



FOUNDATION FOR  
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018



Foundation for Educational Services  
Former Military Hospital, Triq l-Imtarfa  
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MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT



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• *in absentia Ms Carmen Nygaard*

## BOARD MEMBERS



**Chairperson**  
Ms Elena Borg



Prof. Andrew Azzopardi  
*Member*



Mr Mario Mallia  
*Member*



Mr Joseph Abela  
*Member*



Ms Carmen Nygaard  
*Member*



Mr Paul Debono  
*Member*



Ms Marcon Cassar  
*Board Secretary*





## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

The role of the Foundation for Educational Services within the education sector has become increasingly important due to the continuous support that is being provided to working parents. Throughout this period, the number of centres offering Child Care, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf services has increased. I believe that this helped Malta to increase its full-time gainfully occupied population, due to the fact that now women and working parents have an adequate place where their children can stay and continue their development.

The Foundation's role is not just limited to a childminding service. Interesting activities are organised on a daily basis, even in collaboration with other stakeholders. Such collaboration strengthens the provision of non-formal learning and enriches the children's learning experience.

Throughout this period, the Foundation for Educational Services persisted in strengthening its internal operations for better service provision. The Foundation's role is creating a sense of assurance amongst parents like never before.

I would like to thank all employees and stakeholders who throughout the years have contributed towards the success of the Foundation. Without their support, we cannot meet the ever-changing demands of families and service users.

Whilst commending the work carried out by the Foundation throughout 2017-2018, I trust that the same level of excellence shall continue prevailing throughout the coming years.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



*Every child is gifted  
They just unwrap their packages at different times*

I chose to include this quote as 2018 was a year during which FES emphasized on celebrating each child that came into our care. 2018 was a year during which FES embarked on a journey to improve its services and programmes to ensure that every child felt held and nourished. We ensured that staff were given training and the necessary professional development to give an effective service. We made sure of establishing a bridge between the entity and the children's guardians while keeping an open approach for evaluation and ongoing communication with the general public. At FES we are a family working hand-in-hand to create beautiful stories for our children to celebrate their young days.

As Chairperson of the Board of Directors, I could not be more proud of the work that both board and management carried out for FES to continue flourishing and delivering the service deserved by the public. During this year we managed to further increase our services in both Childcare and Klabb 3-16. For the first time during Skolasajf there was no waiting list and thus no child was left behind. This is something that we all were very proud of as we believe every child deserves a service. 2018 was also a year where the Ministry, Board and Management worked together as one team to consolidate further the entity. Together we managed to get an increase in budget and increase the rates of Klabb 3-16 And Skolasajf.

Indeed 2018 was a year of success on many levels. However, it was also a year of deep reflection and evaluation. As board we are determined to continue improving and provide the best effective and efficient service to the public. We are a government entity that humbly positions itself to serve our families by working, or giving a helping hand in moments of need. I, therefore, would like to heartily conclude by thanking the Ministry and all board members for their continuous support. A special thanks goes to the management and all staff at FES for their trust, commitment and hard work. Last but not least, to our general public who trusts us with their most precious gifts, their children who unwrap some of their most beautiful talents when they are in our care. From my heart I thank you.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



The period under review has been a busy and successful one, and I'm proud to share the highlights with you here.

Together with the Board of Directors, throughout the period under review, we worked together to strengthen the entity, both in terms of human resources and also service provision. One of the first issues we noted from the start was that we couldn't offer a better quality service without strengthening the Head Office team.

Thus, the first step was to further support the Head Office with the necessary staff to be able to improve the service. In fact, various vacant positions were filled and new ones introduced to be able to better address the ever-increasing demand for our services. I must say that staff turnover at the time was really high. However, we managed to reduce this and implement a new structure. In addition, a consolidation exercise of internal procedures was undertaken. This helped to give a clearer structure and identity to the individual departments.

During the period under review, the entity was growing at a very fast rate. In 2018 the FES opened 3 new centres: 1 Childcare Centre in Żebbuġ and 2 Klabb 3-16 in Mqabba and Gzira respectively. This brought us to a total of 99 centres incorporating Childcare Centres, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf.

Various initiatives were undertaken to address such growth. For the first time the FES started offering a course for prospective playworkers. In collaboration with the Institute for Further Education, those interested in working with the FES who do not have the required qualifications now have the opportunity to do so by attending this course.

As a concluding note, I would like to thank the Chairperson Ms Elena Borg and the Board of Directors who have continuously provided their support. Without their guidance, the entity would not have been able to move forward. In addition, I would like to thank all employees who have in one way or another contributed towards the successes we achieved together and offered a safe and healthy environment for children to develop and enjoy themselves. We look forward to further strengthening the foundation to provide an improved service to our children.

# MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Foundation for Educational Services aims to work with families and individuals through the development and implementation of educational programmes and services to promote integration and social inclusion.

## GOALS

- To provide an after-school service,
- To establish a comprehensive childcare service,
- To develop a post-secondary educational programme for young people,
- To encourage lifelong learning through the setting up of community learning centres,
- To raise the profile of the Foundation to ensure accessibility to all programmes and services particularly amongst those at risk of social exclusion,
- To collaboratively work with local and international organisations having similar goals to the Foundation; and
- To build the capacity of the Foundation by actively seeking additional sources of funding and investing in the development of its human resources.

# KLABB 3-16

## Introduction

The Klabb 3-16 service has become firmly established in the Maltese society as the service that is enabling parents and families to juggle their work, educational, and family duties. Offered in various centres across Malta and Gozo, the Klabb 3-16 service has also proven to be a reference point for many children. It is not just providing care and homework help, but also serving as a social function for children to be with their peers, while also being an opportunity for informal educational activities.

## The Klabb 3-16 Service during 2017

The Klabb 3-16 service has continued its operations in a number of primary schools, providing care for school children aged 3 to 16 years, after school hours. The service was open to all children attending State, Church and Independent schools, and was an important support system for working parents.

The endeavour of the Foundation to strengthen this service is reflected in the increase in the number of children who benefitted from homework support and extra-curricular activities provided between 2:30pm and 6pm. During the month of June 2017, when the schools closed at noon, the Klabb 3-16 service opened its doors at noon. The service was also available all day during the scholastic holidays, and during the bridge holidays between the end of school and Skolasajf, and the end of Skolasajf and the beginning of the next scholastic year.

During the year 2017, FES operated 28 Klabb 3-16 centres in Malta and Gozo. Each centre is managed by a Centre Coordinator, while care of the children is entrusted in the hands of playworkers. Teachers are also employed to provide guidance and help with homework tasks.

The administration of the centres is closely monitored by the FES Head Office; centre coordinators attend regular meetings and are also guided by the Services Operations Manual which is updated annually. This contains rules and policies that regulate the service.

## Attendance

During 2017 there was an average of 2,716 active registrations in the 28 centres in Malta and Gozo. The service periods were January to June and September to December 2017. The following is a breakdown of the average number of service users per Klabb 3-16 centre.



### The Programme of Activities

Children attending the Klabb 3-16 service start the afternoon with a short lunch and a free play session, as a break from the school routine before starting their homework. Once all school related tasks are finished, the children are engaged in various activities that capture their interests. The playworkers are guided by thematic programmes which vary from one month to the other and these themes are explored in various types of activities such as arts and crafts, sports, drama, and games. The following is a list of the themes developed during 2017.

Month	Theme
January	The Good Citizen
February	Our Natural World
March	Music
April	Fire, Water, Earth and Air
May	Poetry
June	Under the Sea
<i>Skolasajf Programme</i>	
September	The Seasons
October	The Animal Planet
November	The Human Body
December	Christmas Around the World

Table 1: Klabb 3-16/Skolasajf themes, 2017

The programme also included partnerships with other educational entities to give children the opportunity to discover new areas of interests. These entities included FLAP, Judo and *Darba Wahda*.

The Foundation for Educational Services collaborated with the Department for Curriculum, Research, Innovation and Lifelong Learning, to implement the programme called Foreign Language Awareness Programme (FLAP) through the Klabb 3-16 centres. FLAP is intended for children who are in Year 3 and Year 4, and enables them to become aware of foreign languages by communicating in more than two languages from an early age. During these sessions, children were introduced to foreign languages by means of a specially designed awareness programme that helped them appreciate and nurture a love for languages. The FLAP programme was implemented at the Klabb 3-16 centres of B'Kara, Mosta, Siggiewi and Sliema. Students who attended at least 80% of the lessons were given a certificate of participation.

The Olympic Sport of Judo was also introduced at the Klabb 3-16 centre of Pembroke, through the collaboration with the Malta Judo Academy, established by the Malta Judo Foundation. This programme presented Judo in its educative format, to children aged 5 years and over. The sessions were 1.5 hr long and occurred twice a week. The students were allowed to follow the White Yellow curriculum and to sit for the exam.

*Darba Wahda* was an intergenerational project funded by Valletta 2018 which brought together children aged 9 to 12 years and adults over 60 years of age. They learnt from each other by sharing experiences and viewpoints through various fun and multidisciplinary sessions that helped to build bridges through generations. The various creative methods included drama games and exercises, arts and crafts, storytelling and improvisations. The centres that took part in this project were Attard, Luqa and Xagħra.

### Assistance to Post Secondary Students

Klabb 3-16 is also a vehicle for post-secondary students to carry out projects as part of their studies. Students who submitted requests for research projects or placement periods, were interviewed and asked to submit the required documentation. They were then assisted in any way possible by FES staff, both at Head Office and at the centres.

