



Religion Class during school?

As a parent, you might be wondering what this is! We hope this quick explanation helps you make an informed decision for your student.

In Germany, each child has the constitutional right to religious education (Article 7) which is seen as a valid subject taught in the school curriculum (elementary and high school – 2 hours per week in the class schedules). Until the age of 14, the parents have the responsibility to choose in which religion class their student enrolls (with a written enrollment form). At the JFK Elementary School, there are 4 offerings during the regular instruction time (Jewish, Catholic or Protestant Christian Education, Life Skills/Lebenskunde – in the High School, students have 2 options (Protestant or Catholic Christian Education) which are offered during the lunch period once a week.

Each class is unique due to the different inherent philosophies backing what is taught (for example, Life Skills/Lebenskunde takes a non-religious perspective while Catholic, Protestant and Jewish their religious perspective respectively). The Religion Department* Classes (Protestant, Catholic and Jewish) explore the diverse dimensions of values and faith structures, social/emotional competencies, respect for each other and our world, communication skills, an overview of the major world religions, and much more. Protestant and Catholic Religion classes provide an English and or German offering, while Judaism and Lebenskunde are taught bilingually.

As a Religion Department*, we have shared projects (such as the Generation Bridge partnership with a Nursing home and visits to Synagogues/Mosques, +). We also substitute for each other within the Religion Department* – allowing students to visit other classes and gain new perspectives. We see this as a wonderful opportunity to nurture an understanding and appreciation of diversity and respect for others among the students of Religion.

A quick survey of the offerings (in alphabetical order) and the institutions behind them:

1. ***Catholic Christianity:** provides an overview of the Catholic tradition. Biblical stories and church traditions introduce students to the practices and traditions of the Catholic Faith. Dealing with the biblical stories offers a unique opportunity for the students to communicate biblical experiences in their day-to-day life. Classes are offered in German and English. Teachers are employed by the Erzbistum Berlin www.erzbistumberlin.de
2. ***(Evangelisch)/Protestant Christianity:** explores the intersection of biblical and other world religion teaching stories with the student's life experiences, historical/current events, and the Christian tradition. Love/respect of others and self is a central aspect taught in light of christian and other world religion values in creative and playful ways. Classes are offered in German and English. Teachers are employed by the Reformed Protestant/Lutheran Church, EKD/EKBO <https://ru-ekbo.de>
3. ***Jewish Ed:** the religious dimension of Judaism, Jewish life, culture and holidays taught from biblical stories/Torah. Students are taught the basic skills of reading Hebrew and the Schma Jisrael as preparation for Bar- or Batmitzwah. Teachers are employed by www.jg-berlin.org
4. **Life Skills (Lebenskunde):** From a non-religious perspective, ethical questions concerning life and existence are taught using materials provided by the Humanistischer Verband Deutschland (HVD). Teachers are employed and educated by the HVD www.lebenskunde.de

More information and the Registration Form can be found on the JFK Website under Academics/Religion and Life Skills/Lebenskunde:

<https://jfs.de/elementary-school/academics/religion-and-lebenskunde-classes/>