

MANUAL FOR THE PURPOSE OF STARTING AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL IN THE NETHERLANDS



Foundation for International Education in the Netherlands

Disclaimer

This manual is a publication of the Stichting Internationaal Onderwijs in Nederland with the cooperation of The Dutch International Schools and Educaide. The Ministry of OC&W has made a financial contribution towards the translation- and printing costs. Author of this manual is Mr J.J.M. van Elderen, senior advisor of Van Beekveld & Terpstra Organization Consultancy (www.vanbeekveldenterpstra.nl).

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1. INTRODUCTION AND READER'S GUIDE

Introduction

A great number of international schools have been established in the Netherlands. The term 'International schools' in this publication refers to: schools that are first of all meant for the children of expatriates ('expats') who stay in the Netherlands temporarily. Despite the already available offer, the possibilities regarding new facilities for international education are investigated regularly. This is in keeping with the intended development of the Netherlands as an attractive place of business for international companies and institutes. This is also why the Innovation Platform pleads for better facilitation for international schools in the report 'Deuren open!' (2009; 'Open the Doors!'). Concretely, one of the recommendations is the compilation of a manual in which the knowledge and expertise needed to found an international school is collected.

The Foundation for International Education in the Netherlands has taken this recommendation to heart and given Van Beekveld & Terpstra Organisatieadviesbureau, an organization consultancy, the assignment to compile such a manual. Next to their own expertise, the Consultancy has also made use of the know-how of members of the Board of SIO, The Dutch International Schools and Educaide. The information thus gathered has been compiled into this publication.

This manual is intended for schools for primary and secondary education (i.e. for children in the age of 4 to approx. 18 years). The information, on which this publication is based, is partly a product of its time. The version at hand is based on the information that was available on the 1st of January 2010. Despite the attempt to meticulousness, the correctness and completeness of the statements in this document cannot be guaranteed and so no rights or claims can be derived from this.

Reader's Guide

This publication proceeds with the description of several concepts. It turns out that, in practice, confusion often arises over some of these. Chapter three will go into the first decision to be made in case of a new initiative to start an international school: government-funding, yes or no? The answer to this question also determines which of the following chapters is relevant, chapter 4 or 5. Chapter 6 pays attention to the aspects regarding content of international education. Next to consequences for the organization of the education, the choices regarding content can have consequences for any authorization, personnel to be recruited, etc. Chapter 7 gives tips for planning and for a practical approach to starting an international school. The last chapter lists several organizations that can be of service when starting an international school.

2. SEVERAL CONCEPTS

The order of the concepts below has not been organized alphabetically, but is based on correlation.

- **Internationalization:** indication of special attention for international aspects and contacts within the Dutch curriculum of regular Dutch schools.
- **Bilingual education:** (secondary) education meant for regular Dutch pupils, generally in accordance with the Dutch curriculum, preparing for Dutch diplomas, partly with English (or another modern foreign language) as the language of instruction.
- **Bilingual MYP:** (secondary) education meant for regular Dutch pupils, partly with English as the language of instruction, according to an international curriculum (the IB Middle Years Programme).
- **Enhanced language education:** Dutch primary or secondary education with extra lessons in modern foreign languages.
- **International education/international schools:** education/schools with an international curriculum primarily meant for children of 'expats'. These are not foreign or European schools.
- **Expats:** expatriates (with a foreign or the Dutch nationality) who live in the Netherlands temporarily, as well as Dutch people returning after a temporary post abroad or Dutch people who are about to move abroad.
- **Foreign schools:** schools established in the Netherlands, organized according to a national (i.e. non Dutch) curriculum, often with connections to the 'homeland' (such as the British Schools, the American Schools, Deutsche Schule, Ecole Français, etc.).
- **European schools:** schools maintained by the European Union, primarily meant for children of employees at EU-institutes. (In the Netherlands there is a European School in Bergen).
- **Private schools:** schools that are not structurally funded by the Dutch government.
- **IGO/IGBO/IGVO:** Internationally-Oriented (Primary- and Secondary) Education; indication for international departments of Dutch schools that are recognized and structurally funded by the Dutch government.
- **Dutch International (Primary/Secondary) Schools:** indication for the group of schools with a recognized internationally-oriented education department. The Dutch government-funded international schools have joined forces to form two organizations. Schools with an internationally-oriented primary education department have formed the Dutch International Primary Schools (tDIPS) and schools with an internationally-oriented secondary education department have formed the Dutch International Secondary Schools (tDISS). Both organizations work closely together and maintain the joint website www.dutchinternationalschools.nl. The Dutch International Schools form a platform for the exchange of experience and expertise between board representatives and school managers, the schools initiate and stimulate schooling and training and they promote the interests of the affiliated schools through contacts with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and other organizations and institutes.