During 2017, FES had requests for research projects from students at the University of Malta and Future Focus. There were also several requests for placements from students attending the Junior College and the Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School as part of their Systems of Knowledge project, and also from the Centre for Child Development, Education and Care Studies.





### **The Klabb 3-16 Service during 2018**

Though service use fluctuates according to month, holidays' period, and parental requirements, the demand for the service during 2018 has continued to remain steady, registering a marked increase during the month of June when schools finish early. The service also remained constant during the scholastic holidays. Klabb 3-16 Centres opened all day during the mid-term, Christmas, Carnival, and Easter holidays, according to demand.

During 2018 there was an average of 3,563 active registrations in the 28 centres in Malta and Gozo.

The commitment by FES to strengthen the service and make it more accessible in various localities also resulted in the opening of two new Klabb 3-16 Centres. These were inaugurated at the Mqabba and Gżira Primary Schools at the start of the scholastic year 2018/2019 FES, bringing the total number of Klabb 3-16 Centres to 28.

During 2018, FES employed 28 Centre Coordinators, 419 Playworkers and 74 Homework Tutors. Recruitment is ongoing, and Klabb 3-16 proved to be a good job opportunity for people who would like to return to employment on a part time basis. The FES *Professional Development Sessions for Prospective Playworkers*, organised in conjunction with the Institute for Education, offered applicants a job shadowing experience, and prepared applicants to render a service in the Klabb 3-16 Centres. 26 applicants finished the course successfully during this first year of the course.

## The Programme

The routine during Klabb 3-16 hours on school days starts off with a lunch break, followed by time dedicated for homework, and then time for an eclectic programme of activities. The latter is created by the FES Head Office and provided to the centres in a manual format. It follows a thematic approach and includes a number of games and class-based activities.

During 2018 the Klabb 3-16 programme also focused a lot on an Active Lifestyle Programme. Staff members were advised to split the week in two sections, dedicating a number of days to games and Physical Education activities, and the other days to follow the thematic programme. The latter also included a number of games that enabled the children to be active following their long stretch of school and HW hours.

Month	Theme
January	Culture
February	Love and Respect
March	Spring and Easter
April	Music
May	Sports
June	Summer
<i>Skolasajf Programme</i>	
September	International Days
October	Going to the Shops
November	Performing Arts / Halloween
December	Christmas

Table 2: Klabb 3-16/Skolasajf Themes, 2018

These activities are delivered in the centres by Playworkers. However the service is also a platform for partnering organisations to reach children and implement their own approved programme.

One such partner was the Migrant Learners' Unit, which organised the 'Making Friends Bringing Friends Club' during the Klabb 3-16 hours. The club aims at promoting inclusion between European and Third Country Nationals, through the sharing of ethnic food snacks and other artistic activities that encourage teamwork and appreciation of different cultures. These clubs were also run through the provision of a Playworker and a Homework Tutor by FES. During 2018, five such clubs were organised, with two being at M'Scala, two at B'Bugia, and one at B'Kara.

During 2018 FES also partnered once again with Malta Judo Academy, established by the Malta Judo Foundation. This collaboration enabled more children from the Pembroke Klabb 3-16 Centre to participate in free Judo sessions every week. The twice weekly sessions followed the White Yellow curriculum.

Another successful collaboration which was repeated in 2018, was with the Department for Curriculum, Research, Innovation and Lifelong Learning. This enabled the implementation of the programme called Foreign Language Awareness Programme (FLAP). This time the number of participating centres increased to 10, which were Naxxar, Haż-Żebbuġ, Haż-Żabbar, Hamrun, Fgura, Sliema, St Venera, B'Bugia, Rabat, and Victoria. Students who attended at least 80% of the lessons were given a certificate of participation.

### **A reference for students**

The Klabb 3-16 service also proved to be instrumental in helping students carry out assignments and research projects as part of their studies. The school environment, the organisation of the service, and the presence of school age children, gives post-secondary students a controlled environment with the right assistance for their studies. Requests for such studies are screened at Head Office, and applicants have to supply tutors' referral letters and relevant documents. Students hailed from the Junior College and from the University of Malta.

### **Looking Ahead**

Over the years, the service of Klabb 3-16 has established itself as a sterling assistance for families to achieve a better work-family balance. It also helped the children in their academic journey and personal development as future citizens.

The certificate of trust bestowed on the Foundation for Education Services by the authorities, and by the parents who entrust their children to this service, encourages the Foundation to continue its consolidation of the current centres, and to provide the service in new localities. The way forward is to answer to the need of an ever-changing society, with an increasing workforce and a changing family structure, while also being beneficial to family preservation and workplace productivity.

# SKOLASAJF

## Introduction

Come June, parents start thinking of how they will be engaging their children in quality activities during the ensuing summer months. However, thousands would also have their mind at rest, having registered for the annual Skolasajf service. This vehicle of non-formal education provides a programme packed with class-based activities, outings, and collaboration with partners.

## The Skolasajf Service during 2017

Skolasajf 2017 was based on the theme 'Education for All'. This is a policy that is at the heart of an education system that is striving to achieve better results, which go beyond the academic successes, and spill over into the personal and professional life of all citizens.

The Skolasajf programme was implemented in 56 centres, including 4 Resources Centres, and 7 centres in Gozo. The service was offered during core hours (8:30am-12:30pm) and during extra hours (7:00am-8:30am, 12:30pm-5:30pm). The number of children who attended in mainstream centres amounted to 11,769, while 116 attended the Resource Centres. The service was delivered by 1,830 staff members who fulfilled the roles of Regional Coordinators, Centre Coordinators, Playworkers, Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities, and Child Support Workers.

All these staff members attended Induction Seminars, where they were given details from the Programmes Unit, both from the Programmes and the Services sections. The Centre Coordinators were given a *Programme Manual* and an *Operations Manual* to guide them in their work. This year the seminars were held at Maria Regina College, Mosta Secondary School Žokrija, Mosta.

## The Programme

The programme was based on the main theme 'Education for All' and was explored and developed through various sub themes. Three manuals of activities were created with the intention of being tools in the hands of all Skolasajf educators; two manuals were for the Early Years and for the Primary Sector respectively, while the third one contained the Parallel Programme for Resource Centres. In this way, the main theme was explored from different viewpoints, bearing in mind the age bracket and the natural competences of the pupils. The Parallel Programme for Resource Centres was also made available to mainstream centres as a tool to cater for children with different learning needs. Themes were presented in a more functional and applied manner in order to be accessible for all.



Children were also encouraged to embrace a healthy eating lifestyle, since FES also follows the "Whole School Approach to a Healthy Lifestyle: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity" policy. This was enhanced by the weekly distribution of a portion of fruit to all Skolasajf children by the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency.

Another event related to the Healthy Lifestyle Policy was the healthy breakfast event. Paolo Bonnici Limited sponsored Weetabix cereal for all the children and the first session of the day was dedicated to this important meal of the day.

### The Partners

Over 40 partners collaborated with FES during the Skolasajf programme. Their activities varied from centre-based visits and programmes, to outings.

Among the partners there was Paolo Bonnici Ltd, agents for Weetabix, who sponsored the gifts and trophies for the Educational Quiz and the Sports Programme. The quiz participants were guided by a quiz manual, which provided information about the logistics of the quiz and information about the themes. The winner of the Skolasajf Educational Quiz was the centre of Siggiewi.

The sports programme consisted of daily sessions of physical education, Sports Days, and Fun Games Competitions between centres. The winner of the Skolasajf Sports Programme was the centre of Qormi San Ġorġ.

Another returning partner was the National Literacy Agency, which managed literacy campaigns. The reading campaign *Aqra fis-Sajf* invited Skolasajf students to read at least five books in summer, while the *Bil-Qari u l-Kitba Niskorja* / 'Footballers Read and Write Summer Programme' offered a 2 hour session of football exercises, reading about football, exploring new skills and football games. There was also the Klabbsajf guided reading programme in the centres of Paola, Haż-Żabbar, Mosta, St Paul's Bay and B'Kara.

### Special Projects

FES also worked in collaboration with the Malta Communications Authority and the Directorate for Digital Literacy & Transversal Skills, to provide children in five Skolasajf centres with an opportunity to experience and learn about **Coding** in a six-week programme. These chosen centres were Fgura, Siggiewi, Hamrun, St Paul's Bay and Sliema. These coding sessions helped children to understand how devices work whilst providing a fertile ground through which they could learn to think in a logical, computational way.

Skolasajf 2017 was also invited by the Office of the President of Malta, to take part in the 13th Meeting of the Heads of State of the **Arraiolos Group**, which took place in Malta on the 14th and 15th September 2017. This meeting involved a number of non-Executive Heads of States from all over the world, including Malta, who met to discuss political matters.

The thirteen participating countries were each represented by a centre. Three children from each centre worked on a mini exhibition about the country. The exhibition was set up at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta, and was displayed after the morning session of discussions by the Heads of State. It was first toured by the international media and then by the Heads of State. The dignitaries showed great interest, especially in the displays of their own country, and asked questions and conversed freely with the children.

It was a great success and the President of Malta showed her appreciation by inviting the staff, and the children with their families, to the Palace for a small reception.

Another interesting project was the one sponsored by the European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA), as part of the Erasmus+ 30th anniversary. This involved a visit to Parliament House in Valletta.

