

# Pre-school Care in Brief



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# Pre-school Care in Brief

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*The text you are reading is primarily intended for parents who have children of pre-school age (three to six years of age).*

*It provides a brief overview of the most important information you will need in order to register your child in a kindergarten or in another pre-school care facility. Here, you will find useful information, links, tips and everything you need to make the necessary arrangements as you register your child in a kindergarten.*

*We hope you find this brochure helpful in facilitating the process of enrolling your child in a pre-school care facility!*

## Definition of basic terms

The current situation in the area of pre-school care may not be clear and transparent for everyone. For this reason, it seems appropriate to present the main types of pre-school care facilities, both currently existing and planned for the near future:

	<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>Establishment operating under the Trades Act</b>	<b>Facility operating under generally applicable laws</b>	<b>Children's group</b>
<b>Legal regulation</b>	The School Act <sup>1</sup>	The Trades Act	Generally applicable regulations in the area of hygiene, boarding, fire safety and construction	Childcare Services Act
<b>Organizer</b>	Municipalities, regions, legal entities, churches, non-profit organizations, employers	Individuals and legal entities who are trade licence holders	Municipalities, regions, state institutions, churches, non-profit organizations, employers	Municipalities, regions, state institutions, churches, non-profit organizations, employers
<b>Legal regulation pertaining to hygiene, operation and safety standards</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>Mandatory upbringing or education program</b>	YES – school education program	NO	NO	YES – upbringing care plan
<b>Mandatory qualification criteria for the caretakers</b>	YES	NE for children older than three years of age YES for children younger than three years of age	NO	YES
<b>Mandatory ratio of the number of children and caretakers prescribed by law</b>	YES	NO	NO	YES
<b>Age of children</b>	Usually from three years of age	Free trade- from three years of age Regulated trade – from 0 to 3 years	Not regulated	From one year of age
<b>Minimum and maximum number of children in the group / class</b>	13 – 27	Not regulated	Not regulated	Groups up to 4 children Groups up to 12 children Groups up to 24 children
<b>Profit</b>	NO, but a "school fee" may be charged to cover costs	YES	NO, but a "school fee" may be charged to cover costs	NO, but a "school fee" may be charged to cover costs
<b>State subsidies for ordinary operation</b>	YES	NO	NO	NO
<b>Tax deductions</b>	YES	NO	NO	YES

<sup>1</sup> Act No. 561/2004 Coll, on Pre-school, Primary, Secondary, Higher Vocational and Other Education, as amended.

## NOTE:

Not everything called a “kindergarten” is in fact a kindergarten! Kindergartens are defined as facilities meeting the applicable statutory criteria that are registered in the Schools Register. The law allows these facilities to be established by municipalities, regions, individuals or legal entities, employers, non-profit organizations or churches. Pre-school facilities can be divided into public kindergartens (established by regions or municipalities) and private kindergartens established by individuals or legal entities (e.g. church kindergartens). Kindergartens that are established pursuant to the School Act and registered in the Schools Register are entitled to apply for state subsidies for their operation and the School Inspection Service is entitled to inspect such kindergartens.

If the pre-school care facility is established pursuant to the Trades Act (baby-sitting centres, day-care centres, family corners, etc.), there is no legal regulation governing the daily routine, weekly program, professional qualifications and competences of the personnel. Care for children who are older than three years of age is classified as ‘free trade’, which means that the School Inspection Service has no jurisdiction in these facilities. This, of course, does not mean that such facilities are necessarily of poor quality; however, these are considerations when choosing a facility suitable for your child.

## Statutory regulation pertaining to kindergartens

Kindergartens are established pursuant to the School Act that, first and foremost, defines the purpose of pre-school education, as well as the role of kindergartens within the entire education system. These facilities are registered in the Schools Register and the education provided in kindergartens must comply with the School Educational Program (the “SEP”). These facilities are subject to inspections by the Czech School Inspection Service.