- **School fees:** fees to be paid by parents/guardians for children attending international and foreign schools.
- **IPC:** International Primary Curriculum; an international curriculum for primary education.
- **IBO :**International Baccalaureate Organization
- **IB PYP/MYP/DP:** International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme / Middle Years Programme / Diploma Programme; international curricula for primary education, the first stage and second stage of secondary education respectively.
- **IGCSE:** International General Certificate for Secondary Education; a version of the British diploma for secondary education, recognized internationally.

3. GOVERNMENT-FUNDING: YES OR NO?

In the Netherlands international education is offered by both private schools¹ and schools recognized and funded by the Dutch government. In each case (partly) different preconditions apply. Thus, the choice made from both variants will effect the further development of the initiative.

Of course government-funding provides schools an extra income and might, therefore, seem attractive. What motives are there, then, to decide for the course of a private international school?

- 1) It is imaginable that recognition/funding by the Dutch government is not possible, for instance, because the interest for the school cannot be demonstrated sufficiently or because the government has already recognized and funded another school relatively near by.
- 2) Perhaps the school does not want to meet the conditions set by the Dutch government in order to get recognition or funding (e.g. the obligatory attachment to a regular Dutch school; these conditions will be discussed later).
- 3) It is possible the school does not want to be dependent on funding by the Dutch government.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

Private schools for international education in the Netherlands do not have to comply with government rules that specifically concern international education. They do, however, need to observe the general rules concerning the provision of education. The Dutch Education Acts (i.c. the Primary Education Act and the Secondary Education Act) contain several general rules that all providers of education have to observe, whether they receive government-funding or not. Thus, it is compulsory to inform the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (the Ministry of OC&W) within 4 weeks about the start of a private school.

In the framework of these general education acts, the following three issues with respect to the content need to be paid attention in particular:

- **Qualification and competence of the teaching staff.** Only people with a teaching qualification, accredited in keeping with the Education Acts, and with a certificate of

¹ An example of a private international school is the International School of Amsterdam, established in Amstelveen.

good conduct are allowed to teach. A private international school, therefore, needs to make sure that its teaching staff fulfil the qualification and competence requirements of the Education Acts (or that it can make an appeal for exemption included in the Education Acts).

- **Compulsory education.** Children up to the age of approximately 18 years, living in the Netherlands, are of statutory school-age. This means, that, in principle, they have to attend a school that complies with the requirements of the Compulsory Education Act. Private schools do not necessarily comply with this Act. They need to be recognized first. Recognition is granted by the school attendance officer of the municipality that the school belongs to. This school attendance officer will consult the Inspectorate. And so, it is advisable for a private international school to report to the local school attendance officer at the earliest opportunity and to realize the recognition in consultation with this civil servant.
(Strictly speaking this does not concern a direct interest of the school, but of the parents whose children will attend the school. After all, these parents are responsible for complying with the Compulsory Education Act. Of course, practically, it does concern the school's interest.)
- **The quality of education and the Inspectorate.** Through recognition by the school attendance officer the Inspectorate will evaluate the basic quality of a private international school. The website of the Education Inspectorate gives the framework of inspection for non-government-funded education (not available in English). A private international school needs to make sure that its educational offer complies with the current requirements, with concern to both quality (educational offer) and quantity (teaching time).
There is a political tendency to intensify the quality control at private schools. In this light, there might be further rules in the near future.

