

## **How starting school is celebrated in Baden-Württemberg**

In Germany, starting school is celebrated as an important day in your child's life. The children leave kindergarten and become school pupils. This transition means changes for all children and also for their parents. The process of starting school is known as "Einschulung" in German.

On the first day, the school organises a celebration to which all children who are starting in year 1 and their parents (and often other relatives) are invited. The children bring their school bags with them – and a "Schultüte" (cardboard cone).

### **The Schultüte**

The "Schultüte" is a very popular German custom. It signifies a new start and is usually given to the child by the parents. It can be homemade, sewn or bought. The parents put sweets, small presents or school supplies (like coloured pencils or erasers) in the cone. The contents don't need to be expensive – the fact that it's a surprise for the children is more important.

### **The celebration**

During the celebration in the school, the older pupils often perform something such as a short theatre piece. The head teacher welcomes the parents and children. The children go with their teacher into their new classroom. There they usually have their first school lesson. While the children are having the lesson, the parents have the chance to get to know one another.

### **Christian church service**

Some schools organise Christian service to celebrate the "Einschulung". Parents who are not Christians are also invited and are welcome to attend – they do not need to actively take part. Regular lessons then start on the first school day after the "Einschulung". Parents receive detailed information about the course of the day from the school.