrutacje-warszawa.pzo.edu.pl/>

for Wrocław – <https://rekrutacje.edu.wroclaw.pl/>

formico-parents/

for Cracow – <https://rekrutacje-krakow.pzo.edu.pl/>

formico-public/

for Gdansk – <https://naborp-kandydat.edu.gdansk.pl/>

The leading authority determines detailed rules for recruitment to educational institutions.

Children residing in the area of a given municipality are admitted to kindergarten as their first priority. Priority is given to a child:

- from a large family children,
- with disabilities,
- whose parents or siblings are persons with disabilities,
- who is being raised by only one parent,
- who is being raised in a foster family.

Once the general recruitment procedure for kindergartens is completed, the further process is carried out directly at the institution, depending on vacancies.

Enrollment of a child in elementary school

Depending on the municipality, recruitment for elementary schools begin in the spring of each calendar year (March) and are conducted:

(a) in traditional form (paper documents need to be delivered to the secretary's office of the respective school),

(b) or in an electronic system (e.g., in Warsaw through the system of <https://rekrutacje-warszawa.pzo.edu.pl/formico-public/>

In the 2024/2025 school year, due to the introduction of compulsory education for Ukrainian children and youth, it is possible to enroll your child in school outside of the enrollment plan.

If your child turns 7 in a given calendar year, you must enroll them in school. To do this, you must choose a school and submit an application with the appropriate documents.

In the case of an elementary school, your child must be enrolled in the district school of your place of residence.

They can be enrolled in another school chosen by the guardian, as long as there are vacancies. A list of district schools for Warsaw can be found at:

<https://mapum2.um.warszawa.pl/obwody>



A child must be admitted to school regardless of whether they are assigned a PESEL number, whether they speak Polish, and what their residency status in the Republic of Poland is.

A child's right to education is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and the Education Law.

Documents to be prepared in order to enroll your child in a Polish school:

- an enrollment form completed and signed, if possible, by both guardians (the form can be obtained from the school's secretary's office or its official website),
- the child's passport or birth certificate, in the absence of a passport,
- passport of the parent or temporary guardian,
- a document confirming the completion of school education (so-called "school readiness") issued by the school where the child completed the "reception class" – a preparatory class for first-graders),
- a document confirming the completion of the appropriate grade in a Ukrainian school for children continuing their education,
- a statement of criminal liability for knowingly falsifying the place of residence or registration (certificate of registration).

Practical advice for parents and guardians:

- Submit an application for your child's admission to the school's secretary's office even if you are verbally informed that there are no vacancies or other obstacles to enrollment.
- Ask for a written decision on the application – this is common practice in Poland.
- If you are unable to find a place for your child in an elementary school on your own, contact the education department of the municipality/city office.
- If you are unable to provide a document confirming that your child has completed education in a Ukrainian school, you can make a statement under penalty of criminal liability for knowingly making a false statement.
- If your child turns 6 in a given calendar year and you want to enroll them in school without waiting for them to turn 7, you can submit the appropriate application to school, as long as your child completed the preparatory class in the previous year. The Psychological and Pedagogical Counseling Center (Polish: Poradnia Psychologiczno-Pedagogiczna – PPP) will issue a statement on the child's readiness for school.

- If the child did not attend a preschool unit ("reception class"), but turns 7 in a given calendar year, parents can enroll the child in school with a statement that the child has the necessary skills to acquire knowledge. Sometimes the school may require a certificate from the PPP.
- If your child is not ready for school after completing "reception class" (the institution has not issued a "school readiness" document), or you have doubts if your child will be able to attend school due to developmental difficulties or problems, the PPP can issue an appropriate opinion "on contraindications to start school". In this case, an application for deferment of compulsory schooling must be submitted to the district school by August 31 of the year in which the child turns 7. The decision to defer compulsory schooling is issued by the headmaster of the school. The child must attend school preparation classes in that year. A child with a disability can be granted a deferment until the age of 9.
- If during the school year you want to transfer your child to another institution (for example, due to a relocation to another city or country), it is absolutely necessary to inform the principal of the school that your child currently attends. At the same time, the first step is to contact the new institution and talk to the school's principal about the possibility of admission. If the principal is willing to accept your child, you should prepare the transfer documents. Usually these documents are sent between schools, and the whole procedure takes about a week.