In addition to the School Act, the day-to-day operations of kindergartens are also governed by other legal regulations (statutes) regulating, for example, the health and safety requirements pertaining to the premises and the operation of pre-school facilities.

Kindergartens registered in the Schools Register are affirmed to have fulfilled all statutory criteria, both at the operation level (size of the premises and equipment therein, compliance with applicable hygiene standards, daily routines, etc.) and at the personnel level (the caretakers must meet mandatory qualification criteria). The Act on Pedagogical Staff prescribes both general and specialized qualification criteria that must be fully met.

Kindergartens are designed for children from three to six years of age, with the lower age limit being specified rather vaguely by law: “institutions usually admit children from the age of three years and up”. This means that it is possible to admit younger children as well. The decisive factor is not the age, but the child’s ability to actively participate in the education program pursuant to their level of development.

In reality, however, children younger than three years of age are not normally admitted to kindergartens due to limited capacity. The maximum number of children in one kindergarten class is 24, or 28 in exceptional cases. Private facilities, such as “company day-cares” or other private pre-school facilities offer better chances for those wishing to enrol children younger than three years of age.

## **What children should know and be able to do prior to their enrolment in a kindergarten**

What skills should your children have before they enrol in a kindergarten? In kindergarten, children will start learning and strengthening habits they have already begun learning at home. Certain “accidents” are expected and may still happen at this stage. However, when a three-year-old child is enrolled in a kindergarten, he/she should have certain skills and knowledge:

### **He/she should:**

- know his/her name and surname – it is a plus if the child also knows his/her age and hometown;
- be able to recognise the personal symbol to be used to designate the space in which he/she is to store personal belongings;
- be able to recognise his/her own clothes and shoes;
- be able to undress; he/she may have difficulties dressing (e.g. with zippers, buttons, tights) – he/she should be able to ask the teacher for help if needed, and should be able to put on shoes and take them off their;

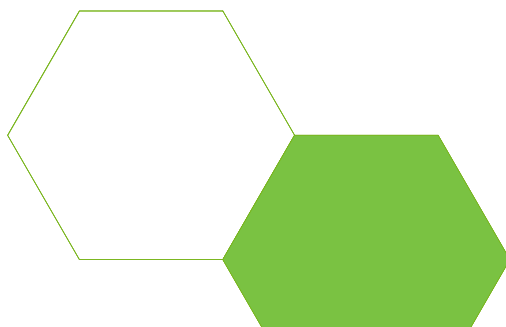
- be able to eat by him/herself with a spoon and drink from a glass or a cup;
- be able to blow his/her nose and use a handkerchief;
- have basic physiological needs under control (in kindergartens, there are certain time intervals when children can go to the toilet by themselves, until such times, they should be able to stay dry or be able to ask if they need to use the toilet earlier);
- wash his/her hands (after having used the toilet, before a meal, when they are dirty) and dry them with a towel;
- be able to brush his/her teeth;
- walk up and down the stairs without adult supervision;
- put away toys and work tools where they belong;
- say hello, goodbye and thank you;
- express what they need or what they like or dislike.

Even if your child does not have all of these skills, they will definitely learn them at kindergarten, so it is not necessary to be under pressure to learn the skills they lack at the last minute.

In the beginning, attending kindergarten may be a bit complicated due to the separation from Mommy and/or Daddy. For some children this is very difficult and it may also be difficult for you as a parent. The best way to help your child is not to be stressed yourself. When dropping off your child, you may try to reassure him/her, but you must be firmly determined to leave and not to prolong your departure unnecessarily. On the other hand, you should not sneak away without saying goodbye. It is good to explain when you will be back and to keep your word to your child.

Most kindergartens nowadays offer parents and their children the opportunity to get acquainted with the environment before the child starts attending regularly. You will meet the teacher and see your child's future classroom. Kindergartens also organize open-house days where they present their program and daily routines.

It is very important that your child trust the teacher. If there is something you do not like about the teacher, the teacher should not be confronted in the child's presence – it is in your own interest that your child respects the teacher.



