



## Basel Private Schools in Switzerland Offer Attractive and Alternative Educational Opportunities



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A good start to education is very important for a successful school life. A good pre-school education prepares students for primary school and the rest of their educational life. Kindergarten is followed by primary school, which lasts six years in Basel. Together with kindergarten, primary school marks the beginning of 11 years of compulsory schooling. The children attend the same school for the entire six years of primary school. After two years of kindergarten and six years of primary school, students in Basel attend a three-year secondary school. After completing eleven years of compulsory schooling, young people in Basel, Switzerland, have two main options. They can either start vocational training or enrol in a gymnasium to continue their academic studies. Basel-Stadt offers a wide range of educational opportunities. The aim of Basel's schools is to ensure that all children have equal educational opportunities. In addition to the public schools, Basel-Stadt also has a large selection of private schools. Parents are free to decide whether they want to send their child to a public or a private school. Private school fees are paid by the parents. In Basel-Stadt, there are various private schools at all school levels and with different pedagogical orientations that complement the state school system. For a city like Basel with many multinational companies and a correspondingly mixed and highly qualified population, these schools are of great importance. Located on the border with France and Germany, Basel is probably the most international city in Switzerland. The international schools in Basel share the same characteristics as international schools throughout Switzerland. The International Baccalaureate curriculum is the most widespread in Basel. Many schools offer multiple languages of instruction, including English, German and French. Private schools with a transfer agreement can be found on the list of recognised private schools. More information about private schools in Basel can also be found at: <https://privatschulenbeiderbasel.ch/mitglieder-bs/>.

Keywords: private school, attractive education, alternative education, educational opportunities, Switzerland, Basel, education, schooling

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Dear Readers,

Compulsory schooling in Basel is 11 years. A good start to education is very important for a successful school life. A good pre-school education prepares students for primary school and the rest of their educational life. Kindergartens therefore play an important role in children's success. Kindergarten education makes a major contribution to children's mental, physical, social, emotional and linguistic development. Kindergarten is followed by primary school, which lasts six years. Together with kindergarten, primary school marks the beginning of the eleven-year compulsory schooling programme. Children attend the same school for all six years of primary school. In primary school, children's perception, thinking and expression skills and social skills are developed. After two years of kindergarten and six years of primary school, students in Basel attend the three-year secondary school. Secondary school in Basel consists of the 9th, 10th and 11th years of the 11-year compulsory schooling programme. The educational objectives of the eight-year primary school education are deepened and extended in these secondary school levels. It is expected that every student will be able to find a suitable profession after completing secondary education. After completing eleven years of compulsory education, young people in Basel, Switzerland, have two main options. They can either start vocational training program or enrol in a Gymnasium to continue their academic studies.

Basel-Stadt offers a wide range of educational opportunities. The aim of Basel schools is to ensure that all children have the same educational opportunities. Children with support needs or special educational needs receive professional help at all levels (Basel Erziehungsdepartement, 2025a).

In addition to public schools, Basel-Stadt also has a large selection of private schools. Parents are free to decide whether they want to send their child to a public or private school. Private school fees are paid by the parents. Private schools require a licence from the canton and are under the supervision of the Department of Education (Basel Erziehungsdepartement, 2025b).

In Basel-Stadt, there are various private schools at all school levels and with different pedagogical orientations that complement the state school system. The international schools with their internationally recognised curricula are aimed at families of global employees. For a city like Basel with many multinational companies and a correspondingly mixed and highly qualified population, they are of great importance. Most international schools follow the International Baccalaureate (IB) or the Cambridge International Curriculum, but are also orientated towards Curriculum 21, which applies in German-speaking Switzerland. However, a connection to the Swiss school system is guaranteed at almost all public schools. Some international schools have reached an agreement with the Basel authorities that enables students to transfer to secondary school or a secondary state school without having to take examinations. In addition,

some international schools also have different national curricula, so that students can catch up on the school curriculum of their country of origin when they return (Basel Erziehungsdepartement, 2025a).

Students who wish to transfer from a private school to a state secondary school or a state high school must pass an entrance examination in the 8th or 11th grades (including kindergarten). Private school students can transfer without an examination if the private school has concluded a transfer agreement with the Ministry of Education. A transfer agreement can be concluded if the transfer year at the private school is comparable to the transfer year at the state school (Basel Erziehungsdepartement, 2025b).

Private schools with a transfer agreement can be found on the list of approved private schools. For the list of authorised private schools in Basel-Stadt, you can download a pdf file [here](#) (Erziehungsdepartement, 2025c). You can also find out more about private schools in Basel and current information events here: [Privatschul Beratung](#) (2025) and [Privatschulen beider Basel](#) (2025).

Located on the border with France and Germany, Basel is probably the most international city in Switzerland. The international schools in Basel share the same characteristics as international schools throughout Switzerland. The International Baccalaureate curriculum is the most common in Basel. Many schools offer multiple languages of instruction, including English, German and French. Several of the international schools in Basel can essentially (though not officially) be considered bilingual (International Schools Database, 2025).

Sincerely,

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