REMEMBER: You are obliged to inform the facility that you plan to change schools. Otherwise, as a result of your child's absence, the case may be referred to the family court and you may be fined.

Early school education

The Polish education system has separated compulsory schooling and compulsory education. Compulsory schooling is the **obligation to attend elementary school**. It applies to children from the age of 7 until graduation from elementary school. It can be carried out outside of school through homeschooling.

The first three years of schooling are integrated education. The teacher, who is also the tutor of the particular class, conducts **early school education (ESE)**. **ESE** includes such subjects such as Polish language, mathematics, science, foreign language, art, music, IT classes and compulsory **P.E. (physical education)**. They can be conducted by the same person. An exception can be made for religious education or foreign language. Religious education and ethics lessons are optional, children attend these classes if their parents have consented.

Textbooks are given to every child at school. However, at times it is necessary to purchase some. In addition to textbooks, a student should carry a school starter kit: notebooks, pencil case, pen, pencil, eraser, crayons, ruler, scissors, glue, pencil sharpener, sportswear for P.E. classes, change of shoes, supplies for art classes and a water bottle. It's a good idea to ask for a list of things you need for class (a school starter kit).

Communication between the school and parents is carried out through an electronic journal (Librus, Vulkan). It is mandatory to use the electronic journal regularly.

Assessment

In grades 1–3, the mid-year and end-of-year evaluation is a descriptive evaluation. Behaviour assessment is also descriptive. The teacher has the opportunity to use proprietary work tools for descriptive assessment of behavior and educational skills.

In the course of early school education, a child must master the skills of reading, writing and basic numeracy.

Children also learn the basics of science, living in harmony with the environment, healthy lifestyle, and interpersonal relationships. The main goals of early school education are:

- expanding knowledge of correct reading, writing and counting,
- developing the ability to work independently and cooperate with others,
- being in touch with wildlife and nature,
- deepening knowledge of environmental care,
- learning to establish connections,
- broadening interests and hobbies,
- paying attention to correct articulation, language proficiency in reading, writing and speaking,
- expanding knowledge through multimedia sources and books,
- developing their interests in sports and health,
- learning self-assessment and peer evaluation,
- developing creativity and imagination,
- learning appropriate social attitudes.

On the school diploma there is a descriptive assessment of (instead of scoring marks) participation, behavior, involvement in the school and class community, and more.

Each school has a school club (Polish: *świelica*) for grades 1–3. This is an educational and pedagogical space where children can stay before or after school hours. In order to benefit from the school club, an appropriate application must be submitted along with a list of people authorized to pick the child up from school.

For the implementation of activities in the common room, you will need the so-called 'school club kit': colored school paper, colored cardboard, crayons, paint, plasticine, glue and other materials indicated by the teachers at the beginning of the school year. In some schools all materials are covered by the school budget, while in others each child brings the necessary items with them. When enrolling a child for the school club, it is worth clarifying how this is arranged at a particular school.

Sources:

<https://publikacje.edu.pl/edukacja-wczesnoszkolna-w-polsce>

<https://spkicin.edupage.org/text/?eqa=dGV4dD1zdWJqZWNOcy8yMQ%3D%3D>

<https://policjalna.gowork.pl/blog/jak-wyglada-sytem-szkolnictwa-w-polsce-etapy-charakterystyka/>

Communication with the school

Librus and Vulcan are the most popular electronic journals in Poland, which allow parents to communicate quickly with the school (primarily the class tutor) and easily view their child's current academic progress. The e-journal is used to contact teachers, psychologists or school counselors and obtain information about the child's grades, behavior and attendance. Access to the e-journal is given to both students and parents, while they log in from separate accounts.

Electronic journals provide various functions and data such as:

- grades, comments, students' attendance,
- timetable – current schedule for students and teachers,
- messages – communication between teachers, students and parents,
- homework – information about assignments, deadlines for their completion,
- school calendar – dates of tests, trips, school events,
- teaching materials – educational resources provided by teachers,
- announcements – important information and announcements from the school.