## How to register a child in a kindergarten

A system of electronic support for kindergarten registrations has been introduced in Brno, effective as of 1 February 2012. The aim of this system is to simplify the administrative burden of kindergarten admissions, to improve the distribution of information on the numbers of admissions, to determine the admission criteria and to ensure the transparency of admissions.

You can register in the system on the web site, [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz). The only district not participating in the electronic registrations system is Brno-centre, for which reason the deadlines for filing out kindergarten applications and their collection have been unified for this area. The web portal lists the number of spots currently available in Brno kindergartens and also the number of children admitted. The same information can also be obtained directly from individual kindergartens (usually in February).

The screenshot shows the homepage of the website [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz). The header features a navigation menu with items: DOMŮ, PŘIJÍMACÍ ŘÍZENÍ, KRITÉRIA ŘÍZENÍ, SEZNAM ŠKOL, PORADNA, and PŘIHLÁSIT. The main banner includes the text "Mateřské školy BRNO" and statistics: "Počet vypsaných volných míst: 2358" and "Počet přijatých dětí: 1836". Below the banner is a progress bar with four steps: 0. Základní informace od 1.1.2014, 1. Vydávání přihlášek 3.2.2014 - 28.2.2014, 2. Sběr přihlášek 3.3.2014 a 4.3.2014, and 3. Přijímací řízení od 10.3.2014. The main content area is divided into two sections: "A, Vyhledat dítě" with a search box for "Zadejte číslo pojistěnce:" and a "Hledat" button; and "B, Vyhledat dítě (bez karty pojistěnce)" with fields for "Křestní jméno dítěte:", "Příjmení dítěte:", "Datum narození dítěte:", and "Heslo:", along with a "Hledat" button. At the bottom, there are three columns: "Jak se připravit?" with advice on browser compatibility, "Jaké jsou cíle projektu?" with bullet points about transparency and online information, and "Aktuality" with the date "23.01.2014 - 14:55" and "Vydávání přihlášek: od 3. 2. 2014 do 28. 2. 2014".

Screenshot of the web site [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz)

The director of each kindergarten determines the place and date of registration for the subsequent school year. This usually takes place between February and March for the school year. The place, date and time of the registration are announced in a manner usual at the given place (e.g. on the official notice board of the given kindergarten, [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz)).

## Required documents

**To register your child in a kindergarten, you will need the following documents:**

- a completed registration form,
- the child's birth certificate,
- an ID card of at least one of the child's legal guardians,
- the child's health insurance card.

**There are three ways to obtain an application form to register your child with a kindergarten:**

- electronically at [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz) in PDF format;
- by picking one up at the kindergarten on the days determined by the director – during the specified period of time;
- by picking one up at the Municipal Council of Brno's Department of Education, Youth and Sports (Dominikánské náměstí 3, Brno)

When filling out the application form, please be sure to duly fill in all required data and not to forget to provide your paediatrician's confirmation of any required information.

## Collection of application forms

Application forms are always collected during the publicized period of time (usually in February), which can be found at [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz). Duly completed application forms are to be submitted to the authorised kindergarten employee together with all necessary documents. Do not forget to provide a proof of your residence address if it differs from the address stated on your ID card (e.g. lease agreement, document certifying your mailing address, etc.) and a document evidencing the child's residence address (if it differs from the residence address of the child's legal guardian).

You may submit applications to as many kindergartens as you wish. However, you must visit each of the kindergartens in person to submit the application form in hard copy. The choice of the kindergarten is not dependent on your residence address, but it is one of the criteria in evaluating your child's application. Normally, the child is brought to the kindergarten when the application form is submitted, but you can ask the director if this is really necessary.



## Admission to kindergartens – evaluation/criteria

The admission process is based on a point system of evaluation that has been introduced in the city of Brno. It is as follows:

### Unified criteria – point system

#### Age group

- older than five years of age – 560 points
- three- and four-year olds – 480 points
- younger than three years of age – 0 points

#### Residence address by district

- same district as the kindergarten – 40 points
- different district than the kindergarten – 0 points

#### Residence address in/outside of Brno

- in Brno – 240 points
- outside of Brno – 0 points

#### Age (reaching the age of three years during the course of the school year)

Older children are admitted as a priority, the number of points is awarded based on the date of birth.

