



Evaluation results indicate moderate improvement of pupils' skills to retrieve information from texts and to assess the form of texts. Weaknesses prevail in the abilities to assess the content of texts and to interpret them. Support for pupils with SEN (dyslexia) has worsened. Results of inspection evaluations confirmed the poor results pupils had achieved in international studies and pointed to the reasons for such an adverse development. If the results of inspection evaluations are compared according to PISA guidelines the conclusion can be drawn that the above described approach towards reading literacy has not yet been supported within the Czech education system.

For more details regarding the support of reading literacy see the relevant CSI thematic report.

Evaluation of the Development of Mathematical Literacy

Results arising from international studies repeatedly demonstrate a low level of abilities of Czech pupils to use their knowledge for practical problem solving and the decline in the level of knowledge and skills of pupils with regard to mathematical literacy. The conceptual aim of inspection evaluations has been developed according to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council on key competences for lifelong learning (COM(2005)548) and in compliance with the OECD guidelines for PISA and TIMSS where "mathematical literacy is the capacity to identify and understand the role that mathematics plays in the world, to make well-founded judgments, and to use and engage with mathematics in ways that meet the needs of that individual's life as a constructive, concerned and reflective citizen" and "it encompasses the ability to put mathematical knowledge and skills to functional use as well as the ability to pose and solve mathematical problems in a variety of situations moving beyond the kinds of situations and problems typically encountered in school classrooms and such situations do not cover only mathematical, science and reading literacy and there is no obvious solution to them".

The CSI was building on the results of PISA and TIMSS international studies and in its inspection evaluations focused on some selected characteristic features and areas where Czech pupils were unsuccessful or their results showed a deteriorating trend. If there is a need for pupils to apply mathematical knowledge when solving certain problems they should also understand the meaning (content) of mathematical terms and theorems which are to be used in specific situations.

Although the understanding of such terms differed from school to school both members of school management and teachers attempted to improve the situation.

Among the positively evaluated aspects of teaching at the elementary level of basic education were findings showing systemic deepening and exercising of numerical counting and the correct use of mathematical terminology and symbols. In general, in the classes observed pupils demonstrated a good level of the required knowledge and skills. There were discrepancies in developing independence when solving examples, justifying pupils' answers and developing the competences necessary for problem solving.

As regards the 2nd level of BE sample task-solving and also, in the majority of cases, solution of applied tasks can be evaluated positively. Pupils were successful in 90% of the observed mathematical classes. However, only in one quarter of the observed lessons were pupils instructed to approach learning actively and were their key competences in problem solving clearly developed. Pupils are not frequently able to guess in advance and subsequently interpret the results of mathematical tasks, they are not oriented towards various ways of solving the problem and are not taught how to justify their replies.

School management as well as teachers in all the schools visited confirm the implementation of internal and external testing of pupils' results, although the evaluated