

# **GERMAN LANGUAGE SCHOOL SEATTLE**



## **A HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES 2025-2026**

**5001 NE 50<sup>th</sup> St., Seattle, WA 98105**

**[info@germanlanguageschool.org](mailto:info@germanlanguageschool.org)**

## MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

Founded in 1965, the German Language School Seattle (GLS) is a non-profit organization that teaches German language and culture to children and adults on Saturday mornings at the Villa Academy in Seattle.

Its mission is to provide excellent German language instruction to diverse learners, to celebrate the culture of German-speaking countries, and to cultivate a vibrant German-speaking community in the Seattle area.

The school fosters a safe, interactive, and stimulating learning environment where children and adults of all ages and levels study the German language and experience cultural events.

The GLS welcomes all students regardless of gender, gender expression, race, color, nationality, faith, disability, or sexual orientation.

As a community, the GLS values diversity, honors each person's uniqueness, and fosters cross-cultural understanding.

## CURRICULUM

Classroom instruction follows the curriculum [Rahmenplan Deutsch als Fremdsprache](#) by the Zentralstelle für Auslandsschulwesen (ZfA) and prepares students through all classes in the four areas of listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

Students are placed by considering their age and grade in regular school, as well as their language skills. They progress at their own pace through language levels as defined by the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\)](#).

The school prepares advanced students for competitive exams, which may include the [Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency \(STAMP\) Test](#), the [National German Exam \(NGE\)](#), the [Internationale Vergleichsarbeit \(IVA\)](#) A1 and A2, the [Deutsche Sprachdiplom \(DSD\)](#) I and II, and the [Advanced Placement \(AP\) German Exam](#).

## CLASS HOURS AND SCHEDULES

The school year includes 32 classes from September to June. Classes meet on Saturdays from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm, with a 15-minute break around 10:45 am.

## STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to transport their students to school in a timely manner, to supervise them until school begins, and to pick them up promptly at the end of school.

All students need to report to their respective classroom teachers, who keep track of student attendance.

Parents must contact their student's teacher immediately if they anticipate a delay at pick-up so that the teacher can pass this message to the student and make arrangements to supervise the student. A \$10 fee will be incurred after the second late (more than 10 minutes) pick-up.

If a student is picked up by someone other than a parent/guardian, a note signed by a parent/guardian **MUST** be sent to school. Under no circumstances will a teacher release a student to an unauthorized party.

## **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Teachers regularly inform parents by email about their students' class content and other important issues. In addition, the principal sends out newsletters to the school community with relevant information for all families.

Parents can arrange a meeting with the teacher or the principal to discuss specific issues about their student. This ensures that sensitive matters are not addressed in front of other students. All conversations between parents and teachers are held in the strictest confidence and are not shared with other parents or students.

Minor differences between a student and a teacher or among students are settled at school and not brought to the attention of parents. Any matter of a more serious nature is relayed to the parents.

## **CHANGES WITHIN YOUR HOME**

Parents are encouraged to inform the school about changes in their family situation which might affect the student's behavior at school. This information is treated confidentially in order to ensure maximum support for the student.

Parents should also promptly inform the school about any updates to their emergency contacts.

## **SNACKS AND ALLERGIES**

Parents must inform the school about all food allergies of their student. This is especially important if a student has a serious and/or potentially life-threatening allergy that would require either medication or a 911 call.

The Villa Academy is a nut-free school. All snacks for the 15-minute break must follow this policy.

## **HALLWAY, CLASSROOM, PLAYGROUND ETIQUETTE**

The GLS uses the facilities of the Villa Academy for classes on Saturdays. These facilities include the hallways, the classrooms, the bathrooms, the lunchroom, the playground, the library, and occasionally, the Rainbow Theater.

Students must respect the property of the Villa Academy at these locations at all times. Any materials, computers, toys, and displays in the classrooms are strictly off limits to students.

Food is not permitted in the classrooms but can be consumed in the lunchroom and on the playground.

Any trash needs to be picked up at the end of the break and at the end of class.

## **SCHOOL MATERIALS**

At the beginning of the school year, teachers inform their classes about the materials needed in class. They might hand out workbooks to their students and require other materials (i.e. binder, pencils, an eraser, scissors, a glue stick and colored pencils). Students get to keep the workbooks.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The school has a "lost and found" box located in the library on the fourth floor. Parents can check this box on Saturday or contact the Villa's custodian at 206-234-8886 during the week.

## **ILLNESS**

Students with communicable diseases are not permitted to attend class to protect other students from exposure.

