

Leipzig  
International  
Kindergarten

LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



# KINDERGARTEN ROOM PARENT HANDBOOK

Last updated: 20 August 2019

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# Welcome Room Parents

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Dear Parents,

Parent involvement and communication is an important aspect of our international kindergarten community. Thank you for volunteering to be a Room Parent for your child's class.

We very much appreciate the contributions that you will make to improving the kindergarten and what we offer for children and their parents.

As a liaison between the group's educational team and children's families, Room Parents help to strengthen the community around the school; are actively involved in shaping the developments of LIK; provide feedback from a parental perspective on specific themes; and provide support to group and whole kindergarten events and activities throughout the academic year.

In short, your role is an important one.

We trust that, as you browse through these pages, you will find answers to any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact any member of staff if you would like further information.

We look forward to seeing you soon and once again, thank you for volunteering to be a Room Parent for your child's group.



*Kjersti Nichols*  
Kindergarten Principal

*Liane Lindenlaub*  
Marketing Manager

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# Requirements to be a Room Parent

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Any parent of a child within the Leipzig International Kindergarten may apply to be a Room Parent. The only exception is if that parent is a member of staff working within LIK. This is because they will already be aware of the items discussed within meetings and would be unable to help with class events given they have their own responsibilities within LIK.

Furthermore, all Room Parents must have a good level of spoken and written English and be able to commit to the majority of meetings for that academic year. Meetings take place bi-monthly, rotating every other time between a morning (8:15-9:45) and an afternoon meeting (16:00-17:30).

## How to apply

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At the start of each academic year, the Kindergarten Principal invites parents to register their interest in becoming a Room Parent.

If you are interested in becoming a Room Parent for your child's class, please send the Kindergarten Principal an email that contains the following pieces of information:

1. **Your full name**
2. **The name(s) of your child(ren)**
3. **The group(s) of your child(ren)**
4. **Your phone number** – which will be shared only with the group's educational team
5. **Which of your children's classes you would like to represent** (as appropriate)
6. **The following statement** "*Should I become a Room Parent, I hereby give permission to LIK to allow my personal email to be shared amongst all other Room Parents as well as with the parents of the group which I will represent.*"

This last statement is to ensure that there is no delay in email communication between Room Parents and the group's parents whilst also adhering to any data protection concerns.

Please note that:

- You can apply to be a Room Parent for more than one class, but the likelihood will be that you will only be assigned to one class.
- Between 1 and 2 Room Parents are needed for each class.
- Should there be more than two volunteers for a class, then the Kindergarten Principal will speak to those concerned and come to a mutual agreement as to who will represent the class.
- Even if the school year has already started, if you are interested in becoming a Room Parent, please email the Kindergarten Principal the above information and they will contact you.

**The Deadline for Applying is Wednesday, 4 September 2019.**

The first Room Parent meeting this school year will be on Thursday, 12 September, 8:15 – 9:45 in the LIK Conference Room.

# The 5 Cs

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## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important aspect of your responsibilities as a Room Parent. It is an important obligation to protect each student's and each staff member's right to privacy. Whilst volunteering at LIK, any information or observations about students or staff must be kept confidential. If you witness or hear of a problem with any student, please notify the relevant group's educators.

## Consistency

As a Kindergarten, we aim for a degree of consistency between groups and levels. It would be wrong to treat one group any differently than another with regards to special events or trips. Therefore, whenever planning such events for the class that you represent, kindly consider involving the other groups and their Room Parents within your level.

## Communication

Attending the monthly meetings is an important part of home-kindergarten communication. These meetings strengthen the sense of community around LIK; are used to actively shape the development of LIK; provide feedback from a parental perspective on proposed topics; are used to discuss what support is needed for group events and activities throughout the academic year.

We also ask that all Room Parents communicate either in person or via email with the following people

- Group Educators, Specialists and Teachers – understand their needs and the needs of the children.
- Fellow Room Parents – discuss matters of interest and bring them to the monthly meetings.
- Fellow Group Parents – encourage them to share their questions or areas of concerns with you; encourage them to donate their time and be involved in class/school events and activities; help organize social activities for them to attend.
- Marketing Manager – help organise community events.

## Correspondence

Correspondence must be by email. As a Room Parent, your personal email address will be shared with all other Room Parents as well as the parents of the group you represent (you will be asked to give written consent before this happens). At the same time, these parents will be asked to email you directly, should they wish to learn more about what occurs in Room Parent meetings, to be involved in group/level activities etc.

Emails to parents must use *blind carbon copy* (bcc) rather than *to* or *carbon copy* (cc) and be written in English - the operating language at LIS. In addition to the English version, there can be German translation if you wish. As we are an international school with many families from abroad, they must not be excluded from communication.

It is not part of the role as Room Parent to forward emails to your group parents on behalf of third parties other than the Section Representatives and the Marketing Manager.

