

Annual General Meeting
Czech School Without Borders, London

116 Long Acre, London WC2E 9PA, Registered Charity Number 1151158

Dear Friends and Members,

It is my pleasure to write this letter to summarize what we have reached together and what we are aiming for in the following academic year.

At the outset, let me stress that our school flourishes and develops not only thanks to the dedication of our senior staff, our teachers, assistant teachers and voluntaries, but thanks to you and of course your wonderful children.

Our voluntaries play a crucial role in our organization. Let me start with our Board of Trustees which runs our charity, the voluntaries helping in our classes, our amazing librarians who make sure our children are reading books, voluntaries who help with reading in our classes and last but not least the voluntaries helping us every Saturday with dropping on and off our children. All those people dedicate their own time for the good of our school and I would like to thank all of them for their fantastic work.

This year we have successfully fulfilled our academic curriculum for all our current classes from pre-school to Year 8. We have almost reached our aim to fully mirror the Czech school system and we have only ONE year to go! Next year this time we will have our first Czech School graduates and I feel already very proud.

The school has provided more than just academic activities during the past year. Among others, we held the traditional Night with Anderson in the spring and during the October, February and May half-terms we organized a Holiday Thursday in the British Museum. At the end of the year we finished with the St Nicolas celebration, which provided a perfect opportunity for the whole community to meet and celebrate. We also organized Christmas and Spring parties in Harpenden for our community there. In February we were part of the International Mother Tongue Day, a celebration of supplementary schools where some of our children were acknowledged for their efforts to learn a mother tongue language by the Mayor of Islington. All these activities add an important dimension to our school life when children of all ages can get together and have an opportunity to improve their knowledge of Czech and develop friendships in a more relaxed environment.

For more details about this year activities please see the attached Annual Report.

We have always seen our school as a part of the wider community especially in the Borough of Islington where our Saturday school is based. Our ongoing projects in the Borough provided after-school clubs and holiday clubs to Islington-based schools. Those projects were fully funded by London Borough of Islington Mother Tongue and Supplementary School Grant. I am pleased to tell you that we have received a new grant for the year 2017/2018 and we will be organizing a series of after school clubs in the Autumn around the theme of migrants and immigration.

This year another interesting opportunity arose in The Bouda Project. The Czech Centre has invited us to be a partner in this exciting project and together we are fundraising to help to create a space that will promote Czech culture and enable us, the Czech School, to have a space where we can organize our workshops and to have the use of desk and storage space.

The building is situated near the Czech Embassy and belongs to it. The Czech Centre is in talks with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which has promised to finance a reconstruction of the space. However, we feel that we need additional funds for the final works, refurbishment and possibly for securing the building so it will not further

deteriorate during this coming winter. We will talk about this project during our AGM but if you are interested please have a look at the Bouda website www.bouda.org.uk. We are grateful for all donations and appreciate your support. When Bouda is finished, our aim is to open it up for the wider Czech communities living in the UK and also to local community as well as we have done in the Islington borough.

Now I would like to briefly write something about our finances. Net Income for this financial year shows a small surplus. The trustees took a number of measures throughout the year to ensure the optimum financial result at the end of the financial year. The increase of rent in St Mary Magdalene Academy was dealt with by an adjustment in the length of our rental hours. The necessary office and storage place was moved to the Czech Centre which has kindly offered us better conditions. The Trustees considers it crucial to set aside any profit as a reserve to meet unforeseen expenditure.

We are a fast growing organization and together with that comes a need for more funding. We have secured all the grants available from the Czech Republic and managed to slightly increase some of them. However, our financial needs are greater that we can satisfy for the next financial year. Therefore, the Trustees have decided to increase the school fees from £12.50 to £14.50 per Saturday session of 3.5 hours from this September. The sibling discounts will be kept as before. We are proud that we have managed to maintain our school fees at the same level since 2009. I would like to stress that the Trustees are always looking for other opportunities to find additional grants for our school and will continue to do so next year.