Parents should inform the teacher in advance about their student's absence from school due to illness.

When teachers observe any signs of illness of a student at school, they will contact the parents/guardians or the emergency contact and request that arrangements be made to pick up the student from school as soon as possible.

Before returning to school, a student must have been fever-free for at least 24 hours. Please check the [CDC Guidelines](#) for more information.

## **ABSENCES**

Parents should inform the teacher in advance about a student's absence from school for any reason (i.e. illness, sports, trip). Unfortunately, the school cannot adjust tuition for absences that arise during the school year.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSURE**

During periods of inclement weather (i.e. snow, ice, heavy rain, flooding) and associated conditions (i.e. power outages, road closures), the school will always prioritize the safety of its community.

In these instances, the school will monitor the local weather news and communicate with the Villa Academy staff closely.

Parents will be informed with an email from the principal and/or teacher about either a switch to online instruction or a school closure. The school will offer make-up classes for all full morning closures.

## **SAFETY POLICY**

The safety of all students is a top priority at the GLS. During the first few weeks of school, teachers inform the students of indoor and outdoor safety rules as well as responses in the event of a fire, an earthquake, or any other disaster. These safety rules are reviewed and enforced throughout the school year.

Every effort is made to provide a safe environment. The GLS follows the Villa Academy's emergency procedures in case of an accident. If appropriate, parents and/or emergency referrals will be contacted immediately.

### **INDOORS RULES:**

- Use inside voices.
- Use walking feet.
- Share class materials.
- Do not eat in classrooms.
- Do not touch Villa items in classrooms.
- Clean up when done.
- Pick up any trash.

### **PLAYGROUND RULES:**

- Stay inside the fenced area.
- Leave sticks, rocks, and bark on the ground.
- Do not throw anything.
- Do not stand on the slide.
- Do not walk or crawl on the top of the horizontal ladder.
- Do not hang upside down on the round carousel.
- Do not play on the wobbly bridge in rainy or icy weather conditions.

## **EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR CATASTROPHIC EVENTS**

A catastrophic event includes severe weather, gas or hazardous material leaks, police issues, or a code alert status signaling a terrorist attack. During such potential danger, the following procedures are implemented by the school depending on information from local authorities:

- Continue to operate as usual.

- Stay open until students are picked up by their parents.
- Initiate a lock-down until further information is given.
- Initiate a shelter-in-place when it is determined that everyone should remain inside to be safe. At this point, no one will be admitted into the building to pick up a student until clearance is given by the authorities.
- In the event of either a lock-down or a shelter-in-place, it may be difficult to maintain phone contact with everyone. Individual phone calls to parents will NOT be made so that lines can be left open for emergency contact. Rather, if possible, an email message will be sent to all families. In addition, parents should follow information on the radio regarding the actions of public-school districts surrounding the school.

## FEES AND OBLIGATIONS

The school's budget is based on full enrollment from September through June. A timely payment helps the school meet and maintain its operating budget.

Tuition is based on annual costs per student and includes a student workbook.

Tuition must be paid either 50% or in full at registration, and it must be paid on time. A late fee of \$25 applies to all payments received late. Payment options for tuition include PayPal, Zelle, or check.

The treasurer must be notified immediately if a tuition payment cannot be made on time. There will be a \$15 charge for handling non-sufficient funds checks returned from the bank.

No refunds are offered for missed days of class.

The GLS reserves the right to cancel classes in case minimum enrollment requirements are not met. Tuition for cancelled classes will be reimbursed via PayPal, Zelle, or check.

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

If a student is to be withdrawn from school for any reason, the responsible adult is required to notify the principal and treasurer in writing by letter or by email about the reason for the withdrawal. The postmark of the letter or the send date of the email will be considered.

The withdrawal letter should be sent to the German Language School Seattle, 5001 NE 50<sup>th</sup> St, Seattle, WA 98105. Alternatively, the withdrawal email should be sent to both the principal ([principal@germanlanguageschool.org](mailto:principal@germanlanguageschool.org)) and the treasurer ([treasurer@germanlanguageschool.org](mailto:treasurer@germanlanguageschool.org)).

The responsible adult is still accountable for any outstanding tuition payments and the return of all school materials (i.e. library books).

If the withdrawal is requested between registration and December 31, half of the tuition for the remaining Saturdays from the withdrawal date will be refunded.

If the withdrawal is requested after December 31, there will be no tuition refund of the yearly tuition.

Unpaid tuition installments are due in full at the time of withdrawal.