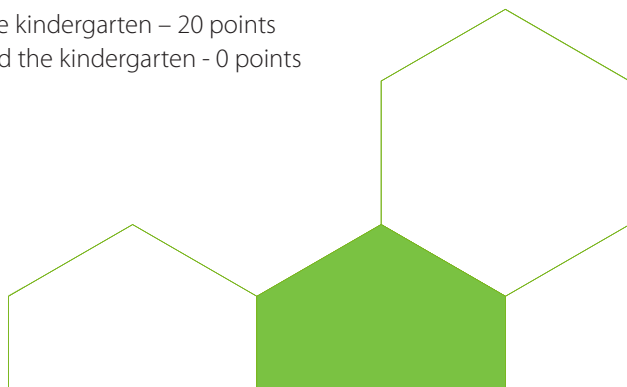
- age reached during the course of the year - 20 points
- increment per day – 0.03 point
- even years (two-, four- and six-year olds children) are favoured by awarding another 10 points

#### Type of attendance

- full day -160 points
- half day – 80 points
- 4 hours – 0 points

#### Siblings

- Sibling in the same kindergarten – 20 points
- First child to attend the kindergarten - 0 points



## Admission procedure

You can expect to be informed whether or not your child has been admitted to the kindergarten during the announced period of time, which can be found on the web portal [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz). You will receive this information from the authorised kindergarten employee. The notification of admission/refusal of admission is an administrative decision and must be executed in writing.

During the entire admission process, you can monitor the course of the process on the web sites specified above, including up-to-date information as to whether the limits have been shifted so that your child has become eligible for admission.

The director usually makes the decision on the child's enrolment by the end of June.

### Appealing the decision:

It is possible to file an appeal against the director's decision with the Regional Authority within 15 days after the delivery of the decision. There is no unified form of an appeal against the decision; appeals are always treated on a case-by-case basis.

If you are unsuccessful in the appeal proceedings and your child has not been admitted to any of the kindergartens where you have applied for admission, you can still wait until the beginning of the school year to see if all the children admitted have indeed enrolled. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that your child will be selected in such a case. Even where a child has been evaluated with the top score below the cut-off line is not a guarantee in these cases.

### Alternative solutions when your child is not admitted to a kindergarten:

Another possibility is to use the services of a private facility or a company day-care that are offered by a number of employers as an employee benefit. Next year, your child will be a year older and will have a better chance of being admitted to a public kindergarten in comparison to younger children.

The Municipal Council's website lists public kindergartens, as does [www.zapisdoms.brno.cz](http://www.zapisdoms.brno.cz). It is also possible to download a list of private kindergartens and their contact details from the Municipal Council of the City of Brno site. This is merely a list, without any guarantee or endorsement from the Municipal Council with respect to the quality of services provided by the facilities listed:

[http://www.brno.cz/fileadmin/user\\_upload/sprava\\_mesta/magistrat\\_mesta\\_brna/OSMT/dokumenty/Soukrome\\_MS\\_03.pdf](http://www.brno.cz/fileadmin/user_upload/sprava_mesta/magistrat_mesta_brna/OSMT/dokumenty/Soukrome_MS_03.pdf)

## Kindergartens – supplementary information

### Hours of operation of kindergartens

Hours of operation are determined by the director of the kindergarten in consultation with the management of institution responsible for the given kindergarten and in accordance with the needs of the children and their legal guardians. Accordingly, kindergartens can be categorized as follows:

- half-day
- full day (6:30 a.m. - 04:30 p.m.)
- extended hours of operation (6:30 a.m. – 06:00 p.m.)