I would like introduce our changes to our members of staff. Firstly, let me thank our senior staff, namely, Lucie Wenigerova our Acting Director and her team: Ivona Klemensova, Deputy Director and Adela Herbsova our Assistant. They have done a fantastic job this year and we look forward to further working with them. Lucie will be stepping down as an Acting Director in July and will come back to our Trustee's team. I am pleased that Ivona and Adela will be continuing their work as senior staff, Ivona as a Co-Director and Adela as an Assistant. I would like to welcome Zuzana Jungmanova who is coming back from maternity leave and will be joining our school from September as a Co-Director. Last change in our staff is the position of our book-keeper. Ilona Shaw is leaving Czech School and I would like to thank her for her great work. Her role will be taken over by Ivona who will have a joint role as a Co-Director and book-keeper.

I would like to also thank to all our teachers and assistant teachers who have done an absolutely amazing job teaching our children and we look forward to welcoming them back in September. To those who are leaving us I wish on behalf of our school the best of luck in their future endeavours!

You will have sensed that next year will be another exciting year full of new challenges but also a year of continuity in our work. Our aim is to provide the high quality of Czech education for our children that you have all come to appreciate and to further develop our school.

I would like to close this letter with a thought that together we have created a fantastic community and we are rightly proud of it. WELL DONE TO EVERYONE!

I wish you all a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you and your children in September!

Petra O'Connell
Chair
Czech School Without Borders, London

Czech School Without Borders, London

Registered Charity Number: 1151158

Company Number: 7323697

Address: 116 Long Acre, London WC2E 9PA

Board of Governors:

Chair: PETRA O'CONNELL

Vice-chair: RENATA CLARKOVÁ

Treasurer: JAKUB PACHANSKÝ

Secretary: ALENA WILKEN

Member: DAGMAR KRAFT

Management:

Acting Director: LUCIE WENIGEROVÁ

Deputy Director: IVONA KLEMENSOVÁ

Assistant: ADÉLA HERBSOVÁ

Cashier: ILONA SHAW

Saturday School

St Mary Magdalene Academy, Liverpool Road, London N7 8PG

10.30am–2.00pm



Preschool – Group A and B

Teachers: Veronika Prokopová, Aneta Linc-Kelsall

Teaching Assistant: Petra Příbylová

Volunteers: Andrea Seidlerová, Jana Hasegawa, Kateřina Šotolářová

In this school year, our two pre-school groups have gone through several positive changes. We moved both the groups into St Mary Magdalene's Academy, which our children and their parents got used to very quickly. Due to an increased number of our children in the older group, we've split the group into two classrooms and increased the length of the lessons by half an hour, which allows us to focus more on each child. This arrangement has also enabled us to prepare the oldest group of pre-school children for the transition to the Reception class which they will be attending next year. In each term, we focus on a variety of topics, such as family,

home, nature, means of transport, traveling and food. To build up children's vocabulary we play a lot of interactive games, sing many songs and tell them stories. We also enjoy many art activities that help the children to develop their imagination and practise fine motor skills. The oldest pre-schoolers also learn the Czech alphabet and the basics of the Czech grammar. We hope that we help the children to establish a positive attitude towards the Czech language and environment.



Reception Class

Teacher: Lenka Hábová

Volunteers: Jana Skulová, Lucie Chludilová

Erasmus Intern: Věra Šimková

Our pupils learn Czech mostly through speaking and fun activities and games that relate to their own lives and hobbies. Our main goal is to teach them the key vocabulary and develop their comprehension and speaking skills. We focus on children's writing skills as well, starting with simple words and gradually moving to writing whole sentences. We also develop children's reading skills.

Every week, the children have their individual reading sessions with our parent volunteers. Besides, we read with the whole class and the children are encouraged to read at home too. During and after our group readings we ask the children lots of questions in order to check their understanding of the text. We also have lots of fun learning traditional Czech songs and rhymes that explore Czech sounds and pronunciation.



Year 1

Teacher: Štěpánka Bulířová

Teaching Assistant: Veronika Kadlecová

Volunteer: Kateřina Votrubová

Erasmus Intern: Karla Novobilská

In addition to learning how to read and write letters in Czech, our pupils also start learning about the Czech history and geography. Each Saturday, we introduce a new letter in an interactive presentation focused on a specific topic related to the children's lives. The lessons are filled

with many competitions and physical, musical and art activities. During breaks, the children enjoy watching popular Czech TV short programmes. Individual reading sessions overseen by our parent volunteers form a very important part of our Saturday lessons. Visiting our library is another very popular activity amongst the children, which encourages them to read in Czech more. During the whole school year, we have had a special visitor to our lessons – a soft toy pig called Snílek! Every week, Snílek visits one child and together they note all the adventures they do during the week into Snílek's diary.