This visit was the culmination of a programme implemented during Skolasajf, in the centres of St Paul's Bay, Fgura and Attard, which included sessions by EUPA personnel about the EU (talks and workshops), and Public Speaking workshops.

The visit to Parliament House in Valletta took place on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017, where the children met the Speaker of the House, Hon. Dr Angelo Farrugia MP, and members of Parliament from the Labour and the Nationalist Parties. A Q&A session followed where children asked questions related to the environment, employment, migration, and education amongst others themes.

After this session, each child was presented with a certificate of participation by EUPA. They were then taken on a tour of the building, ending in the actual chamber of parliament. Children from the centres of Sliema, M'Xlokk, Żurrieq, Haż-Żabbar B, and Victoria also took part in a creative project called *Ohloq Kultura*. The project helped them become aware of Culture Capitals, like Valletta 2018, in a fun and creative manner. The mini-programme consisted of three-session workshops plus a final presentation at Mellieħa Primary School.

### **Talent Shows and Open Days**

Each centre organised an end of Skolasajf Talent Show, where every child attending the service performed in a dance or drama activity. The shows were hosted by children, and the performances were presented collectively as a whole class. The children were coached and choreographed by their class Playworkers and Child Support Workers. Parents were invited to watch these performances and then they toured the classrooms to see their children's work.

### **Fund-Raising**

All centres were encouraged to participate in fundraising activities in aid of the Malta Community Chest Fund (MCCF). These activities included Crazy Hair Days and Pyjama Days, car wash sessions, fairs and cakes sale, bazaars, and the Coin Carpet Challenge by the Fgura centre, where a carpet made of €2 coins was created in the yard. The Coin Carpet Challenge was kicked off by the First Gentleman Mr Edgar Preca, followed by the FES CEO, the St Margaret College Principal and a number of Heads of Schools, followed by the children of the school. The fund-raising event continued in the evening with an open fair where the general public was invited to attend.

The total sum collected during all the Fund-Raising events for the Malta Community Chest Fund, by all the Skolasajf centres, was €10,700, which was presented live on air during the L-Istrina 2018 event, by the FES Chairperson and CEO.

### **Local Council Activities**

Skolasajf centres were also encouraged to reach out in the community and participate in activities in collaboration with the Local Council of their locality. Many Local Councils accepted this invitation and the events that took place helped the children to become more involved in their community while learning about their town or village.

These events included visits to historical places in the same locality, voluntary work such as clean up sessions of selected areas, and visits to old people's homes where children talked to the residents and also performed for them. Some children also had the opportunity to visit the building of the Local Council, where they were given information about the roles of the different council members.

### **Visits by the Commissioner for Children**

The Commissioner for Children Ms Pauline Miceli, visited two Skolasajf centres, namely Hamrun and Fgura. During these visits she was given a tour of the classrooms where she could see the children engaged in their various activities. She also stopped to talk to the children in different classrooms, and finally held a discussion with the older groups, where she talked about her role as a Commissioner for Children and also answered questions from the children.

### **Other Initiatives**

Many centre coordinators took the initiative to organise activities independently of the calendar of events. They were all interesting and engaged the students as they captured their interest and imagination.

These included a cooking competition between the centres of Haż-Żebbuġ and Qormi San Ġoġ. The children, guided by the playworkers, cooked different courses over a two-day period. The different courses were judged by a team of three judges who tasted the food and gave points based on a set of criteria used in the academic subject of Home Economics, such as taste, hygiene, cooking methods and appearance. The competition was won by the centre of Haż-Żebbuġ. Each child was awarded a cooking book as a reward.

Another initiative was the one organised by the Paola Centre, which established a new national record that was recognised by the Malta Records. This record was conferred because the children at the centre used thousands of bottle caps to create a 3-D life-size peacock, which bird is part of the emblem of the locality of Paola, and on the coat of arms of Grand Master De Paule. The creation was unveiled on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017 in the presence of guests from FES, the Local Council, and representatives from the Malta Records. The peacock is now being displayed at the Local Council.



### **The Skolasajf Service during 2018**

The Skolasajf service is a major milestone in the annual achievements' list of the Foundation. This is especially so in view of the ever-increasing number of service users and staff members. Skolasajf 2018 was delivered in 59 centres, in 52 localities in Malta and Gozo. These included 5 Resource Centres, with the service at the Wardija Centre being offered for the first time this year.

The service was offered during core hours (8:30am-12:30pm) in 22 centres only, and during the extra hours (7:00am-8:30am, 12:30pm-5:30pm) in the remaining 32 centres. The number of children who attended in mainstream centres amounted to 12,078, while 130 attended in the 5 Resource Centres.

These statistics on their own reflect the high demand for the Skolasajf service. However, they are also an umbrella that shields from the public eye the vast amount of work involved in the run-up, delivery, and closing of Skolasajf. All this was delivered by a staff complement in various roles, both on a full-time and part-time basis, who worked to fulfil tasks and responsibilities fundamental to the eventual launch of the service.

### **The Different Departments**

Work on Skolasajf never really stops, however the beginning of February 2018 marked a decisive start, with the opening of calls for the various job opportunities. This year the marketing of the calls was made both through social media and press adverts. The online application process has been a major move in decreasing the bureaucracy and paperwork involved. This led to an acceleration of the interviewing system, the confirmation of personnel, and the staff allocation in the respective centres. The staff complement during Skolasajf 2018 totalled 1,860 key workers, 800 of whom were Child Support Workers. The other filled roles were those of Regional Coordinators, Centre Coordinators, Playworkers, Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities, and Sports Playworkers. All of these staff members attended tailor-made training sessions, where they were addressed by speakers according to the designations of the staff members. The speakers included staff from the FES Head Office and from other entities. The Centre Coordinators were also given an Operations Manual and a Programme Manual to guide them in their work. The Programme Manual was tailored according to the centres, thus three programmes were produced; one programme for the Malta Centres, one programme for the Gozo Centres, and one for the Resource Centres. A worthy note to mention here is that this year, an official liaison was established with each College's Psychosocial Team, who also met with the Regional Coordinators and Centre Coordinators to give them an overview of the services on offer and procedures to be followed, in cases of children with challenging behaviours.

Parallel to this work in relation to Human Resources, were ongoing works in the Corporate, Services, and Programmes Units.

The Corporate Services Unit was responsible for drawing up the contractual obligations between FES and the different schools whose premises were being used as Skolasajf

centres. Other duties included the procurement of all the resources that were used in the centres, ranging from the purchasing of consumables to securing services such as the cleaning of the centres.

The Services Unit dealt with a number of issues in connection with the running of the centres and their administration. These included allocating staff members in relation to the centres' population, assigning Child Support Workers according to the children's needs, and checking on medical conditions to book the Nursing Service in the respective centres. Another service included the coordination of transport for Skolasajf clients who hailed from localities which did not have a Skolasajf Centre. The Administration of the centres was also supported by the Services section, in the processing of applications, preparation of forms and documents, and collation of statistical data.

The Programmes Unit took care of the design, development, and implementation of the programme of activities in each centre. The programme was based on the main theme 'Living Culture', as a nod towards the capital city Valletta being the European City of Culture. It was implemented through a series of class-based activities, centre-based programmes, outings, and collaborations with partners. It also emphasised a healthy and active lifestyle through an eclectic sports and games programme.

### **The Programme of Activities**

The main theme was explored and developed through various sub-themes, both for the Early Years and for the Primary Years, and a Parallel Programme for the Resource Centres. The needs of these three different service users in terms of ages and capabilities were addressed with the preparation of a Programme Manual for each sector, bearing detailed information about each activity. The Parallel Programme for Resource Centres was also made available to mainstream centres to cater for different learning needs. All this facilitated the preparation process for the Playworkers and Child Support Workers, and the implementation of the activities during Skolasajf.

Skolasajf 2018 also presented service users with an opportunity to experience a wider range of sports and games within the Active Lifestyle Programme. This was part of the pledge by the Foundation to combat the side effects of the growing tendency of a sedentary lifestyle. To this aim, Sports Playworkers were engaged in each centre to focus on the physical education sessions, and the eventual organisation of a Sports Day in each centre. This schedule of activities ensured participation by all the children in each centre. The encouragement to be physically active was also channelled through the invitation to sports associations to be Skolasajf partners. The aim was to make children more aware of the different sports disciplines that one can practise such as softball, judo, taekwondo, karate, triathlon, amateur wrestling and hockey.

In tandem with the Active Lifestyle Programme, was the enforcement of the Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan, where children were educated in the type of food that should be consumed to lead a healthy life. This was both in terms of the packed lunches allowed in Skolasajf Centres, and also in terms of the cooking activities that were held as part of the programme. Another related activity was the Healthy Breakfast Event, sponsored by Paolo Bonnici Ltd by providing Weetabix cereal for all the Skolasajf service users. Children also benefitted from a weekly portion of free fruit and vegetables, and milk

(also lactose free), as part of the New School Scheme financed by the European Union and Government of Malta, through the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency. Each Skolasajf edition sees the return of a number of collaborating partners. This year over 40 partners provided different opportunities for the children to experience activities about culture, history, scouting, marine life, business and entrepreneurship, computers and coding, and environmental awareness, amongst others. The partners included Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ where children aged 11+ years participated in activities with professional youth workers; the Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Business, who provided sessions about business and entrepreneurship through a collaboration with Junior Achievers Young Enterprise; MEUSAC and the European Commission Representation in Malta that provided EU-related educational fun sessions for children themed 'Connecting Cultures'; EUPA who created a public speaking programme which culminated in a Q&A session in Parliament House with the Speaker of the House and Members of Parliament; and the Malta Communications Authority, who collaborated with a programme about Coding. Another returning partner was the National Literacy Agency, which ran the reading campaign 'Aqra fis-Sajf' and the 'Klabbsajf' guided reading programme.