### Tuition fees at kindergartens

Each kindergarten determines its own tuition fees on a case-by-case basis, but the monthly average in public kindergartens in Brno ranges between CZK 400–550 plus meal charges, which amount to CZK 30-35 per day.

Most kindergartens offer the opportunity to take advantage of paid supplementary services consisting of a wide variety of hobby groups.

### Kindergarten specialization

It is now possible to choose a kindergarten based on a specialization (e.g. sport, foreign language kindergartens, etc.). An overview and detailed information is available at [www.brno.cz/katalogskol](http://www.brno.cz/katalogskol) or can be obtained in person or by telephone from the Municipal Council of Brno's Department of Education, Youth and Sports (Dominikánské náměstí 3, Brno):

<http://www.brno.cz/sprava-mesta/magistrat-mesta-brna/usek-socialne-kulturni/odbor-skolstvi-mladeze-a-telovychovy/#c4460787>

*Secretary's office – tel.: 542 172 101*

## **Enrolment in a kindergarten during the course of the school year**

At the moment, there is no system in Brno that provides up-to-date records of available spots in kindergartens. There are cases where parents submit an application to kindergartens during the course of the school year (due to a relocation of the family, for example) and wish to have their child enrolled immediately. This is only possible if there are spots available at the given kindergarten. **Therefore, due to current capacity overloads at kindergartens, it is necessary to search out information pertaining to open spots at different kindergartens.**

This necessity also applies to foreigners and employees from abroad who are not permanent residents in the Czech Republic. Unfortunately for them, the child's permanent residency in the municipality/district where the kindergarten is located constitutes one of the main criteria in the decision to admit the child.

## **When children must be admitted to kindergartens**

Pursuant to currently applicable legal regulations, the director of a kindergarten is obliged to give priority in the admission process to children who are one year from their mandatory enrolment at primary school. If this is not possible due to a lack of capacity, the given municipality or district where the child has permanent residency is obliged to secure a spot for the child in another kindergarten.

The year prior to the child's enrolment at primary school is the last possible opportunity for the child to attend kindergarten and it is recommended that the child do so. It is very important that pre-school children learn to work in a peer group without the presence of their parents, develop an ability to concentrate on their work, learn to respect authority and try to observe instructions. Children who did not attend kindergarten face difficulties when starting the first grade. This has nothing to do with the child's intellectual capacities, but rather with the social skills that children form in the kindergarten and that enable them better cope with the requirements of primary school. What is particularly important is the ability to interact independently within a peer group.

## Foreign employees

EURAXESS Brno, operating at the South Moravian Centre for International Mobility, offers assistance, to foreign employees looking for kindergartens for their children.

### Contact person:

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

## Do you need one-to-one consulting?

As of March 2013, employees can benefit from the consulting services we provide as a part of the WLB project. Employees of OP RDI projects can address our consultants with their queries related to balancing their personal and work life:

- Are you planning to take maternity or parental leave and would you like to familiarize yourself with your rights and obligations?
- Are you planning to return to work from maternity or parental leave and are you considering a flexible form of employment (part-time, compressed work week, etc.)?
- Do you wish to learn more about ways to balance your personal and work life and discover how to negotiate them with your employer?
- Are you interested in up-to-date information relating to grant financing with respect to female scientists leaving for their maternity or parental leave?

If this is your case, do not hesitate to contact the WLB project consultants, either by telephone or e-mail at any time during working hours.

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*This informative material was created as a part of the project, “**Work-life balance of Scientific Employees in OP RDI Projects**” (reg. no. CZ.1.04/3.4.04/76.00133). The objective of the project is to introduce an HR-development system aimed at supporting personal and work-life balances for scientific employees. The primary role belongs to the employee target groups, specifically scientific employees in the OP RDI projects in the field of natural science and employees in the field of human resources development. The project is financed with ESF funds through the Operational Programme “Human Resources and Employment” and from the national budget of the Czech Republic. For more information on the WLB project:*

<http://www.ceitec.cz/projekt-work-life-balance/t1364>



Project partners:

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Jihomoravský kraj

