

School life

The structure of our school system

The Czech school system has four degrees:

- Preschools - from 2 to 5 years old
- Primary (elementary) - from 6 to 15 years old (mandatory)
- Professional secondary (high) schools, grammar schools (gymnasium), vocational schools
- Universities

Education in the Czech Republic is free, but there are some exceptions like preschools which are paid by parents, though the last year before entering elementary school is free. There is also a long-standing discussion about paying fees for attending university. However, as education is free, parents only pay for textbooks, basic equipment and food if their child eats in a school cafeteria. The state pays health insurance for students up to 26 years of age.

Primary schools

The primary (elementary) school consists of nine grades which are divided to two substages.

The first stage contains first 5 years of education. Children are taught by only one teacher for all subjects (sometimes there is a second teacher for foreign language or Physical Education). The



Typical classroom in Czech schools

subjects taught at this stage are Czech, 1st foreign language (mostly English), Mathematics, Computer Science, Basics of History and Geography, Basics of Sciences, Arts, Music, Physical Education and Handworks.

The first stage school is usually in every town and village. In small villages with a low number of pupils, several grades (2 or 3) can be taught in one class.

The second stage contains years 6-9. Subject taught at this stage are Czech, Literature, 1st foreign language, 2nd

foreign language, Mathematics, Computer Science, History, Geography, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Music or Arts, and Physical Education.

Elementary and Practical Schools

Predecessor of this type of schools were Special Schools. These schools were given over to children with mental or developmental handicap who were not able to follow education in Elementary Schools. Their subject matters were restricted.

Secondary education

After obligatory Elementary Schools, pupils can continue on higher type of schools that vary in number of years, in type of qualification and in possibility of university studies.

Practical Schools

Practical Schools are continuation of Elementary and Practical Schools. They offer 1 or 2 years course. The education is mainly practical oriented and its aim is to teach students to be self-sufficient and to give them abilities for some easier auxiliary works.

2 years vocational course

2 years vocational course offer qualification without vocational certificate.

Vocational course

Vocational course lasts 2 or 3 years. In the end, student must take qualification exam and obtains vocational certificate.

Vocational school with maturita

Vocational school with maturita lasts 4 years. In the end, student must take qualification exam (obtains vocational certificate as from vocational course) and take maturita exam; to be graduate, student must succeed in both exams. As they have taken maturita exam, graduates can continue their studies on university.

Professional high school

Professional high school lasts 4 years and students must take maturita exam. There is a huge variety of offered branches, mainly industrially oriented (such as technical chemistry or electrical engineering), but also oriented in agriculture, health service, IT or economy.

Lyceum

Lyceum or generally professional high school prepares student for university studies. The subject matters are more general than in professional high schools and out-of-profession subject (such as History or Geography) are taught wider than on professional high schools. Technical Lyceum, Economical Lyceum, Pedagogical Lyceum, Medical Lyceum, Scientific Lyceum (Chemistry and Biology), and Military Lyceum,

Grammar Schools

Grammar Schools are partly continuation of 8- and 6-years Grammar Schools and partly 4-years Grammar Schools for Elementary Schools leavers. 4-years Grammar Schools are generally or Physical Education oriented, but (as well as the 8 or 6-years type) the generally oriented schools can decide for a specialisation Grammar school graduates have no qualification, the aim of this type of school is a preparation for university.



Our Gymnasium in Dobříš

Maturita exam

Maturita exam is ending exam on 4-year secondary schools and is a requirement for university studies and higher professional schools. Maturita exams from all schools are equal and mean possibility to study in all types of universities.



Maturita exam

Tertiary education

Higher professional schools

Higher professional schools is a type of school offering professional tertiary education. Schools offering this type of education are usually connected with professional high schools. In the end, the students have to take final exams and write an absolvent thesis.



Universities

Higher education in the Czech Republic consist of public, state (police and military) and private universities. Study at public universities is unlimited and free but after the age of 26, the attendant will not receive the student status from social services and state would not pay his health insurance if he continues studying. Foreign students can attend as well, with choice to attend education made in Czech language for free, or pay for education done in English.

For private Universities a fee falls between 2,000 and 3,000 euro. Prestige and qualities of education and research of public and state universities is much higher than private ones. Private universities have undergone many scandals in recent years.

School year

The school year starts on the first weekday of September and ends on the last weekday of June. It is divided into two semesters with exams at the end of each. Usually, the first semester runs from 1.9. to 30.1. and the second from 1.2. to 30.6., separated by a one-day break and summer holidays. The actual dates, along with holidays and breaks, are announced by each school individually and may vary slightly.

Holidays

- Autumn holidays - two working days around Independent Czechoslovak State Day (28.10.)
- Christmas holidays - about 9 – 12 days (usually 22.12 – 2.1.)

- Mid-term break – one day holiday (4.2.)
- Spring holidays – one week holiday with the date varying according to the district
- Easter holidays – three day holiday (called Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Monday)
- Summer holidays – between the end of one school year and start of the second (1-7. – 31.8.)



School week

Our school week takes 5 days (from Monday to Friday). In one day we usually have six-hour lessons, one hour for each subject. In first-class school hours were only four in a day but each year the number of hours gradually increases from 20 hours in week to 34 hours a week.

extracurricular activities

In our school we also have a lot of extracurricular activities. Pupils can visit a lot of courses for example some sports courses like a floorball or language courses. Our school also create a lot of excursions or trips. For example ski course in Austria, boating course or ecological course in beautiful locations all over Czech Republic. There is a lot of different projects offered to pupils, like a foreign exchange with other students or visits to foreign countries.