ENSURING CHILDREN’S WELLBEING & INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAMESE PRESCHOOLS

A practical guide for reflective teachers
Preface - Acknowledgement - Key References

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCING PROCESS-ORIENTED CHILD MONITORING

Purpose of the guide

What is child observation about?

5 key reasons for you to work with child observation

Child monitoring in practice: 3 steps

Separating observation and interpretation

Wrap-up

CHAPTER II: IMPLEMENTING PROCESS-ORIENTED CHILD MONITORING

Step 1: Observing well-being and involvement

- Introduction
- Objectives
- Introducing well-being
- Scoring well-being
- Common mistakes
- Scoring involvement
- Common mistakes

WELL-BEING (LEUVEN SCALE)

IN Volvem (LEUVEN SCALE)

CLASS SCREENING FORM

The class screening

Step 2: Identifying children’s barriers to learning

- Introduction
- Objectives
- Analyzing your class screening
- Example from training on process-oriented child monitoring
- Way forward: from barriers to actions
Step 3: Actions to enhance well-being and involvement

Action Point 1: (Re)arrange the classroom into appealing areas and corners

Action Point 2: Check the content of the areas & enrich them

Action Point 3: Introduce new and unconventional materials & activities

Action Point 4: Discover children’s interests and offer activities that meet these interests

Action Point 5: Support ongoing activities through stimulating impulses

Action Point 6: Widen the possibilities for child initiative and support this with clear rules and boundaries

Action Point 7: Explore your relationship with each of the children and between the children

Action Point 8: Introduce activities that help children explore the world of emotions, behaviour and values

Way forward: implementing action points in your daily activities

Action points checklist (Laevers et al., 2012)

Work sheet for action points documentation: narrative

Please write about your experience of taking action

CHAPTER III: CONTINUING WITH PROCESS-ORIENTED CHILD MONITORING

Being a reflective teacher

Great ideas when learning and sharing together

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
PREFACE

The practical guide for teachers ‘Supporting Children’s Wellbeing and Involvement in the preschool’ has been developed by VVOB Vietnam to support teachers in developing the skills and knowledge needed to implement a reflective practice to support all children’s learning. This reflective practice merges together two internationally recognized best practices that support teachers in ensuring children’s learning through inclusive, quality education environments: (i) the process-oriented child monitoring system for early years (Laevers, Moons & Declerq, 2012) and (ii) the Index for inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2016).

The process-oriented child monitoring system offers the foundation to understand children’s learning through well-being and involvement as process indicators and offers concrete inspiration for teachers to take actions based on the action points for experiential education. To better understand barriers of children at risk of not learning, VVOB Vietnam’s approach has integrated the barrier concept which is promoted by the Index for inclusion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

VVOB Vietnam would like to thank the involved education officers, school leaders and teachers from Kon Tum, Quang Nam and Quang Ngai provinces for their invaluable support to the guide. Their knowledge and experience on child monitoring to support children’s wellbeing and involvement in Vietnam has been inspirational.

KEY REFERENCES


This is a practical guide developed primarily for preschool teachers. The guide is also useful for school leaders and education officers in provinces and districts to understand child observation and support teachers in implementing good quality education for preschool children.

This guide will help you
(i) to understand wellbeing and involvement as indicators for children’s learning,
(ii) to develop child observation skills and score children’s wellbeing and involvement,
(iii) to understand why some children are (at risk of) not learning, and
(iv) to make changes in your teaching that help children learn and develop to their full potential.

**What is child observation about?**

As a teacher or education manager, you want all children to benefit from the preschool education that you provide. To do this, you ask yourself the key question: how is every child doing in the setting, is every child learning? You need to ensure that each child receives the necessary warmth, care and stimuli, that each child benefits from the efforts made by the teacher and the school.

When you use child observation in a systematic and regular way, you are doing child monitoring. In your child monitoring, you can focus on two observable indicators of learning: the child’s wellbeing and the child’s involvement. You can observe wellbeing and involvement in children’s behavior during our preschool activities. The experiential education approach says that if a child’s wellbeing is high, and the child’s involvement is high, the child is engaged in deep level learning. This means that the child is developing to its full and holistic potential, it is developing in all its developmental domains.

**The role of the preschool teacher**

As preschool teacher, you need to equip yourself with the necessary child observation skills. By focusing on signs of wellbeing and involvement, you can immediately see which children are engaged in deep level learning and which children are (at risk of) not learning. You can find out what is keeping these children in the cold.

Based on your observations, you can make changes towards more child-centered, play-based learning and observe what happens with the children’s well-being and involvement. As you observe our children’s learning in a more systematic way, you develop a reflective practice in which you continuously improve the learning experiences of our children.
5 key reasons for you to work with child observation:

1. By observing children’s wellbeing and involvement, you become aware of how each child is feeling and doing in your class. You learn more about your children’s needs and interests.

2. When you know your children better, you can make adjustments in the environment, materials, activities and interaction opportunities offered to your children in the class. As such, you develop quality relationships and support their learning needs better. This helps you ensure that all children in your class are reaching their full and rich potential.

3. Based on your experiences with the children, you can make adjustments in your teaching. You become more child-centred and increase opportunities to support learning through play, in line with the MOET policy on preschool education.

4. Every teacher can learn how to observe wellbeing and involvement. This is a very practical skill that you can quickly master and once you’ve mastered child observation, you will always be able to use it to adjust and improve your teaching.

5. When children’s levels of wellbeing and involvement go up, this will benefit their, which helps the children reach the academic and developmental standards issued by the MOET.

Activity #1: Icebreaker

Together with a colleague, you stand up facing each other. Ask your colleague to look at you for 30 seconds. Then your colleague turns around for a minute while you change something about yourself. For example, you may change your hair, the way you wear your clothes or take away/add one item. After you changed, you ask your colleague to turn around and look again. You ask your colleague: what changes do you see?

It is not easy to capture each detail based on a quick observation. Therefore, you need to observe regularly and in a systematic way.
A story about a child

Introduction to the story:
This is a real story about a real child, living in a mountainous commune in Quang Nam. The teacher was concerned about this child. Using child observation as a basis, the teacher made changes in the preschool activities. The school leader and colleagues supported the changes. The teacher found a way to help the child thrive, develop. The child became a happy child, the teacher a happy teacher, proud of supporting the child to develop its rich and full potential.

You can read through this inspirational story, which can become the story of any child, any teacher in any place.

The story
An is a 3-year-old boy in my class. He is very active. He likes to play by himself and rarely joins his classmates in class activities. He often runs around and does not want to sit still. Sometimes, he hits classmates to take the toys from them. As his teacher, I am very concerned about this issue and try to find a solution to help his focus and engage more during class activities.

To help him participate in his work in group, I decided to join his group and made a scenario for other classmates to involve him more. I assigned some specific tasks to him, for example “once you have finished your work, please come and help your friends”. I also highlighted his products to the whole class. When he finished his tasks, I also complimented him for the whole group by saying “An is doing very well today, please give him an applause!”. He really enjoyed these new activities and improved his counting, grouping skills. The new activities that I organized help him to engage more in class.