With the help of the electronic journal it is possible to send to the teacher such messages as:

Absence note – a message (excuse letter) sent to the tutor by the parent or legal guardian, indicating the reason and date of the child's absence.

Exemption from lessons – a message sent to the tutor in a situation when a child has to leave school before lessons end, for example, if they have a doctor's appointment or feels unwell.

With these features, the journals facilitate the management of the educational process and communication within the school community.

Not using the electronic diary can have negative consequences, such as:

- lack of knowledge about upcoming events, days off, trips, fees,
- being unprepared for lessons or tests, with the effect of worsening grades and decreasing motivation to learn,
- the child's inability to engage in school activities, such as competitions, workshops, concerts, which might be an obstacle to the child's healthy development and their talents.

Remember that the electronic journal is the main tool for parent and student communication with the school. Check the electronic journal every day so you don't miss important information!

The use of the electronic diary is mandatory!

Instructions for the use of electronic diaries:

Links by which you can log in to:

- Librus <https://portal.librus.pl/szkola>
- Vulcan <https://www.vulcan.edu.pl/konto>

Learn how to use LIBRUS on the Polish Migration Forum's YouTube channel:

@PolskieForumMigracyjne

ENGLISH LANGUAGE VERSION:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3yAgwsslmSXCW11AJ-7UQCI2A3O9YMdE>

AJ-7UQCI2A3O9YMdE

How to use VULCAN?

POLISH LANGUAGE VERSION:

https://str-arch.vulcan.edu.pl/vulcang_files/user/AABW/AABW-PDF/uonetplus/uonetplus_Logowanie-ucz-rodz.pdf?_

https://str-arch.vulcan.edu.pl/vulcang_files/user/AABW/AABW-PDF/uonetplus/uonetplus_Logowanie-ucz-rodz.pdf?_

[Logowanie-ucz-rodz.pdf?_](https://str-arch.vulcan.edu.pl/vulcang_files/user/AABW/AABW-PDF/uonetplus/uonetplus_Logowanie-ucz-rodz.pdf?_)



Education in grades 4–8

Fourth grade is a new stage of education, which marks the first step towards classes in strictly defined subjects, including a second foreign language. The classes are taught by teachers of the particular subjects.

Subjects in grades 4–8

Classes include Polish language, two foreign languages, history, social studies, art, music, science, geography, biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, design and technology, safety education and physical education (PE). Schools also organize religious education and ethics classes. These subjects are not compulsory. Students attend them with parental consent.

As of September 1, 2024, new regulations are in effect, under which, as of the 2024/2025 school year, religious education will no longer be included in the school grading average. In public schools, the subject "religious education" refers to the Roman Catholic religion.

Textbooks are loaned by the school for the school year. Workbooks in most cases are also provided by the school library. If a child joins a class in the middle of the school year, then their parents have to buy the workbooks individually. Students have the opportunity to borrow books that are school readings from the school library.

They also have access to additional educational materials in various subjects.

Starting in the fourth grade, students have additional classes with a tutor (homeroom lesson) once a week.

During the homeroom lesson, issues concerning peer relations, functioning in the classroom and outside the school are being addressed. The following topics can be discussed in the classes: growing up, education, relations in the family and among peers, emotional growth, etc.

In grades 4–8 there is a six-grade grading scale:

- 6 – excellent
- 5 – very good
- 4 – good
- 3 – satisfactory
- 2 – sufficient
- 1 – insufficient

Teachers evaluate the child's learning progress on an ongoing basis. At the end of each semester and school year, teachers issue final grades for each subject in the electronic journal (Librus/Vulcan), which will then be reflected on the child's school diploma.

School kit

The contents of the child's pencil case should be supplemented at this stage with a geometry set, a calculator, pencils, highlighters for notes, and a pen. For physical education classes, students are to dress in sports clothes.

Attendance and safety

The school monitors a child's attendance. If a student does not attend school or misses classes without a valid reason, parents face consequences from the school and social support services.

Individual insurance against accidents (In Polish: NNW) is an insurance against accidents. It covers, for example permanent injury after an accident, animal and insect bites, acquisition or repair of orthopedic items and aids, medical expenses after an accident and hospital daily allowance. It is possible to purchase a commercial insurance policy for a child from one of the insurance companies operating on the Polish market.

