

FAQ – questions frequently asked by parents

How is basic education structured in the Czech Republic?

From the age of 3, children usually attend kindergarten. The last year of kindergarten, just before they start to attend school, usually at the age of 5, is compulsory. Primary school lasts 9 years. It consists of two stages—the 1st stage (grades 1–5) and the 2nd stage (grades 6–9). Gifted children can change to a 8-year gymnázium after 5th grade or a 6-year gymnázium after 7th grade, provided that they pass the entrance exams. After finishing 9th grade at primary school, they can continue at a secondary technical school or gymnázium, both of which are completed by taking the maturita. Another option after finishing primary school is to continue at a vocational school, which lasts 2 or 3 years and does not require students to take the maturita. The maturita is required for admission to university.

How much does primary school in the Czech Republic cost?

Education in state primary schools established by towns, cities or regions is free of charge. Parents only pay for essential school supplies, some textbooks and exercise books and contribute to school events (trips, theatre, nature classes). Parents also pay for lunches at the school canteen. There are also private schools (religious, alternative, language) where various fees are paid.

What is a local public school?

A local public school is the school children should attend based on their residence. You can find out how towns and cities are divided into school districts from local authorities or you will be informed by the school. **The school is obliged to accept children in its district regardless of their nationality, residence status and knowledge of Czech language.** The only acceptable reason for denial is if the school has reached full capacity.

Postponement of school

If your child is 6 years old but not mentally or physically ready for school, you can apply for postponement of school attendance. You will be given the appropriate form at the enrollment day at school, and you submit your application to the school principal. The request must also contain the opinion of a doctor and the Educational and Psychological Centre. Your child can be held back from school only up to the age of 8 years.

Ignorance of Czech language is not a reason for postponement of school attendance but is justified in cases where the child comes from a very distinct language area, so that the child does his/her last compulsory year in kindergarten and learns Czech. In fact, it depends on the age and individual situation of the child and family. Preparatory classes, which exist at some schools and prepare children for school attendance, are another option.



 INBÁZE

How long is compulsory school attendance in the Czech Republic?

In the Czech Republic, **children must attend school for a minimum of 9 years** (school law 561/2004 Sb.).

Children enter the 1st grade of primary school at the age of 6, which means that every child who turns 6 before 31 August must enroll. Primary school lasts 9 years.

Children of foreigners have access to primary education under the same conditions as Czech children. School attendance is compulsory for all children—including foreigners who have been in the Czech Republic for 90 days, regardless of their residence status. This also applies to children without legal residence status.

Parents or legal representatives are responsible for the education of their children. If they do not enroll the children in school or the children do not attend school, it is considered a violation of the law.

How do I enroll a child in school?

Enrollment is in April every year. The exact date can be found on the website of the school or town/district.

A parent or legal representative must come in person with the child. The parent has to bring **proof of the parent's and his/her child's identity (passport) and the child's health insurance card.** If the child has attended school before, it is good to bring his/her **school report.**

At enrollment, the teacher talks with both the parent and the child. The parent fills in forms and documents. Some schools have the children do a few playful tasks in order to find out whether the child is ready for school. If the child is not ready yet, the parent applies for a **postponement of school.**

The parent can also enroll his/her child in school during the school year. In this case, it is necessary to contact the principal and apply in writing (application for primary education and registration form).

Acceptance or non-acceptance is up to the principal, who will inform the parent of the decision within 30 days. The principal of your local public school is obliged to accept local children with residence in a given area (§ 36 par.7 school law) preferentially—even in cases where the child is changing from school to school.

If the child is not accepted, you can appeal to **the school establisher.**

Can I choose any school for my child?

Parents can choose any school that is close or that they like, but the principal is only obliged to accept children from the school district and is not obliged to provide place for other pupils. All schools organize school open days, so if you want to choose, you can visit the school even with your child and get acquainted with the school program and ask questions. You can find out about school open days at websites.