



## What is kindergarten (or preschool) and why is it good for children?

Kindergarten's role is to prepare children, in enjoyable and playful way, for primary school that comes next. It helps them learn all they should know at their age, develop their personality, practice how to behave in a group and a society, and build human relationships.

In kindergarten, children play together, engage in sports, art and music activities, go on walks and trips, visit cultural events. They meet and make new friends, develop their language skills. It also presents children from different language environments with a unique opportunity to start learning their new language, and many preschools even offer special courses to help with the process. Kindergartens usually open from Monday to Friday, from 7 AM to around 5 PM, but each preschool has its own hours and rules. Child can either stay there all day, or only half a day. Kindergartens are closed during school holiday (see "School Year Time Frame")

## Can my child enroll?

Preschools are open to children of the age between 3 and 6 years. Children of foreigners who are also the European Union citizens have the same rights as Czech children. Children of foreigners

from outside of the EU can also attend Czech kindergartens, however the parent(s) must present evidence of their permanent residence permit for a period of more than 90 days. It does not matter whether the child speaks Czech.

If you are a foreigner and you are not sure if your child can enroll to Czech preschool (for example, you are an asylum seeker, or have some other special type of residence), do not hesitate to ask the school directly, or contact our organisation.

## Is kindergarten attendance compulsory for all children?

Preschool is not compulsory for younger children (3-4 years of age). Parents themselves choose whether or not they wish to enroll their children. If children of that age experiences difficulties there – ie. cry daily, are put under undue stress – it is possible to suspend their attendance upon consultation with the institution.

However, preschool attendance is compulsory for all children over the age of 5. That one compulsory year should prepare them for primary school. They must enrol at the start of the school year that commences after their 5th birthday. Children of that age usually no longer have a problem spending part of the day away from their parents, adapt well to the environment, and find friends there.





### Which preschool is the right one for you?

Children usually go to the kindergarten close to their home. Each residential address has one allocated preschool in its near proximity to accommodate local children. You may also enrol your child elsewhere, but in your local kindergarten it is most likely that your child will be accepted.

There are both public and private preschools in Czech. Public, state-run preschools are much cheaper (the last, compulsory year is free, parents only have to cover the cost of food). The main difference is in the number of children in classes, usually smaller in private kindergartens. There also exist special preschools for children with mental illness, or with impairments of speech, hearing, sight, or other conditions.

### How to enroll?

Select one preschool, or more, that is close to you. You can check their websites or visit them in person to better decide which one you like best. You will find the list of preschools on the website of the municipality in which you live.

Enrollments usually take place in spring, so that there is enough time to get everything organised by September when school year begins. School year goes from September until June. Each kindergarten makes public exact enrollment dates and instructions,

what to do and what to bring with you on the day. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask. Check the website to get everything ready on time. If the preschool has spaces left, they can also enrol your child outside of the regular schedule.

### I don't know what to do, I can't speak Czech, I need help!

If you need any help in choosing the right preschool, with the procedures, documents, or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact us right away. We will gladly help by providing translations and other language services, we can take you to the school, or get all the necessary information for you. Most kindergarten employees speak some English, older staff may also speak Russian. However, it is always better to make use of our professional translators which we can provide for you for free.

### Contacts

**Centrum pro integraci cizinců** | [www.cicpraha.org](http://www.cicpraha.org)

**Meta, o.p.s.** | [www.meta-ops.cz](http://www.meta-ops.cz)

**InBáze, z.s.** | [www.inbaze.cz](http://www.inbaze.cz)

[www.metropolevsech.eu](http://www.metropolevsech.eu)

[www.rodinaprorodiny.cz](http://www.rodinaprorodiny.cz)

