

The best of all worlds: Prague educator explains why being bilingual matters

Czech-English program Young Hippocampus incorporates the best of the Czech and international educational systems in a cost-effective bilingual initiative.



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There is a broad consensus among both locals and expats, that the Czech Republic is a wonderful place to live long-term. Whether the attraction is the small but beautiful, culture-packed city of Prague, the nature or even the beer, the lasting allure of the Czech Republic is undoubtable.



ever, many are mindful that Czechia is a small player on the global stage and that their children



Therein lies the dilemma when it comes to education. Until recently, expat and Czech families had two choices, Czech state education or private international schools.

Recognizing this dilemma a professional team, comprised of British expats, Czech professionals and international education specialists [established Young Hippocampus](#).



The idea behind the Young Hippocampus program is to incorporate the best of the Czech and international educational systems in a cost-effective bilingual initiative.

"State schools prepare children for Czech higher education and life in this lovely country, but many fall short in terms of language skills and other soft skills that are essential for studying and working abroad," says Renata Buckle, YHC co-founder.

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Buckle says that international schools on the other hand equip children with language and other skills, but these often fall short in terms of Czech language and culture. "In addition, such schools are notoriously expensive, even on an international scale, and once in that system there is no easy way

Young Hippocampus's comprehensive [Czech-English bilingual program](#) is for children in the lower elementary school (1. stupeň ZŠ) aged 6 to 11 years with an option to continue in the upper level. In addition to an immersive curriculum in English, led by qualified native-English-speaking teachers, the program also includes interactive, creative and project-based learning methodologies to develop vital social skills while also covering the syllabus in math, geography, arts and crafts, music, PE, and other subjects.



"Both Czech and native English teachers were living and working in various parts of the world so they can pass onto children their different experiences and cultures which is so much needed in the open multicultural society of today," says Buckle.

The program is designed to introduce English from an early age in a fun, natural environment. "By immersing children in English for part of each school day, including through study, games and project work, the language develops naturally, and the children soon become truly bilingual, whether or not they had previous knowledge," she says.

According to Buckle, the level of spoken English varies within each class at the beginning but converges when it comes to reading and writing by the end of the first grade. This is achieved through the tried and tested phonics methodology.





Fluency in English has obvious benefits for global communication. However, exposure to a second language and creative, project-based learning also stimulates brain activity and strengthens cognitive functions. It improves memory, focus, and attention, and can lead to faster thinking and information processing. It is widely accepted that bilingual people operate better in multicultural environments and are much more tolerant and creative.

In fact, while the school's name "Young Hippocampus" may conjure images of a school for cute little hippos, adults will recognize the dual meaning which points to the importance of the hippocampus part of the brain in advanced learning.





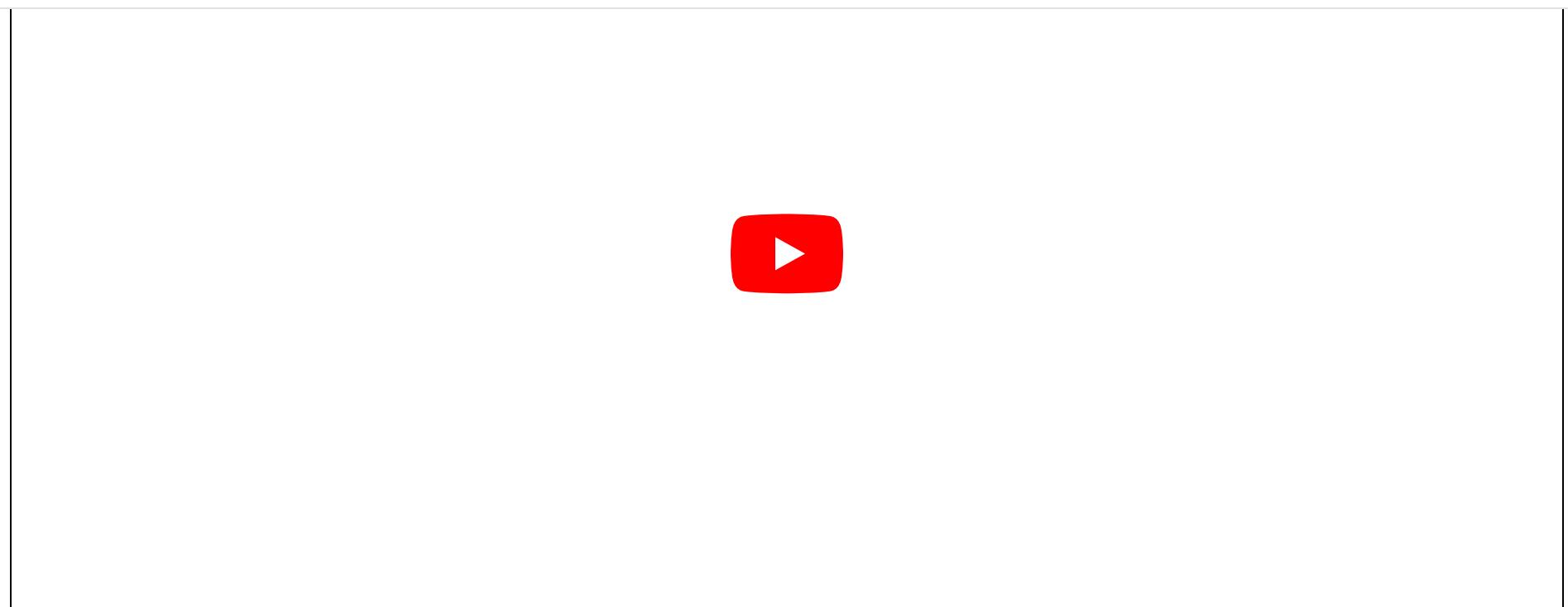
Despite its lofty academic and social goals, the [Young Hippocampus](#) team is able to deliver this program at a fraction of the price of private international schools as it cleverly coordinates with Czech state schools to deliver a coherent education incorporating the best of both worlds.

