

EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Children in the Czech Republic usually begin their education when they are **three years old**. They start going to **kindergarten**. In kindergarten, the children **sing, play with toys, paint, draw, run, jump and do other activities**. They learn how to communicate with other people and they get ready for real school. Sometimes, they can **start learning English**.

When they are **six or seven years old**, children start going to **elementary school**. Elementary schools in the Czech Republic have **two parts**. In **the first part**, the students **learn how to read, count and write**. They have only one teacher who teaches them everything. They also learn a little about nature, about the Czech Republic and about the world. They study the Czech language and the English language. They get **grades from 1 to 5**. One is the best grade and five is the worst grade. The students also usually start going to the **school canteen**. The food there is cheap but sometimes, for example in the town of Nové Strašecí, it is not very tasty (or at least it wasn't very tasty about twenty years ago).

At the age of **eleven or twelve**, the students start **the second part** of elementary school. They have different teachers for different subjects. They study **mathematics, Czech, English, one other language (usually German), geography, history, chemistry, civics, P. E., biology, music, and art**. Sometimes, they also study cooking and working with wood.

When they are **fifteen years old**, Czech students usually finish elementary school. Now they have to decide if they want to continue studying or not. Most of them want to continue their studies and they try to choose the right **high school**. It takes **four years** to finish high school in the Czech Republic. At the end of high school, students have to pass **exams in four subjects**. This is called the **maturita**. Every student has to take an exam in the Czech language and in either mathematics or a foreign language. As for the other two exams, the students can choose the subjects.

There are a lot of kinds of high schools in the Czech Republic, for example:

Grammar Schools (in Czech *gymnázia*)

These schools prepare students for studying at universities. Some grammar schools are famous for the quality of their education, for example the **Jan Kepler Grammar School** (a state grammar school in Prague) or **PORG** (a private grammar school, also in Prague).

The students study **the same subjects as they studied at elementary school**, but they have to **learn a lot more** about them. They can also study some **new subjects** such as **Latin** or **descriptive geometry**. Some students start studying at these schools when they are just eleven or twelve years old. They study **for eight years** and finish, like other students, when they are eighteen or nineteen. Grammar school students usually finish their studies by passing **the maturita exam**.

Technical schools (in Czech *průmyslovky*)

Students who choose to study at technical schools study especially subjects like **mathematics, chemistry and physics** and some **specialized technical subjects**. They also study languages, history, biology and other subjects, but not as much as the students at grammar schools. At the end of their studies, they usually pass **the maturita exam**. They often go on to study at **technical colleges and universities**.

Business schools (in Czech *obchodní akademie*)

These schools are for students who are interested in **economics**. They teach subjects such as **typing or accounting**. They also teach the students how to **write business letters** and **other skills needed for doing business**. The students also study the same subjects as grammar school students, but they do not have to learn as many things about them. The students usually finish their studies by passing **the maturita exam**.

Nursing schools (in Czech *zdravotní školy*)

Nursing schools are schools that prepare **future nurses** for their job. The students **go to hospitals** and learn how to **help doctors** and how to **take care of patients**. They also study standard school subjects and they can pass **the *maturita* exam** at the end of their studies.

Vocational schools (in Czech *učiliště*)

Some students decide to study at vocational schools. At these schools, students can **get ready for a specific job**. For example, they can learn how to become a cook, a waiter, a tractor driver, a plumber or a hairdresser. Sometimes, they can pass **the *maturita* exam** like students from other schools.

Sports schools

Sports schools are a **special type of grammar schools**. The students at these schools study the same subjects as students at other grammar schools but they also do some sport, for example **athletics, swimming, ice hockey, judo or volleyball**. They have **special training sessions** and sometimes they can have a **special timetable**. The students finish their studies by passing **the *maturita* exam**.

After passing **the *maturita* exam**, Czech students get their **high school diploma** and they can go on to **study at university**. University studies usually take **three years** and the successful students receive a **bachelor's degree** (Bc.). The letters Bc. are used by the students who studied humanities as well as by the students who studied sciences. Many students continue their university studies for **two more years** and earn their **master's degree** (Mgr.). Students of **technical, agricultural and economic universities** get a special master's degree called **an engineer's degree** (Ing.). Some students continue studying even longer and they get a **doctor's degree (PhD)**, which is the highest university degree that you can get.

There are a lot of universities in the Czech Republic today. The most famous and probably the best university is **Charles University** in Prague. It is **the oldest university in Central Europe**. It was founded in 1348. There are universities in other cities as well, for example in České Budějovice, Plzeň, Olomouc, Ostrava and Brno. There are also **specialized universities**, for example **technical universities**. The most famous of these universities is **ČVUT (Czech Technical University)** in Prague.

Schools in the Czech Republic can be either **state or private**. Most students go to state schools. Students who study at private schools have to pay for their studies. There are also some **religious schools** in the Czech Republic. Most high school students live with their parents, but there are also a few **boarding schools**.

Czech students can also **study abroad**. At the university level, many students take part in the **Erasmus Programme** and spend part of their studies at a university in a foreign country.

My school

Our school, **Sportovní gymnázium Kladno**, is a sports school and a grammar school. It was founded in **1984**. It is situated in Plzeňská Street in Kladno.

There are many sports that the students of Sportovní gymnázium Kladno can do, for example **ice hockey, volleyball, judo, swimming and athletics**. Our students often take part in **competitions and tournaments**. Most classes go on **school trips** every year. Some students go on trips abroad, usually to **France and Great Britain**.

Our school has **two gyms** and our students often go to the **athletics stadium** and to the **swimming pool**. There are **special computer classrooms, science laboratories and language classrooms**. There is also a **school canteen**. Students can eat their lunches there every day from Monday to Friday.

Recently, a **new buffet** has been opened at our school.