5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR GOVERNMENT-FUNDED INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

There are several schools in the Netherlands for both primary and secondary education with international departments that are recognized and funded as such by the Dutch government (Ministry of OC&W). The oldest of these schools/departments were established in the eighties of the last century. These schools have joint to form 'the Dutch International Schools'. By now 11 schools for primary education and 10 schools for secondary education are concerned. Government policy regarding recognition and funding of this type of schools has gradually developed. The government policy indicates this type of education with **Internationally-oriented (Primary and Secondary) Education (IGO: i.c. IGBO and IGVO)**. Meanwhile there is a detailed ministerial regulation for IGVO. A similar regulation for IGBO is still being worked on. Below several general starting points will be discussed first. Next, the rules that apply to the IGVO will be specified. And after that, IGBO will be discussed in more detail.

The Dutch Ministry of OC&W has a number of reasons to recognize and fund IGO:

- Within the IGO an adapted form of education is offered for a particular group of children that cannot simply be placed in a regular school (educational motive).
- IGO can serve as a bridge for the (re-)integration of children coming from abroad into the Dutch society and Dutch education (integration motive).
- At relatively low school fees IGO can attract foreign companies and institutes to the region (economical motive).

The Dutch Ministry of OC&W recognizes and funds IGO only as a 'department' attached to a regular (recognized and government-funded) Dutch school. This means an existing Dutch primary or secondary school has to provide the basis to start IGBO or IGVO from. As far as secondary

education is concerned, this should be a integrated school with at least HAVO (senior general secondary education) and VWO (pre-university education). The required association with a regular school is partly an effect of the integration reason. However, on the other hand it is an effect of the procedures followed regarding schools that have been recognized in accordance with the Education Acts.

Although the Ministry of OC&W has requests for an IGBO- and an IGVO-department checked separately (by different departments within the Ministry), a criterion at checking is that **both an IGBO- and an IGVO establishment** should be available in the district (or its vicinity) or will be within the foreseeable future. As a result, an IGBO-initiative automatically requires the (future) availability of an IGVO-facility and vice versa.

As mentioned before, the regulations for recognition and funding of IGVO have been recorded in a ministerial regulation, the so called IGVO Policy Document ('**Beleidsregel IGVO 2010**'²).

Permission to start an IGVO-department and (partial) funding of such a department is granted by the Ministry of OC&W. The granting of permission is fully based on the IGVO Policy Document mentioned above and is outside the regular scope for school planning (such as het Regionaal Plan Onderwijsvoorzieningen (the Regional Plan for Educational Facilities)).

A regular school will need permission to start IGVO (not even counting the effects on funding), because the organization of IGVO assumes deviation from the regular requirements of the Secondary Education Act. Even using English as the language of instruction is a deviation from the Secondary Education Act. The Ministry of OC&W legitimizes the deviation of the Secondary Education Act by considering an IGVO-department a **course** as referred to in article 73 of the Secondary Education Act. This means that the regulations of the Secondary Education Act only apply to IGVO-departments to the extent that these have explicitly been declared applicable in the IGVO Policy Document. Next to that, as a result of funding based on the course-definition, the IGVO-pupils do not count as regular pupils of the school as far as, for instance, the norm for the closure of school is concerned!

The **IGVO Policy Document** gives rules with regard to aspects of IGVO mentioned below. For the greater part, the rules speak for themselves and will not be repeated here. However, some parts do call for further comment.

- **The establishment and closure of an IGVO-department.** To get permission for the establishment of a new IGVO-department, it has to be demonstrable that at least 120 pupils (to be divided over 6 school years) have an interest. When assessing the application the Ministry will also evaluate if the requested facility fits in with a balanced nationwide spreading. In actual practice, the existing schools with IGVO and The Dutch International Secondary Schools will be consulted. When considering to put in a request for establishment, it is, therefore, advisable to contact tDISS and the IGVO's in the region beforehand.

A (well-founded) request for establishment should be submitted to the Ministry of OC&W before October 31st of any year. As a rule, a decision will follow within four months after submission of the request.

Funding will be terminated, when the IGVO-department has been attended by less than 100 pupils for three consecutive years. The reference date is the 1st of October.