Children are enrolled in the Czech school system and cover the extensive state curriculum, while qualified, native-English-speaking Young Hippocampus staff are on-site to seamlessly integrate the language and project work modules.

All children, whether newcomers or children already in the program, love the summer Hippocamp where, apart from the interesting projects (this year the "Young Explorer" is the theme), they have a chance to meet all their future schoolmates and teachers and have great fun together.

"We believe this innovative approach delivers the best of both worlds, at a very affordable price. It would be particularly appropriate for expat families intending to stay in the Czech Republic long-term, bilingual families and those Czech families wishing to equip their children with the skills need to achieve success in the future anywhere in the world," says Buckle.





Young Hippocampus still has a few free spaces left for September 2022 in its 1st and 2nd grade in Roztoky u Prahy, state of the art new building (a 10-minute from Dejvice, Prague 6). All children, whether newcomers or children already in the program, love the summer Hippocamp where apart from the interesting projects (this year the "Young Explorer" is the theme) they have a chance to meet all their future schoolmates and teachers and have great fun together.

"It isn't just our view that this unique bilingual program fulfills a much-needed gap in the educational market," says Buckle. "We have many testimonials from parents and children who most appreciate the teamwork, interesting projects, professional approach, and especially the great teachers."

[Read more on Young Hippocampus here](#)

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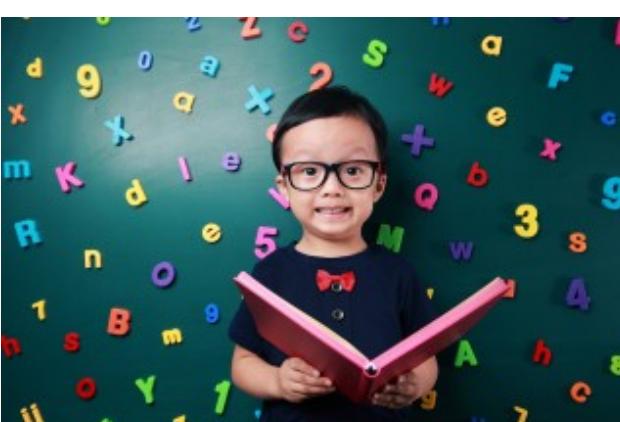
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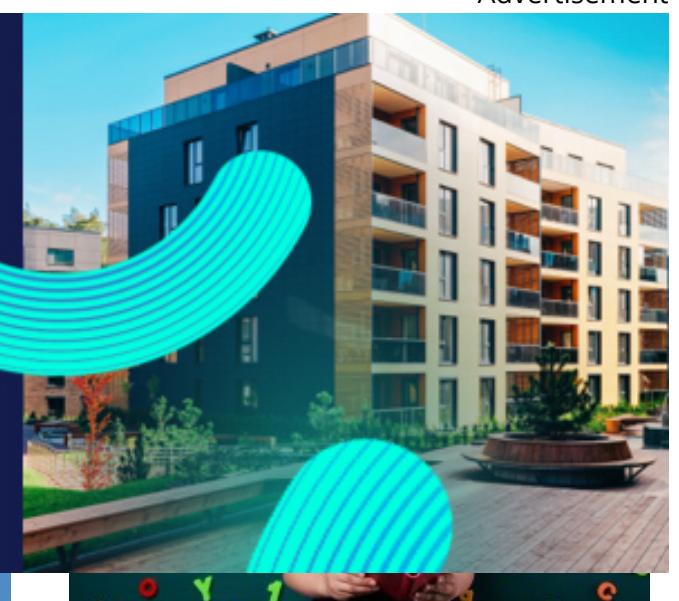
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