



Child Day Care Centres of the Internationaler Bund

Conceptual framework

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Foreword

Through its association and its companies, **the Internationaler Bund (IB)** is one of the large providers of youth, social and educational work in Germany. Since its foundation in 1949, the IB is independent of party politics and religious denominations.

It supports people by developing their skills in such a way that they are able to shape their own life and to take over responsibility both for themselves and society.

The IB is committed to providing real opportunities in life and to expanding fair conditions of living.

The work of the IB is meant to strengthen the individual's ability to take decisions and to act, to bring about social inclusion, participation and joint responsibility, and to promote humanity and willingness to help. Education for democracy plays an important role in this context.

Within the IB thinking and acting are linked to an active analysis of changing intellectual, social, ecological, economic and political requirements of time.¹

Until today, the association has been loyal to these principles. Care, education, building bridges – these are the guiding themes under which the IB organises support measures and help for other fellow men and women.

Nationwide, the support and education available to children in the IB includes the education of and care for 12,000 children in more than 130 child day care centres such as day nurseries, kindergartens, after-school care clubs, day care centres for children and adolescents, centres for children and families in the child day care as well as offers with respect to all day primary schools.²

In past years, the education of and care for children in child day care centres has emerged as a challenge for society as a whole. The IB as a private organisation of youth, social and educational work has been meeting this challenge for more than three decades.

Education in the IB's child day care centres excels by applying a holistic concept and takes current research findings in child education into account. The very first years of life are especially formative for a child's future career and life.

Education is geared towards *fully unfolding the child's personality and talent, as well as its mental and physical skills.*³

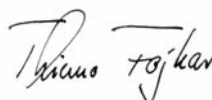
The uniqueness of a child is the focal point of a learning process. Every child, with all its individual skills and talents is at the heart of pedagogical thinking and acting. Child day care centres are places where children are able to meet and, in their striving for independency, where they can find a social network beside or alongside their own family. This social network offers personal development opportunities responding to most different needs.

Many families face the challenge of aligning family commitments and job-related demands. In the IB's child day care centres, parents are provided with support and advice in manifold ways, and find themselves strengthened and relieved.

The present conceptual framework is the basis of the institution related concepts of child day care centres within the IB. It has been developed in a working group with the active cooperation of both directing staff and experts in education. It is an orientation guide for an idealistic, content related and pedagogical organisation of the child day care centre. Taking into account the conditions of the social environment and region, the individual child day care centre is responsible for its operationalisation.

This conceptual framework is addressed to fellow employees in child day care centres and serves as information for parents and other interested parties, as well as for the internal and external specialist public.

We hope that this document helps to inform the public youth welfare authorities about the functioning of the IB in its child day care centres.



Tiemo Fojkar
Chairman of the Board

¹ Excerpt of the principles of the IB

² Version 2013

³ UN Convention on Children's Rights. Convention on the Rights of the Child

Fundamentals of Working in Child Day Care Centres

On the basis of its statutes and its general orientation, the IB performs its work in child day care centres according to the guidelines of the Child and Youth Services Act (SGB VIII – Social Code Book VIII) and the laws and curricula of the federal states. The guiding principles of the IB designed for its work in child day care centres precisely sum up their professional background. Furthermore, work in day care centres is supported and guided by the “Guidelines of the IB for the protection of children and adolescents”, the UN “Convention on the Rights of the Child” and the provisions of the federal law on the protection of the child.

The pedagogical approach taken in the child day care centres of the IB is co-constructivist and living environment related. Children educate themselves by actively interacting with their environment. Children and experts in education shape this process together.

Each child day care centre develops its own concept, based on these fundamentals and this conceptional framework, and on the grounds of its specific conditions.