² Policy Document of the State Secretary of OC&W of 29th of May 2010, published in the Staatscourant on 21st of June 2010 (to be found (in Dutch) on <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl>)

- **The target group.** In accordance with the IGVO Policy Document only the following pupils can get government-funded admission to an IGVO-department, i.e. those who:
 - a. have a non-Dutch nationality or also have a non-Dutch nationality and have at least one parent/guardian who works in the Netherlands or in the border region of the Netherlands for a specific period of time, or
 - b. have the Dutch nationality, have spent a longer period abroad, because at least one of the parents/guardians has worked abroad for a specific period of time, as a result of which the pupil has attended school there for more than two years, or
 - c. have the Dutch nationality and who can show, by means of an employer's testimonial or another kind of certificate, that the parents/guardians will be dispatched abroad within two years in the not too distant future and that the pupil will move abroad with them.

Amongst others, this restricted description of the target group aims to prevent IGVO from becoming a competitor of regular Dutch education for Dutch pupils.

- **Funding and School Fees.** Recognized IGVO-departments receive funding for the pupils that belong to the target group. This funding is the equivalent of the lump sum for a HAVO/VWO pupil increased with an extra subsidy per pupil. The Ministry realizes that this is not cost-effective (more about that below) and that it is customary to ask an extra fee for IGVO-pupils. On account of this fact, it has been recorded in the IGVO Policy Document that payment of such an extra fee can be made a condition for admission of a pupil. Thus, it is made clear that this does not concern a 'voluntary parental contribution' within the meaning of article 27 paragraph 2 of the Secondary Education Act.

- **The curriculum.** The IGVO Policy Document distinguishes the following curricula for IGVO:
 - a 'Middle Years Programme' which covers the first four³ years of secondary education and prepares for the IB MYP-certificate or the IGCSE-exam (more information below);
 - the 'Diploma Programme' which covers the final two years of secondary education and prepares for the IB-diploma.

There is also an obligatory amount of teaching time per year for IGVO, which is analogous to the regulation for Dutch schools.

The IGVO Policy Document requires that the pupils are taught sufficiently in the Dutch language and culture. Furthermore, the course programme should meet the requirements of the IB Organization.

- **Qualification requirements.** Teachers appointed to a position at an IGVO-department have to fulfil the same qualification requirements as teachers at a regular Dutch school. In practice this means that foreign/non Dutch teachers have to have their foreign diplomas and qualifications accredited by DUO (formerly IBG, an executive agency of the Ministry of OC&W).

As mentioned before, there is no regulation for IGBO as there is for IGVO yet. Amongst others, this is because of the fact that the Primary Education Act does not have a definition by analogy with article 73 of the Secondary Education Act (course article). A regulation like that would give the Ministry the opportunity to set specific funding and organizational requirements for international departments of primary schools⁴. Such a statutory basic and executive regulation for IGBO is being drawn up. Until that time the Ministry of OC&W pursues a policy that on the whole is analogous (*mutatis mutandis*) to the foregoing regarding IGVO.

³ The MYP can also cover five years, i.e. if the transfer from primary to secondary education takes place after group 7 instead of group 8 (which is not unusual in non-Dutch and international curricula).

⁴ As a consequence the IGBO-pupils do count for the pupil numbers of the primary school within the scope of preservation.

Of course for the establishment and closure of IGBO-departments different norms apply than for IGVO. At the moment the Ministry of OC&W will allow a new IGBO- department, if the (expected) number of pupils is at least 80. Funding will be terminated, when the IGBO-department has been attended by less than 30 pupils for three consecutive years.

Finances

Permission to start an IGO-department automatically gives the right to funding for pupils enrolled into this department. The subsidy (funding) basically consists of three components:

- First of all, these pupils can be included in the regular pupil-bound funding the school receives from the Ministry of OC&W. This amounts to approx. € 4,000 per year for a pupil in primary school and to approx. € 6,000 per year for a pupil in secondary school⁵.
- Secondly, the Ministry gives an extra subsidy on top of the regular funding. This extra subsidy amounts to approx. € 1,000 per pupil per year.
- Thirdly, pupils in the IGO-department are included in the housing compensation that the municipality receives. In general, a school can only apply for housing compensation once a new school building proves to be necessary. The amount of the compensation is different for each municipality and goes beyond the impact of this manual. The municipality can also decide to make more or less money available than the government compensation.