Promotion to the next grade

If a child receives a "1" in a subject, they can improve their grade within two weeks. By mid-December, elementary (grade 4 and above) and high school teachers issue proposed grades based on current first-semester grades in each subject. The exact deadline may depend on the school's internal regulations. Suggested grades are available in the electronic diary, and tutors often distribute printouts to parents at parent-teacher meetings.

These estimates are not final. Suggested grades are designed to allow students to "increase" their level of knowledge to the desired level and improve their semester grades. Parents are required to monitor their child's grades in Librus/Vulcan.

A failing grade in the first semester does not withhold a student from further study in the second semester. This is explained by the fact that the grade lasts until the end of the school year, and only the annual classification determines the promotion (or not) to the next grade.

If a child obtains the status of "unqualified", then, exceptionally, with the approval of the educational council, they can work through the material of the entire semester on their own. Such re-sits are usually scheduled for the last days of August.

Note that students who have two and more "1" are not promoted to the next grade. After receiving more than two failing annual grades, the child repeats the school year in the same grade.

A student may be granted "unqualified" status if they miss more than 50% of the learning hours in a subject as well as due to bad behaviour.

A student's behaviour grade may be:
bad, inadequate, correct, good, very good, exemplary.

Important information for parents of eighth grade students:

The eighth-grade exam is held annually in May and covers three subjects: Polish language, foreign language and mathematics. Passing this exam is a prerequisite for graduating from elementary school and moving on to the next stage of education, that is to secondary school.

Additional points

A student can earn them for making a positive impact on the class, school (participation in competitions, work for the benefit of the class, school). Negative points (-) awarded for undesirable behavior reduce the pool (e.g., disruption in class, cheating, bad language).

Points from the school diploma

For an excellent grade one gets 18 points, for a very good grade – 17, for a good grade – 8, for an acceptable grade – 2. For graduating with honors, one can get as many as 7 additional points. Additional 3 points are also awarded to those who engage in school volunteering activities.

Information about additional points is listed on the 8th grade diploma and the number of points accumulated counts when recruiting for secondary school.

Career Counseling

One of the tasks of the elementary school is to prepare students to choose the direction of further education and profession. The school conducts lessons in career counseling for students in grades 7 and 8. You can read more about this in the section "Secondary school recruitment".

Elementary school graduation certificate – a document confirming the completion of elementary school, students receive it based on the exam results.

Outside the school timetable are the following:

Polish as a foreign language – additional Polish language lessons for foreign students. They are taught to children from 2 to 6 hours per week, depending on current regulations and the capabilities of a particular school.

Assistance of an intercultural assistant – classes with an intercultural assistant (doing homework, interpreting topics not understood by the child, interpreting instructions during lessons, psychological support, explaining school rules and cultural differences, mediation during conflicts).

Compensatory classes – classes during which children have the opportunity to review the material that has been covered so far.

Consultation hours – each teacher should have one extra hour per week available for students. This time can be used to master overdue material, focus on written work or improve grades.

Extracurricular activities – private companies conduct classes on the premises of public schools (e.g. sports, dance, music classes, programming, etc.).

Parent-teacher meeting – a meeting on the school premises organized by the class tutor, during which they inform about the children's educational progress, behavior as well as important events and matters concerning school life.

Open days – these are days set for individual discussions with parents or guardians of students. Usually before the event, teachers provide a special list from which you can choose a specific date and time for the meeting.

NOTE: In the 2024/2025 school year, children studying in the highest program grade at a school operating in the Ukrainian educational system will not be required to attend Polish schools. They can complete their education online. Students in Polish grade 8 will by no means be required to take the Polish language exam for the eighth-grade exam.

Source:
<https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja/uczniowie-z-ukrainy-w-polskich-szkolach-wazne-informacje-dla-rodzicow>



Recruitment to secondary (high school) education

After completing elementary school, the next educational stage begins – secondary (high school) education. The recruitment process begins in April-May and lasts until July. Before recruiting for a particular institution, it is worth getting acquainted with the offer of secondary schools in your city or village.

