



Who Conducts the Orchestra Handbook for educators

Who Conducts the Orchestra



Chapter 1 – Who Conducts the Orchestra (WCO)



Chapter 2 – The Four Fundamentals



Chapter 3 - Communication Methodology



Chapter 4 – Best Practices



Chapter 5 – Evaluation and Sustainability



Chapter 6 - The WCO Journey

Chapter One

Welcome to Who Conducts the Orchestra: An Erasmus + project with a focus on building good relationships between schools, pupils and their families.

Who Conducts the Orchestra

A Shared Responsibility of Parents, Teachers & Pedagogues in Children's Education. *(please note the term 'parent' covers an adult's legal guardianship for a child, thus the partners can involve carers as well as parents in the project).*

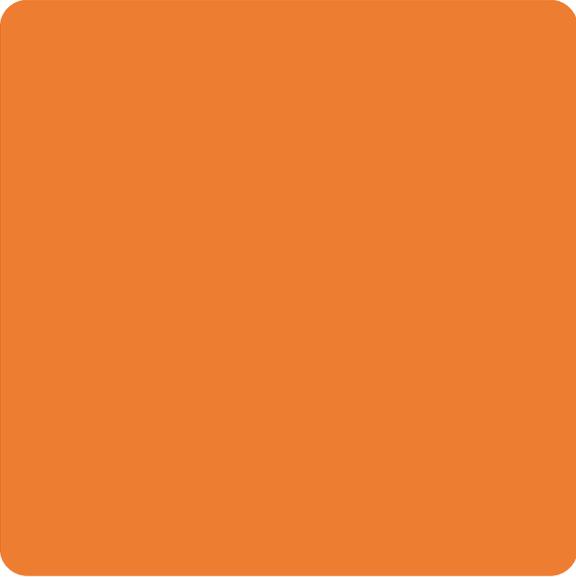
Objectives

To develop a methodology for teachers and pedagogues that improves and more fully involves parent/carers in their children's development and education.

The methodology

Based on four fundamentals:

- a.) Relationships
- b.) Morality
- c.) Self Control
- d.) Environment



Description of the WCO project



The **Who Conducts the Orchestra** programme offers participants a whole new form of professionalisation and interdisciplinary cooperation, whilst developing a collective knowledge of the triggering factors and mechanisms that affect both the individual child and the family.

Ultimately, we hope this will help us in deciphering why children and young people in 'at risk' groups often choose an exclusive behavioural pattern and disconnect from healthy environments.

Neither primary and lower secondary school, institutions, health visitor services nor family efforts can solve the challenges of preventive work all by themselves, despite being well-established and highly professional occupational categories providing excellent support.

Our intention is to create a new framework that enables participants to understand the challenges of preventive work from a new perspective.

At the same time, participants contribute personally to the development and creation of an interdisciplinary platform, one that will encourage reflective practice, and prompt an analysis of one's actions, behaviours and dialogue in cooperation with children, young people and families, using examples and personal experiences from everyday life.

The most important arenas for learning self-control and developing personal morality are those within the family and the school. A good collaboration between the family and the school and a sense of shared responsibility are essential for engaging parents in school activities and thus their children's social and cultural education.

Research shows that pupils whose parents take an active part in their educational life do better with regards to education, jobs, health, economy and leading a life away from criminality.

Teachers and pedagogues are key when it comes to engaging parents in their children's social and cultural education in school, but they lack useful methods to succeed. The project '**Who Conducts the Orchestra?** – A shared responsibility of parents and teachers for children's social and cultural education' aims to create awareness of parents' importance in children's school life and develop concrete methods to improve collaboration between teachers, pedagogues and parents.

The key elements in the project are based on the theories of P.-O. Wikström, professor in Criminology at Cambridge University, and on a methodology and an interdisciplinary training programme called 'Who Conducts the Orchestra', developed in Vejle Municipality, Denmark, for dealing with challenging children and youth.

According to Wikström, children who grow up with good relationships, good morals and education, who learn self-control and grow up in a healthy environment, become resistant to crime and abuse, and experience higher self-esteem (Wikström, 2016).

The most important environments for learning self-control and developing personal morality are the family and the school. A good collaboration between the family and the school and a sense of shared responsibility are essential for engaging parents in school activities and thus their children's social and cultural education.