However, it turns out in practice that the government funding does not cover the actual costs of an IGO-department. There are several reasons for the actual costs to be higher. Amongst others:

- smaller classes (because of smaller school size and the necessary greater individual attention due to language-culture and level differences);
- a broad course programme (including the different native languages) and the principle that in secondary education most courses are taught at two different levels;
- the recruitment of personnel (teachers and management) abroad (native speakers);
- membership of (and quality control by) international educational organizations;
- the development of expertise abroad (conferences and workshops for teachers and management).

On top of that, expats generally have greater expectations of a school and school building than is usual according to Dutch standards. This concerns the catering facilities, modern teaching materials (smart-boards, laptops), sports facilities and suchlike.

Because of these higher standards the costs per pupil on international schools quickly run up to at least € 8,000 per pupil in primary education to approx. € 12,000 per pupil in secondary education. The actual costs are closely linked to the school size.

The difference between running costs and government funding is, in practice, covered by school fees and (often incidental) company contributions or other kinds of sponsoring. School fees at government-funded international schools in the Netherlands vary between approximately € 2,500 and € 6,000 per pupil per year.

⁵ The amounts mentioned in this paragraph are rough indications, based on the situation at the start of 2010.

In summary:

Amounts per pupil	Primary education	Secondary education
Costs per regular pupil	± € 4,000	± € 6,000
Costs per international pupil	± € 7,500 - € 9,000	± € 11,000 - € 13,000
Government-funding per regular pupil	€ 4,000	€ 6,000
Extra subsidy per international pupil	€ 1,000	€ 1,000
School fees per international pupil	€ 2,500 - € 4,000	€ 3,700 - € 6,000

6. THE EDUCATION AT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

In the end it is all about the content of the education programme.

International schools should have a programme that:

- is not linked to a specific country or culture;
- has room for language and culture differentiation;
- does not give too many complications with concern to intakes and transfers throughout the year;
- aims to prepare for an exit-level that is internationally recognized.

There is no 'obligatory' international curriculum. International schools are free to organize their educational programme. In practice the schools usually make use of a specific standard curriculum, also to give teachers something to go by.

The following curricula are the most frequently used by the international schools.

In primary education:

- the International Primary Curriculum (IPC);
- the Primary Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate Organization - IBO (IB PYP).

In the first stage of secondary education:

- the Middle Years Programme of the IBO (IB MYP);
- the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) of the Cambridge International Education Institute.

In the second stage of secondary education:

- the IB Diploma Programme (the International Baccalaureate or IB-DP) of the IBO.

International Primary Curriculum

The IPC is currently the standard used most frequently by international primary schools in the Netherlands. This curriculum has been developed in 2000 by English and Dutch education experts. The programme entails education in all subjects, except for language and arithmetic. The international schools in the Netherlands that use the IPC, often adopt the British teaching methods for teaching language and arithmetic.

In the meantime there is a Dutch version of the IPC that is being used by several regular Dutch schools.

A school that wants to start using the IPC, needs a license to do so and needs to purchase the necessary materials. This involves costs and delivery periods, but no conditions need to be fulfilled beforehand. Obviously, the teachers do need to be or get acquainted with working with the IPC. Training will therefore be necessary.

The import and development of the IPC in the Netherlands is supervised by IPC Nederland (www.ipcnederland.nl), a daughter company of the Stichting Nederlands Onderwijs in het Buitenland - the Foundation for Dutch Education Abroad. For more information, please, visit www.internationalprimarycurriculum.com.

IB Primary Years Programme

The PYP is currently being used by a few international schools in the Netherlands. The PYP is part of the on-going curriculum of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO; www.ibo.org.pyp/). The IBO is a private organization. It is, in practice, the world market leader in the field of international education preparing for a qualification that gives admission to university comparable with the Dutch VWO-diploma. The IBO assumes an integrated approach to areas of knowledge and development and has organized its course programme as such. The IBO is established in Geneva (Switzerland), but is likely, probably in part, to move to the Netherlands soon.