### **Other Initiatives**

Part of the programme of activities also included various initiatives that enabled the children to show a sense of altruism and creativity. The former was manifested in fund raising events, the funds from which were donated to officially registered NGOs. All the centres also collected money for the Malta Community Chest Fund, with the total sum of €10,905 being presented in person to the President of the Republic of Malta H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca. The end of Skolasajf was also an opportunity for children to showcase their talents as they performed in a Talent Show in each centre, in front of parents and other guests. Staff and children alike gave their utmost to condense the eight weeks of activities in a celebration of friendship and teamwork.

The assorted and colourful mix of activities that were happening concurrently during Skolasajf, was also highlighted through a series of media events and other marketing opportunities. These included press conferences such as at the Fgura Centre for the launch of Skolasajf, and at the Naxxar Centre for the Centre's Sports Day. There were also a number of news features, both in the press and on TV. These included a feature about a centre-based research programme at the Attard Centre, about the Talent Show at the Siggiewi Centre, coverage of the performances and discussions held between Skolasajf students and Members of Parliament at Parliament House, and a closing Coding session held at MCAST.

### **The Way Forward**

The mission statement of FES runs throughout all the services offered by FES, including during Skolasajf. A structured programme within a safe environment remains one of the topmost priorities for the Foundation for Educational Services, engaging its workers to improve activities and enhance performance through various initiatives taken by the different departments. With this directive in mind, the evaluation of the 2018 Skolasajf service will be the starting point for the planning and development of Skolasajf 2019, making sure to eliminate any weaknesses and to build on our strengths.

# CHILDCARE CENTRES

## Introduction

The Foundation for Educational Services (FES) took over the running of government-subsidised childcare centres in March 2010. In 2017, FES was responsible for the running of thirteen centres in various localities across Malta.

FES childcare services are offered to babies and toddlers aged between 3 months and 3 years or until they are eligible for Kindergarten. FES childcare centres are open on weekdays from 7:30 to 16:00. All centres are staffed with qualified, experienced and professional care givers. All childcare assistants are carefully selected and must have an MQF level 4 in childcare as well as, a valid paediatric first aid and food handling certifications.

FES centres give the opportunity to all families from different socioeconomical backgrounds to benefit from the childcare service. These could range from single parents on social benefits seeking employment, parents who wish to send their children to integrate with other children, parents in employment or social cases.

Parents in employment or who are pursuing their studies benefit from the government's Free Childcare Scheme and are given priority. Together with this cluster of families, families identified as social cases by the FSWS are also given priority.

Parents who are not in employment can also make use of the FES-run childcare services but they would fall under the FES contribution policy. The contribution is worked out based on the combined family income which is assessed through means-testing.

Combined Family Income	Monthly Contribution					
		1 day/ week	2 days/ week	3 days/ week	4 days/ week	5 days/ week
0-€ 10,000	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
€10,001 - € 12,000	€40	€8	€16	€24	€32	€40
€ 12,001 - € 14,500	€65	€13	€26	€39	€52	€65
€ 14,501 - €19,500	€90	€18	€36	€54	€72	€90
€19,501 plus	€150	€30	€60	€90	€120	€150

Table 3: Rate charges for Childcare Services

## Childcare Centres during 2017

FES Childcare Centres were operational during 2017 in the following areas:

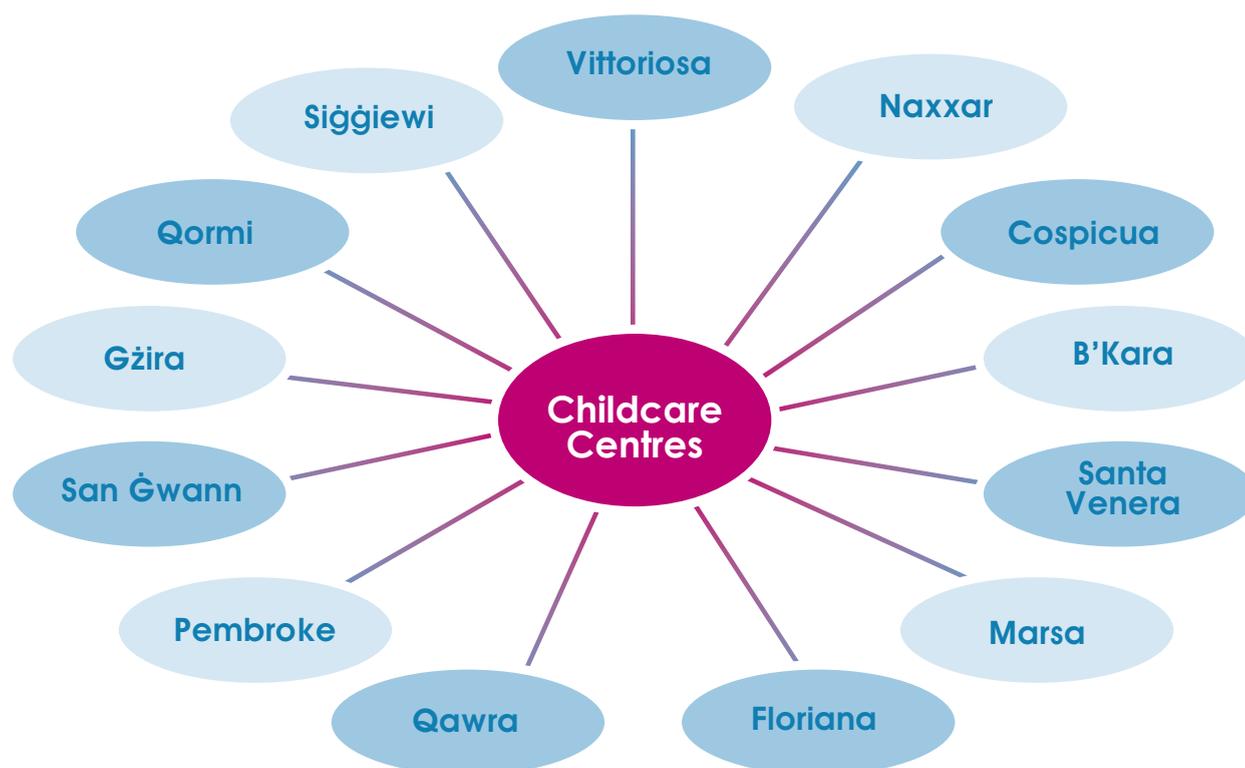


Figure 1: FES Childcare Centres in 2017

The Childcare Centre in B'Kara moved its premises and is now adjacent to the B'Kara Primary School A. Il-Ferrovija Childcare Centre was inaugurated on 25th May 2017 by the Hon. Minister Evarist Bartolo.

By the end of 2017, seven hundred and one (701) children made use of FES childcare service provision. The following is a breakdown of service users per childcare centre.

	Childcare Centre	No. of Children
1	Il-Kuluri, Vittoriosa	51
2	Ix-Xemx, Qawra	49
3	Il-Ferrovija, B'Kara	42
4	Il-Bejta, Cospicua	48
5	Il-Merill, Pembroke	71
6	Id-Denfil, Siġġiewi	56
7	Il-Bebbuxu, Santa Venera	54
8	It-Tgħanniqa, Floriana	40
9	It-Tbissima, Qormi	43
10	Il-Pespus, Marsa	43
11	Pizzi Pizzi Kanna, Naxxar	73
12	Is-Sardinella, San Ġwann	72
13	Il-Qawsalla, Gżira	59
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>701</b>

Table 4: Number of children using FES childcare centres in 2017

At all times the FES Childcare Centres aim to provide high quality early childhood education and care based on developmentally appropriate practices while it also stresses the importance of working in partnership with the primary care givers of each individual child. In order to reach its goals, FES has worked on implementing the Operations Handbook which mainly includes policies in relation to the service provision, the well-being of the child, programme implementation, issues related to HR and corporate services. These policies are there for both parents and staff members to follow and refer to when they need further guidance and assistance.

### Staff

The FES employs childcare assistants on full-time basis. They work 30 contact hours with the service users and 10 non-contact hours. During these non-contact hours childcare assistants are required to plan and prepare activities, fill in and update checklists, write observation reports on children, do ongoing research, and other work as deemed necessary. This has positively affected the quality of the service provided. Moreover, FES also employs relievers who work on a thirty-hour week basis. Currently FES has two relievers who are being rostered according to the exigencies of the service across all centres.

The FES works in collaboration with different educational organisations to accommodate students who would like to do their placement and gain experience in working with children under 3 years in one of our childcare centres. The FES welcomes students from MCAST - Level 4 and Level 5 in childcare, Jobsplus - Level 4, Future Focus - Level 5, Centre for Child Development, Education & Care studies - VET Diploma level 4 and Form IV students doing their career exposure week.



## Collaboration with Professionals

Our childcare centres are constantly working in collaboration with professionals such as Early Intervention Teachers, Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, as well as with the paediatric medical team lead by Dr Chris Sciberras, who is in charge of the Community Health Services.