Through my observation, I could find out that An often goes to the corners and was counting the toys and materials in there. To me, this indicated that he enjoys math. Based on this observation, I made some changes in my class activities. I decided to use more new and unconventional materials to get his attention; I started using more colourful things to attract him. I also looked for daily natural materials such as peas, seeds, gravel and leaves to use in math activities, for example shaping numbers with the materials, counting leaves, grouping gravel.

To help Ha participate in his work in group, I decided to join his group and made a scenario for other classmates to involve him more. I assigned some specific tasks to him, for example “once you have finished your work, please come and help your friends”. I also highlighted his products to the whole class. When he finished his tasks, I also complimented him for the whole group by saying “An is doing very well today, please give him an applause!”. He really enjoyed these new activities and improved his counting, grouping skills. The new activities that I organized help him to engage more in class.

To improve the interaction between him and others, I based myself on the action points. I decided to join him in his group and ask some supportive questions to trigger his thinking and formulating his ideas. When he is working in group, I assign tasks based on their current knowledge and skills. For example, after children finish sorting objects, I ask them to add or remove objects, pick up correct amount to add extra challenges. While they are working, I often interact and support him if needed. After he finishes his assignment, I let him play freely with toys and materials by his own.
When you systematically observe children’s well-being and involvement to improve your teaching, you are implementing process-oriented child monitoring (POM). The implementation of POM consists of 3 key steps:

**Step 1: Observe children’s well-being and involvement**
At the start, you observe and score the levels of well-being and involvement of each child. (link to other pages: signs, scales, class screening form).

A high level of **well-being** means that the child feels comfortable and at ease, like a fish in the water. A high level of **involvement** means that the child is in a continuous focus, feels challenged in the activity. This child is operating at the limits of one’s capabilities.

This first step of scoring children’s wellbeing and involvement is called the class screening. Over a few weeks, you select 3 to 5 children per day and observe their levels of wellbeing and involvement throughout the day. You will do such a class screening at least twice in a school year: a first-class screening at the beginning (around October) and a final class screening at the end of the school year (around April). With these class screenings, you make the learning in your class visible. (For more information about the step 1, go to pages 11-21)

**Step 2: Reflect on barriers to learning and participation**
With the class screening results, each child will have an individual score on well-being and involvement. Based on these scores, you identify children with low levels and think of the possible reasons for these low scores. These reasons can be seen as possible barriers that children experience, they keep children from engaging in activities. By gaining more understanding about these barriers, you will be able to make adjustments in your teaching. (For more information about the step 2, go to pages 22-26)

**Step 3: Act to enhance well-being and involvement**
After identifying the children’s barriers, you can make changes in your class. There are 8 possible action points that you can use to enhance children’s levels of well-being and involvement. By integrating these action points in your regular activities, you will not only benefit the children (at risk of) not learning, your actions will also have positive effects on the well-being and involvement of the other children in your class. (For more information about the step 3, go to pages 27-36)
ACTION POINTS

1. Rearrange the classroom in appealing corners or areas
2. Check corners to replace unattractive materials by more appealing ones
3. Introduce new and unconventional materials and activities
4. Discover children’s interests & find related activities
5. Support ongoing activities with stimulating impluses & enriching interventions
6. Widen possibilities for free initiative & Support them with sound rules and agreements
7. Explore & improve the relation with each child and between children
8. Introduce activities that help children to explore the world of behaviour, feelings and values
Activity #2: Is this child learning?

Look at each of the pictures below. Is the child learning? What could be the learning objectives of this activity?

In your perception, when is a child learning?

We all find it important that children are learning, however what we understand by learning is defined by the context that we live in, by our own knowledge and experiences, and by our beliefs about education. Please take a look at the following activities #2 and #3 to become aware of your own perception about learning, what you find important.
Activity #2: Is this child learning?

Look at each of the pictures below. Is the child learning? What could be the learning objectives be of this activity?

Is the child learning?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Learning objectives?

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Is the child learning?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Learning objectives?

____________________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________________

Is the child learning?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Learning objectives?

____________________________________________________________________________________
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Activity #3: A definition of learning through action

There are many definitions of learning. Please read through the following description of ‘learning through action’:

- Action is doing.
- Action is handling, changing, moving, making things – not just watching. Action is sawing, sanding, hammering.
- Action is painting, making models of real things, mixing paints, learning to use the brush, covering the table with newspaper, discovering that bottle caps can be wheels.
- Action is squishing, pressing, rubbing, getting down on the floor, racing, pushing, comparing.
- Action is using your entire body to learn.

Questions for reflection:

- Do you agree or disagree with some of these descriptions? Why? What do your colleagues think?
- Look back at the above photos. From this definition, would you change some of your answers?
- When you think of your own activities, do you find elements of this description in your daily practice?

Based on international educational research, we know that learning through action or ‘learning through play’ has a positive influence on children’s wellbeing and involvement. It generates more deep level learning among children, which benefits children’s academic and holistic development.

While there are many other ways to implement education, we believe that a focus on wellbeing and involvement will help you in implementing quality preschool education in line with the policy on child-centred, play-based learning.
Process-oriented child monitoring is based on looking at each individual child and understanding whether the child is learning. **Observation** and **interpretation** are two important ways to collect this information. To know whether a child is learning, you can use both your observations and interpretations. It is important that you separate our observations from interpretations.

**Observation is using all your senses** and reporting based on these senses. It is what you see, without adding your own thoughts and experiences. To report on observations, you have to use thick description that allows others to get the exact same factual information.

**Interpretation is adding your judgement** to your observations. You make use of your brain, your knowledge and experiences to make sense of what you see. Different persons that have the same observation can have a different interpretation.

### Key differences between observation and interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>OBSERVATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>INTERPRETATION</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facts</td>
<td>Deductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Subjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detect with all your senses</td>
<td>Making sense of what you observe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The below examples can give you a better understanding of observation and interpretation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanh sat together with her friend in the construction corner. Hanh was stacking blocks. The fourth block fell off. Hanh smiled and looked at her friend, who helped her with the final block.</td>
<td>Hanh seemed to enjoy stacking blocks the construction corner. I think that stacking four blocks was a challenge for Hanh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Why is it important to distinguish between observation and interpretation?

Memories change over time. To base your interpretations on accurate observations, these are a few tips:

- Take notes, use “thick” description
- Be very specific, note visible items
- What kind of facial expressions?
- In which position is the body?
- How does (s)he act? React? Interact?
- How are the movements?
In this section, you have learned about the purpose and the steps of process-oriented child monitoring. You have developed an understanding of how this can help you support the learning of your children.

You have also gained insights about what you understand as learning, and about the difference between your observations and your interpretations. These insights will help you as you start applying child observation skills in your practice.

In the next sections, you will learn in ‘Step 1’ how to observe a child’s well-being and involvement so that you can implement a class screening and find out how your children are doing. In ‘Step 2’, you will learn to identify the barriers that are keeping your children from learning. In the final ‘Step 3’, you will explore 8 possible action points to make changes in your activities. By applying each of these steps in your practice, you will be implementing the basics of process-oriented child monitoring.
CHAPTER II  
Implementing process-oriented child monitoring

STEP 1: OBSERVING WELL-BEING AND INVOLVEMENT

Introduction

In this step, you will learn how to observe two important indicators of a child’s learning: the child’s well-being and the child’s involvement. You can observe well-being and involvement in children’s behavior during our preschool activities.

