

The Czech School Inspectorate (hereinafter referred to as the 'CSI') is submitting summarised findings on the situation in education and the educational system gathered through inspections carried out in the school year 2008/2009.

Inspections were implemented in compliance with the Plan of Principal Tasks of Inspection Activities in the school year 2008/2009 approved by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports.

When evaluating the conditions, course and results of education the work of the CSI was based on the principles and objectives of education stipulated by Act No. 561/2004 Coll. on Pre-school, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education (the Education Act) as amended, with the fundamental criterion being, in particular, effectiveness of support aimed at developing the personality of the child, pupil and student (hereinafter referred to as 'pupil') and at education targets to be achieved by particular legal entities performing activities of schools and school facilities (hereinafter referred to as 'school'). The overview of the criteria used for school evaluation is listed in Annex 1.

In evaluating schools and their activities the CSI is building on the principle of legality and protection of the rights of the child within education. In the course of its evaluations the CSI concentrates on: how educational goals concerning enhancement of reading literacy and counting skills are met; it monitors innovation of the content of education programmes, study materials, school systems of professional preparation of teachers; innovation of teaching methods and forms of education; and the development of school self-evaluation. In the past school year, within its main thematic observations, the CSI focused on progress made in English language teaching as well as ICT equipment and its utilisation in the course of class instruction.

Evaluation of how objectives of equal access to education at all levels are met and how pupils with special education needs (SEN) are supported remains among the permanent priorities of the CSI. The CSI reviews the functionality of school self-evaluation systems, internal control systems and school systems of prevention, for example safety and health in school or prevention of socio-pathological phenomena.

The CSI monitored the level of head teachers and teachers, their qualifications and options for career growth and professional development.

Frequent changes in legislation that have had an impact on school practice are among the problems of the past school year. The legal amendments are listed in Annex 4.

There was also an unstable social and economic environment which affected the activities of schools. In the last school year programme changes in governmental policy and the necessity to tackle the impacts of the economic crisis must be mentioned.

The Annual Report is divided into three main parts providing information of interest on schools and their education programmes.

The first part, Part A, encompasses findings on the situation in schools providing pre-school, basic and secondary education and having an obligation to teach in compliance with their own school education programmes. Other parts of the education system underwent only pilot inspections, the results of which will be published as thematic reports. Further information on the schools visited is to be found in public inspection reports published on www.csisr.cz.

The second part, Part B, contains summarised findings arising from thematic inspections broken down according to selected priorities of the long-term objectives of the development of education in the Czech Republic issued in 2007.

For the first time, the Annual Report also provides information about the progress made in schools and comparisons of results achieved by individual schools within three years of English language teaching and using ICT in schools. The data was gathered