Description of the WCO project



The Orchestra

Human beings are products of the society in which they live, and as such fulfil the social contract established by the 'rules' or 'norms' of this society. P.-O. Wikström explains that people are essentially regulated individuals and that our society is based on common rules. An example of this is that, as a society, we agree that children should attend school every day, and adults should show up at work or comply with other agreements and obligations (P.-O. Wikström, 2007).

Self-control gives us the ability to take independent and targeted actions (executive functions) and is fundamental to several other functions like work memory, long-term planning, attention management and complicated problem solving.

Our brain stem is influenced by both nature and nurture, which is of huge importance to our habits and patterns of response. The Orchestra conductor sits within the frontal lobe, guided by our principles in life and basic values. The conductor conducts the orchestra consisting of our thoughts, feelings, behaviour and body.

If the conductor is good, s/he has good liaison with the orchestra and vice versa, and therefore external input and experiences will be balanced. Should an imbalance arise, the conductor will quickly get things back in proper balance. With that in mind, it is an important task and responsibility for both teachers and parents to support the child in restoring the balance.

The theory suggests that addressing at risk behaviours should start as early as possible in both family and school, with a focus on improving children and young people's relationships, environment, personal morality and ability to exercise self-control.

Morality and self-control are developed in relation to adults – and in their interaction with peers. For this reason, it is important to notice children and families who may need help in establishing healthy relationships that support morality and self-control.

Situational Action Theory (SAT)

identifies the process in which an individual first becomes motivated and subsequently transforms from a law-abiding citizen to an individual, who due to the situation, perceives at risk behaviours as a viable alternative and a legitimate means to achieve a desired result.

Project Partners

Partners are from Turkey, England, Spain, Italy, and Denmark and represent a cross section of agencies: a municipality, a university, family councils, and a local organisation, who are working actively with children and education in many ways, will carry out the project.

Partners

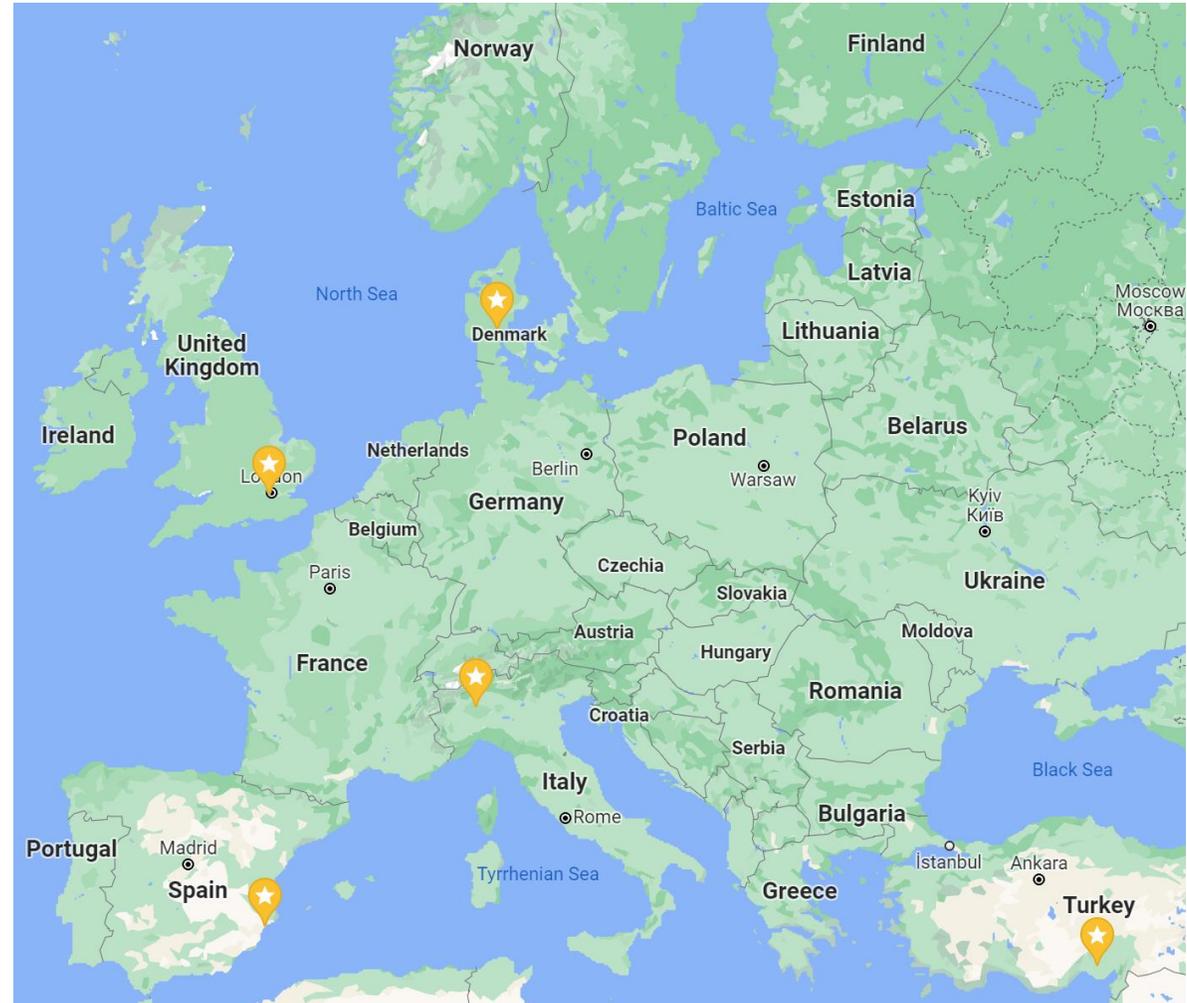
[VIFIN – Vejle, Denmark](#)

