

Table 9 Support for development of pre-reading skills in pre-school education

Monitored indicators for support of pre-reading skills Section in FEP PE – “A Child and His/Her Psychology” (share of teaching units in which the given phenomenon was observed – as %)	Small KGs	Large KGs	Total KGs
Work with texts, attaining some knowledge and skills which precede reading and writing, development of an interest in written forms of language	56.3	48.2	51.7
Searching for information, an ability to use means of information and communication which a child can regularly meet (books, cyclopaedic books, journals, computers, audio-visual technology, telephone and so forth)	48.3	45.9	46.9
An opportunity to use information found, development of communication skills (verbal and non-verbal) and cultivated speech	49.7	50.1	50.0

The following are the most important factors measuring the quality of support for development of the skills necessary for reading: qualifications of teachers and a possibility of specialised training, participation of schools and involvement of teachers in development projects as well as the ability of teachers to interconnect educational activities with the real environment. A low level of these attributes consequently represents risk for the group and in particular individual failure of children in the evaluated area. Further important factors are the size of the class and the prevalingly low information literacy of teachers with long teaching experience.

Kindergartens have built up and used class, school or public libraries, which have a sufficient number of various kinds of books, audio-visual aids and ICT and therefore they positively affect the development of reading literacy. However, the level of libraries' equipment and facilities differ.

The system of pre-school education lacks professionals for improving speech impediments, for special speech therapy for children who might need it. Such care has not been sufficient for a long period of time.

In order to further develop the competences of teachers in this area, methodology and the provision of further education aimed at this issue, which could fully satisfy the likely high interest of school managers as well as teachers in attaining comprehensive and correct information are missing.

Development of Support for Foreign Languages

As far as this area is concerned the CSI monitored the impacts of the measures adopted in accordance with the National Plan of Education in Foreign Languages, which terminated in 2009, and in compliance with the 2007 long-term objectives. The CSI evaluated the level of language skills of teachers and the occurrence of activities directed towards supporting foreign language instruction and motivating children to get interested in foreign languages in general.

The level of language knowledge of teachers in kindergartens was not very good. The share of teachers with English language knowledge was 18.6 %. With regard to foreign languages 27 % of teachers had knowledge of the Russian language, 9 % of teachers spoke German, while knowledge of other languages was minimal. Teachers involved in pre-school education also had minimal opportunities to acquire or extend qualifications in foreign languages.