Year 2

Teacher: Adéla Herbsová

Volunteers: Tereza Pešíčková, Katarina Lebar, Martina Radochová, Eliška Kouřilová

Erasmus Intern: Soňa Šebestová

Our curriculum is primarily focused on the structure of the Czech language. With the help of animated interactive presentations, we learn about the basics of grammar, such as the different sentence types and the usage of "i" and "y". The children are teamed up for fun competitions in which they are asked to create their own towns, compete in singing and reading contests, or create their own pieces of art. At the end of each term, the best group wins a small prize. We visit our library regularly



and the children write their own reading diaries. This year, the children have written their own stories about the class mascot Dino, the Dinosaur. We also enjoy various fun activities, such as pottery-making, filming our own TV spot, running a blind taste test in which children were asked to recognise various fruit and vegetables and listening out for a secret word.

Year 3

Teacher: Kamila Sekaninová

Volunteers: Alena Pilná, Lucie Slavotínková

Erasmus Interns: Jiří Mánek, Marie Hošťálková

This year has been full of great adventures for the Year 3 students. Together, we have been discovering the Czech culture and history through play. We learn about major Czech towns and cities and talk about similarities and differences among them. In the Czech language lessons, we learn more about grammar, following on from what the children learnt about the usage of “i” and “y” in the previous year. Our pupils even made their very own brochure about this topic! The Year 3 children have made great progress this year and became much stronger as a class after spending a night in the church as part of the “Night with Andersen” project this spring.



Year 4

Teacher: Hana Pospíšilová

Volunteer: Šimon Sedlařík

Erasmus Intern: Zuzana Brůžová



There are 14 children in Year 4 this year. Our first two terms were focused on the declension of nouns. In our lessons, we practise grammar through fun games and activities, such as a memory game “Who wants to be a millionaire?”, and our version of bingo which

is undoubtedly the most popular game. Our children also explore Czech history while working with tailored history worksheets and presentations and spending the lunch breaks watching popular children history series, “Udatné dějiny českého národa”. During the history classes, we also enjoy mini-performances and art activities such as building Romanesque rotundas, creating royal crowns and medieval illuminated letters. Our Year 4 children are very skilful, eager to learn and energetic!





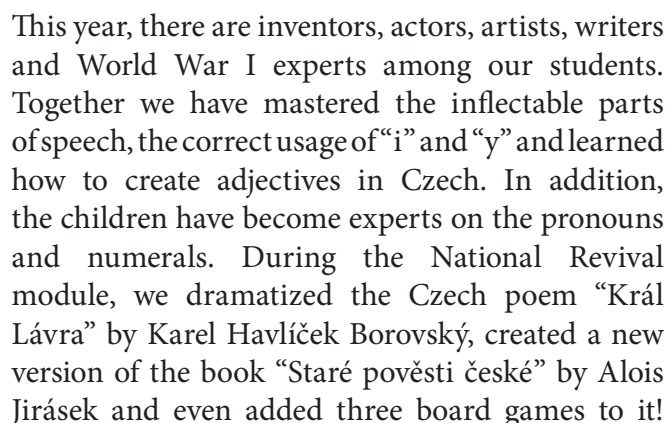
Erasmus Intern: Karolina Chmielová

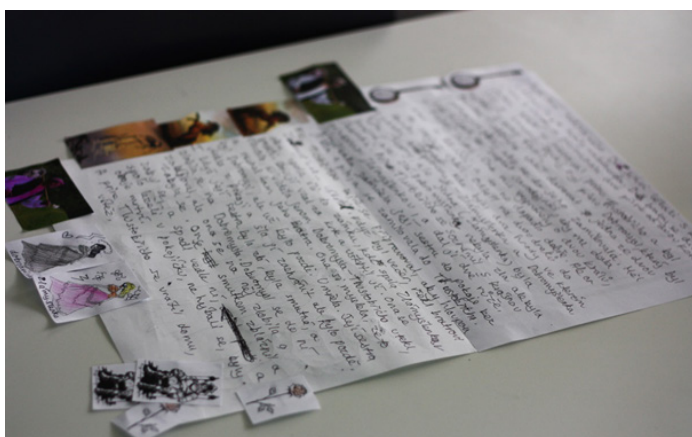
Our classroom is a place where the children gain courage, patience, determination, and creativity. The children are strong enough to fight the most cunning of the linguistic adversaries: pronouns, inflections, and declensions, while also learning about the most important dates from the Czech history.