Guiding Principles of the IB for the Work in Child Day Care Centres

The work in child day care centres of the IB is based on the objectives set forth in the statutes of the Internationaler Bund *to help people to develop freely, to shape their own lives, to assume personal responsibility and to actively participate in social development.*

In this sense, we follow these guiding principles in our pedagogical work:

- ***Every child is in the focus of our pedagogical thinking and acting. We respect its individual personality and meet the child with understanding, care and appreciation.***
- ***Our pedagogical work is characterised by trust and commitment.***
- ***Children are actively shaping their own development. We support their individual educational and developmental processes.***
- ***We are committed to inclusion in the broader sense and thus counteract discrimination of any kind. We support the development of each and every child in the community.***
- ***We believe that participation of children is an essential aspect of developing democratic competence. It is a fundamental pre-condition in building and enhancing resilience.***
- ***We support a healthy and environmentally responsible attitude to life.***
- ***We work together in partnership with parents. Such cooperation is characterised by respect, reliability and transparency.***
- ***We see ourselves as a part of the community, we are involved in social networks and actively contribute to their development.***
- ***Constantly improving the quality of our organisation our quality is the basis of our work.***

Tasks and Objectives of the Work in Child Day Care Centres

It is the task of the IB child day care centres to give children the chance to unfold their individual skills and to recognise their own steps of development so that they can become strong, self-confident and socially competent personalities. Education and individual support are the prerequisites for good life chances and opportunities for the future.

Therefore, the IB's objective is to educate, attend to and raise children in compliance with their individual needs,

demands and development, and to initiate educational processes designed to challenge and to support them.

In realising these tasks and objectives, the parents are our most important partners.



Pedagogical Approach

Children explore the world through their own action. Education is always an interactive process in reference to children's daily environment. This means to educate oneself through one's own observation, one's own action and one's own experience.

Children have the ability to develop their own theories. On their own and together with other children and adults, they ask self- and other-motivated questions and turn them into hypotheses. Children's curiosity, the manifold perception of the world and the shaping of questions are the key elements of their learning. Children are active creators of their own knowledge. They have an enormous repertoire for expression – far beyond their verbal ability.

Children who feel well emotionally, who are supported in their interests and their urge for research and discovery by adults on hand, will be intrinsically motivated to learn.

Each child is unique and has its individual development plan. The educational experts support children in being eager researchers. They encourage them to learn and support them in making the world their own and, consequently, in gathering life skills. However, this does not mean that they leave children to their own devices. The child on its pioneering voyage of discovery is not given immediate answers. Rather, suggestions and stimulating impulses are provided, so that it will be able to find ways and solutions by itself and make the world its own.

Children learn in a playful way and begin to understand that solutions cannot be consumed, but that they themselves are able to develop them. Thus, through mastering challenges on their own, their self-confidence will be strengthened and this will be the basis for the next learning step. The educational experts trust that each child, on the basis of its intrinsic motivation, will deal with individually relevant learning fields. They provide the timeframe, space and support that the child needs for its learning process.

The Importance of Playing



“Without intense playing that requires the input of the whole body, the child will not get the extent of sensory perceptions needed to develop its brain.” (Jean Ayres)

For children, playing is the most important form of making the environment their own. Playing is creative reprocessing and is the basis of the child's interaction and communication with its surroundings. To play with objects means to better get to know and understand these objects. Neurophysiological tests and studies prove that playing has a linking influence on the unfolding of all spheres of competence unmatched by any other activity. Not the mere transfer of knowledge is the prerequisite for lifelong learning, but the development of skills such as creativity, pleasure in learning, openness, tolerance and dealing with failure, as well as developing alternative solutions.

Project Work

Through self-determined project work, children not only learn much about the respective contents; by negotiating and coordinating the tasks and responsibilities during the preparation and realisation, their social competence is encouraged in the best way. Together with other children, they assume responsibility for the planning and implementation of projects.

The tasks of the experts in education are to pick up and document the ideas given and proposals made by the children. The negotiating processes are accompanied, monitored and facilitated where structuring is necessary.



Language Assistance and Literacy

Linguistic educational processes already start at birth. Language learning and language assistance can only succeed in a holistic way; in interaction with the environment, among adults and children. For such language assistance and, consequently, for the development of competences as the basis for future reading and writing, we use our specific approach to literacy. It includes the linguistic capacity for action, joy of reading, familiarity with books, familiarity with written language and “literary” language as well as media competence.

During their educational day-to-day life, the experts in education constantly provide for occasions that encourage speech. Connecting contents and topics of interest of individual children, small groups, and even the whole group of children, inspires children to an active use of language.



Experiencing Diversity and Living with Variety



As a social association, the IB has signed the Diversity Charter and, in 2002, started the campaign “Schwarz-Rot-Bunt – IB pro Demokratie und Akzeptanz” (black-red-colourful – IB for democracy and acceptance).

