

Assessment of pupils in compulsory education in Thurgau

Information for parents and guardians





Dear parents and guardians,

Children and adolescents should become independent, responsible people. The school will support you and your child in achieving this goal. Teachers set learning objectives in lessons – they encourage, challenge and assess your child holistically. They help the children to strengthen and develop the skills described in the Lehrplan Volksschule Thurgau (Thurgau Compulsory Education curriculum) (tg.lehrplan.ch).

Learning and assessment go hand in hand

The most important task in teaching is to support the child's learning process. To this end, teachers regularly observe the child according to criteria geared to the learning objectives. These observations and experiences from the learning support help the teacher to give your child constructive feedback, to tailor lessons accordingly and to provide information and make specific suggestions during progress meetings.

Self-assessment and feedback from other pupils

In order to promote the learning process, it is also important for children to reflect on their own learning. Regular self-assessment will help your child to take responsibility for his or her learning process.

During lessons, learning from each other and learning together are key in addition to individual learning. In accordance with this objective, pupils learn to give each other feedback (peer assessment).



Regular assessment

Teaching staff assess how well your child has achieved the lessons' learning objectives at regular intervals, based on proof of competence (such as tests, tasks and presentations). Pupils are advised of the learning objectives and criteria, according to their ages, at the start of a learning cycle.

This results in a range of proof of competence over the course of the academic year, or the term. Teaching staff use these to promote and show competence. Encouragement takes place through feedback given to the pupils in the classroom and the report serves as proof of competence.

Progress meetings – a valuable exchange

Progress meetings help to develop trust and cooperation between the school and home, which is why it is important that you attend. They strengthen personal contact between parents and teaching staff and are held once a year from the first year of kindergarten. All pupils take part from the third year (3 Klasse) onwards. In the case of younger children, teaching staff consider whether it makes sense for the child to take part, and for how long, and discuss this with the parents or guardian. It may be that your child's school has a standardised policy on participation.

The progress meeting is an opportunity to supplement the teacher's external assessment (learning level, attitude to learning and work and social skills) by the child's self-assessment and the assessment from the parents' point of view.



The progress meeting sheds light on the child's stage of development and learning. Positive behaviour is valued and recognised. The child is encouraged and motivated. Teaching staff and parents can also address problem situations and come to an agreement.

The report – words and grades

The report complements the Progress meeting and gives pupils written feedback on their performance in various subjects. Criteria oriented towards the learning objectives are used for the assessment. In classes 1 and 2 of primary school, the words “Unsatisfactory”, “Satisfactory”, “Good” and “Very good” are used. From class 3 onwards, the report contains half and full grades, which have the following meaning:

Mark	Grading	Meaning
6	Very good	Learning objectives achieved very well
5	Good	Learning objectives achieved well
4	Satisfactory	Learning objectives achieved
3, 2, 1	Unsatisfactory, Poor, Very poor	Learning objectives not achieved

In kindergarten, the assessment is verbal and forms part of the progress meeting. The report confirms the child's kindergarten attendance, so school attendance is fully documented.

In primary school the report is issued at the end of each school year, and at the end of each term in secondary school.



Separate learning report

If, even with appropriate support, a pupil fails to attain the targets set over an extended period, following a decision by school management, teaching staff can work with individual learning targets. In this case, a separate learning report is prepared and forms part of the main report.

Attitude to learning and work, social skills

From class 1 of primary school onwards, teaching staff not only assess pupils' performance in subjects in the report, but also undertake an assessment of the pupils' attitude to learning and work, and their social skills. This assessment focuses on behaviour that is important for progress in learning and communal life in school.

Absences, progress meeting, signatures

Teaching staff will include excused and unexcused absences in the report and note the number of half-days that the pupil has been absent. A reason may be included for excused absences. Any "Joker days" taken, count as excused absences.

The report also contains the date of the annual progress meeting.

The teaching staff will sign the report to confirm its accuracy. Parents and guardians sign to verify that they have received the report.

Overall assessment

The words and marks in the report show how well learning objectives in a subject have been met and represent the overall assessment. This means that the assessment incorporates different forms of proof of competence on the one hand, and, on the other hand, that it also takes into account teaching staff's observations and experiences from teaching pupils.

When making this overall assessment, teaching staff exercise their professional judgement as education specialists. They are not permitted to assess students solely on the basis of an average mark. They can also disregard work that was not awarded a grade when arriving at the grade in the report. This is why the proof of competence which teaching staff let your child look at, or give them to take home for you to sign, only forms one part of the assessments that go to make up a word or a grade in the report.

Assessment during the school year

These guidelines for assessing performance in subjects with words and grades refer to the report. How though are students assessed over the school year? The canton does not specify any guidelines. Therefore, in addition to grades, assessment may also take the form of words, symbols, colours, points, comments, a report, or verbal feedback. So, there are a number of ways in which teaching staff can inform pupils and you, as parents, about your child's learning. The schools decide how they want to handle this.

Please visit www.av.tg.ch for additional information about the assessment, sample reports and translations of this flyer into other languages.