Our children (usually) win such linguistic battles! However, as in the case of the Austro-Hungarian Empress Maria Theresa, they also learn that even an occasional defeat can later lead to a success. We strive to find new ways in which we could practise and learn something new. This year, we dramatized the Premyslid murders and the Czech ballad stories; we played board games that focused on the children's knowledge of grammar; we conducted art workshops in which we turned into medieval craftsmen and Baroque artists. We encourage children to get involved in lively discussions about the Czech history, such as learning about the faults of the revered Charles IV, and the positive aspects of his unpopular son Zikmund. We enter our linguistic battles, together and confident, and whilst there may be an occasional defeat, we are ultimately victorious while also having lots of inspirational and thought-provoking fun!



Erasmus Interns: Hana Kubová, Veronika Jaklová





We also tried the roles of the impressionistic painters and painted some pictures inspired by Claude Monet and Antonín Slavíček. We explored the events of the World War I while we were drawing the maps of Europe during the war. Our creative students even win prizes – Adélka Trhlíková won the third place in the international art competition called “Za časů Marie Terezie”.



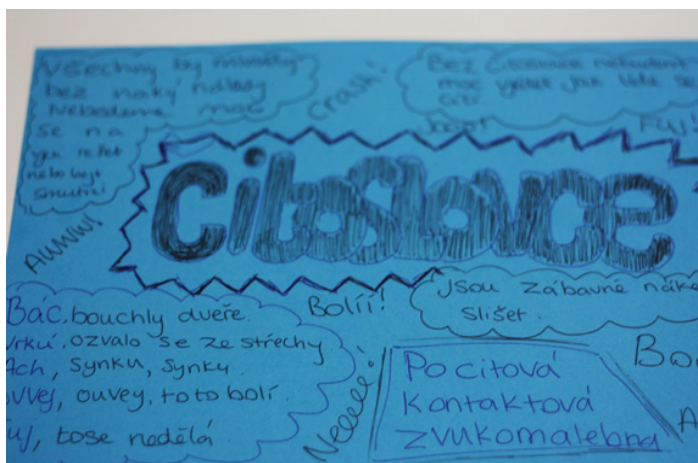
Year 7+8

Teacher: Ivona Klemensová

Teaching Assistant: Veronika Skřenková

In the Czech language lessons, the Year 7 and 8 students practise the un-inflectable parts of speech and learn about the passive voice. The Year 8 group has bravely tackled the rules of interpunction, negation, and inflection of pronouns. During the year, the entire class has written dozens of essays, reports, interviews, and descriptions and has done a lot of reading with comprehension exercises. In the history

lessons, the students have gone on a journey through the first Czechoslovak Republic. We talked about the formation of the first independent Czechoslovak state and the role of the minorities in that period. We also examined the effects of the 1930s economic crisis on the subsequent developments in Europe. The topics such as the rise of Fascism, the Munich Agreement, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and even the assassination of Heydrich caused some of the most passionate debates and evoked many emotions. The students tried to imagine themselves in the role of the Czechs and Slovaks during the period of the first Republic and the World War II while attempting to understand the people's way of thinking, fears, and hopes in that period.



Steps to Czech – Sunday Classes

Czech Centre London, 116 Long Acre, London WC2E 9PA

10.30am–12.00am

Teacher: Markéta Grigelová

Erasmus Interns: Věra Šimková, Soňa Šebestová, Hana Kubová, Jiří Mánek, Zuzana Brůžová, Veronika Jaklová, Marie Hošťálková, Karolína Chmielová, Karla Novobilská

In the Sunday lessons, the children are divided into three groups according to their age and their language abilities. In the youngest group, there are children aged 4-5. Each lesson is focused on one topic, such as a season, favourite toys, etc., with fun activities and games aiming to develop the children's vocabulary. At the end of each lesson, the children do an art project and watch a short Czech cartoon.