For a teacher, observing well-being and involvement as indicators for children’s learning has several benefits:

- It gives you immediate feedback on how you’re doing as a teacher and how children are benefiting from your teaching
- It gives you the possibility to change your approach on the spot
- Well-being and involvement are relevant for and benefit every developmental area.
- Both well-being and involvement are quite easy to measure

Objectives

1. After this step, you will be able to observe and identify signs of well-being and involvement among 3 to 5-year-old children;
2. You will also be able to score well-being and involvement based on your observations using the Leuven scales for well-being and involvement;
3. Based on your observations and scores of children’s well-being and involvement, you will be able to implement your own class screening;

Introducing well-being

Observing well-being

To engage in activities, children need to be emotionally OK. They need to feel like ‘fish in water’. This is called a high level of ‘well-being’.

Children with a high level of well-being enjoy life and radiate vitality as well as relaxation and inner peace. They adopt an open, receptive and flexible attitude towards their environment. These children show a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem, they feel good about the way they are. They have the courage to be themselves, to stand up for themselves. They know how to handle life, they can deal with unexpected happenings.
There are six key signs of well-being:

1. **Pleasure & enjoyment**
   A child’s pleasure and enjoyment can be seen in the child’s mimic and posture when you see the child smiling and laughing, when the eyes are shining, showing excitement.

2. **Vitality**
   The child shows vitality when you observe that the child is full of energy, also in facial expression and posture. You see fast reactions and alertness by the child.

3. **Relaxation and inner peace**
   You can observe relaxation and inner peace in the child when you see no worries, no frowns, relaxed posture and face. The child’s muscles are not tensed or tight, there’s no emotional unrest, no agitation.

4. **Open, receptive & flexible**
   A child is open, receptive and flexible if you observe that the child is open to the environment, easily making contact to others. The child is open towards the input of others, accepting attention from others that cuddle, compliment, express a word of comfort, offer to help. A child is flexible if the child adapts easily when the environment changes. In new situations, they’re only briefly confused or upset, or not at all. When they meet frustrations or problems, they get over it easily. You observe the child considering alternatives, making compromises.

5. **Spontaneous & comfortable:**
   A child is spontaneous and comfortable when you see that the child is acting natural and being itself, if the child is not showing doubts. The child is not thinking about: ‘how will I appear to others,’ ‘what will they think about me?’ They will let themselves be heard and seen. Here am I. Don’t forget me. I have something to say, to show, … They believe that they’re good persons, worth knowing.

6. **Self-confidence & self-esteem**
   A child with self-confidence will accept challenges and try new things, because failure doesn’t mean you’re worthless, it doesn’t affect the way they see themselves. They don’t bother to ask for help for the same reasons. When the child needs help, it will ask you for help as this doesn’t mean that the child is stupid or incapable. They are willing to admit that some things are too difficult for them, without feeling inadequate.
Reflection:
For each sign of well-being, ask yourself:

- How can you observe this?
- What are specific behaviours?
- Can you see something in their face? Their posture? Give an example.
- Think about a situation, how will they react?

Scoring well-being

To score a child’s level of well-being, you make use of the Leuven scale. On the scale, there are five levels. The scale goes from level 1 (lowest level of well-being) up to level 5 (highest level of well-being).

Take a closer look at each level of the scale for well-being (see page 18). When, according to the scale, the observed behavior of the child gives you a level 1 or 2, this is considered a low level of well-being. A score of 3 is considered medium level, while a score of 4 or 5 can be considered a high level of well-being.

Practice observing well-being

- Together with one or more colleagues, observe a child’s behavior over several minutes, either in a video clip (2-3 minutes) or in your class (5 minutes). Focus on one child only.

- Note specific behaviour, mimic, posture according to the signs of well-being and check these observations with the Leuven scale.

- Score the level of well-being individually (Level 1-2-3-4-5). Share your scores with each other. Did you score the same, or are there differences? Compare also your observations, did you note the same behavior, posture, mimic? Did you clearly separate your observations from your interpretations?
COMMON MISTAKES

1. Well-being is not the same as behaving well

More ‘naughty’ behavior can indicate an explorative drive or self-confidence of a child. The child can be looking for boundaries because it feels very safe and confident.
Example: children often tend to challenge rules when they are with the parents while they can easily obey rules in school or at friends’ places.

2. Children with high level of well-being also experience negative emotions

Usually, the high level of well-being allows for a child to handle the emotion, deal with it, talk about it and then move on. After that, the child could immediately be ‘thriving’ again.
Example: child is fighting with another child over a toy, child runs to dad, dad gives a small hug, child goes back and starts something else or tries a new strategy.
Dealing with emotions especially becomes complicated for children at the age of 4 as they really start to connect with their friends through play.

Observing involvement

There is a human condition that brings about deep level learning. This condition or mental state is called high involvement.
Children with a high level of involvement are highly concentrated and absorbed by their activity. They show interest, motivation and even fascination. That is why they tend to persevere.
Their mimic and posture indicate intense mental activity. They fully experience sensations and meanings. A strong sense of satisfaction results from the fulfilment of their exploratory drive.
When there is involvement, we know children are being challenged, they are operating at the very limits of their capabilities.

Activity #4: Imagine an involved child

- Close your eyes
- Think of a 5-year-old child that is highly involved, is it a girl? A boy?
- Imagine, what is the child doing, how does her/his expression on the face look like, her/his body movements,
- Now open your eyes and write down 3 key words of what you observed in your child

Observing high involvement = to see a child learning

Involvement can be observed in any person or child, independently of age, of what is being learned, of the context in which the learning is taking place.
There are five signs of involvement

1. **Deep concentration**
   Children with deep concentration keep their focus on the task or activity. They are absorbed and you will hardly be noticed when you are passing by or saying something to the child.

2. **High interest and motivation**
   You observe high interest and motivation in a child when you see excitement in the child to get started or to continue the activity. The child shows or expresses a connection, a real interest in the offered activity or content. You observe an internal drive in the child, you don’t need to add encouragement for a child to feel motivated.

3. **Intense mental activity**
   Intense mental activity can be observed in the child’s posture and mimic when you see the tension in muscles, lips, position of the eyes, wrinkled forehead.

4. **Deep satisfaction**
   When children accomplish or fulfill their explorative drive, you see that they take pride in their achievements, express their successes with their whole body and mimic.

5. **Operating at the limits of one’s capacities (ZpD)**
   The activity is not too easy, the child finds it challenging. You see the challenge, the struggle in the child during the activity, but also the motivation to continue, especially with some encouragement or support by you.

**Reflection:**
For each sign of involvement, ask yourself:
- How can you observe this?
- What are specific behaviours?
- Can you see something in their face? Their posture?
  - Give an example.
- Think about a situation, how will they react?
Practice observing involvement

Together with one or more colleagues, observe a child’s behavior over several minutes, either in a video clip (2-3 minutes) or in your class (5 minutes). Focus on one child only.

Note specific behavior, mimic, posture according to the signs of involvement and check these observations with the Leuven scale.