## Comments, questions or concerns

Should you have comments, questions, or concerns, please contact the staff member who is directly responsible first. It is also possible to set up an appointment with the Kindergarten Principal or Marketing Manager if the need arises. Contact can be made either in person or by email.

# Responsibilities

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Please remember that there may be two Room Parents for a single class. Therefore, transparent communication between these Room Parents is essential.

## Essentials

- Support the Kindergarten to fulfil its role in providing the students a quality, holistic upbringing with an international perspective, within a safe environment, where individuals feel secure, respected, valued, happy and successful.
- Relay information from Room Parent meetings to the parents and vice versa.
- Essential but not compulsory – in order for the Room Parents to function more effectively, it is useful that all of our emails are freely shared with one another.

## After your Appointment to Room Parent

- The Kindergarten Principal will email the parents of the class that you represent – see appendices 1 and 2. This will encourage the parents of the class you represent to contact you, and provide you directly with their contact information.
- Please set up a meeting with the other Room Parents in your level to discuss how to maintain consistency between classes.
- Please set up a meeting with your group's educators to discuss support needed for classroom activities and events. During your meeting:
  - Give your educational team the opportunity to tell you how he or she works best with a Room Parent. Some colleagues have very specific plans they wish to implement; others appreciate a Room Parent to take the initiative and plan activities within certain given guidelines.
  - Ask if the LIK colleague wishes assistance with organising outdoor events and/or field trips.
- Write an email to the parents of the group you represent to introduce yourself (and phone number if you wish). Provide also information on volunteer activities coming up, if applicable.
- So that they do not need to ask throughout the year, some Room Parents ask for a one-time **voluntary** donation from the group's parents at the start of the year. This money is used to help purchase gifts for the students and fund special events throughout the year, as well as get the educators presents etc. In such cases:
  - Ask your group's educators if you could place a box on their desk to collect donations and once approved, find a suitable box.
  - Please use appendix 3 or 4 as an email to the Class Parents (or something similar).
  - Class Parents can be asked to make a one-time voluntary donation of **€20** maximum.
  - As the majority of money should be for the students, any gifts for the Class Teacher should not exceed **€50 in total for the year**.
  - A record should be kept of all:
    - Donations made by parents
    - Receipts/invoices should parents/school require to see them

## After every Room Parent meeting

- Once the minutes of the meeting have been agreed and approved by the Kindergarten Principal, email the relevant information to the parents in your class.

## **Throughout the school year**

- Meet with the Kindergarten Principal on a monthly basis to discuss matters relating to the Kindergarten.
- Help members of the Kindergarten and the Marketing Manager to organise Kindergarten and Whole School events.
- Group activities. Please discuss dates and times for activities/parties as a level so that one group is doing something and other classes are not. Then discuss needs for volunteers, food & beverages, etc. coordinate volunteers and follow up. When you call parents for volunteer help, go through the class list in rotation. Try to offer opportunities to all parents equally.
- If you are expected to volunteer, but cannot be present, please arrange a substitute. If you cannot find someone to fill in your position, please notify the group educators in advance. Please find someone else from your class to fill in for you at meetings the school or your school section invites you to.

## **Field trips**

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There may be times when you attend a school field trip. This might be because you have (a) been specifically asked to help out or (b) you have been invited to attend and enjoy the experience.

### **Specifically asked to help out**

There may be times when parents are specifically asked to help out on a field trip; most likely to help supervise the children under the guidance of the staff who are also on the trip. In such circumstances, any travel fees or entrance fees will be paid for by the school.

### **Invited to attend and enjoy the experience**

For field trips where parents are invited to attend and enjoy the experience, parents are not required to help supervise the children (but we will gladly accept if the offer is there). Please note, however, school is unable to cover any costs involved in attending the field trip.

### **Buying things for your own child**

For all field trips, opportunities may arise where you could possibly buy things for your own child and others. Please check with the staff attending the trip whether this is allowed before making any purchases, particularly if the field trip is one where students have been told not to bring any money.

# **Section Representatives**

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## **Election**

- At the beginning of each school year, all Kindergarten Room Parents receive an email from the school with an invitation to a first Room Parent meeting.
- The Room Parents of each section elect one or two Section Representative amongst them for the school year.

## **Responsibilities**

The Section Representatives meet periodically with the:

- Head of School and/or the Commercial Director (Geschäftsführer)
- Room Parents of their section

Meetings can be set according to needs by all sides. At the beginning of the school year set up a meeting with the Head of School to discuss specific needs for the section.

Room Parents should use the Section Representatives as the liaison with the Head of School. Section Representatives are available to answer questions from Room Parents. For this purpose, the Section Representatives provide a telephone number and email address to all Room Parents of their section.

# Appendices

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There are four appendices in this handbook:

- Appendix 1 & 2 is used by LIS to invite parents to get in touch
- Appendix 3 & 4 can be used by Room Parents to introduce yourself, ask for voluntary one-time donations and enquire about setting up playdate

## Appendix 1 – Initial email to Parents from LIK (if only 1 Room Parent)

Dear Parents of **GROUP**

Your child's group now has a Room Parent.

