B 1.3. Using the nursery portfolio at school

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The recommendation from the school inspectorate that the nursery portfolio be examined is aimed at facilitating continuity in the children's schooling.

By examining the portfolio, the school demonstrates its interest in the preceding period at nursery and is thus able to express its appreciation of the work of that nursery and of the child's individual contributions to the portfolio.

# What role can the portfolio play when children are enrolled at or start school?

At **enrolment**, the portfolio can serve as a genuine basis for discussion: it is easier for the children to talk about what they have personally experienced or created. In a co-constructive, reflective dialogue, the child is able to talk about the material they have covered and what they have experienced. In line with the school enrolment situation, the child may be able to pick out one or two pages from their portfolio to talk about.

What the child says and how provides information on their language skills and offers an individual and overall picture of the child (for example with regard to interests, social environment and graphomotor skills).

Items in the portfolio can also launch discussions between the school management, educational staff and parents.

Depending on the nursery's portfolio concept, the portfolio may provide information on the child's level of development in various different areas.

When a child **starts school**, the portfolio can be an appropriate tool to use for the pupils, and the teachers and pupils, to get to know each other. In individual lessons or on "portfolio days", children can show each other their portfolios and talk about them. This creates scope for a multilingual teaching setting: the children can also exchange ideas in their first languages.

The portfolio has broad language development potential that can be harnessed in individualised language support both in German as the language of teaching and in native language lessons. A dialogue on portfolio content encourages the children to talk, describe, report, explain and reflect freely.

As the children want to share, they have the necessary motivation to use all their available linguistic resources.

# More ideas for using the portfolio

Continuing the portfolio as **biographical project** is a constructive option provided the children themselves decide whether or not they want to add specific pieces of work.

As part of **transition work**, school pupils could visit nurseries and talk to the children there about their portfolios. Where children meet others with the same first languages, they will be able to employ their full linguistic repertoire.

In the case of partnerships between nursery and primary teachers, the portfolio can be used for an exchange on the educational goals that are reflected in portfolio work.