According to research, actions taken by parents and any other stakeholders that are part of the children's development can influence the life of the child. Hence, our childcare centres strive to provide the best possible early intervention to our children. In 2017, 194 of the children attending FES childcare centres underwent medical screening and 83 children were visited by the Early Intervention Teacher. A total of 11 visits were made by other professionals.

5 out of the 13 FES childcare centres have contributed to a local research study carried out by Prof. Valarie Sollars. Prof. Sollars is an academic member of staff at the University of Malta in the Faculty of Early Childhood & Primary Education. Following a number of observations carried out by Prof. Sollars, parents were given questionnaires to fill in and a number of childcare assistants and coordinators were interviewed in groups.

By the end of 2017, all childcare centres were visited by the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) and they were all successfully given a certificate of conditional provisional registration. The DQSE certified that the FES childcare centres are constantly providing a high-quality educational standard through an adequate programme and appropriate educational service.

## Story-Telling Sessions

*Aqra Miegħi* sessions were extended this year to six centres. Centres offering this service are now Marsa, Cospicua, Naxxar, Qawra, Pembroke and Qormi. A breakdown of *Aqra Miegħi* sessions is shown below:

Locality	Total Centre Sessions	Total Community Sessions	Centre & Community Sessions
Marsa	46	0	0
Cospicua	7	0	0
Naxxar	9	0	0
Qawra	6	0	0
Pembroke	0	0	48
Qormi	44	49	0

Table 5: *Aqra Miegħi* Sessions in Childcare Centres, 2017

## Staff Training

FES believes in investing in the skills that our staff possess. Our staff feel confident to capitalise on their work and are able to test different philosophies while working with our children. The staff at the centres is key to helping our children grow in all areas of development and reach the appropriate goals set up in conjunction with our parents; staff training days are supporting the workforce to be able to reach these highs.

In 2017, FES organised two training days for all childcare staff. During the first training day held in April 2017, Prof. Paul Pace and his colleagues gave a presentation on how to support our children to engage more with their surroundings. Afterwards, representatives from Aġenzija Appoġġ gave a presentation about child protection issues. The day was concluded by Ms Cristina Attard, Ms Suzanne Vassallo, Ms Marvic Xuereb, Ms Luana Iunco Torpiano, Ms Mariella Stivala and Centre Coordinators who conducted a training session about the use and benefits of Social Stories with young children, an analysis and discussion about the Childcare Operations Manual and finally a SWOT analysis of the different centres.

In November 2017, another Staff Training Day was organised. Ms Michelle Falzon gave a presentation about the different dimensions of Challenging Behaviour. Then Mr Jefflyn Grech presented practical aspects of Challenging Behaviour. Lastly, Ms Pamela Attard Biancardi, Mr Christian Tanti, Ms Melanie Muscat and Ms Fanina Sciberras presented new procedures concerning challenging behaviours at the centres and practical ways on how the Programme implemented may affect behaviour.

Lastly, throughout the year various members of staff attended different staff training courses. These included first aid top-up courses, computer skills training courses, art courses, and online courses which support further understanding of the various methods used in our childcare centres. Members of staff and courses were identified according to individual training need analysis.

### Childcare Centres during 2018

During 2018, FES Childcare Centres were operational in the following areas:

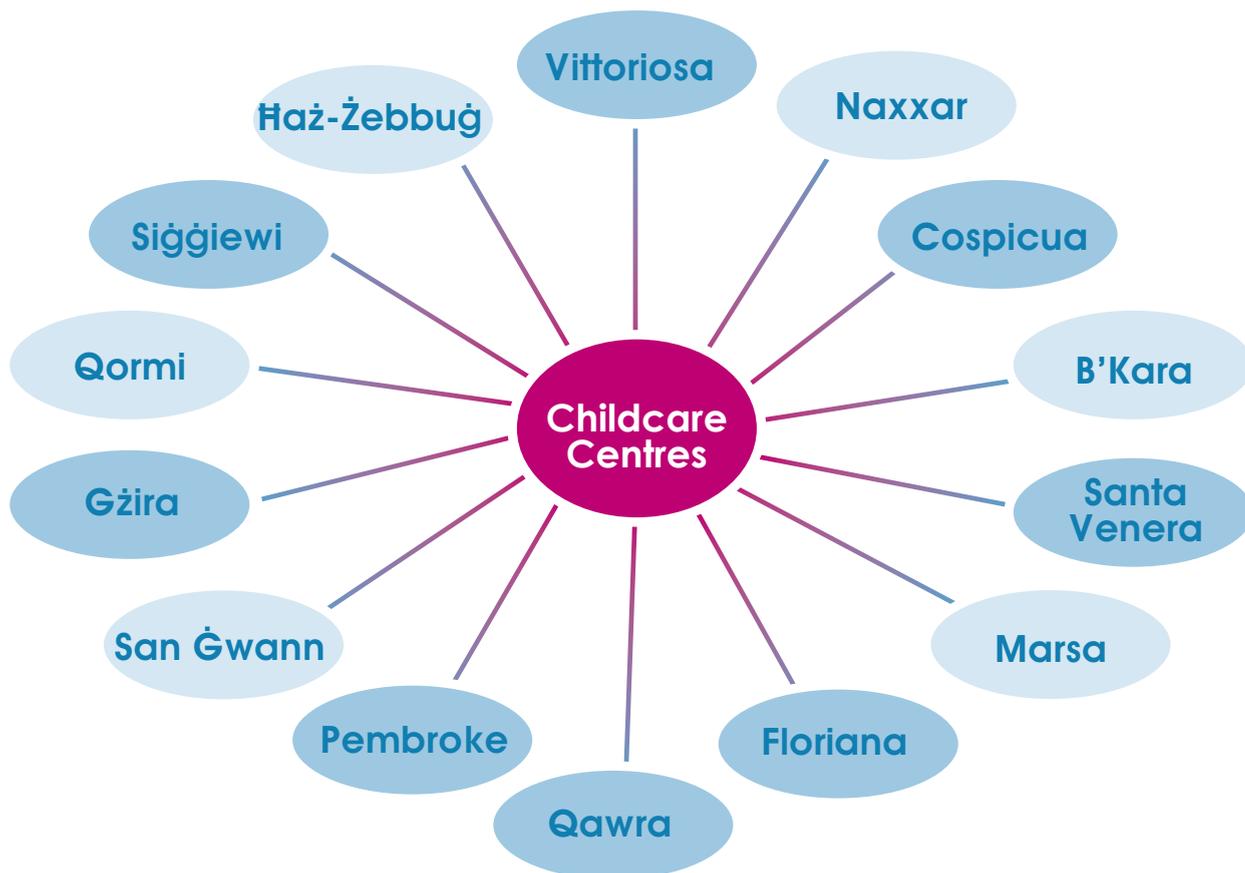


Figure 2: FES Childcare Centres in 2018

By the end of 2018, six hundred and eighty (680) children made use of FES childcare service provision, of whom five hundred and ten (510) families benefitted from the government's Free Childcare Scheme. One hundred and seventy (170) parents made use of the FES Contribution Policy, of whom forty-seven (47) families had a combined family income ranging from €0 to €10,000 (bracket 1). Families falling under bracket 1 are exempted from paying the FES contribution per month.

The following table is a breakdown of service users per childcare centre.

	Childcare Centre	Service Users in 2018	Service Users in the Free Childcare Scheme	Service Users in FES Contribution Policy	Service Users Bracket 1
1	Il-Kuluri, Vittoriosa	40	33	7	3
2	Il-Ferrovija, B'Kara	41	36	5	3
3	Il-Bejta, Cospicua	42	17	25	10
4	It-Tgħanniqa, Floriana	40	28	12	6
5	Il-Qawsalla, Gżira	49	21	28	1
6	Żmeraldi, Haż-Żebbug	9	4	5	0
7	Il-Pespis, Marsa	35	31	4	2
8	Pizzi Pizzi Kanna, Naxxar	61	55	6	0
9	Il-Merill, Pembroke	78	69	9	3
10	Ix-Xemx, Qawra	44	33	11	10
11	It-Tbissima, Qormi	52	46	6	0
12	Is-Sardinella, San Ġwann	66	47	19	5
13	Id-Denfil, Siggiewi	64	49	15	0
14	Il-Bebbuxu, Santa Venera	59	41	18	4
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>47</b>

Table 6: Number of service users in FES childcare centres in 2018

### Collaboration with Professionals

FES Childcare centres work in close collaboration with different professionals such as Aġenzija Appoġġ, Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Speech Therapists, the CDAU multi-disciplinary team and Early Intervention Teachers. Such entities refer the children to the childcare centre and work together with the childcare staff for the child to reach his/her full potential. In 2018, a total of 24 children were referred by professionals to make use of FES childcare Centres.

At FES Childcare Centres, we understand how vital early intervention is, as it introduces the appropriate interventions in a child's life as early as possible to address particular needs, to help him/her become a successful learner and reach his/her full potential. Our childcare centres aim to provide the best possible early intervention to our children. A Consultant in Developmental Paediatrics, who is in charge of the Community Health Services, leads a paediatric medical team that conducts visits at least twice a year per centre and schedules visits according to the needs of the centre.

During the developmental screening all children are seen by the paediatrician/ consultant and if the parents and childcare staff have any concerns they would be able to discuss with the professionals to draw up the appropriate care plan for the child.