A school that wants to start working with the IB PYP-curriculum first needs authorization of the IBO. This authorization is given based on a written assessment procedure. Once authorization has been granted, the school will be visited by the IBO and checked for compliance with the programme. In the worst case scenario, this might lead to losing the IB PYP-license.

IB Middle Years Programme

Most international schools in the Netherlands for secondary education currently use the IB MYP. The MYP is, like the PYP, part of the on-going curriculum of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO; www.ibo.org/myp). The different elements of the IB-curriculum can, however, be offered and followed separately.

As mentioned above, the IBO is a private organization. It is, in practice, the world market leader in the field of international education preparing for admission to university. The IBO assumes an integrated approach to areas of knowledge and development and has organized its course programme as such.

The IB MYP offers a programme for pupils in the age of approx. 11 to 16 years. At the end of the programme the pupils do receive a school certificate (the MYP-certificate), but no external validated exam or diploma is available yet. Once the MYP has been rounded off, the pupils usually go on to the IB Diploma Programme or various kinds of internationally-oriented senior secondary vocational education.

A school that wants to start working with the IB MYP-curriculum needs authorization of the IBO first. This authorization is given based on a written assessment procedure. Once authorization has been granted, the school will be visited by the IBO and checked for compliance with the programme. In the worst case scenario, this might lead to losing the IB MYP-license.

International General Certificate of Secondary Education

Some international schools for secondary education in the Netherlands use the IGCSE. This is an international variant of British secondary education for pupils of approx. 11 to 16 years old, which is rounded off with the IGCSE-diploma. The final exam can be done on various levels, which can be different for each subject. On average the final exam can be compared with the Dutch HAVO - senior general secondary education.

If a sufficient number of subjects have been passed at the highest level, i.e. 'A-level', the IGCSE can sometimes give admission to university.

Educational content and examination for the IGCSE have been standardized world-wide. The International Examinations Office of the University of Cambridge (www.cie.org.uk) executes a central quality control.

IB Diploma Programme

The Diploma Programme (IB DP) of the IBO is the standard world-wide to round off international secondary education (on VWO-level, i.e. pre-university level). The IB-diploma is recognized by most universities around the world as a valid certificate for admission. All international schools for secondary education in the Netherlands offer the IB DP for pupils attending the final two years of secondary education (16-18/19 years), who are expected to be able to pass the exams. The DP is, just like the PYP and the MYP, part of the on-going curriculum of the IBO (www.ibo.org.dp/). The different elements of the IB-curriculum can, however, be offered and followed separately. This way a school can offer IGCSE in the first stage of secondary school, but switch to IB DP in the second stage. The IB DP-exam (the so called International Baccalaureate) has been standardized worldwide. This includes a central quality control by IBO.

A school that wants to offer the IB DP, needs authorization of the IBO first. Only existing schools can be authorized, based on an assessment by the IBO. It is, therefore, not possible for a new school to immediately start with the IB DP-programme. First, the school will have to offer a first stage programme. Even after authorization has been granted, the school will regularly be visited by the IBO and checked for compliance with the programme. In the worst case scenario, this might lead to losing the IB DP-license.

Quality control

Next to quality control for various curricula by the licensers, there are other 'quality marks' for international schools. International schools can, for instance, obtain recognition from international organizations such as the Council of International Schools (CIS;www.cois.org). With such accreditations the quality of the school is assessed in a broad sense. If the accreditation standards are met, the school is allowed to carry the accreditation mark.

As far as the international schools in the Netherlands are concerned, the Dutch Education Inspectorate carries out a quality control as well. The Inspectorate visits and checks schools in the Netherlands for educational soundness. Government-funded schools have to fulfil harder criteria than non-government-funded schools. The reports on the quality checks executed by the Inspectorate are published on the website of the Inspectorate (www.owinsp.nl).