The middle group consists of six pupils aged 5-10. The main aim of this group has been to develop the children's communication skills, and so these children, together with their soft toy-friend Krteček, have been learning useful phrases and Czech pronunciation while building their Czech vocabulary. Together we enjoy a wide range of fun activities – from pantomime to board games and watching popular Czech cartoons.

In the oldest group we practise Czech grammar, write a lot of stories and talk about many areas of life in the Czech Republic. This year we also worked on a project called “Japanese stories for Czech children”. In this project, the students translated Japanese stories they know from their second mother-tongue, Japanese into Czech while creating their own illustrations, audio recordings, and puppets. The aim of the project has been to familiarize the children with stories from other cultures.

Czech through Play – Wednesday

Quakers Hall, 12 Southdown Road, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 1PD

16.00pm–17.45pm

Teacher: Kateřina Filipová

Erasmus Interns: Soňa Šebestová, Věra Šimková, Jiří Mánek, Karla Novobilská, Zuzana Brůžová

The Czech through Play lessons are attended by children aged 3 – 8. They usually consist of music and art activities and high-energy outdoor games. The aim of the lessons is to familiarize Czech bilingual children with Czech culture, games, songs etc. The songs are accompanied on the piano played by the teacher and the rhythmic instruments played by the children. Every term we prepare a special topic for the lessons, for example, the human body, sports disciplines, and the animal world. We also adapt the lessons to special events such as Christmas and Easter.



Individual Lessons

During this school year, we've launched individual lessons for children who do not attend the Czech school or who would like extra one-to-one tutoring in Czech. The teachers from Czech school teach children either in their homes or via Skype. These one-to-one lessons allow the teacher to focus specifically on the child's needs and adapt the lessons to their abilities.

Speech and Language Therapy

Jana Martykánová

During the last school year the speech and language therapist completed the assessments of speech sound production and general language skills of all the children in the reception class and new starters in year 1. Following the assessments the verbal feedback sessions were provided to all parents of children in reception class, giving recommendations for further management of the children's speech and communication needs. During the summer term 2016 the speech and language therapist resumed her practice and has been offering individually tailored session to all children attending the Czech School.



Czech School Library

Helena Rýparová, Dagmar Kraft

In September 2011 we started operating a library of Czech books for children to support one of the most critical aspects of developing our children's vocabulary. Our collection of more than 200 books in Czech is ever-growing through purchases and donations. It includes a great variety of books on various themes and difficulty levels. You can find many Czech classics as well as books following the latest reading

level system (from early beginners to advanced readers). The library is open during all regular sessions of Czech School without Borders (CSWB). The membership is free to CSWB members and the books are lent for a period of two weeks with the option to extend.

1 to 1 Reading

Jana Thomson, Filip Charvát, Barbara Lipnerová,
Gabriela Skorunková

We are immensely grateful to volunteering parents for the ongoing support with developing children's reading skills. Some of the parents assist teachers directly in the class and others provide individual reading and comprehension session. We introduce individual reading to children in the reception class and then we continue in year 1. Thanks to this all our children have an opportunity to improve and strengthen their reading skills in Czech language.



Other Activities

Voyage to the Moon – British Museum – 27 October 2016

The Seven Ravens & Art Workshop – 27 November 2016

St Nicholas Party – 3 December 2016

Christmas Party in Harpenden – 14 December 2016

Journey through Time – British Museum – 16 February 2017

International Mother Tongue Day – 21 February 2017

Spring Party in Harpenden – 29 March 2017

Night with Andersen – 31 March – 1 April 2017

UCL Workshops – 6 May and 24 June 2017

Museum Mystery – British Museum – 1 June 2017

Voyage to the Moon – British Museum

27 October 2016

In October, we visited the British Museum and a nearby park with our children who underwent an exhausting astronautic training there. There were a lot of art activities and games prepared for the children. At the end of the event, there was a small ceremony in which awards and diplomas were given to our brand new astronauts!