The withdrawal policy is intended to protect the long-term operation of the GLS as a nonprofit organization. Parents should contact the principal if a student needs to be withdrawn due to a medical emergency or other exceptional circumstances.

## **VISITORS AT THE SCHOOL**

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. However, they should not visit teachers, parents, or students in the classroom during class time.

Parents wishing to discuss a particular matter should arrange to meet their teacher before or after the class. Parents wishing to attend a class with their student should make prior arrangements with their teacher.

The teachers lounge on the third floor is available for parents who prefer to wait for their students at school.

Children who visit the school and are not enrolled in classes must be supervised by an adult.

## **GROUND FORS SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION**

Students are expected to act respectfully towards teachers and to behave appropriately towards other students. All parents and guardians agree to support the teaching staff in these matters.

If a student disrupts a class or acts inappropriately at school, the teacher will talk with the student, and, if necessary, will inform the principal and parents/guardians.

If, after several disciplinary steps, the behavior of a student does not improve and he/she continues to behave in inappropriate ways, the student may eventually be suspended from the school. Tuition will not be refunded in this case.

## **ON DISAGREEMENTS**

All parents/guardians and adult students agree to settle all disagreements arising from GLS attendance by mature discussion and by mediation, if necessary, specifically waiving any other outside means, excepting binding arbitration, to settle differences.

As a small non-profit organization, we seek to reach agreement for the common good quickly. The following clauses require that you mediate in good faith any disputes with the GLS before you may seek arbitration.

Any dispute, claim or controversy arising out of or relating to the participation of any student in the GLS, including the determination of the scope or applicability of this agreement to arbitrate, shall be determined by arbitration in Seattle, Washington, before one arbitrator. The arbitration shall be administered by Judicial Arbitration and Mediation

Services (JAMS)\*, or its successor, pursuant to its Streamlined Arbitration Rules and Procedures. Judgment on the award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction. This clause shall not preclude parties from seeking provisional remedies in aid of arbitration from a court of appropriate jurisdiction. The arbitrator may, in the award, allocate all or part of the costs of the arbitration, including the fees of the arbitrator and the reasonable attorneys' fees of the prevailing party.

The parties agree that any and all disputes, claims or controversies arising out of or relating to the participation of any student in the GLS shall be submitted to JAMS, or its successor, for mediation, and if the matter is not resolved through mediation, then it shall be submitted to JAMS, or its successor, for final and binding arbitration pursuant to the arbitration clause set forth above.

Either party may commence mediation by providing to JAMS, and the other party, a written request for mediation, setting forth the subject of the dispute and the relief requested. The parties will cooperate with JAMS and with one another in selecting a mediator from JAMS panel of neutrals, and in scheduling the mediation proceedings. The parties covenant that they will participate in the mediation in good faith, and that they will share equally in its costs. All offers, promises, conduct and statements, whether oral or written, made in the course of the mediation by any of the parties, their agents, employees, experts and attorneys, and by the mediator or any JAMS employees, are confidential, privileged and inadmissible for any purpose, including impeachment, in any arbitration or other proceeding involving the parties, provided that evidence that is otherwise admissible or discoverable shall not be rendered inadmissible or non-discoverable as a result of its use in the mediation.

Either party may initiate arbitration with respect to the matters submitted to mediation by filing a written demand for arbitration at any time following the initial mediation session or 45 days after the date of filing the written request for mediation, whichever occurs first. The mediation may continue after the commencement of arbitration if the parties so desire. Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, the mediator shall be disqualified from serving as arbitrator in the case. The provisions of this clause may be enforced by any court of competent jurisdiction, and the party seeking enforcement shall be entitled to an award of all costs, fees and expenses, including attorneys' fees, to be paid by the party against whom enforcement is ordered.

\* <http://www.jamsadr.com/locations/resolutioncenter.asp?id=19>

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

German Language School Seattle  
5001 NE 50th St  
Seattle, WA 98105  
[info@germanlanguageschool.org](mailto:info@germanlanguageschool.org)

Board President: [president@germanlanguageschool.org](mailto:president@germanlanguageschool.org)  
Treasurer: [treasurer@germanlanguageschool.org](mailto:treasurer@germanlanguageschool.org)  
Principal: [principal@germanlanguageschool.org](mailto:principal@germanlanguageschool.org)

Website: [www.germanlanguageschool.org](http://www.germanlanguageschool.org)



Facebook: [www.facebook.com/GermanSchoolSEA](https://www.facebook.com/GermanSchoolSEA)  
Instagram: gls\_seattle

Updated on 03/24/2025