Score the level of involvement individually (Level 1-2-3-4-5). Share your scores with each other. Did you score the same, or are there differences? Compare also your observations, did you note the same behavior, posture, mimic? Did you clearly separate your observations from your interpretations?

You may also observe well-being and separate your observations on the signs of involvement from your observations related to the signs of well-being.

Scoring involvement

Just like for well-being, you make use of the Leuven scale for involvement. On this scale, there are also five levels from level 1 (lowest level of involvement) up to level 5 (highest level of involvement).

Take a closer look at each level of the scale for involvement (see page 19). When, according to the scale, the observed behavior of the child gives you a level 1 or 2, this is considered a low level of involvement. A score of 3 is considered medium level, while a score of 4 or 5 can be considered a high level of involvement.

At a low level of involvement, you will observe more interrupted, repetitive and passive behavior. The child will be easily distracted.

When involvement is at level 3 (medium), the child will be continuously busy, however the activity will be lacking challenge and will be done in a routine manner.

High involvement, at level 4 or 5, requires that the child experiences intense moments of focus and challenge. The child will not be easily distracted.
1. **High involvement** is not the same as just being **busy**

A child running around without purpose may look busy and active but doesn’t experience challenge or focus. A child making very easy puzzles without an effort, will not be learning new things.

2. **High involvement** is not the same as ‘competent or able to do’ & ‘Not being able to do’ is not the same as **low involvement**

Finishing the easy puzzles does not mean that this child is learning something from it, while just failing a challenging puzzle could be an opportunity to expand what the child can do.

**Well-being is a pre-requisite for involvement.** A high level of well-being is a necessary condition for children to be able to reach high levels of involvement. However, well-being alone is not enough. For children to be learning, they also need to be challenged. This is captured with involvement. If well-being is high, and involvement is high, you can assume that the child is engaged in deep level learning.

**WELL-BEING + INVOLVEMENT = DEEP LEVEL LEARNING**
## WELL-BEING (LEUVEN SCALE)

- Pleasure & enjoyment
- Vitality
- Relaxation and inner peace
- Open, receptive & flexible
- Spontaneous & comfortable
- Self-confidence & self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Has a difficult time</th>
<th>Often feels great</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Has a difficult time</td>
<td>Children with very low wellbeing are clearly having a difficult time. They do not seem happy in the setting.</td>
<td>The picture obtained of the child shows elements of Level 5 is less strongly expressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Often does not feel okay</td>
<td>The picture obtained of the child shows elements of Level 1 but is less strongly expressed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Feels more or less okay</td>
<td>Children with a moderate level of wellbeing in the setting are neither happy, nor unhappy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Often feels great</td>
<td>Children with a very high level of wellbeing in the setting seem like a ‘fish in water’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Always feels great</td>
<td>Children have a lot of fun, laugh a lot, they radiate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children with very low wellbeing are clearly having a difficult time. They do not seem happy in the setting. Moments of “true” pleasure are scarce or even nonexistent. Children mostly seem anxious or tense or show hardly any vitality. Contacts with their environment tend to be difficult. Children are either in conflict with others, or they avoid contact. Children don’t feel at ease in most situations.

The picture obtained of the child shows elements of Level 1 but is less strongly expressed.

Children with a moderate level of wellbeing in the setting are neither happy, nor unhappy. Children look rather indifferent and if they show positive or negative signals these are seldom outspoken. Enthusiasm is rarely observed, but neither do children display negative emotions. Contacts with other children are rather superficial and have low intensity. Basic needs are only satisfied to some extent: still many chances for real satisfaction slip away.

The picture obtained of the child shows elements of Level 5 is less strongly expressed.

Children with a very high level of wellbeing in the setting seem like a ‘fish in water’. Children have a lot of fun, laugh a lot, they radiate. Children enjoy what the environment has to offer and the other’s company. When Children feel unhappy, angry or frightened, they manage to get over it fairly quickly. Most of the time children feel very happy: they enjoy life to the full. Children’s actions affect others and the group climate in a positive way.
## INVOLVEMENT (LEUVEN SCALE)

- Deep concentration
- High interest and motivation
- Intense mental activity
- Deep satisfaction
- Operating at the limits of one's capacities (ZpD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Level 1 | Hardly engages in activities | Children with a very low level of involvement often do not engage in any activity at all.  
Children wander, appear absent-minded and tend to stare aimlessly  
When any activity occurs, it is often short-lived or purposeless  
Children are easily distracted by surrounding noises, voices, movements…  
There is little mental activity. Children do not seem to take anything in  
Children often act without any effort or dedication |
| Level 2 | Activity is often Interrupted | The picture of the child obtained shows elements of Level 1 but is less strongly expressed |
| Level 3 | Is busy, but seldom absorbed | Children with a moderate level of involvement are often occupied, but closer observation reveals that they are rarely engaged in what they do  
Children pay attention but signals of real involvement, such as concentration, being absorbed, intense mental activity, are rare  
Children appear to act in a routine manner, without much effort  
Children are also easily distracted and their activities seldom last long  
They do not show much drive while occupied with activities |
| Level 4 | Is often intensely engaged | The picture of the child obtained shows elements of Level 5 but is less strongly expressed |
| Level 5 | Is mostly completely absorbed | Children with a very high level of involvement are often absorbed and intensely engaged in their activities  
Signals of concentration, persistence and energy are strongly represented  
Children readily make choices and as soon as they have started an activity they are completely absorbed  
Even strong stimuli in their surroundings will barely distract them  
Children take pleasure in exploring the world and operate at the very limits of their capabilities |
## CLASS SCREENING FORM

No. of children: _______ (Male:  Female:  )

School: ____________________________  
Teacher: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No./Color code</th>
<th>Date of observation</th>
<th>Children's name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Well-being</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>? 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Descriptions of expressions/behaviors/gestures represent the level of involvement**
How to do a class screening

In one school year, you need to do a class screening for all your children 2 to 3 times:
- 1st screening: at the beginning of the school year, after the children have settled in (October)
- 2nd screening (optional): in the middle of the school year (January-February)
- 3rd screening: by the end of the school year (April)

Depending on the number of children in your class, the duration of each observation period will last from 2 to 3 weeks.

You can plan the observations in advance. Every day, you will focus on a certain number of children to observe their well-being and involvement in different activities throughout the day. Some days, you will be able to cover less children, while on other days, you will focus on children that you already know well.
- If you know/understand your children already well, you can observe up to 5 or 6 children in one day.
- If you don’t know the children well, you need to take more time to observe them during activities: for those children, you may limit the focus on 3 children in one day.
- At the end of each day, you can look back at your observations, add some comments from your earlier experiences with the child and give an overall, average score for both well-being and involvement.

You will continue your class screening until you have observed and scored each child in your class. During the observation period, it’s very important that you record and focus the child’s behavior during activities to give an accurate assessment of the level of well-being and involvement for each child using the respective signs and Leuven scale. It is recommended for you to separate your observations from your personal interpretations about a child’s expression or behavior.

Way forward: Implementing your class screening

In this chapter, you have learned how to recognize the signs of well-being and involvement in children’s behavior and how to score the levels of well-being and involvement using the Leuven scales.