7. APPROACH AND PLANNING OF THE START OF AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

When considering the start of a facility for international education, it is recommended to follow the steps below:

1. Rough impression of the potential.

The initiative to start an international school will have been triggered by the impression that there is an interest in such a facility. Before time, energy and costs are invested in the development of an initiative, it is advisable to investigate the possible interest in such a school.

This is a difficult task in actual practice, because the supply often determines the demand. In other words: the offer of international education can attract more internationally-oriented companies and institutes, as a result of which more expats will settle in the region. A first market research could focus on the number of internationally active companies and institutes in the region, the number (of children) of expats already settled or expected to settle in the region, the actual offer of international education, and suchlike. Connections with the municipality (Economic Affairs) and the Chamber of Commerce can be convenient at this stage.

2. Private- or government-funding.

The decision to go for either government-funding or private funding has quite an effect on the further development of the initiative for an international school. The aspects to be considered for this decision are stated in this manual. It is advisable to make this choice at an early stage, at least as far as the first preference is concerned (this can always be revised at a later stage). The outcome of the principal choice is contributory to the rest of the course.

3. If government-funded: selecting a primary and a secondary school as ‘mother schools’.

In case a government-funded international school is preferred, the aim will be to attach an IGO-department to existing regular schools. This means one has to find schools (including their boards) that are prepared to take such a department under their care. The co-management of an IGO-department attached to a regular school is no sinecure. It has a great impact on the school board, the school management and the Dutch department of the school. The school board, for instance, will become involved in the project financially and will start to carry final managerial responsibility, for the IGO too. The school leader will also have final responsibility for the IGO. As a consequence, he or she will have to be able to and willing to be involved in such a facility with concern to language (English-speaking) as well as knowledge of education. Next to that, the possible start of an IGO-department will have consequences for the personnel, parents and pupils of the Dutch department of the school. They will be confronted with an international community, in the schoolyard, for instance, and in school.

In the end, it is likely that the school will pursue to offer both primary and secondary international education. In practice this can be done in phases, for example, first international primary education and then international secondary education. But even if a start is made with only IGBO, the future possibilities for IGVO will have to be given some thought in this phase as well.

It is very important that the transfer from international primary to international secondary education within the school runs smoothly. Pupils who have finished international primary education will nearly always go on to the IGVO-department in the same place or region (i.e. if they stay in the Netherlands). In fact, the Dutch way of having separate schools for primary and secondary education is odd in the eyes of expats. In the world of international education, an on-going curriculum with both primary and secondary education is the rule rather than the exception. Following this trend, there are more and more integrated facilities for IGBO and IGVO in the Netherlands as well (e.g. in The Hague and Amsterdam). A complication for this development is that, in Dutch practice, the managerial responsibility for primary education on the one hand and secondary education on the other is often separated.

4. Contacting the local authorities and others.

If there is still enough perspective for the start of an international school, after having carried out the foregoing steps, the next step would be to give the initiative some publicity. This can be done by introducing it to the local authorities (and possibly the regional authorities), to bigger international companies and institutes in the region, to the (bigger) local educational organizations and (government- and non-government-funded) international schools established in the vicinity. This is to prevent rumours and opposition. If government-funded international education is being pursued, it is advisable to contact the national organization of Dutch International Primary/Secondary Schools in this phase too.

5. Setting up a rough business plan.

One of the greatest challenges is organizing the financial part from planning to the opening of an international school. Setting up a rough business plan can help to provide insight into

the attainability, the number of pupils necessary for financial vitality and the realistic level of ambition.

6. Investigating the potential.

In a systematic approach the next step would have to be to draw up a prognosis of the pupil numbers. This prognosis is necessary as a basis for the business plan, but also to be able to apply for government-recognition.

It is advisable to call in the assistance of experts for drawing up such a prognosis. They can be experts in the field of school planning (from national organizations of education employers) or experts working for specialized research consultancies.

As mentioned before, it is always difficult to draw up a reliable prognosis for the target group of international education, because the offer will to a certain extent create its own demand.

7. Choosing a curriculum and the authorization procedures.

The choice of curriculum for the international school can be of great influence on the planning (authorization procedures), the finances (costs of license and materials) and personnel recruitment (experience with certain curricula). This is why it is recommended at this point in the development to make a choice and start the authorization procedures.