The Seven Ravens & Art Workshop

27 November 2016



On Sunday 27th November 2016, we participated in a screening of a Czech fairy-tale movie “The Seven Ravens” in Regent Street Cinema as part of the Czech Centre London Made in Prague festival. The screening was followed by an art workshop in which children made their own dream catchers that, according to an ancient Native American legend, will protect them against nightmares. The results were truly beautiful!

St Nicholas Party

3 December 2016

At the beginning of December on Sunday 3th, we organized our traditional St Nicholas party. The afternoon was full of Christmas-related activities. Our children performed the nativity play and enjoyed a variety of art activities. At the end, St Nicholas himself made an appearance accompanied by angels and the most mischievous of devils!



Christmas Party in Harpenden

14 December 2016

On the last Wednesday before Christmas, we organized a Christmas party in Harpenden. The children decorated their own Christmas trees with candy canes, created Christmas cards and various Christmas decorations. Together they created one big Christmas tree with their own handprints. At the end, we sang carols accompanied on the guitar, piano and saxophone and the children got their Christmas presents.



Journey through Time – British Museum

16 February 2017

Our children were welcomed in the Clocks and Watches Gallery by Mr Time. We made our own time machines and used them to time travel to ancient Greece where they took part in the Olympic Games; to Asia where they used their own puppets in a shadow play; and to Africa where they created masks and bracelets inspired by the traditional African art.

International Mother Tongue Day

21 February 2017

The Czech School took part in its celebrations in the Islington Assembly Hall. Our Head Lucie Wenigerova talked about our new interactive textbook Czech Without Borders and the Mayor of Islington, Kat Fletcher, awarded six of our students for their excellent work and achievements in the Czech language. These students were Aneta Rubešová (Year 2), Laureta Krasniqi (Year 3), Miriam Louisa Hozee (Year 4), Veronica Kolarova (Year 5), Tyna Polenská (Year 6) and Juliette Keates (Year 8). Congratulations – we're proud of you!



Spring Party in Harpenden

29 March 2017

In March, we held a Spring party in Harpenden. On this occasion, the children decorated their own Easter eggs, created Easter cards and paper animal shapes and there was one big collaborative art project which everyone took part in. There were also many outdoor activities, games, and competitions. At the end of the party, we had a small spring concert in which the children played various instruments while the adults were singing.

Night with Andersen

31 March – 1 April 2017

This year's Night with Andersen took place at St Mary Magdalene Church. The title of the book chosen for the event was "Muřinoh a Krchomilka" by the Czech writer Milan Valenta. Throughout the evening there were several readings of the book which were accompanied by a shadow theatre play. During the breaks between the readings, the children enjoyed art activities. They created their own masks, bookmarks, and even their own soft toys. We also held a masquerade ball during which the children played many games, such as the musical chairs or the limbo. At the very end of the evening, everybody's courage was tested during a short walk in the dark. Then, all that was left to do was to unpack the sleeping bag and go to sleep. The following morning there was a big breakfast waiting for the children, so they could get enough energy for their Saturday classes!



UCL Workshops

6 May and 24 June 2017

We were very pleased to welcome Dr Froso Argyri from UCL Bilingo in the Czech Centre, where she delivered her talk on bilingualism for our teachers. Froso gave us an overview of what it means to be bilingual or multilingual, explained to us the stages of acquiring a second language and how children juggle two or more languages. It was a highly informative workshop, delivered in a very professional manner. Froso replied

to loads of our curious and specific questions in a very friendly and approachable manner. We were also very glad that we could organise a workshop for the parents of our students because as Froso emphasized many times, the parents' input is a very important factor for bilingual children.

Museum Mystery – British Museum

1 June 2017

The whole adventure began in front of the museum, where the children met a curious looking animal that was resembling a blue sea horse. It didn't have any name so the children named him Mořík. Together they played some games but after a while, Mořík decided to run away. Fortunately, the children were able to track him down because he left some cues for them. While the children were looking for Mořík, they visited many parks near the British Museum and enjoyed various interesting activities and games. Luckily, in the end, the children found Mořík back in the British Museum, where they spend some more time together before their parents picked them up. It was a very pleasant day!





We would like to thank Karolina Chmielová, Karla Novobilská and Isabella Kraft for creating this report.