With your knowledge about well-being and involvement, you can now conduct a class screening of all the children in your own class, using the class screening form (see page 20) to score and record your key observations for each child.

Once you have collected all the information of your children, you can move on to the next step, and start with analyzing the results of your class screening to identify those children that are at risk of not learning. In ‘Step 2’ of the process-oriented child monitoring cycle, you will understand more about the barriers that are keeping your children from reaching high well-being and involvement. Based on these barriers, you will be able to make changes in your practice, by taking actions introduced in ‘Step 3’.
Through your class screening, you have found that some children are not yet showing high levels of well-being and/or involvement. These children are experiencing barriers that keep them from developing to their full potential. At the start of this section, you will analyze your own class screening results. Based on your analysis, you will find out more about barriers.

Barriers to learning can occur in interaction with any aspect of a school: its buildings and grounds, the way it is organized, the relationship amongst and between children and adults and in approaches to teaching and learning. Barriers to learning may also be found outside of the school, within families and communities, and even within policies and guidelines. Identifying barriers to learning is a progressive discovery and removal of limits to participation and learning.

The use of socially defined ‘barriers to learning and participation’ as a key concept can replace the idea that some children, due to their individual characteristics such as gender, disability or home language, are labeled as children with special learning need which would then require an individual intervention and may lead to lowering expectations.

Most educational difficulties are to be overcome by removing barriers to learning and participation. You as a teacher, and your enabling environment of school leaders and education officers have control over many of these barriers. You are able to make changes in the offered physical environment, offered materials, activities and interactions. The changes you make can remove many of the barriers that are keeping your children from learning.

**Objectives**

After the Step 2 of the process-oriented child monitoring cycle:

1. You will be able to analyze your own class screening results and categorize your children in three groups: children that are doing well (the green group), children that are at risk of not doing well (the orange group) and children whose learning is a serious concern (the red group)

2. You will have identified children’s barriers to learning and participation
Analyzing your class screening

Based on your class screening results (see form on page 20), you need to identify to which group your children belong by color coding each child as follows:

1. **Green color code**: you have given the child high scores (4 – 5) for both well-being & involvement.

2. **Orange color code**: You have given at least one score of 3 or ? as the lowest score. This score was given on either well-being or involvement or on both dimensions.

3. **Red color code**: For this child, you have scored at least one score of 1 – 2. Even if the child scored a medium (3) or high (4-5) level on the other dimension, the child will still be in the red group.

This grouping gives you a general idea of how your child is doing.

The children in the **green** group are doing fine. You do not need to be concerned about these children, for the time being, they are OK with your teaching.

The children in the **orange** group are not yet a serious concern but are also not fully challenged or at ease. These children are experiencing some barriers to learning and may benefit if you take some actions.

The children in the **red** group are not doing OK. They are experiencing barriers, you need to take immediate action in order to increase their involvement and/or well-being. To summarize:

| Green: high scores (4 – 5) for both well-being & involvement | Green: The child is doing fine on both dimensions, teacher does not need to be concerned |
| Orange: at least one score of 3 or a question mark | Orange: children may be at risk, teachers need to pay extra attention |
| Red: at least one score of 1 – 2 | Red: The situation is a cause for concern, requiring immediate action by teacher |
After color coding each individual child, make an overview of your class, using the following table. You will include the total number of children in each color group. You may also compare the distribution of girls and boys. Usually, boys tend to be more at risk than girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Green group</th>
<th>Orange group</th>
<th>Red group</th>
<th>Total number of children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boys</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole class</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignment: identifying children’s barriers to learning

You have observed your children and analysed your results of well-being and involvement of each child in the class by grouping each child in the appropriate colour groups. Based on this analysis, you can now find out more about the barriers of the children with the **RED** colour code, and of children with **ORANGE** colour code.

Use the following questions to find out more about your child:

(1) **Well-being**
- How is the child feeling **towards me**, how am I feeling towards the child?
- How is the child feeling **towards classmates**, how are they feeling towards the child?
- How does the child generally feel during play time, in the class environment, in the school environment?

(2) **Involvement**
- How does the child involve in different types of activities?
- How involved is the child during whole group activities?
- How deeply engaged is the child in small group activities, e.g. corner play? Individual activities?
- How deeply engaged is the child at activities with guidance? Activities without guidance? When the child can take initiative or lead (instead of teacher)?
- How does the child respond to new, unconventional activities and materials? Variation in methods and activities used? To more routine, returning activities?
Based on your ideas, make your list of five main reasons that you have identified for your children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason #1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason #2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason #3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason #4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason #5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now look at each of the barriers that you have listed and separate individual characteristics from social barriers. Which barriers can you address as a teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual characteristics</th>
<th>Social barriers to learning and participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example, the character of the child (‘the child is shy’), social economic background (‘from a poor family’) or the home language of the child</td>
<td>For example, the challenge for you to communicate with the child, or the chances for the child to take initiative during activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example from training on process-oriented child monitoring**

This reflection exercise about barriers has been used during trainings of teachers, school leaders and education officers. In this guide, you can look at the outcome from one of the trainings.

After listing the possible reasons for their children in red or orange group, the participants came up with the following list of ideas:

- The child is shy, lacks confidence (due to difficult living conditions)
- There is a (big) gap between teacher’s expectations towards the children and the children’s capacities.
- The child’s parents do not collaborate with teacher
- There’s discrimination among the children when they are in the group work.
- There is a language barrier
- There’s poor interaction between and among the children.
- The child’s Vietnamese is not good enough
- There’s poor interaction between and among the children.
- The teacher does not pay enough attention to all the children
- There’s no rich offer of materials and toys.
- There’s poor interaction between and among the children.
The participants were then asked to separate the individual characteristics from the social barriers. They divided these as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual characteristics</th>
<th>Social barriers to learning and participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The child is shy, lacks confidence (due to difficult living conditions)</td>
<td>• The teacher does not pay enough attention to all the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The child’s parents do not collaborate with teacher</td>
<td>• There is a (big) gap between teacher’s expectations towards the children and the children’s capacity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a language barrier</td>
<td>• There’s no rich offer of materials and toys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The child’s Vietnamese is not good enough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Between children                                               |                                                                                                               |
| • There’s discrimination among the children when they are in the group work. |                                                                                                               |
| • There’s poor interaction between and among the children.      |                                                                                                               |

After the grouping, the facilitator went through each of the listed items. Together with the participants, the inputs were reformulated as social barriers that teachers can address:

- The environment doesn’t support the child to feel confident, safe (for example by dividing the space in smaller areas, using small group activities)
- Teachers don’t find opportunities to talk with and listen to the parents about the child, to understand more about the child’s needs and interests
- It is challenging to communicate with children without a common language, as the teacher doesn’t speak the child’s home language and the child still needs to master Vietnamese
- Teacher finds it challenging to pay enough attention to each individual child during activities
- There is a (big) gap between teacher’s expectations on the children and the children’s capacity. It is challenging to consider each child’s developmental needs.
- Available materials and toys are not rich in variety or attractive to the children.
- Children show discriminative behavior towards other children when they work in small groups.

The interaction between teacher and child and among children remains rather poor. It is difficult for the teacher to offer rich language and support more child initiative in the interaction.

