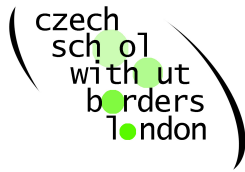


## Czech School without Borders, London



My name is Zuzana Jungmanova and I would like to introduce you to my long-term work with bilingual children. In October 2007 I founded Czech School without Borders, in London, which explores new possibilities in bilingual education. We started as a small club called Kid's Art Club for Czech-speaking pre-school children. In 2009, the school joined a wider international project with branches in London, Paris, Berlin, Munich, Brussels and Zurich...

### **The busy annual calendar of educational activities of Czech School without Borders, London:**

Over the years the school grew in size by adding other school activities to the normal three teaching days a week.

- These include a camp for children in Windsor, celebrations of Czech national holidays such as the Mardi Gras carnival in February and the Easter Holiday. At 'Night with Andersen', children read in the evening and slept over in the library; they made art and experienced alternative methods of working with the Czech language.
- Another very important project for us is Live Museums. This involves visits to London museums, followed by art workshops in permanent and temporary exhibitions at the museums. Live Museums take place throughout the year. We also run DraCzech Drama Club every fortnight, where children work creatively with selected Czech fairy tales. Linked to DraCzech is an international project called Dragon Drama Club, a three-day workshop open to children in Islington and the surrounding area during school holidays. These workshops are free of charge and their aim is to combine and extend art and drama education to children from all over the world and from all social and cultural backgrounds.
- We also celebrate Children's Day on June 1st, promoting Czech books and literature under the auspices of the Czech Embassy in London and in cooperation with the Czech Centre. Summer Holidays begin with the Summer Party, which is a goodbye to the school year and an opportunity to distribute the school reports. After the holidays the new school year starts off with the screening of a Czech fairy tale in the Riverside Studios followed by an art workshop for Czech children at the cinema. At the end of the calendar year we organize St. Nicholas Day for the Czech community, friends and Czech

children from Great Britain; a one day event comprising a Christmas Exhibition at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in London, where our hand-made Christmas decorations and a hand-made crib are exhibited.

#### **Statutory and financial partners of the Czech School without Borders, London:**

- Czech School without Borders would not exist without the help of our partners. We are supported financially and statutorily by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. We also receive support from the Embassy of the Czech Republic in London, The Czech Centre, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Czech Republic. We have several sponsors in the Czech Republic and in England are supported by Islington Town Hall. We have worked for years with the managers of St Mary Magdalene and St David Church. We get huge support from the IVAC, Voluntary Action Islington, Cambridge Education and National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education.

#### **Important relationship with British Museum:**

- For me, the relationship with British Museum started with my first visit to London in 2003 and continued through research of the museum collection as part of my textile course at the Academy in Prague. I greatly valued the visit to the Department of Drawings and Prints, where I handled works of artists I studied in detail at school. A huge fascination with the museum continued even in my professional approach to bilingual education sparking off the aforementioned project, Live Museums, in 2008. This project began when the Czech School was founded.
- Cooperation and responsiveness from British Museum regarding all museum activities have always been very pleasant in contrast with other museums, which have had problems with the size of our group, time spent on the premises and so on. British Museum has always been a very open partner. The pinnacle of my personal and professional relationship with the museum has been an animated film called Namalujme Olympiadu (Let's Draw the Olympics) from last year; the story starts inside the museum. Producing it was an amazing experience; together with more than 170 children from Islington we created a wonderful animated film about friendship, the symbol of the Olympic Games, mutual help, and love of arts and tradition. The film was made in two versions, both with Czech and English narration, and was financially supported by The Czech Olympic Committee.
- In addition to usual weekend activities, our activities help the children to develop their social skills and improve their knowledge of the Czech language. Museum visits are a natural way to capture the children's interest and provide inspiration for workshops and projects. Producing short animations is inspiring to all of us; to children as active participants, to their

parents and relatives, and to our school. Our Olympic project in 2012, inspired by British Museum, was a great success as it was a truly bilingual project.

- My professional relationship has been furthered through my membership in the Steering Group, where I met other similar schools. My invitations to other workshops and educational activities for children and their parents and the teachers from supplementary schools have been a valuable experience.

**Future Vision:**

- I see a great future in broadening the relationship between Czech School without Borders and big cultural partners like British Museum. Spreading information through social networking sites like Facebook will enable more effective communication about different activities to families with children, teachers or volunteers from our school.
- We will continue our Living Museums project for bilingual children and extend the programme for other children from supplementary schools. We aim to better inform our community about events in the museums, schools and education activities and get parents and older children more involved in our projects!