Within this campaign, a practice handbook “Arbeitshilfen zur interkulturellen Bildung und Erziehung für Kinder von 3 bis 10 Jahren” (tools for intercultural education and upbringing for children between 3 and 10 years) was developed and is available for all child day care centres.

On the basis of the guidelines and principles which the IB has elaborated and laid down as a compulsory framework, the experts in education have the obvious task to answer children’s questions about ethics, moral issues and values

and to respect the opinions and attitudes of both the children and their parents.

Each child has the right to grow up with other children in a community. In the child day care centres, all children have the same chances for learning and development. They promote the development of each and every child in its individuality and counteract disadvantages opposing to equal opportunities. By feeling part of the community, children can learn from each other in an open atmosphere.

As a member of the National Coalition which, in Germany, is committed to the implementation of children’s rights, integration and inclusion are the programme for the IB. “Children’s rights” are anchored in each child day care centre.

Participation

Co-determination is one of the children’s fundamental rights and an indispensable foundation for the work in child day care centres. The right to participate according to article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not only include the right to a say and is not only to be understood as a preliminary practice for future democratic opinion-forming. Participation as a human right includes the respect and recognition of “interactive signals” starting at birth. Each child is entitled to being approached by adults in a manner that respects and appreciates its individuality.⁴

According to their level of development, children articulate interests and needs that have to be heard, understood and picked up. The experts in education respond by adopting the role of a dialogue partner; they change perspectives and enable the children to make their own decisions.

The readiness and capability for tolerance, responsibility and solidarity can only be developed when children learn to make their own decisions, when they begin to like to get involved and when they are ready to assume responsibility. Therefore, according to their level of development, children participate in all decisions which affect them. Co-determination is one of the most important fundamentals to become independent and to learn democratic rules. Everyday opportunities to participation promote children’s resilience. They learn to take an interest in their surroundings and the needs of others, to dispute in dialogue, to stand up for a cause or to accept the opinion of others and to deal with it. Consequently, they acquire key competences, such as the ability to make judgements and decisions, empathy and flexibility.

Health

Health describes the condition of general physical, mental and social well-being. Health education and upbringing in child day care centres of the IB is always subject to a holistic view and includes, first of all, the areas of physical exercise, nutrition and psychic well-being. Health promotion is based on the Setting-approach and takes a salutogenetic perspective.⁵

Changing conditions of life are responsible for many children today suffering from lack of movement and, because of unhealthy diets, a tendency towards obesity and eating disorders. Exercise is the basis for the whole development of the child and its strongest incentive for development. Scientific studies have shown the close connection between mental and physical capacity, between learning success and joy of movement.

Children deal with their environment through motion. Experts in education create very different incentives and initiatives to encourage the children to choose between diverse movement forms.

In the child day care centres of the IB, a healthy diet is part of the basic health prophylaxis so that children know about a healthy and balanced nutrition according to the children's needs, but also acquire the ability to moderately enjoy it as an important part of quality of life. In order to promote the children's mental health, positive social relations are of great importance. Starting from the individual level of development and in addition to the free space which is necessary for them, children also need reliable structures which provide them with security and orientation so that they feel protected.



⁵ *Salutogenesis: What keeps human beings healthy. (cf. Aaron Antonovsky: Salutogenese. DGV-Verlag, Tübingen)*

Understanding Nature and Environmental Awareness

Even before they are able to talk, children like to experiment with things taken from their surroundings and so independently explore physical and material connections. They come up with assumptions, they analyse and establish connections.

Children's encounters with nature allow them to develop their spirit of discovery in a real and non-formal world and therefore enable them to acquire practical competences for life.

Children get to know nature in its overall context, as a habitat for plants, animals and human beings. As time goes by, they also experience, learn and comprehend rational connections to the protection of the environment.

The experts in education provide children with manifold opportunities for experimentation, they arrange for jaunts and excursions and entrust them, according to their level of development, with the responsibility for plants and animals.