[INSTITUTO ALICANTINO DE LA FAMILIA – Alicante, Spain](#)

[Çukurova University - Adana, Turkey](#)

[Consorzio Scuola Comunita' Impresa \(CSCI\) – Novara, Italy](#)

[London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham \(LBHF\) UK](#)



Primary target group

25 teachers and pedagogues of young pupils, who will first introduce concepts of responsibility in relation to family/school collaboration within an educational setting.

Secondary target group

The parent/carer of the targeted pupils. The project will involve 50 parents actively in the test-phase of the methodology.

End target group

The children themselves, with the project endeavouring to provide the best conditions for children to thrive in their social and educational lives.

A transnational **test group** consisting of 50 parents/carers (10 parents per country) and 25 teachers/pedagogues (5 teachers/pedagogues per country).

A transnational **qualitative research** based on the test groups experiences with family/school collaboration and communication.

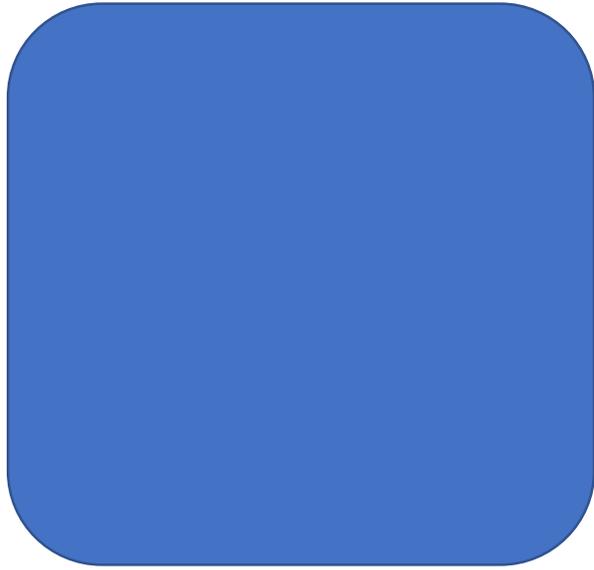
A **transnational mapping** of current practices regarding family/school collaboration.

A fully developed **methodology** “Who Conducts the Orchestra” that renews parent/carer/school collaboration and incorporates the four fundamentals: *Relationships, Morality, Self-control, and Environment.*

Development of a **digital platform**, where teachers and pedagogues can tailor the methodology to their needs.

Project Outcomes





A **Teacher Training Event**, where teachers and pedagogues are introduced to and trained in the methodology.

Two **local training** events. The project will host two local training sessions with the parent/carer test group, where teachers and pedagogues introduce and discuss the methodology.

Two **multiplier events**, where parents/carers, teachers, pedagogues, and school staff are invited and introduced to the latest research on parental/carer importance in children's school lives.

Development of the "Who Conducts the Orchestra in Children's lives" **handbook** which functions as guidance on how to use the methodology in practice.