**Way forward: from barriers to actions**

Based on this shared reflection, participants recognize that teachers can make changes in the environment, activities, materials and interactions to support children in overcoming these barriers. To even better understand your children, you may add some observations of these children or consult with the parents or colleagues.

Based on your reflections and your additional insights about the barriers to learning and participation, you are now ready to take action. In Step 3, you will learn about 8 possible action points that benefit the involvement and well-being of the children in your class.
In previous steps, you have identified which children in your class are at risk of not learning. You have also identified possible barriers that are keeping some of these children from learning. Based on our experiences and reflections made in the first two steps, you are now ready to act, to make changes in your teaching that benefit the children's well-being and involvement. All these possible actions can be summarized in 8 action points, which you will explore in this third step of the process-oriented child monitoring cycle.

In this section, you will learn about what you as teacher can do to enhance children's well-being and involvement:

1. You will know about 8 possible action points that you can use to make changes in your teaching that benefit children's well-being or involvement
2. You will be able to start applying action points in your preschool activities.

Introducing 8 action points

- In order to support the children's well-being and involvement, you can start from what you are already doing in your class. You can build on your current situation, your existing activity plans, your curriculum, contents and themes.

- The 8 action points offer you a form of inspiration to make changes in your existing activities. They cover a general approach of good preschool practice that caters to the needs of all children in the class. Each action point can be translated into concrete ideas for all kinds of activities and meaningful moments throughout the day.

- A common challenge of teachers in Vietnam is to find a good balance between reaching the academic and development goals of the curriculum and supporting children's initiative through more play-based approaches. Many teachers struggle to reduce moments of direct instruction or add developmental objectives during moments of free play. This framework of 8 action points helps you focus on the different aspects that facilitate play-based learning and child-centered approach in line with the Vietnamese policy and context.

The 8 action points are included in the 8 action point checklist (see page 33-35).
The first action point is about the general physical set-up of your classroom. Do you have space to work with the whole group? Are there clearly separated areas or corners with an attractive set-up and atmosphere. Are the materials in these play areas easily accessible and relevant for the children's needs.

A corner is a clearly separated, recognisable space in which children can more or less independently engage in play-based activities in smaller groups and in which all the materials are easily accessible to the children.

Take a look at the illustration. Ask yourself:
- Are areas clearly separated?
- Is it comfortable to enter?
- Are noisy and quiet or more focused areas separated?

What would you change in this space, how would you improve the set-up of the corners?

Check the content of the areas & enrich them

To ensure high levels of involvement among children, each corner needs to be well-equipped with materials and look appealing for children to engage in play. In corners, materials can also be linked to the new contents and themes that have been introduced. Good corners can support multiple academic and developmental goals. Children can also join in managing the corner, to start-up the activity or to tidy up when corner play ends.

Looking at the illustration, ask yourself:
- Do children have access to the materials?
- Does this look tidy and cozy?
- Are these materials rich and appealing to children?
- Can children operate the corner by themselves, find the materials?

What would you change in this corner, how would you improve the set-up? What developmental objectives could you integrate in the corner?
To keep children interested and motivated, you need to offer new experiences and activities. You can offer children more open-ended materials that allow to be used in different ways. You can offer more natural, real life materials that allow for children to explore. You can reuse and recycle daily objects in meaningful ways. You can connect with the real world, with people around you that can share their experience or skill.

Looking at the illustration, ask yourself:
- What materials are being used in this activity?
- Can you think of other activities for this material to be used?
- What contents, academic and developmental goals can be found in this activity?

Look around on your own school ground, try to collect at least 10 materials that you have never provided before in your class and could be interesting for children to use.

To the extent possible, you need to offer activities that align with the various interests and needs of the children in your class. To know more about the children, you need to take the role as observer, you need to listen and connect with the children. You can ask yourself: What is on the children’s minds? What appeals to them? What are they usually talking about?

The teacher of this class developed a choice board by finding out about the interest of each child in the class.
- Can you think of different ways to find out what your children like?
- If you want to offer an activity on a daily basis that addresses one child’s special interest, how would you approach this?
At the beginning of an activity, children will be often excited and show high levels of involvement. After a while, the involvement levels will go down as children start to lose their focus or interest. In such activity, providing an additional challenge or adding impulses can bring the involvement levels back up for a longer period of time.

**Support ongoing activities through stimulating impulses**

In the illustration, children were playing with dry sand, which quickly became boring. By adding water, and modeling mudplay, the teacher brought the involvement levels up.

- What learning and development goals can you link to this activity?
- Reflecting on corner play in your class, can you think of other impulses to add in the role play corner, the construction corner, the art corner?

**Widen the possibilities for child initiative and support this with clear rules and boundaries**

Throughout the day, you can create a clear structure and guidance for children to take initiative and lead in activities. Children can choose what activity or corner they want to participate in, with whom or how long. By offering choice with rules, you don’t need to force children to do an activity.

To visually support, teachers often use a choice board on which children can place their symbol to choose an activity or corner.

In your own class, can you think of moment that such child initiative can be offered?

What kind of rules would you install to make sure that children participate in a variety of corners throughout the week, and not stay in one corner?
Children at preschool age go through a lot of emotions throughout the day. As a teacher, you can help children to become aware of what they feel and what the impact of their behavior is on other children. You need to acknowledge to the children that every feeling is ok, but not every behavior.

Some teachers use a hand puppet from time to time to communicate about emotions, feelings and values as children often find it easier to talk to the puppet than to share with the teacher directly.

What makes, according to you, a puppet an easier partner to talk to about more difficult subjects?

Imagine that a child is playing with a toy and another child takes it. The first child becomes angry and hits the second child. How would you, using a puppet, start a conversation about this incident? What would be the learning goal? How would you broaden this to the whole class without making the involved children feel unease?

Each child needs to feel safe and connected to others to reach a high level of well-being. As a teacher, you can support this by offering a positive group climate in which children experience a sense of belonging. The class becomes a group with strong relations, both with you and with each other. In activities, you can integrate ideas to strengthen these relationships.

Think about the upcoming theme in your class. What type of objects can you ask children to introduce to each other. What kind of open questions would you ask for children to share their experiences with each other?

Can you think of other ways to help children feel part of the group in your class?

Children at preschool age go through a lot of emotions throughout the day. As a teacher, you can help children to become aware of what they feel and what the impact of their behavior is on other children. You need to acknowledge to the children that every feeling is ok, but not every behaviour.

One way children can learn to respect and value each other is ‘show and tell’. For such activity, you can ask children to bring meaningful objects or photo’s from home and share with their friends.

Explore your relationship with each of the children and between the children

Introduce activities that help children explore the world of emotions, behaviour and values
Wrap-up

You have explored 8 possible action points that you can use in your class. All action points benefit the whole class, they can benefit all children and not only the children that are experiencing barriers.

Action points 1 to 6 focus mainly on involvement, while action points 7 and 8 target well-being of children.

Throughout the school year, you can make use of all the 8 action points to gradually make changes in your practice.

Way forward: implementing action points in your daily activities

Go to the action points check list on page 33-35. Look at each action point and think about your own class and context. Fill in the checklist for each action point: is this already OK, is it something to consider or do you think it can be a priority to make changes.