Transitions

The biography of a person is determined by transitions between individual phases and stages. This already begins with the smallest ones. While the new-borns are still closely connected to their mother, very soon the integration into a family system will start that opens itself more and more. By attending a day nursery, the transition to a new system unknown to the kid outside of the family will be added. And all future transitions to the kindergarten, to school and after-school care centres will expand the children's field of reference and will offer them new stimuli and opportunities, but also new uncertainties and challenges. While accompanying the child in these transitions, the most important task of the IB's experts in education is to always provide for a secure and emotionally stable basis.

In the case of the smallest ones, in the child day care centres of the IB, special attention is given to a gentle and

attentive familiarisation. In all day care centres, individual and child related familiarisation concepts are implemented.

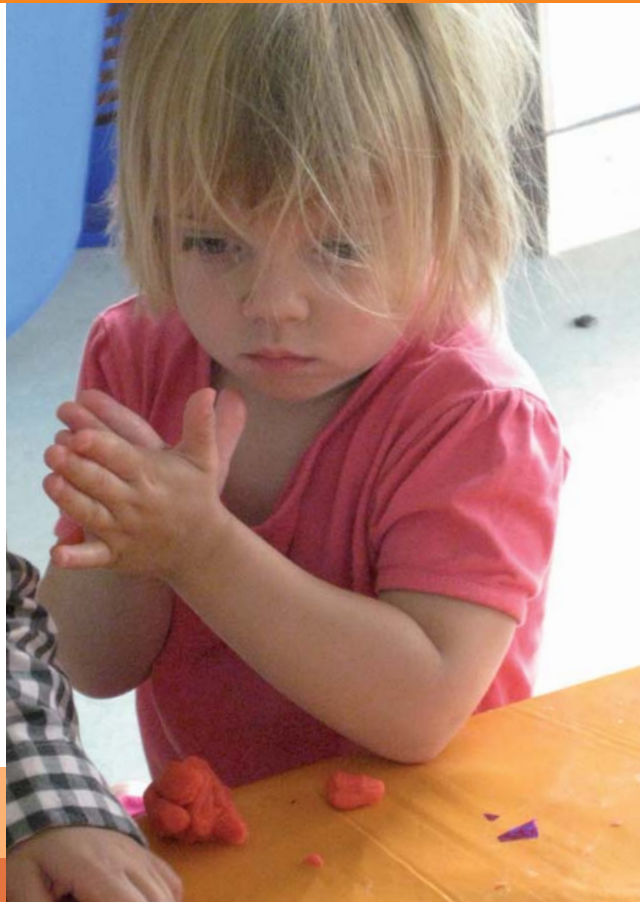
For children, the transition from the child day care centre to primary school is a very special and life-changing experience, just like the transition from the parental home to the child day care centre has already been before. The subjective emotional experience of these transitions takes a decisive influence on the children's development. This important step for the children will be actively shaped by the experts in education in a trustful relationship and in cooperation of the child day care centre with parents and school.

A handout of the transition from the child day care centre to primary school has been worked out within the IB and is available to all skilled personnel.

Observation and Documentation

Special emphasis of the experts in their education's work is put on the observation, documentation and assessment of the child's development.

Documentation provides for a structural context in order to perceive the interests, needs, skills and development opportunities of each individual child in a differentiated way. The documentation of development processes is also a possibility to reflect, together with the children, their own or collective actions and thus, to support their learning processes. The experts in education themselves provide the children with opportunities to get involved in the documentation, for example, by creating portfolios, selecting photos, self-made drawings or other works of art to be presented. By such type of contribution, the children experience a special appreciation.



Partnership in Education and Upbringing with Parents and Families

Parents are the most important partners in the daily educational work. Teaming up with them in education and upbringing occurs in a trusting cooperation. This means that parents contribute to the events in the child day care centre. They are invited to actively take part in the design of projects in the groups and in the whole day care centre. Involving the cultural diversity of the individual families particularly enriches life in the day care centres.

Thus, the child day care centres are not only places of education and encounter for children but they can also become a place for their parents and families.