Final **conference** to share the "Who Conducts the Orchestra" methodology to relevant stakeholders



Project Partners and the European Landscape

Project Impact

Participating schools will achieve a concrete methodology for teachers and pedagogues to facilitate dialogue with parents/carers about their children's development and education.

This will profile the schools as a lead within family/school collaboration, trust-building, and social awareness.

The methodology is expected to help parents/carers become more involved and committed to school activities, which it is hoped will lead to happier and more engaged pupils and potentially improve the school's social environment and attainment levels.

Impact

Evaluation of the methodology focuses on the teachers, pedagogues, and parent/carer user experiences and impact on children.

The partners will continuously evaluate their internal cooperation to strengthen cooperation and improve the quality of the products throughout the project.

Chapter Two

Defining the four fundamentals

Who Conducts the Orchestra

Handbook link [here](#)

Context

Link to p-o Wikstrom paper [here](#)

The methodology

Based on four fundamentals:
Relationships
Morality
Self-Control
Environment

Context



Children and young people are influenced by the norms, behaviours, values and morals within their families if families are unable, for a variety of reasons, to pass on strong values, early action is crucial.

Children also rely on institutions and schools to help them acquire knowledge and develop 'good' behaviours, which can aid them in attuning their abilities, skills, and maintain well-being.

Risky behaviours and violation of rules usually start on a small scale and, according to P-O Wikström's research findings, it is extremely rare that the first violation is serious enough to involve outside agencies.

Wikstrom's research illustrates how some children exhibiting risky behaviours and rule breaking at an early age can develop into serious rule breakers at a later stage. A previous history is usually at play, which requires early intervention.

Consequently, there are good reasons for taking action at an early stage as a potential descent into 'at risk' and criminal behaviour will have a huge impact on the individual in experiencing a 'good life', such as health, life expectancy, education, trust in other people and other factors that we associate with a high quality of life.

Relationships

If children grow up with good relationships, good morals and education, learn self-control and grow up in a healthy environment, they become resistant to crime and abuse, and they achieve higher self-esteem (P.O. Wikström 2016).

Teachers and pedagogues need to improve their skills and competencies to encourage parents to be more involved in their children's development. The task of educating pupils rests not only on teachers but on parents/carers as well.

While there seems to be a greater need for parental involvement in schools, some studies also show that parents/carers find it hard to live up to schools' expectations for their participation (Maria Ørskov Akselvoll, 2016).

The Four Fundamentals



Morality

it is important to notice children who do not have a parent-child relationship that can teach them morality and self-control. Next to the family, P.-O. Wikström points to the school as the most important arena for learning self-control and developing personal morality

Children benefit from the teaching of moral behaviour, of what is right and what is wrong, essentially, a positive environment and influences to enable instruction on what represents 'good' or 'bad' behaviours.

Morality and self-control are developed in relation to adults – and in their interaction with peers. For this reason, it is important to notice children and families who may need help in establishing healthy relationships that support morality and self-control.

Morality and self-control are inextricably linked.

The Four Fundamentals



Self Control

Scientists agree that the ability to exercise self-control directly, influences how individuals develop and studies illustrate that we can be taught how to exercise self-control. (references?) This in turn has a positive impact on other 'at risk' behaviours.

Self-control offers us the ability to take independent and targeted actions (executive functions) and is fundamental to several other functions like work memory, long-term planning, attention management and complicated problem solving

The ability to exercise self-control makes us hang in there when something is difficult, annoying, hard or scary; for instance, because we can see a reward that is worth waiting for such as a sports performance, an education or a school assignment, where self-control is required from the individual, to benefit from the reward.

Skills in exercising self-control makes it easier to decline many at risk behaviours.

Self-control is an ability that can be strengthened through training just as you can train your muscles in your body.

Recent research shows that if children have learned self-control before the age of 6, they will manage better for the rest of their lives. It is therefore important that both parents and professionals help children train their self-control. (where are the references here?)

The Four Fundamentals

Environment

P.-O. Wikström believes that it is possible to fully explain criminal actions by looking at the interaction between a person and his/her daily environment, and that a person's basic values are formed through these surroundings. It is important to understand that we are part of a social interaction and that people act in response to their surroundings.

The environment and the surroundings in we grow up in, are essential in honing our morality, manners and basic values. It is therefore important that we distinguish between the causes of criminal acts and the 'causes of the causes' of criminal acts. Basically, an understanding of the origin and subsequent evolution of 'at risk' behaviours.

