

EDUCATION

MY SCHOOL

The building

My school (a part of Secondary industrial, technical and automotive school Jihlava) is situated almost in the centre of the town. It is a big three-storey building. In fact, it consists of two original structures which are more than 100 years old – one of them is even protected as a historical building. However, the inside is adapted in a modern and practical way.

On the first floor there are head(master)'s and deputy head(master)'s offices and the secretariat. Most of the rooms are used as classrooms (about 20) and specialized classrooms: language labs, computer labs, specialized rooms for electrical and mechanical engineering. You can also find workshops and three gyms (including a fitness one). A complex of sports fields belongs to this school too. If you are hungry or thirsty, you can buy something in the school buffet. There is no school canteen here, that's why our teachers and students have to choose between a few school canteens nearby.

A school year

A school year in the Czech Republic lasts from 1st September to 30th June. It consists of two terms (September – January, February – June). At the end of each term students get school reports with marks from individual (both compulsory and voluntary) subjects. Then two months of holidays follow – everybody always looks for them very much. There are also autumn, Christmas, midyear, spring and Easter holidays and some bank holidays.

The timetable

The timetable in my school depends on the field of study and the school year. At present students can choose among four fields of study: IT, multimedia and webdesign, electrical engineering (electrotechnics) and mechanical engineering. All students have to learn generally educational subjects: Czech, English, math(ematics), physics, chemistry and ecology, history, civics and PE. Besides, there are a lot of technical subjects: e.g. electronics, information and communication technology, digital technology, programmes and databases, electrical measurements, automation, engineering technology, mechanics etc.

Lessons – 45 minutes, short and long breaks, from 8 to ...

In the first form a lot of students take part in a ski course in the mountains, in the second and third forms they have two-week work placements. At the end of every school year there are school trips, in the course of the school year various specialized excursions (e.g. to Brno fairs, to Great Britain).

The school-leaving exam

Students at this school finish their secondary education after passing the school-leaving exam. It consists of exams in Czech, math or English, and technical subjects. Only if you are successful in all of them, you can get your school-leaving certificate.

QUESTIONS:

1. Describe this school.
2. How is a school year organized in Czechia?
3. What is typical of the timetable at this school?
4. Characterize the school-leaving exam.

5. You and your studies at this school:

When and why have you decided to study at this school?

What is your field of study? Name some subjects you have to learn.

What are your favourite subjects? Why? Are there any subjects you do not like so much?

What is your timetable like this year? Would you like to change it?

How do you get to school? How much time does it take?

Speak about your classroom. Where is it situated? Do you like it? Why (not)?

SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In this country there are mainly state schools but also some private and church ones. At state and church schools education is free, at private ones you have to pay.

1. Pre-school education.

It begins at the age of 6 months when children can start attending nursery schools. However, mothers often stay with them at home on the maternity leave (or fathers on the parental leave). Most children aged 3 to 6 attend kindergartens.

2. Compulsory education.

Compulsory (primary) education is provided at primary schools and at present lasts 9 years. Children and young people have to go to (= attend) school when they are 6 to 15 years old. They have lessons of generally educational subjects (Czech, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, geography, biology, and civics). They are also taught the basics of ICT; PE is important too.

3. Secondary education usually lasts 4 years – from the age of 15 to the age of 19. Most students finish their secondary education after passing the school-leaving exam. There are three main types of secondary schools in this country:

- Grammar schools (They are attended for 4, 6 or 8 years, e.g. after pupils have finished their 9th, 7th or 5th form at the primary school. They mostly teach generally educational subjects and prepare students for studies at colleges and universities)

- Secondary specialized schools (These are e.g. technical schools – for computing, for mechanical, electrical or civil engineering, for textile industry, also business academies, agriculture schools, music schools, schools for nursing, for social work etc. Students learn both generally educational and specialized subjects. After the school-leaving exam some of them continue their studies in higher education, some of them try to find a job.)

- Vocational schools which prepare apprentices for practical professions (shop assistants, hairdressers, dressmakers and tailors, bricklayers, joiners, painters, mechanics, various repairmen etc.).

4. Higher education.

It usually lasts 3 to 6 years. Students may attend various universities or colleges. The best-known university in this country is Charles University in Prague founded in the 14th century by Charles IV. In Jihlava there is Polytechnic College. For those who don't want to enter university there are three-year Higher Vocational Schools (VOŠ in Czech).

QUESTIONS:

1. Who do schools in this country belong to? How long is compulsory education here?
2. What do you know about pre-school and primary education in this country?
3. Give three types of secondary education, explain the differences among them.
4. Speak about higher education in the Czech Republic.