Their name is:

**RPname**

Their personal email address is:

**RPemailaddress**

**Your Room Parent would really like to communicate with you throughout the academic year** about a whole host of information such as special events; class and grade level activities etc. As such, **please kindly send them an email** to say “hello” and provide them with your email information so they can best reach you directly. Should you wish to learn more about their role, please have a look at the Room Parent Handbook found on our website.

Please note that email communication between yourself, other parents and your Room Parent, should be done using *blind carbon copy* (bcc) rather than *to* or *carbon copy* (cc) so to ensure that your personal email addresses are protected.

Thank you as always for your support.

## Appendix 2 – Initial email to Parents from LIK (if 2 Room Parents)

Dear Parents of **GROUP**

Your child's class now has two Room Parents.

Their names are:

**RP1name** and **RP2name**

Their personal email addresses are:

**RP1emailaddress** and **RP2emailaddress**

**Your Room Parents would really like to communicate with you throughout the academic year** about a whole host of information such as special events; class and grade level activities etc. As such, **please kindly send them an email** to say “hello” and provide them with your email information so they can best reach you directly. Should you wish to learn more about their role, please have a look at the Room Parent Handbook found on our website.

Please note that email communication between yourself, other parents and your Room Parent, should be done using *blind carbon copy* (bcc) rather than *to* or *carbon copy* (cc) so to ensure that your personal email addresses are protected.

Thank you as always for your support.

## Appendix 3 – Email to Parents from 1 Room Parent

Dear Parents of **GROUP**

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is **yourname**, am the parent of **yourchild'sname** and I am the Room Parent for **GROUP** this academic year.

### My role

- Act as liaison between the group's educators and yourself.
- Attend monthly Room Parent meetings to provide feedback from a parental perspective on proposed LIK topics.
- Provide feedback to all of the group's parents after the room parent meetings.
- Provide support to group/kindergarten events and activities throughout the academic year.

### Voluntary one-time donation

In our first Room Parent meeting, we discussed the possibility of having a collection of money for a class fund. As such, if every parent **voluntarily** made a one-time €20 donation, then a fund could be created and the associated budget could be used at our discretion, for example, for the following activities:

- a St. Nikolaus gift (chocolate for the children)
- a Christmas gift
- an Easter gift
- miscellaneous items such as decorations, party supplies or things that come up during the year including the end-of-year class party
- Birthday card/gift; Christmas gift and end-of-year gift for **teachername**

All the money that is used for the children is for 'extra' things that our class will be doing. This money is not for school-funded activities. It is just a treat for the children. **Please note that all of the collection is voluntary** and at the same time, will hopefully make saying 'thank you' easier for you – I will do the gift buying so you do not have to.

If you wish to a **voluntary** contribution, please put your contribution in an envelope. Please put your child's name on the envelope and place it the box found on the Class Teacher's desk.

### Playdates

Another idea I would like to propose is to create a '**playdate**' list. This would be used by the parents of **CLASSNAME**, so that we can arrange playdates between our children. If this is something that you are interested in please send me an email indicating your interest and phone number. I will share your phone number with the other parents who are interested.

### Finally

If you would like to help out with any class events or if you have any ideas, questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you

**Yourname**  
**Yourphonenumber**  
**Youremailaddress**

## Appendix 4 – Email to Parents from 2 Room Parents

Dear Parents of **GROUP**

Please allow us to introduce ourselves. We are **yourname1** and **yourname2**, parents of **yourchild'sname1** and **yourchild'sname2**, and we are the Room Parents for **GROUP** this academic year.

### Our role

- Act as liaison between the group's educators and yourself.
- Attend monthly Room Parent meetings to provide feedback from a parental perspective on proposed LIK topics.
- Provide feedback to all of the group's parents after the room parent meetings.
- Provide support to group/kindergarten events and activities throughout the academic year.

### Voluntary one-time donation

In our first Room Parent meeting, we discussed the possibility of having a collection of money for a class fund. As such, if every parent **voluntarily** made a one-time €20 donation, then a fund could be created and the associated budget could be used at our discretion, for example, for the following activities:

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If you wish to a **voluntary** contribution, please put your contribution in an envelope. Please put your child's name on the envelope and place it the box found on the Class Teacher's desk.

### Playdates

Another idea we would like to propose is to create a '**playdate**' list. This would be used by the parents of **GROUP**, so that we can arrange playdates between our children. If this is something that you are interested in please send us both an email indicating your interest and phone number. We will share your phone number with the other parents who are interested.

### Finally

If you would like to help out with any class events or if you have any ideas, questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you

**Yourname1**  
**Yourphonenumber1**  
**Youremailaddress1**

**Yourname2**  
**Yourphonenumber2**  
**Youremailaddress2**