Secondary education can be obtained at:

High school (4 years)	Technical School (5 years)	Vocational School of the First Degree (3 years)
with the possibility of acquiring:		
matriculation certificate after passing the Matura exam	– a diploma confirming professional qualifications after passing professional examinations – matriculation certificate after passing the matura exam	a diploma confirming professional qualifications after passing the exam confirming the qualification separated in the profession.

Each voivodeship has its own integrated electronic recruitment system for secondary schools. It is worth noting that there are schools that prefer their own recruitment systems or require additional documents.

Basic documents required for recruitment to secondary schools:

- application for admission to secondary school,
- diploma of graduation from grade 8 of elementary school or other document that confirms the completion of the elementary stage of education abroad,
- eighth grade exam results (if the child attended a Polish elementary school).

What other documents may be required?

- competition and school olympiad certificates,
- medical and coaching certificates (for candidates for sports classes),
- medical certificate of a doctor of occupational medicine (for professions, for example, in technical or trade schools),
- certificate of test results for language predispositions (for candidates for bilingual schools or departments),
- decision of the Psychological and Pedagogical Counseling Center or the purpose of continuing education in integration classes and implementation of other recommendations listed in this document,
- certificates that allow the use of concessions (multi-child family, disability of a family member, single-parent upbringing, etc.).

*Every elementary school has a staff person responsible for providing eighth-graders with information on the recruitment schedule. This is usually the counseling teacher or the tutor. Ask your school for details.

IMPORTANT: All student accomplishments during recruitment are converted to scores. What counts are the grades on the certificate, the results of eighth-grade exams, participation in competitions, educational olympiads and volunteer work. The more scores a child gets, the greater the chance of getting into the chosen institution.

You can check the score your child can get when recruiting for high school:

<https://takzdam.pl/kalkulator-punktow/>



Foreign students who complete grade 8 of elementary school in Poland and take the eighth-grade exam participate in secondary school recruitment under the same conditions as Polish citizens.

If your child has completed **elementary school in their country of origin**, you should contact educational institutions individually and discuss the conditions of admission.

Preparatory departments (OPC)

Preparatory departments are created for students whose Polish language level does not allow them to study in regular classes. The number of students in such classes is a maximum of 25, and the teaching lasts no longer than a year. If a student masters the necessary linguistic competence during a preparatory class, they are transferred to a regular class.

Is learning in the OPC mandatory?

Attending preparatory classes is not compulsory. It is one of the solutions for children who have completed elementary school in another country, but have not yet mastered the Polish language well enough to continue their education in a Polish secondary school. After completing a preparatory class, education can be continued in a regular class.

Polish as a foreign language

Both in elementary and high school, students coming from abroad are entitled to additional free Polish language classes. It is advisable to find out at your school on what terms and when additional Polish language classes are held.

Source:

https://rejestracja.odnpoznan.pl/pliki/mat/pakiet_informacyjny_dla_uczniow_i_rodzicow_osmoklasistow.pdf



Useful links:

Guidebook:

Choose a school for yourself (Capital City of Warsaw):

https://edukacja.um.warszawa.pl/documents/66399/98228592/Informator_02_24-25+_04.pdf/f8ad9352-e830-ba74-5914-ee5ac7a88103



Exams

Eighth grade exam

Eighth grade exam is a mandatory exam that students in eighth grades are required to take at the end of the school year. It is designed to assess the knowledge of basic competencies that children have acquired during elementary school. It is the same for students nationwide – mandatory and required for graduation from elementary school.

If a student does not take it, they will not receive a school-completion diploma. There is no possibility of failing the eighth grade exam, as there is no top-down point threshold. However, it depends on the results of the tests whether the child gets into the secondary school of their choice.

The results are crucial for recruitment to secondary schools and replace entrance exams.

Rules

The entire exam is conducted in written form. In the exam for each subject, the child is given an exam sheet. There are closed tasks and open tasks. During the exam, each examinee sits at a separate table. On the table there can only be the exam sheets and writing utensils: a pen with black ink. In the case of the math exam, a ruler is also acceptable. In the case of students with health conditions or disabilities – medication and other aids.

