

## Welcome to My Neighborhood: A Local Exchange Programme for Students

*Name of organisation:*  
Stichting WIMW

### **Regarding: methodology Welcome To My Neighbourhood**

#### The objective of the project

The essence of the project *Welcome To My Neighbourhood* is the thought that living together in a 'diverse city' is being stimulated by experiencing together in a positive manner. *Welcome To My Neighbourhood* offers children the opportunity to get acquainted with peers in other districts and get to know different population segments. The project has two main targets: stimulating children from different social backgrounds to be curious about each other and experience interacting with each other (obtain multicultural competence) and have children become aware of what is characteristic about their district and other districts (acquaintance with and commitment to the city of Amsterdam). Both targets contribute to social cohesion of the city.

#### Brief contents of the project

In the project student exchange is an issue. The participating classes (schools) carry out two project weeks. The theme is 'the district'. In the first week the children orient themselves to their own environment and study their own district and location in the city. In the second week they welcome the students of the other school, act as hosts in their own district and visit the other school. For implementation of the assignment (in class, by means of Internet and on the street) mutual good cooperation is necessary. The project weeks are concluded with a meeting in which acquired knowledge of each other and each other's district is tested in a playful manner. In participating students not only cognitive but also motor and creative skills are addressed.

To strengthen the impact, a second module can be applied. During a year teachers are guided to build in moments in the regular school program in which students of the partner schools have contact with each other. At the end of the year the Welcome To My Neighbourhood project team organizes a second exchange. The topic is 'handling differences'. It stimulates children to engage in a conversation with others, to be curious towards other people's conceptions and lifestyle and supplies skills for handling unknown situations. Teachers are offered training in dealing with mixed groups.

#### Products

The products that go with the method are:

- project books for participating students
- instructions for participating professors
- a private section for participating schools on the Internet site Welcome To My Neighbourhood
- excursions for children through separate districts
- the game Amsterdam and Co
- certificates for participating students
- training 'handling diversity' for teachers (in development)

Furthermore guidance of participating schools exists of:

- training of teachers using instruction and resources
- at least three progress and evaluation interviews per school
- guidance of an employee from the project team of Welcome To My Neighbourhood of each participating school at the exchange days of the project
- guidance by two employees of the project team during the concluding meetings
- coordinating consultations with principals of participating schools