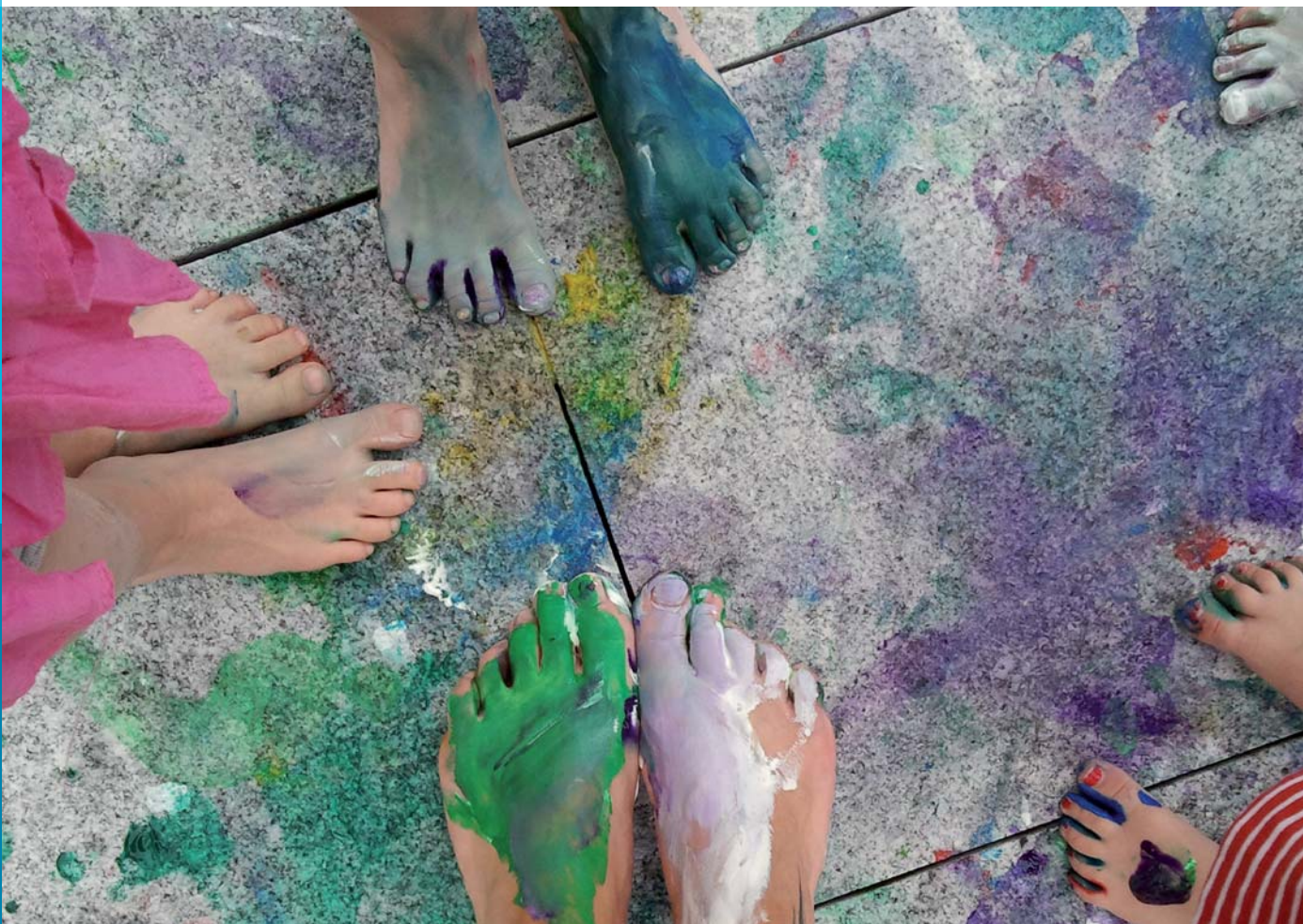
Networking and Public Relations

Child day care centres take an important role in communities. They are a central place of communication for young families.

Child day care centres develop into a social space, they create manifold offers and become a location for social learning and an educational institution for children and their families. Offers of the day care centres can be topics with respect to health promotion, social advice and child guidance, family counselling and/or adult education. Here, child day care centres work together with the respective local services and take advantage of the possibilities of cooperation with voluntary workers and volunteers.

The day care centres are involved in the community and actively look for a partnership with actors in the social space in order to jointly improve life conditions and development opportunities of the children.

It is a matter of course for the IB child day care centres to network and to constructively cooperate with other organisations, institutions, facilities and experts, such as therapists, early intervention centres, family advisory centres, schools, local specialist bodies, associations etc..