In the year 2018, 191 of the children attending FES childcare centres were developmentally screened by Dr Sciberras, 21 of whom were referred to speech therapy, 13 were referred to CDAU and 16 other children required further observation by Dr Sciberras or other professionals.

	Childcare Centre	Children screened in 2018	Children referred to speech	Children referred to CDAU	Children Guidance Support	Referred follow up by Paediatrician	Referred follow up by other professionals
1	Il-Kuluri, Vittoriosa	15	0	0	0	1	0
2	Il-Ferrovija, B'Kara	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Il-Bejta, Cospicua	21	4	3	1	3	0
4	It-Tgħanniqa, Floriana	24	7	4	0	0	1
5	Il-Qawsalla, Gżira	5	0	1	0	0	0
6	Żmeraldi, Haż-Żebbug	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Il-Pespus, Marsa	17	3	1	0	0	0
8	Pizzi Pizzi Kanna, Naxxar	13	1	1	0	1	0
9	Il-Merill, Pembroke	27	1	0	0	0	1
10	Ix-Xemx, Qawra	9	1	0	0	1	0
11	It-Tbissima, Qormi	14	1	0	0	0	0
12	Is-Sardinella, San Ġwann	11	1	1	0	0	1
13	Id-Denfil, Siggiewi	12	2	1	0	3	2
14	Il-Bebbuxu, Santa Venera	23	0	1	1	0	0
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 7: Screenings by Paediatrician, 2018

## Policies

FES Childcare Centres aim to create an environment that:

- Is immediately welcoming through warm, nurturing and positive interaction between staff, children, parents and visitors;
- Fosters a genuine sense of care, security and well-being;
- Encourages each child to develop to his or her fullest potential;
- Ensures the individual's physical necessities of health, safety, nutrition and quality and care are protected through adherence to mandatory regulations and common sense;
- Identifies the needs of the parents and children and supports and strengthens the family unity through responsive communication and programmes.

The FES strives to provide high quality early childhood education and care based on developmentally appropriate practices while it also stresses the importance to work in partnership with the primary care givers of each individual child. In order to reach its goals, FES has worked on implementing the Operations Handbook which mainly includes policies in relation to the service provision, the well-being of the child, programme implementation, issues related to HR and corporate services. These policies are there for both parents and staff members to follow and refer to when they need further guidance and assistance. A hard copy of the policies can be found in each centre. These are updated regularly according to the needs of the service.

## Staff

The FES Services employs 92 childcare assistants on a full-time basis. FES childcare assistants are given 10 hours per week, which can be done from home and logged in the logbook, to plan and prepare child led activities, write observation reports on children, do ongoing research, prepare resources and other work as deemed necessary. The other 30 hours are contact time with the children at the centre. Childcare assistants work on a 6-hour shift basis. FES considers the childcare assistants' preparation time as essential in providing a high-quality service. In addition, staff members are also given



the opportunity and encouraged to attend various talks such as the ones organised by the Early Childhood Development Association of Malta (ECDAM). This serves as the childcare assistants' Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

### **Students**

The FES works in close collaboration with various educational entities to give the opportunity to students who would like to carry out their placement within one of our fourteen childcare centres. Students are in an excellent position to put theory into practice and gain experience in the Early Years sector. FES accepts students, studying for childcare at level 4 or level 5, coming from entities like: MCAST, Jobsplus, Centre for Development Education & Care and Future Focus.

### **Story-Telling Sessions**

*Aqra Miegħi* sessions, in collaboration with the National Literacy Agency (NLA), continued this year in all six centres being: Marsa, Cospicua, Naxxar, Qawra, Pembroke and Qormi. *Aqra Miegħi* sessions are a one-hour free session held once a week. Each session includes sharing of stories from books, singing of nursery rhymes and other fun activities for children from 0 to 3 years. The sessions support the development of reading and other literacy abilities. The parents or relatives are invited to join in every week and take part in this session, whereas childcare assistants are also given the opportunity to continue their professional development and improve their storytelling skills during the session.

### **Staff Training**

An ongoing training programme allows the entity to strengthen the skills to fulfill the requirements needed to provide a good quality service. It is important that all employees in contact with children have a high level of skills and knowledge about early years. In the light of this, FES invests in providing Staff Training to all staff members including Childcare Assistants and the Centre Coordinators.

For another consecutive year, FES organised two Staff Training days in 2018. During the first staff training day held in April 2018, the Employee Support Programme gave a talk regarding the importance of mental health and encouraged the childcare assistants to seek help when needed. An information leaflet about this service was distributed to all staff members. In the afternoon, two speech therapists gave a presentation about Language Development in the Early Years. The day was concluded with a physical team building activity.

In November 2018, another Staff Training Day was organised at the University Residence in Lija. The theme chosen for the November Seminar was, 'Maximising Playtime Potential'. The training started off with an interesting presentation, which also included a workshop, concerning 'Observation and Assessment' by Ms Anna Baldacchino. All childcare assistants and centre coordinators were given the opportunity to work in different groups and share their good practices. Equally informative was the second session that dealt with 'Quality Interaction with Babies and Toddlers' by Ms Catherine Xuereb. Mr Steve Libreri, Manager Child Protection at Agenzija Appogg, gave a talk about Child Abuse and gave important tips to all the staff on how to identify and deal with such situations.

Lastly, throughout the year various members of staff attended different staff training courses. These included First Aid top-up courses, computer skills training courses, art courses and online courses which support further understanding of the various methods used in our childcare centres. Members of staff and courses were identified according to individual training needs analysis. Childcare Centre Coordinators also attended a series of training sessions in 'Communication Skills', 'Mental Health', 'Dealing with Angry Parents' and 'Team Dynamics'. These sessions were organised by FES in collaboration with the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS). Coordinators also had the opportunity to attend '*Seminar for Childcare Managers*' in Malta organised by ECDAM and QAD. Coordinators had workshops about the childcare quality service and had the opportunity to share their experiences. In 2018, most of FES staff members successfully completed the Mental Health First Aid training organised by the Richmond Foundation and are now qualified mental health first aiders.

### **Parental Involvement**

During 2018, all FES Childcare Centres had a minimum of two outings or open days where parents were encouraged to attend and participate in the activities with their children. Some outings which some of our childcare centres visited were: ŽiguŽajg, Aquarium, Playmobil, Ferry Ride, Train Ride and Ta' Qali Petting Farm. Moreover, parents are continuously given feedback about their child and are involved through various meetings and visits at the centre.

### **Quality Assurance**

Apart from the ongoing staff training, FES hosts ongoing support visits on site related to the service and programme quality to make sure that the best possible service is being provided. By the end of 2018, all childcare centres were visited by the Quality Assurance Department from the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) and they were all successfully given a certificate of conditional provisional registration. The DQSE certified that the FES childcare centres are constantly providing a high-quality educational standard through a satisfactory programme and appropriate educational services.

# CORPORATE SERVICES

## Introduction

The Corporate Services Unit started operating in January 2017. The FES has for a long time felt the need to strengthen the Business Support Unit with such function, with the aim to cover issues related to Estate Management, Procurement, IT, Communications, Data Protection and other administration related matters.

## Corporate Services during 2017

### Estate Management

Childcare centres require continuous maintenance to ensure that there are no health and safety hazards. During 2017, health and safety risk assessment reports were prepared by MEDE officials and various risks were addressed.

The childcare centre in Floriana had all of its rooms freshly painted and other minor maintenance tasks were tackled. The same was done at the Qawra childcare centre, which also had a broken AC replaced, broken soffit tiles changed, and a major plumbing problem was dealt with. Another centre that was refurbished was that in Santa Venera which had its walls painted and soffit fixed. New outdoor area canopies were installed at Naxxar and San Ġwann childcare centres, which now offer a more sheltered environment to children when playing outside. All such works would not have been possible without the assistance of the MEDE maintenance team who carried out all the above-mentioned works.

Throughout 2017 various discussions were held with the Foundation for Tomorrow Schools (FTS) to have ACs installed at Gżira, Pembroke, Bormla, Floriana, Siggiewi, Marsa, B'Kara and Haż-Żebbuġ childcare centres. In August 2017, such a system was installed at Gżira. Thanks to a close collaboration with FTS, foam wall panels, foam tiles and rubber corners were also acquired to further equip all childcare centres.



Discussions were held with Head of School at B'Kara Primary school to refurbish the area used by Klabb 3-16.

New childcare centres were given priority throughout the year. After close collaboration with FTS and MEDE all the requirements to obtain a license for the B'Kara childcare centre were met. The centre was successfully transferred from an old building at B'Kara Railway Station to new larger premises located within the primary school of the same locality. The centre was officially inaugurated in May 2017 and was renamed as il-Ferrovija.

Discussions were underway to open new centres in Haż-Żebbuġ and St Julians. By the end of 2017, the Haż-Żebbuġ centre was in an advanced state of works and meetings were held with the DQSE to ensure that all pending items are tackled. With regards to St Julians, meetings were held with the FTS to determine the requirements and a tender was drafted.

### **Procurement**

In 2017 the FES has issued requests for quotations to engage the services of a Legal Advisor for the first time. This further assisted the management team in various queries where legal advice was deemed appropriate, as well as during the drafting of a data protection policy.

A request for quotation was also issued for insurances for the first time. The FES aimed to have all its centres insured for the best interest of the service users. By end of year, such quotations were still being evaluated.

