US fashion label Michael Kors is launching into childrenswear in partnership with Children Worldwide Fashion (CWF), as FashionNetwork.com has learnt from industry sources. The French childrenswear specialist, whose portfolio includes the licences for Lanvin as well as its own brand Billieblush, has signed a worldwide license agreement with Michael Kors to create a children's line.

This is not the first foray made by Michael Kors, owned by US luxury group Capri Holdings (proprietor also of Versace and Jimmy Choo) into childrenswear, since the label, which recently returned to New York Fashion Week, already commercialises a kids footwear line, produced under license with US company Synclaire Brands.

Michael Kors’s entry into childrenswear is part of the global strategy deployed by Capri Holdings. The group is targeting a revenue of approximately $5.1 billion (€4.2 billion) for fiscal 2022. Capri Holdings, which in August appointed Joshua Schulman as general manager of Michael Kors is keen to capitalise on the positive performances of luxury labels. It also plans to boost its overall omni-channel strategy and e-tail business, as well as bolstering its product range. While for Versace and Jimmy Choo the focus will need to be on accessories, and notably footwear, the group indicated last September that the development of a menswear line is on the cards for Michael Kors. By introducing childrenswear too, the high-end New York label would therefore be present in all market segments.

By signing the international licence deal with Michael Kors, CWF has increased the number of active partnerships in the luxury sector. In November 2020, the childrenswear specialist, which is owned by private equity firms Arkéa, RAISE Investissement and Dzeta, took over after a court ruling the Paul Smith and Kenzo childrenswear licenses formerly held by the Kidiliz group, which was dismantled after going bankrupt. Michael Kors has now been added to the licenses held by CWF, which include also Chloé, Marc Jacobs and Givenchy. CWF, which also operates the Kids Around multibrand retail chain, is forecasting annual sales of €260 million in 2021, up from €210 million in 2020.