Child Protection

According to IB's principles and mission statement, the protection of children enjoys special attention. Often, the experts in education in child day care centres are the first ones to notice an existing danger to the child. Here, they act preventively. Families, who, because of difficult conditions of life, need special support, are accompanied and advised so that their children can grow up in a healthy environment.

The IB has developed Guidelines for the protection of children and adolescents that provide a basis for the action plans of the IB implemented in case of child endangerment. Multipliers for the protection of children and adolescents, child protection specialists and qualified employees are important points of contact where the IB is active.

Experts in Education

The quality of child day care centres essentially depends on the commitment, the personal skills and strengths of all its employees.

Besides their qualified vocational training, the pedagogical staff often bring along different additional qualifications (such as Reggio Pedagogy, Montessori Pedagogy, Moto Pedagogy, intercultural work, therapeutic pedagogy methods of creative education, art, music, physical activity, every day integrated language training etc.).

They are familiar with current pedagogical developments in day care for children and apply them in their daily work.

The IB promotes a regular participation in work related advanced trainings and specialist conferences. It runs its own further training programme and also uses offers from other providers. Further trainings also serve as expansion of both specialist expertise and personal social competencies.

Management of the Child Day Care Centre

The head of a day care centre takes a key role in the team; their management style and understanding of their work shape the work of the child day care centre. For the executives, the IB has developed a guideline with respect to its management profile. All heads of a day care centre take

part in special further trainings for executives. These trainings shape leadership competencies and help the executives to master their role as a team developer, to promote participation of the employees and to give them target-oriented guidance.

⁶ Cf. Guidelines of the IB for the protection of children and adolescents

Quality Assurance and Quality Development

Expert Advice and further Training

In the IB-group, executives and teams working in a child day care centre are supported both on the central and regional level through regular information on new professional and legal issues.

Expert advice for child day care centres in the IB group is provided both by the Headquarters and, on the level of the

group and subsidiaries, through staff trainings, expert meetings, team and concept developments as well as workshops. The IB also provides for in-house further trainings with respect to pedagogical issues and concept developments.

Quality Management

The objective of the support and education of children in the IB is to educate, to look after and to raise children according to their needs, their demands and to their development. Here, both the specific needs of the children and the regional conditions are taken into account.

All child day care centres have worked out a concept based on the IB conceptual framework. It is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The exchange of know-how within the centre/the team takes place regularly and is documented. All day care centre staff take part in further trainings. The centres strive for a high satisfaction of parents and children and are active in public relations.

These quality standards are laid down in a process with respective procedural instructions valid for the whole IB

group. The quality achieved is reviewed through different methods:

- Parental surveys taking place every two years
- Determination of key figures (rate of continuing education, number of the updated centre concepts, documented team meetings, results of the parental survey)
- Audits
- Biannual working groups of the process owners including both strategical and technical matters

The findings of respective evaluations lead to the improvement of the process or will be embedded in the on-going development of the concept.

In addition, many centres apply different evaluation programmes for the progress of educational quality in day care centres for children, developed on a federal level within the scope of the national quality initiative in the system of day care centres for children (NQI) (such as QuiK, Pädquis).

Qualitätsmanagement im
Bildungs- und Sozialbereich

EFQM Member
Shares what works.



Through its association, its companies and participations, the **Internationaler Bund (IB)** is one of the large service providers of youth, social and educational work in Germany. Each year, almost 12,000 employees in 700 centres in 300 places support about 350,000 children, adolescents and senior citizens in their vocational and personal life planning.

Since its foundation, the Internationaler Bund has put a special emphasis on the support offered to children and adolescents. It is active in all areas covered by volume VIII of the German Social Code and provides its services in many towns and rural districts in Germany. Based on its principles and mission statement, education leading to independence and personal responsibility and, consequently, its striving for children's rights and their protection are at the heart of IB's commitment.



Participation · Individualisation · Transition between school, vocational training and vocation · Family · Social segregation and poverty · Information society · Internationalisation · Migration and integration · Jeopardizing and risky situations of life · Participation · Individualisation · Transition between school, vocational training and vocation · Family · Social segregation and poverty · Information society · Internationalisation · Migration and integration · Jeopardizing and risky situations of life

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