Subjects

An eighth-grader passes 3 compulsory subjects in the exam:

Polish language – 1st day, 120 minutes

mathematics – 2nd day, 100 minutes

foreign language (choice of English, German, Spanish, French, Russian, Italian) – 3rd day, 90 minutes.

A student can choose only the language that is studied at school as part of compulsory education classes (if there are no classes at school in Italian, for example, it cannot be chosen for the exam).

Polish language – tests language skills, reading comprehension, writing, as well as knowledge of literature and grammar.

Mathematics – assesses skills in arithmetic, geometry, algebra and other areas of mathematics.

Foreign language – most often it is English, but you can choose another language that was taught at your school.

Trial exams

Each person who takes the eighth-grade exam will have the opportunity to test their skills in mock exams during the school year. The mock exams are voluntary.

Results

Each person receives a certificate of the results of the eighth grade exam – the percentage result and the score on the centile scale for the exam in each subject. Percentile score is the percentage of points a child earned from tasks of a given subject.

The percentile score is the percentage of the number of country-wide eighth grade students who scored the same or lower than the examinee in a given subject. Examination results are final and cannot be challenged in court.

Adaptation

For students who are entitled to adaptation of the conditions (e.g., students with disabilities, foreigners) of the eighth-grade exam, the time for working with individual worksheets may be extended by:

- 60 minutes – in the case of Polish language,
- 50 minutes – in the case of mathematics,
- 45 minutes – in the case of a foreign language.

Favors for migrant children

Pupils who are not Polish citizens and nationals of Poland coming from abroad are entitled to special conditions during state examinations in elementary schools.

Facilitation consists of:

- extending the duration of the exams
- use of dictionaries

If parents want their child to take advantage of the favours, they must submit an application to the school's management by the deadline set for the school year.

Additional exam date

The exam is held on two dates: the main and additional dates. A student who, for excusable reasons, did not take the class exam may take it on an additional date set by the school principal.

The forms of preparation for the exam are varied: study at school, tutoring, preparatory courses and independent work with educational materials.

Exception

According to the decision of the Ministry of Education, Ukrainian children in Polish 8th grade will not have to take the Polish language exam for the eighth-grade exam this school year. You can read more about this at this link:

<https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja/uczniowie-z-ukrainy-w-polskich-szkolach-wazne-informacje-dla-rodzicow>



Sources:

<https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja/egzamin-osmoklasisty2>

<https://www.wprost.pl/kraj/11230528/egzamin-osmoklasisty-2023-wszystko-comusisz-wiedziec.html>

<https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja/egzamin-osmoklasisty-2024>

<https://eurydice.org.pl/system-edukacji-w-polsce/krotka-informacja-o-polskim-systemie>

<https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja/uczniowie-z-ukrainy-w-polskich-szkolach-wazne-informacje-dla-rodzicow>

Matura exam

The matura exam can be taken by students of a high school, technical school or a vocational school. The matura exam consists of an oral and a written exam. It is an exam that concludes high school, and is mandatory for those who wish to continue their studies at a university.

Preparation

Preparation for the matura exam includes the entire period of secondary schooling, and the last two years of schooling are particularly intensive, when students often take additional preparatory classes and write mock exams.

Compulsory oral matura examinations:

- Polish language exam
- foreign language exam

Compulsory written matura examinations:

- Polish language exam (at a basic level),
- mathematics exam (at a basic level),
- modern foreign language exam (at a basic level),
- exam from a selected additional subject (at an extended level).

Source: <https://wcrs.wroclaw.pl/aktualnosci/szkolny-pakiet-startowy/>

Results and their meaning

Matura results are crucial to a child's educational future, as they are the basis for admission to higher education. Matura results are stated in percentages, and some universities may require a certain percentage threshold in a particular subject. The Matura exam can also be written in additional subjects of the child's choice. The results of individual matura exams are taken into account in university recruitment.

A passed matura exam:

It is necessary to score at least 30% in each subject.

If you fail the matura exam:

If a child does not pass an exam in one subject, they can re-sit the exam in the same year. If your child failed the matura in more than one subject, you must register for the matura exam held the following year.