The FES has embarked on a departmental tender which covered all stationery requirements for Skolasajf. This incorporated 105 items which were distributed amongst all centres during the first weeks of operations of Skolasajf.

### **I.T.**

An IT inventory database was created providing information on all the laptops, PCs and printers owned by the FES across all centres. It is important to note that due to lack of human resources, the information was collected via email and no physical checking could take place. In close collaboration with MEDE IMU, the MITA inventory was also reviewed and updated accordingly.

During 2017, all Klabb 3-16 centres were equipped with a black & white printer whilst all childcare centres were equipped with a colour printer. Various issues in relation to network points were addressed, and where necessary ERFs' were raised. By end of year, all FES employees at head office could make use of a shared network system backed up by MITA. 3 new PCs were acquired for Klabb 3-16 centres and another 3 for Head Office staff. The necessary IT equipment was also purchased for Zebbuġ childcare centre.

The FES website was totally revamped in 2017. Upon management's decision, the Foundation shifted its website to MITA environment which was deemed safer and more manageable. The new website has more information about the services offered and is much easier to use.

## **Communications**

Management noted that different versions of the FES logo were being used by different centres. To eliminate this, the logo was updated and now the FES has one standard logo in both Maltese and English. All childcare centres' signs were updated to reflect this and a generic FES roll up banner was also produced to be used during events.

The FES Facebook page was further used to promote vacancies, Skolasajf initiatives and to share photos of activities organised by various centres. Assistance in relation to communications and public relations was provided during visits carried out by the Minister for Education and Employment in our centres. These included the inauguration of B'Kara childcare centre as mentioned earlier, a visit at Siggiewi Klabb 3-16 and Naxxar childcare centres.

In 2017, the Skolasajf logo was designed in-house. This was used in all advertising done and roll up banners following this year's theme were also produced. Further collaboration with MEDE resulted in having a video at the end of Skolasajf, which showed the main highlights of this year's events. Assistance was provided to various Skolasajf centres during their activities.

During 2017, the annual reports for 2015 and 2016 were collated, designed and published on the FES website. An electronic leaflet describing FES services was also designed.

## **Skolasajf**

Skolasajf 2017 proved to be quite challenging for the Corporate Service Unit since it was the first time it was involved and the request to draft a tender for stationery came rather late in the year.

The Corporate Services Unit, apart from assisting in communication related matters as already explained, oversaw all procurement and distribution of material across Skolasajf centres. Apart from stationery, cleaning material was procured and distributed before the start of Skolasajf. Each centre coordinator was presented with a pack which included first aid boxes, receipt books, stamps, mobile phones (where applicable), pen drives, manuals and other requested items. At the end of summer, all such items were brought back at Head Office, together with extra stationery items. Support was also provided throughout summer in relation to maintenance issues, additional items that had to be procured, and in the absence of a Services Manager transport issues were also addressed.

## **Corporate Services during 2018**

### **Introduction**

During its second year of operations, the Corporate Services function was faced with more challenges due to the ever-increasing needs of the FES. Various attempts were made to increase the staff complement within such Unit, but to no avail. Nonetheless, various targets were reached in 2018 as explained below. For the first time, the Corporate Services Manager started attending the monthly meetings held with childcare centre, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf coordinators. This helped not only to have a clearer picture of what happens at centre level but also to provide assistance where and when required in a more timely manner.

## Estate Management

The main highlight in terms of estate management in 2018 was the installation of ACs within childcare centres. In collaboration with the FTS, ACs were installed at Haż-Żebbuġ, Siggiewi, Qormi, Bormla, Marsa, Floriana, B'Kara and Pembroke childcare centres. In all the mentioned centres (except for Haż-Żebbuġ and B'Kara), a refurbishment was also undertaken which included painting of the centres and addressing other issues emanating from the Health and Safety reports such as the preparation of electrical certificates and the installation of Thermostatic Mixing Valves. Apart from these, faulty ACs were also replaced at Naxxar and Birgu childcare centres.



Other maintenance issues within centres were addressed with the help of MEDE and FTS. These included:

- Gżira childcare centre: installation of gates, painting of the outside boundary wall, maintenance of the soft flooring in the outdoor area, upgrading of the drainage system;
- Birgu childcare centre: fixing of membrane, maintenance of the soft flooring in the outdoor area;
- Qormi childcare centre: installation of soffit, upgrading of outdoor area;
- Bormla childcare centre: installation of soffit;
- Siggiewi childcare centre: upgrading of outdoor area;
- San Ġwann childcare centre: upgrading of outdoor area;
- Qawra childcare centre: changing of lighting system;
- Santa Venera childcare centre: changing of lighting system;
- Floriana childcare centre: changing of main door and windows;
- installation of fans across various Skolasajf centres.





In 2018, all the evacuation plans and health and safety reports for childcare centres were updated and presented to the DQSE. By end of year, the FES had a compliance certificate for B'Kara, Haż-Żebbuġ and Marsa childcare centres in place.

Major issues pertaining to Klabb 3-16 centres in 2018 were cleaning matters which were addressed with MEDE or directly with the contractor depending on the urgency. Two new Klabb 3-16 centres were opened, namely at Mqabba and Gżira, for which assistance was

provided in terms of networking and resources needed.

With regards to new childcare centres, the Corporate Services Unit invested a lot of time and energy to close off the works at the Haż-Żebbuġ childcare centre. All the items required for the centre to start operating were acquired. Together with the Services Manager, the centre was set up and various meetings were held with different stakeholders to ensure that the requirements requested by the DQSE were met. Direction was provided to MEDE and FTS workers to ensure that works were completed. All requirements were eventually met and the centre opened in October 2018.

By end of 2018 various discussions were held in relation to the M'Scala childcare centre. All required equipment was acquired and a site visit was also held with the DQSE. By end of 2018 further documentation was requested to be able to proceed with the licensing process.

Various site visits and meetings with the FTS were held in relation to the childcare centre in St Julians. Support was also provided during the evaluation of two tenders issued by the FTS which were both cancelled. Various discussions were held in relation to the MEDE childcare centre. Both MEDE and St Julians centres were not yet opened by end of 2018 and further guidance is required by MEDE on such matter.

During 2018, the FES was informed that it needs to seek alternative office space for its head office. Discussions were held at management level about the way forward, and apart from assistance procurement-wise, a cleaning up exercise was undertaken at Head office where broken items were discarded and some items were also packed.

### **Procurement**

2018 was quite a challenging year in terms of procurement with the drafting of 6 tenders as following:

Support was provided to MEDE in the drafting of a tender to seek alternative office space for the FES Head Office. The tender was issued three times and by the end of 2018 it was still under evaluation.

The stationery tender for Skolasajf 2018 was issued successfully and its implementation was far better than the previous year. Another tender for consumables was submitted

but was unfortunately cancelled by the Department of Contracts citing Green Public Procurement reasons. However, quotations were obtained respecting public procurement regulations, and consumables were still provided in time for Skolasajf as planned.

Other tenders which were drafted during 2018 were for Skolasajf 2019 stationery, potable water and payroll services. By end of year, these were all still being vetted by MEDE.

Upon approval of the newly appointed CEO, all procurement related issues were dealt with accordingly. During 2018, all centres benefitted from additional resources such as toys, shredders, intercoms, safes, furniture, health and safety equipment, office cabinets, coin sorters, IT equipment, amongst others. Apart from this, the quotations for insurance services mentioned beforehand were finalised in 2018.

## **IT**

In 2018, various technical issues were addressed with MEDE IMU and MITA, and where necessary ERFS' were raised. A number of PCs were replaced at HO, new IT equipment was ordered for Marsascala Childcare Centre and new laptops ordered for all Klabb 3-16 centres. Some photocopiers across centres were changed since they were no longer functioning.

## **Communications**

The FES Facebook page was further used to promote HR vacancies, Skolasajf initiatives and to share photos of activities organised by the FES various centres.

In collaboration with MEDE, 5 short video clips were produced showing childcare centre coordinators and carers explaining their role and encouraging those interested to apply for the position. These shall be further used as a promotion when vacancies for such position arise within the FES.

## **Skolasajf**

2018 served to further strengthen the operations related to Skolasajf. With regards to procurement, a tender for stationery was issued for the second time, and operation-wise this proved to be much smoother than the previous year. All items required for Skolasajf to operate were acquired on time, and further centralisation was adopted. When centres requested additional items, these were delivered within 1 week thanks to the FES messenger.

The contracts that bind the FES with the respective Head of School for the 8-week Skolasajf period were updated. These were reviewed to make sure that there is a better understanding between both parties and were made easier to understand and fill-in by centre coordinators.

MEDE officials assisted in the creation of a risk assessment which covers the Skolasajf and Klabb 3-16 programmes. Thus, apart from the normal health and safety risk assessment provided by the Head of School, this year the FES further ensured the health and safety of children under its care by also covering the programmes and activities delivered within all of its centres.

# RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

## Recruitment

Throughout the year, the Unit invested a substantial amount of energy in recruitment. This function is critical to the unit and to the FES in general since the mammoth task of employing over 1500 personnel for a temporary period of eight weeks is by no means a small feat. The following list depicts all the calls issued during the year.