We need to understand how the environment we grow up in, the people we interact with, our physical surroundings and the activities we take part in affect whether we engage in 'at risk' behaviours and possibly develop criminal tendencies.

In other words, an analysis of social dynamics contributes to explaining why certain people and environments can be expected to encourage individuals to comply with or violate certain behavioural rules.

The Four Fundamentals



Chapter Three

Communication Methodology

The five suns of The
GrowthModel

The Growth Model in
practice case study

Communication and
involvement of parents in
school-home-collaboration

Context



Growth model: An example of working method and approach

The Growth Model is a dialogue model that helps to create multidisciplinary professionalisation and thus enables us to cooperate across professions. Developed by Marianne Grønbaek, this creates a safe and productive environment for collaborative activities with children and parents/carers.

The aim being to create a common challenge and common project, where the model provides a common boost to the task, for which everyone across the board takes responsibility.

The Growth Model is action-oriented and focuses on people as co-developers in a future-oriented process, enabling a desired development and outcome. It creates a clear framework for conversations, including the challenging ones, and all participants, including parents, carers, children and adolescents, take active part in the dialogue. The dialogue will attempt to visualise everything, to create a greater clarity and commitment.

The Growth Model focus:

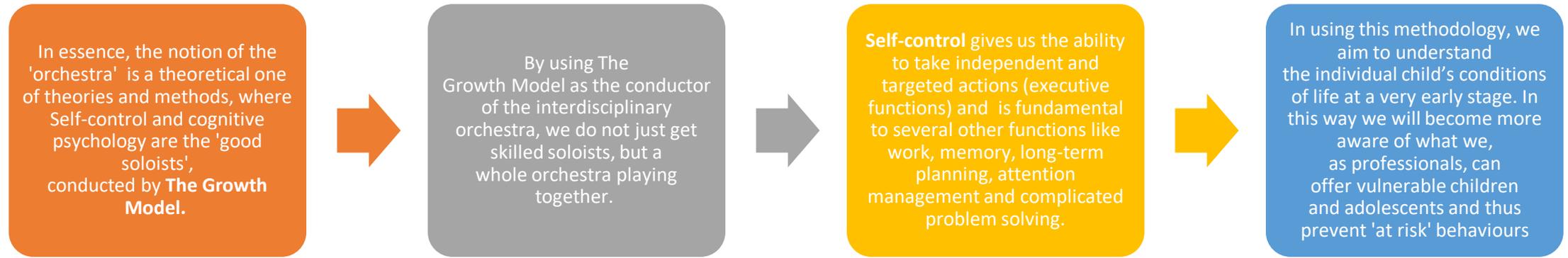
- everyone having a voice
- things that are going well
- things that we want to change
- actions that cause change
- agreements that will turn desired changes into reality for the conversation participants

The Growth Model builds on a positive view that all people have the necessary resources – it is therefore up to us to look for and focus on these resources.

When working with the Growth Model, it is important to recognise that:

- appreciation paves the road to understanding and conversation
- there will always be something that works/goes well
- when we talk about the things, we are good at, we grow
- what we focus on creates our reality
- language creates our actions
- the way we ask is crucial to the conversation

The Growth Model



Chapter Four

Best Practice

Each partner was asked to submit 3 examples of best practice.

Partners were asked to consider project priorities such as transferability, incorporation of the 4 fundamentals, ease of implementation and school family collaboration, etc.

Partners were then randomly allocated the task of peer reviewing and selecting their top best practice.

These were then collated, and 4 Best practices were selected based on this scoring.

Denmark

Italy

England

Spain

Turkey

[Best Practices Choices - Google Drive](#)

Chapter Five

Evaluation and Sustainability

Evaluation Questionnaires

Evaluation

Evaluation Questionnaires

Chapter Six

The WCO Journey

How we started,
How did we get here?

Transnational working
during a Pandemic

Where are we now and
highlights.

Appendices and links to partner projects

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, UK: [Some examples of activities](#)

Consorzio Scuola Comunita' Impresa (CSCI), Italy - [Case studies](#)

VIFIN – Vejle, Denmark - [Case studies](#)

INSTITUTO ALICANTINO DE LA FAMILIA – Alicante, Spain - [Case studies](#)

Çukurova University - Adana, Turkey - [Case studies](#)