Matura can also be taken by those who graduated from high school in previous years and want to improve their results. Also, those who have obtained a high school diploma abroad can take the Polish matura exam.





System of Support

Support of the intercultural assistant

If your child doesn't communicate well in Polish while starting education in Polish school, they are entitled to assistance from:

- the foreign child's teacher's support
- an intercultural assistant

Who is a teacher's support?

This is a person who knows the native language in which your child speaks and supports them during lessons. This type of support can be provided for a maximum of 12 months. For the assignment of a teacher's support apply to the school principal in a written form. You will find an application template in the appendices.

Who is an intercultural assistant?

An intercultural assistant is a person who helps students who do not know Polish or have insufficient knowledge of the Polish language to benefit from learning. An intercultural assistant provides support in dealing with the school environment, and also engages with parents.

The intercultural assistant has to work face-to-face with the child and the teacher in charge (assistance during lessons, for example, translating the teacher's instructions), as well as supporting the child during extracurricular activities (such as revising material, preparing for tests, etc.).

The intercultural assistant also acts as a mediator in the contacts of the non-Polish-born parents with the pedagogical staff of the school: they accompany the parents to meetings with the tutor, pedagogue or school psychologist (also to parent-teacher meeting), introduce new parents to the Polish schooling system/Polish educational system, explain the cultural norms, etc...

The provisions that regulate the scope of support provided by the assistant – section 8a of the Education Law.

You can read more about the role of intercultural assistants in our publication: „Dlaczego szkoły potrzebują asystentek międzykulturowych?” (“Why do schools need cross-cultural assistants?”)



Sample application for the assignment of an intercultural assistant to a child:

Psychological and pedagogical support at school

Each school has a psychological and pedagogical team, which is formed by specialists:

A pedagogist is the person you should contact first. They will propose an individual plan of psychological and pedagogical support that will help address the child's problem, they will also support in case of conflicts between peers, or in dealing with teachers.

A school psychologist is a specialist you should go to for consultation if your child is experiencing communication difficulties within the family or peers, if they are in a bad mood for a long time, or if your child is experiencing abuse. A school psychologist can also intervene in emergency situations, such as during conflicts or difficulties regarding a child's behavior.

A special educator supports students with special educational needs, and helps teachers work with children who have various types of difficulties.

A pedagogical therapist is a person who implements corrective-compensatory activities recommended as a result of psychological and pedagogical diagnosis.

A speech therapist is a specialist who supports children with speech disorders and conducts health screenings in grades 1-3.

Consent to the provision of psychological and pedagogical assistance on school premises is part of the standard document set that parents sign at the beginning of the school year or one-time at school enrollment.

.....

place, date

School Principal

.....

School address:

.....

.....

Application

I kindly request to assign my child
..... (name), (class) an intercultural assistant/
teacher's support for a foreign child*).

I base my request on the fact that (child's
name) his/their language competence is at an insufficient
level to effectively benefit from school education. I am
convinced that the support of an intercultural assistant/
teacher's support*) will contribute to an easier adaptation of
my child in school and will help them in their learning process

Kind regards,

.....

(signature)

*) delete as appropriate

If your child has been subject to psychological and pedagogical assistance in the country of origin or you observe various **difficulties** in your child, for example:

- problems with adaptation in the new environment or adaptation takes too long,
- the child has learning problems, lack of accomplishments and successes, lack of motivation,
- difficulties with literacy, writing, reading, speaking,
- difficulties interacting with peers, is withdrawn and shy,
- difficulty controlling emotions, aggression, does not cope well with stress, which affects their behavior at school,
- problems with sleep, daily rhythm, nutrition,

then it is **worth asking for help** from a pedagogue and/or school psychologist.

Psychological and Pedagogical Counseling Center

In some cases, after consultation with the school psychological-pedagogical team, the child is referred for further diagnosis to the Psychological and Pedagogical Counseling Center. This is a place where it is possible to diagnose the causes of school difficulties and obtain an appropriate document: an opinion or a decision on the need for special education.