Call Title	Persons Engaged
Head of Programmes	2
Programme Secretary	2
Manager Human Resources	1
Coordinator – Human Resources	1
Manager PPDI	1
Childcare Assistants	12
Playworker Skolasajf	798
Child Support Worker Skolasajf	517
Playworker with Extra Responsibility Skolasajf	35
Centre Coordinator Skolasajf	52
Regional Coordinator Skolasajf	10
Homework Tutors	8
Manager PPDI	1
Centre Coordinators Klabb 3-16	7
Acting Centre Coordinators Klabb 3-16 Internal	12
Manager Corporate Services	1
Play Workers Klabb 3-16	71
Childcare Centre Coordinators	6
Programme Coordinator (Internal)	3
Playworker with Extra Responsibility Klabb 3-16	1
Manager Corporate Services	1
Chief Executive Officer	1
Sports Coordinator Skolasajf	1

Table 8: Recruitment, 2017

The recruitment process for Skolasajf is carried out from January till the beginning of Skolasajf which is mid-July. This requires liaison with other Departments such as Services and Programmes and centre coordinators from the childcare centres and Klabb 3-16. The whole process requires review of applications for all calls where every board assigned marks applications eligible or not as per eligibility requirements. Then there is the interviewing stage which is also complicated given that at times there are more than

500 interviews in one day, some of which are written interviews and others are one to one. The next step is the correction and marking of all papers followed by the inputting of marks in the system where the final results are ranked in order to allow placements being done according to ranking. This leads to the staffing of around 60 Skolasajf centres spread throughout Malta and Gozo.

### **Overheads within the Department**

During 2017 the Department saw the engagement of a Programme Coordinator related directly to HR issues. This allowed further improvement to be carried out as regards to policies and procedures related to the administration required, such as engagement and termination of employees, which as already mentioned during Skolasajf covers around 1,500 employees.

### **Training**

During 2017, the HR Department assisted in the organisation of training for childcare staff. The FES organises two seminars during the year for childcare staff. One is usually carried out in April and the other in November. As already mentioned in previous sections of this report, different topics were discussed such as Child Protection Issues, Use of Social Stories, ways of how to deal with challenging behaviour and an analysis of how the programme implemented could directly influence the behaviour of the children. Around 110 employees attend for every seminar. Certificates of attendance are handed out to employees.

During this year the HR Department organised induction training sessions for childcare staff so to help them better understand the policies and procedures already established. Also in this case, certificates of attendance were presented.

### **The service during 2018**

Throughout this year there was an increase in manpower in the HR Department. A programme secretary and a coordinator joined the team. This allowed to better replace staff in centres where necessary in a timely manner.

### **Skolasajf 2018**

Once again the focus of the recruitment process was Skolasajf. This year there was an increase in the number of calls issued due to the fact that calls were issued on a shorter period so to allow immediate placements. This year there was also the introduction of sports playworkers within the structure of Skolasajf. The HR Department supported the organisation of induction meetings for the different roles of Skolasajf. For the first time as well a contact session was organised with an induction meeting and this allowed for a contract signing session to be organised with 200 contracts being signed at the same time. The increase in manpower within the HR Department allowed also for immediate action to be taken where necessary as regards to staff who were not performing well. This allowed better service provision since issues were being dealt with promptly.

### **Childcare**

The HR Department supported the opening of the new childcare centre in Haż-Żebbuġ by recruiting the required staff.

The HR Department underwent an exercise where most of the staff applied for accreditation by the DQSE. Where required, training was provided for first aid. The next step required is the organisation of food handling courses for childcare staff.

### **Klabb 3-16**

The HR Department liaised directly with the Services Department to ensure that vacancies within Klabb 3-16 centres were filled immediately. This required an intensive recruitment process to ensure that the appropriate staff with the required availabilities were employed. The HR Department also supported the Programmes Unit in the organisation of the Playworker's Development Course which will allow the recruitment of employees who do not have the required qualifications apart from a school leaving certificate.

### **Recruitment**

The following list depicts the different calls issued within this year. This process helped the organisation structure to strengthen itself and immediate action was taken where required to ensure that service provision is not disrupted.

<b>Call Title</b>	<b>Persons Engaged</b>
Centre Coordinator - Skolasajf	56
Playworkers - Skolasajf	718
Child Support Workers - Skolasajf	725
Playworker with Extra Responsibility - Skolasajf	140
Sports Playworkers - Skolasajf	66
Regional Coordinator - Skolasajf	10
Centre Coordinator - Childcare	8
Programme Coordinator - Programmes Unit	2
Coordinator - Procurement and Administration	1
Administrative Officer Accounts	1
Coordinator - Business Support	1
Programme Secretary - Programmes Unit	1
Childcare Assistant	9
Play Workers Klabb 3-16 (Indefinite)	138
Play Workers Klabb 3-16 (Definite)	77
Programme Secretary - Human Resources	1
Tutors Klabb 3-16	34
Coordinator - Finance	1
Manager - Finance	1
Head Business Support Unit	1

*Table 9: Recruitment, 2018*

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

### DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT

For the year ended 31 December 2018

	Pages	2018 €	2017 €
<b>GOVERNMENT SUBVENTION</b>		700,000	530,000
<b>GOVERNMENT ADDITIONAL FUNDING</b>		-	1,708,000
Other income		12,141	-
Surplus/ (deficit) from operations	31–32	347,486	(652,181)
<b>TOTAL OPERATING SURPLUS</b>		<u>1,059,627</u>	<u>1,585,819</u>
Administrative expenses	30	(762,680)	(666,099)
<b>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>		<u>€ 296,947</u>	<u>€ 919,720</u>

## FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

### DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT

For the year ended 31 December 2018

	2018	2017
	€	€
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES</b>		
Accountancy fees	56,464	2,254
Advertising and recruitment fees	2,643	5,610
Audit fee	4,130	3,776
Bank and other charges	4,148	3,791
Cleaning	4,918	5,347
Consumables	6,940	707
Depreciation charge	35,670	31,873
Fines and penalties	30,391	-
Honoraria	26,598	15,734
Insurances	6,497	-
Licenses and fees	1,205	2,667
Motor vehicle expenses	2,325	2,533
Office expenses	8,811	8,645
Professional services	15,937	6,325
Repair and maintenance	1,212	6,361
Safety and security	-	1,553
Stationery and printing	6,524	4,640
Subcontracted workers	13,935	8,638
Sundry expenses	3,286	4,155
Telephones	8,230	3,504
Transportation costs	104	181
Wages and salaries	522,712	547,805
	<u>€ 762,680</u>	<u>€ 666,099</u>

## FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

### DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT (OPERATIONAL SEGMENTS)

For the year ended 31 December 2018

	<b>CHILD CARE</b>	<b>SKOLA SAJF</b>	<b>KLABB 3 -16</b>	<b>OTHER</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018
	€	€	€	€	€
Income from clients	51,070	524,602	383,875	-	959,547
Subsidy from Government	1,094,907	-	-	-	1,094,907
<b>TOTAL REVENUES FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>1,145,977</b>	<b>524,602</b>	<b>383,875</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,054,454</b>
<b>REIMBURSEMENTS</b>					
Government	1,922,114	2,110,739	1,144,646	170,006	5,347,505
EU Funding	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL REIMBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>1,922,114</b>	<b>2,110,739</b>	<b>1,144,646</b>	<b>170,006</b>	<b>5,347,505</b>
<b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>	<b>3,068,091</b>	<b>2,635,341</b>	<b>1,528,521</b>	<b>170,006</b>	<b>7,401,959</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Operational expenses	342,072	232,861	169,623	-	744,556
Wages	1,767,010	3,098,363	1,309,428	135,116	6,309,917
<b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>	<b>2,109,082</b>	<b>3,331,224</b>	<b>1,479,051</b>	<b>135,116</b>	<b>7,054,473</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS</b>	<b>€ 959,009</b>	<b>€ (695,883)</b>	<b>€ 49,470</b>	<b>€ 34,890</b>	<b>€ 347,486</b>

## FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

### DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT (OPERATIONAL SEGMENTS)

For the year ended 31 December 2018

	CHILD CARE 2017 €	SKOLA SAJF 2017 €	KLABB 3 -16 2017 €	OTHER 2017 €	TOTAL 2017 €
Income from clients	56,615	291,521	435,423	-	783,559
Subsidy from Government	1,010,660	-	-	-	1,010,660
<b>TOTAL REVENUES FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>1,067,275</b>	<b>291,521</b>	<b>435,423</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,794,219</b>
<b>REIMBURSEMENTS</b>					
Government	1,217,912	1,178,911	1,042,157	236,926	3,675,906
EU Funding	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL REIMBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>1,217,912</b>	<b>1,178,911</b>	<b>1,042,157</b>	<b>236,926</b>	<b>3,675,906</b>
<b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>	<b>2,285,187</b>	<b>1,470,432</b>	<b>1,477,580</b>	<b>236,926</b>	<b>5,470,125</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Operational expenses	128,908	107,830	61,051	-	297,789
Wages	1,615,793	2,318,828	1,626,207	192,774	5,824,517
Net irrecoverable wages	-	70,915	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>	<b>1,744,701</b>	<b>2,497,573</b>	<b>1,687,258</b>	<b>192,774</b>	<b>6,122,306</b>
<b>NET (DEFICIT) / SURPLUS</b>	<b>€ 540,486</b>	<b>€ (1,027,141)</b>	<b>€ (209,678)</b>	<b>€ 44,152</b>	<b>€ (652,181)</b>