While implementing action points, you can document the experience. To document and reflect on your experience, you can make use of the worksheet on page ….. This worksheet helps you to write out your experiences. Through your documentation and reflection, you can share and discuss about the experience with your colleagues, which helps you and your colleagues in your continuous professional growth as a teacher.
### ACTION POINTS CHECKLIST (Laevers et al., 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action point 1 – (Re)arrange the space into appealing areas</th>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>To consider</th>
<th>A priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➤ The room is attractive: nicely decorated, aesthetic in colours, stylish in furniture and with sufficient overview (from the child’s perspective).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ A lot of thought has gone into the layout of the space and positioning of the areas (e.g. quiet areas away from noisy areas)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ There are at least 8 areas or corners, more or less separated by all kinds of devices (cupboards, walls, curtains, a rug, etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ The areas altogether cover a wide range of developmental domains (from fine-motor development to logical and abstract thinking)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action point 2 – Make sure each of the areas is well-equipped</th>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>To consider</th>
<th>A priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➤ Each area offers a wide range of materials, with sufficient pieces of each kind and in good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ The material is organized and displayed in an attractive way, is accessible to all children and can easily be cleared away</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ The material on offer is regularly replaced and enriched in relation to the current themes and the children’s interests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action point 3 – Introduce new and original materials and activities</th>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>To consider</th>
<th>A priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The offer contains new and uncommon materials and activities:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Lots of recycled material (ropes, discovery boxes, old alarms, tubes);</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Original games and activities devised and worked out by the practitioners (shadow play, playback shows, giant story books, songs in foreign languages, experimenting with sounds and noises)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Regular visits by interesting people from outside (a magician, musicians, a policeman, a pilot or steward(ess), a dog trainer)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Regular outdoor visits to unusual environments (the fire brigade, an artist’s atelier, a bakery, the local television station, a garage)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Action point 4 – explore children’s interests and offer activities that respond to them

- You manage to discover what the children are interested in by observing them and holding conversations.
- You succeed in finding interesting materials and activities meeting the identified interests.
- A lot of activities and materials are offered dealing with ‘non-traditional’ themes brought in by the children.
- Most of the time several points of interest are dealt with simultaneously engaging different groups of children.
- Observation of offered activities or materials engenders new offers and so forth: ‘open projects’ take shape over several days of weeks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>To consider</th>
<th>A priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Action point 5 – Support ongoing activities with stimulating impulses

- During the day, you regularly ‘scan’ the group in order to find out where impulses are needed.
- Children having difficulties with making choices and engaging in activities are noticed and guided.
- Ongoing activities are enriched by ‘open’ impulses such as:
  - inviting children to communicate (telling, describing etc)
  - adding material in a discrete manner
  - making suggestions for possible working methods / play alternatives
  - raising thought provoking questions
  - giving information that speaks to the children and fascinates them.

### Action point 6 – Give children room for initiative and support them with sound rules and agreements

- For about 2/3 of the time on a daily base, the children can choose activities and determine how long, how often and with whom they play;
- Children are supported by a daily routine – with fixed moments such as circle time, snack time, outdoor play, clearing time, closure. Pictograms representing the daily schedule and a choice board with more than 20 available activities support the class organization.
- Clear boundaries and agreements, established together with the children and evolving throughout the year, guarantee a smooth transition.
- The day schedule and rules are implemented in a flexible way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>To consider</th>
<th>A priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Action point 7 – Create a positive group climate by developing good relations between you and each of the children and between the children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There is a pleasant atmosphere, everyone feels comfortable and relaxed, few conflicts and a sense of belonging because:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➤ You build up positive relationship with each of the children by interacting with them in a sensitive way and with respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ You make positive interactions prevail among the children by stimulating communication, enjoyment of working and playing together, acceptance of diversity, patience with one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ You create opportunities at the group level to enjoy togetherness by making use of all gatherings (breaks, meals, circle time) and by celebrating events (birthdays, the first day of spring, return of a peer)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Action point 8 – Offer activities which help the children explore the world of behaviour, feelings and values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The offer of activities and materials indicates that a lot of attention is given to the development of social competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➤ Throughout the day children are supported to recognize and distinguish emotions, to express their feelings, to reflect on relations and to get aware of how behavior impacts on one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Suitable occasions are used to get more aware of key values and reflect on what makes people in general happy, angry or sad and how we can make the world a better place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>To consider</th>
<th>A priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>To consider</th>
<th>A priority</th>
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Ok To consider A priority
Changed practices in the class:
List and document (photo, video) concrete examples of positive changes in your preschool children
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Comparing to last year, describe examples of changes that you find in your classroom after implementing action points:

♦ The physical space of the learning environment and the corners;
♦ The materials used in your classroom corners and activities
♦ The activities you organize (learning activities, play activities, outdoor, free play)
♦ Interactions (1) between you and the children, (2) between children
♦ Addressing multiple academic and developmental goals through an activity

Based on these changes, write down 01 practical example of implementing one of the action points. Write it out so that you can share this with your colleagues (concrete, specific, brief):

♦ What was the activity? What were the goals of the activity?
♦ What is different compared to earlier (relate to action point)?
♦ How did children respond to this action (involvement, well-being)?

Please write about your experience of taking action:

1. What was the activity? What were the goals of the activity?
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

2. What is different compared to earlier (relate to action point)?
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

3. How did children respond to this action (involvement, well-being)
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

You can add photos or videos of the action taken and the change that took place. These documentations help you share the experience in a concrete, visual way with colleagues.
Congratulations, it seems that you have taken steps in observing all the children in your class, and besides, think about what you did:

**Step 1**
You have observed the feeling of well-being and involvement of all children in the class.

**Step 2**
You have thought about the barriers to learning and participating with children with red and orange code. Based on that, you have identified the actions to be taken.

**Step 3**
You have created changes in class like:
- The physical space of the learning environment and the corners;
- The materials used in your classroom corners and activities
- The activities you organize (learning activities, play activities, outdoor, free play)
- Interactions (1) between you and the children, (2) between children

And now what? Have you finished? Not yet! Steps 1, 2 and 3 are an ongoing process of reflecting the actions you take in your class. Based on your observations, you can continue to take actions to enhance children’s well-being and involvement.

At the end of the school year, you can again conduct a class screening and find out how your children are doing after all the changes you have made in your class.

You can share your experiences and documented practices with your colleagues, school leaders and local education officers. (elaborate from next section). Some ideas for sharing:
Great ideas when learning and sharing together

Now you have a better understanding of well-being and involvement through observing the class and you have made some changes in the way you rearrange the classroom, in the use of learning materials, in the way to organize activities and how you interact with the child. However,

1. Can other teachers learn from your experience?
2. Did you learn from the experience of other teachers?

Learning will be easier when you study with others.

You will learn more when learning together. Through learning together, you will find solutions for your problems. And you can always encourage each other.