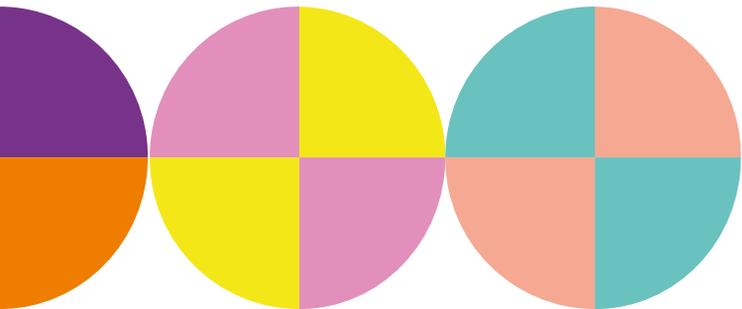
An opinion is obtained in the case of:

- specific learning difficulties: dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dysorthography,
- inclusion of the student in psychological and pedagogical assistance,
- individualized path of education,
- postponement of compulsory school attendance,
- adaptation of requirements to the individual needs and capabilities of the child.

The verdict is obtained in the case of the following children:

- deaf,
- hard of hearing,
- blind,
- visually impaired,
- with mobility impairments, including aphasia,
- with mild, moderate or severe intellectual disabilities,
- on the autism spectrum (including Asperger's syndrome – we are moving away from this term now in favor of a general category: autism spectrum),
- with intersectional disabilities,
- socially maladjusted or at risk of such maladjustment.

After receiving the document, the child's parent receives a list of recommendations, which can be implemented free of charge at school, counseling centers and at home, or for a fee at private facilities. The measures listed in the recommendations are aimed at improving the child's well-being and functioning at school, in the family and in contact with the peer group.



A child's difficulties are not an easy subject. Parents often need support in the diagnosis process too – to accept the situation and be able to help the child. Usually, counseling centers have offers for parents, such as workshops and training on child upbringing and coping with difficult situations, as well as psychological support.

IMPORTANT: It is worth remembering that both the opinion and the verdict are issued only to the parents, and it is the parent who decides how to further manage this document – whether to hand it over to the school psychological-pedagogical team. Also in these documents there may be a recommendation to implement the school program in an individual mode, in a school with integration units, a special school or in a public elementary school. The final decision on the child's mode of education is made by the parents.

A visit to a psychiatrist

In some cases, either to confirm a diagnosis or when applying for an individual educational path, a certificate from a psychiatrist is required.

The need to see such a specialist often causes anxiety among parents and fear of stigmatizing their children. This is associated with concerns about the child's future (whether the child will not be ridiculed, whether such a visit will not adversely affect further education and career path, whether the child will have any limitations).

Such concerns may also be influenced by negative experiences in the country of origin, where, for example, records of visits to a psychiatrist are kept or there is a so-called "blacklist" of people receiving psychiatric care. In contrast, under Polish law, all medical records are protected by law regarding the processing of personal and sensitive data (RODO) and cannot be shared with third parties without special permission. A psychiatrist is also bound by medical confidentiality, so information about a child's condition does not go outside the medical establishment. Schools are also required to specially protect sensitive student data.

Source: *<https://fiklon.pl/orzeczenia-a-opinie-psychologiczne-czym-sie-roznia/>



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Since 2007, the Polish Migration Forum Foundation has been supporting individuals with refugee or migration backgrounds who reside in Poland.

Our mission is to include migrants and refugees in Polish society, advocate for their rights, and combat discrimination. We aim to build social cohesion and resources for functioning in a culturally diverse world. We envision a world where human rights are respected, and communities of people from diverse backgrounds collaborate based on trust and cooperation. We assist everyone, regardless of country of origin, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, worldview, disability, sexual orientation, or age. All our support is free of charge. Our services include mental health support, legal assistance, education, employment advice, and more. We operate on two fronts: offering direct aid and advocating for systemic solutions informed by direct experience.

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We help everyone, regardless of country of origin, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, creed, worldview, disability, sexual orientation or age.

The Polish Migration Forum Foundation specialises in:

- education (training for people working with children with migration experience, psychoeducation and multicultural education for children),
- psychological support for children and adults with migration experience,
- information support (legal, counselling, operates a helpline for migrants),
- support for women, especially in the perinatal period,
- caseworking,
- community building and integration activities,
- advocacy.



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