8. If government-funded: requesting authorization of the Ministry of OC&W.

If the choice is made for a government-funded international school, the next step would be to submit the application for that to the Ministry of OC&W. As far as the IGVO is concerned, specific requirements and deadlines have been laid down in the IGVO Policy Document mentioned before. The Department for Secondary Education of the Ministry will deal with such a request. A request for recognition for IGBO will have to be submitted to the Department for Primary Education of the Ministry. Both requests will be dealt with and assessed separately, but the Departments will of course have mutual consultations. With respect to the IGBO no specific requirements that a request should comply with have been published. In practice, however, at least a well-founded prognosis of pupil numbers will have to be submitted. This prognosis should take the capacity of the already existing facilities into account.

It can be at least several months before a request for recognition is dealt with. The Ministry might ask for further information at some point.

9. If non-government-funded: contacting the school attendance officer.

It has been stated earlier in this manual (chapter 4), that it is important for a non-government-funded facility for international education to be recognized as a 'school' within the framework of the Compulsory Education Act.

In view of this recognition, it is advisable to contact the local school attendance officer (through the local authorities), to inform him or her about the plans and to consult on how this recognition can be realized.

10. Looking for housing possibilities.

Finding appropriate housing for the new international school will be a point of special attention. Usually a first start is made in temporary housing, to be able to wait and see how the actual number of pupils will develop. The first option explored is usually that of disused classrooms in existing school buildings. It goes without saying that the municipality and the user of the school building concerned will have to be consulted.

Once housing has been found, it will have to be evaluated to what extent constructional adjustments are necessary. In doing so, it should be taken into account that on the one hand international schools usually work with smaller groups, but, on the other hand, more rooms are needed for a more differentiated course programme.

Next to that the school will have to be furnished and equipped and certain delivery times will have to be taken into account.

11. Developing a business plan and fund-raising.

In this phase of the project all the facts and figures of the business plan should be specified and balanced. By now there will be insight into the attainability of government-funding, there will be a prognosis of the pupil numbers, the housing situation will become clear and an estimate for the costs for educational tools and personnel can be given. When specifying the business plan, the school fees will have to be determined as well as the way in which a possible shortage can be compensated for.

12. The recruitment of personnel.

To be able to start an international school, at least a manager (head of school or department) and several teachers are required. In this context it is pointed out once more that, on average, classes are smaller. When recruiting personnel, the eligible candidates should be (near-) native speakers, should be familiar with international education (preferably with the chosen curriculum) and should have the proper diplomas and experience. In practice they are hard to find, particularly within the Netherlands. And so it is likely that one or more positions will have to be advertised internationally. This calls for specific demands on the recruitment and selection procedure and takes a lot of time. A possible solution could be to make use of a specialized staffing agency. Important hurdles are the accreditation of qualifications and work permits possibly needed. For information about international recruitment of school staff consult the manual of the European Platform on this topic (www.europeesplatform.nl).

13. Recruitment of pupils.

When there is enough certainty about the expected start of the international school (recognition by the government in case required, housing is available, finance has been 'arranged', personnel is on its way) then a PR-campaign can be started to give publicity to the start of the school and the recruitment of pupils. The 1st of August of any year is a good date to open a school, as the beginning of the school year is a good time for pupils to transfer. As a matter of fact, international schools have to deal with intakes and school leavers throughout the school year far more than regular Dutch schools.

A period of approximately 2 years is recommended to complete the entire course as described above.

8. INFORMATION

Relevant information about international education (in the Netherlands) can be found on the websites of the following organizations:

- Stichting Internationaal Onderwijs in Nederland (Foundation for International Education in the Netherlands); www.sio.nl
- The Dutch International Schools; www.dutchinternationalschools.nl
- IPC; www.inpcnederland.nl en www.internationalprimarycurriculum.com
- IBO; www.ibo.org
- IGCSE; www.cie.org.uk
- ECIS; www.ecis.org
- Council of International Schools; www.cois.org
- Educaide; www.educaide.nl
- European platform for Dutch education; www.europeesplatform.nl