Here are some ideas that you can consider for your professional development at your school:

1 In a professional meeting at school or in a cluster or in discussions with colleagues, please:

   a. **Share** a case in your class and explain the steps you have taken: what you have observed, what barrier you have identified, what changes you have made. **Ask** your colleague to add a comment, “I have tried it, but I want to hear more from you.”

   b. **Ask** colleagues to do the same in the next meeting. You can apply this sharing in professional meetings at school or in a cluster.

   c. **Share your enthusiasm**: focus on one action and share all the things you do to take action. Do you think about shooting some videos or taking photos to illustrate the actions taken? Invite colleagues to share creative ideas!

   d. **Show good practices**: Prepare a poster describing successful changes in class from the beginning until success with funny, vivid images, drawings and inviting colleagues asks questions and discusses this poster together.

   e. **Difficulty sharing and offering support**: Share 01 difficulty you have and ask your colleagues to help with ideas and solutions. Choose some of the solution you can apply and discuss with your colleagues about how to implement it.
2 Let’s observe

a. Are you interested in the activities your colleague is doing in his/her class? Talk to her/him to see if you can attend to observe their class? Observe how she/he performs specific actions and see how these actions affect children’s well-being and involvement.

After observing, talk to your colleagues about what you have learned.

b. Do you want colleagues to give comments on your actions? Invite colleagues to come and observe your class. Talk to them about what you want them to observe: a specific act? Interaction between you and children? Your influence on the well-being and involvement of some specific children?

After observing, talk to your colleagues about what they have observed. What can you learn through this exchange? Can colleagues encourage you with the next steps?

3 Professional learning community

You know that a teacher in your school or in a cluster want to learn more about child observation and action points? Create a group and arrange a regular time to meet, decide the schedule of the meeting. Maybe you want to support another teacher to take 3 steps in the child observation process? Maybe you want to reflect and see how you can improve practice in the classroom? Want to inspire others?

How? You can do activities similar to the school/cluster professional meeting. It is all about learning with and from others.

4 Exposure visit

Do you know any schools that have implemented child observation effectively? Are they ready to share with you? Come and see. The approach of these schools can inspire you to solve the challenges you have experienced. Be prepared for your visit and clarify what you want to learn. This will create the best learning opportunities. Don’t forget to ask your school to visit how they study together and from each other.

Don’t forget to discuss your idea of fostering expertise with your school leader who will assist you in implementing these ideas.
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<th>Question</th>
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<td>In my class, there was a little girl who doesn't listen to my instructions. She is quite energetic and wants to explore, sometimes out of my control. She often doesn't follow the rules. Can I judge this kid at a low level of well-being?</td>
<td>Well-being is not obedient/good behavior. Some light misbehaviors may represent a child's need for discovery or confidence. The child may seek for boundaries because she feels very safe and confident, a sign of well-being. So, in your case, I think she's quite comfortable in your classroom.</td>
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<td>Sometimes Phuong fights with friends to win toys. He cries and ran to me. I hug him and Phuong goes back to the corner and started playing with new toy. Can I score his well-being at a low level?</td>
<td>When a child is uncomfortable, yelling, crying but then he/she overcomes and feels comfortable, it is a sign of a high level of well-being. Because children have experienced &quot;negative feelings&quot; and they have been able to control and overcome them, just like the case of Phuong. If in the case of children always screaming, crying or hurting others when competing for toys and the situation is prolonged then it is a sign of low level of well-being.</td>
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<td>I do not know how to assess Lam's involvement? He was always busy, running from corner to corner, but there was no purpose at all?</td>
<td>High level well-being is not the same as being busy. When it comes to well-being, we talk about concentration. involvement really comes with strong mental activities and challenges for children. It goes beyond everyday habits and external influences. If Lam always runs from one corner to another without any purpose or idea, it means that his involvement is not at a high level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanh always play with simple puzzle games. He always repeats it. Can I score his involvement at a high level?</td>
<td>The repetition of same actions does not mean that he is participating at a high level. The boy plays with simple puzzle pieces and it is not difficult and challenge him. When he completes the puzzle, it does not mean he learns anything from this activity. If you give him a more complex jigsaw, he may not be able to match it yet, but it is an opportunity for him to think, find ways to play and that is also the way teachers promote their abilities.</td>
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<td>Tam is a nice girl. She always answers teachers' questions. Should I score her involvement at a high level?</td>
<td>High level of involvement is not being able or able to do something or &quot;not doing anything&quot; does not mean low involvement. Maybe these questions are too easy for Tam, the question is not difficult enough for her to think and explore.</td>
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<td>I think Nguyet has low level of involvement because she often likes to play alone. She is quite focused and does not interact with other friends when she is passionate about activities.</td>
<td>Children can be involved at a high level without interacting with other children. It is necessary to observe more signs of Nguyet's involvement with facial expressions, postures and movements.</td>
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<td>When I give assignment, Viet often likes to work with friends other than doing it alone, I think that his involvement is at low level. Is that correct?</td>
<td>Children interact with others can still be involved at a high level. Please observe more to see whether he can keep the intensity focused on the activity he is doing?</td>
</tr>
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<td>So, does it mean that all children who achieve the development standard are involved at high level and who do not meet the standard are at low level?</td>
<td>Fail to meet development standards does not mean that children's involvement is low. For children who have not achieve the standards can still participate and learn at a high level. Achieving development standards does not mean that involvement is high. Children can do something, but they still can have low level of involvement because these activities are not challenging enough for them.</td>
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<td>Is there a difference in the signs of well-being and involvement between girls and boys? Can I assess other children's well-being and involvement among ethnic groups? And what's the difference between ages?</td>
<td>Signs of well-being and involvement are no different between children. This applies the same to girls and boys; children in all ethnic groups; Children of all ages.</td>
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(2) Class screening

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>How do I know which children are doing well (green), which ones are at risk of not learning (orange), which ones need attention immediately (red)? Should I consider the child's well-being or involvement?</td>
<td>You need to consider the class screening results of both well-being or involvement to put the child into the right group, not just color-coded but also individual indicators.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Should I observe the child during the whole activity or at a specific time to assess well-being or involvement?</td>
<td>In order to assess the level of well-being or involvement of children, you need to observe them during any activities within the day and combine with the observations you have had before. A purpose-based observation is often based on how a child often behave in class, through all experiences instead of observing at a specific time or activity.</td>
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<td>(3) Barriers</td>
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<td><strong>Question</strong></td>
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<td>Children in my class do not speak Kinh language. So is the child's home language a barrier?</td>
<td>The child's home language is a characteristic of the child, but this is not a social barrier. If the child does not speak school language at home, the lack of common language communication can be a barrier for children and requires action to enhance communication with children.</td>
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<td>Can my class be a barrier for children?</td>
<td>It could be. Classroom arrangement and setting can be a barrier for children (such as toys that are too high for children to get). Utensils, learning materials can be barriers if they are not attractive, interesting and new to children. The relationship between children and teachers can also be a barrier for children.</td>
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<td>Today, I have added more materials to an activity corner. Does it mean that I have completed the second action?</td>
<td>It’s great that you have added learning materials to the corner of the activity. However, you can do more than that in this second action by enriching and diversifying learning materials at all corners. For each action point, you can think of a comprehensive change in classroom setting; utensils, learning materials used; Various play, learning and outdoor activities; interactions between teachers and children, children and children. You can take into account recent observations about your child’s interest and needs. These ideas can be integrated into normal operating plans.</td>
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