



Annual Report

2019

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Foundation for Educational Services

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Board Members

Chairperson

Ms Pamela Schembri

Members

Prof. Andrew Azzopardi

Mr Mario Mallia

Mr Joseph Abela

Ms Carmen Nygaard

Mr Paul Debono

Dr Tiffany Saliba

Board Secretary

Ms Marcon Cassar



Message from the Minister



The Foundation for Educational Services has always played an important role in the educational sector. The Childcare centres, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf services all help in reassuring that working parents have a more than adequate place where their children can stay and continue their development. This is an excellent result from all the hard work that was, and is still being put in, by the administration and all staff.

In order to enrich the children's learning experience, we aim to strengthen the provision of non-formal teaching through interesting activities that vary on a daily basis. This is also done as our objective isn't simply to watch the children, but also to enable them to enjoy a more colourful journey in the educational sector. Our

ambition is that each and every child goes home wanting to come back and enhance his view on education.

As a Government, we are committed to seeing that in this ever-changing world, we meet the demands of parents and families. This can only be done with the support and the hard work of the employees as well as stakeholders in order to give parents peace of mind that their children are in exceptional hands and are well taken care of, apart from also helping them with their career development.

To conclude, I thank all those involved in the success that was seen in the past years, and the hard work during the unprecedented times due to COVID-19. I am certain that we will see the same level of excellence in the coming years.

Message from the Chairperson



It is an honour to be entrusted as Chair of the Board to help steer our future direction across so many different fields. It is my aim to continue building on the work done during the past twelve months which has seen a progressive change in the way the Foundation for Educational Services works. This with the aim of enhancing the experience of our participants. This includes improving the way services are delivered to provide a better experience to our children.

This annual report is a thorough reflection of a busy and productive year. Of course, our outstanding employees, led by the CEO Mr Dermot Galea, are the reason we are celebrating another successful year. Heartfelt thanks also goes to my predecessor Ms Elena Borg for her contribution and work during her chairmanship.

This year, we have been talking and listening more to our customers (children and their immediate family). By exploring what really matters, participants can have better experience of our services. Moreover, we are continuing to measure and built on the impact of our work. Valuable work without which the FES cannot continue to grow its reputation as one of Malta's essential services. I encourage both children and parents to continuously come forward and suggest new ideas of how our programmes and initiatives can be improved.

In order to meet the future needs of the population, change is inevitable. However, we must embrace that change while keeping our children in the heart of all we do. Working in partnership is not a new concept. We already have a long history of innovative partnership work. The aim is to increase the number of partnerships as the opportunities are huge. We are already experiencing the development of new projects and programmes which are making a positive impact.

The Board and Management are constantly seeking to find new ways to act as a platform to exhibit the work done by the Foundation. I am constantly impressed with the small and significant milestones achieved by the Foundation itself with the help of its many centres. Milestones which are very important in the children's lives. I firmly believe that these milestones should be celebrated and the people in society should know about them.

I would like to conclude by thanking the entire FES team for their contribution and commitment over the last months. I am encouraged by the progress we have made, and look forward to working with you all to make sure that through great work and innovative ideas, we will continue to be of good service to all Maltese families.

Message from the CEO



The period under review in this report presents a time of strengthening of the entity in its endeavours to further improve its services. The ongoing synergy between the Board of Directors and the FES Management Team was instrumental in the further development of the core structure of the Foundation in terms of human resources and its service delivery.

One of the measures implemented was the merger of the HR Department and the Services Department to create the Human Resources & Support Services Unit. Such a change in structure has enabled a more fruitful cooperation and a better management of the human capital which is the basis of the services offered by FES.

Other marked developments in the organisational structure feature the creation of two new positions within the Programmes Unit. These include the position of Programme Coordinator Inclusion to provide a more focused and individualised service to our service users in the centres, in all of the three services (Childcare, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf). The Programme Coordinator Inclusion is a key position as we felt that as a Foundation, we need to provide better assistance and be of support not only to the students but also to their families.

The other position is that of Marketing and Communications Coordinator, with the key responsibilities of highlighting the Foundation's achievements and nurturing the consumer-supplier relationship through ongoing communication. The Marketing and Communications Coordinator will improve the customer-care service of the Foundation and will promote more what is being done, which at times goes unnoticed.

The Foundation's commitment towards the community was felt not only in its strengthening of the family-friendly services, but also in its contribution towards a philanthropic cause. This was signalled by the signing of a memorandum of understanding between FES and the Karl Vella Foundation. This enabled FES to assist the Karl Vella Foundation by providing the funds for three playworkers to assist during the service provided by KVF.

As a concluding note, I would like to thank the outgoing Chairperson Ms Elena Borg as she has been instrumental during these last three years at the helm of FES. Her guidance helped in the development of new policies related to social cases. Her belief in social inclusion helped a lot of cases to be addressed and be given the service they deserve. Ms Borg was also fundamental in the restructuring of the FES to be able to cater for the ever-growing services. She gave a lot of importance to teamwork both at board level and at management level. I would also like to welcome Ms Pamela Schembri as the new Chairperson, together with Dr Tiffany Farrugia as a new board member. We look forward to keep striving ahead to improve our services.

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 of the Foundation that enables us to provide an improved service to the children and their families.

Message from Ms Elena Borg



As I sit here in the midst of a pandemic, I was invited by Mr. Dermot Galea, FES CEO to write a few words on the work done during the year 2019, when I was still Chairperson of FES. Honoured by this request, I accepted with an open heart and immediately my thoughts went through the memories of this challenging yet beautiful journey.

So many obstacles yet so many successes throughout. New positions, developments in the operations and services, a memorandum of understanding and policies to increase social inclusion, and commencing the pathway for new offices, are just a few of the many milestones we went through.

We could have easily given up with so many meetings and desperate moments that we faced. Yet, one thing that kept us going was the teamwork, based on the solid genuine and humane relationships we were able to build between the Ministry, the Board, the Management, and the staff.

When Minister Evarist Bartolo, back then Minister for Education and Employment, appointed me as Chairperson of FES, he explained that my role was to be there for others; to serve. From my heart I thank

him for his teachings and ongoing support. I sincerely hope that throughout my chairmanship, I truly served and made justice to all that he taught me.

Although I am no longer Chairperson, my heart will always be with FES and the beautiful children this entity is there to serve. I heartily wish Minister Owen Bonnici, Permanent Secretary Dr. Frank Fabri, and my successor FES Chairperson Ms. Pamela Schembri, all the best of luck in this journey. I have no doubt that with all their experience and abilities, together with the staff and management led by Mr. Dermot Galea, they will all continue shining even during the darkest of days.

I conclude with a heartfelt thanks to all Board members, staff, and partners who have come across my journey. Thank you for contributing to enhancing FES. A special thanks goes in particular to Board Secretary Ms. Marcon Cassar, and the CEO Dermot Galea, who have not only stood by me through thick and thin, but have challenged me in becoming a better Chairperson and a better person with their presence.

So FES, keep going strong for the years to come, and keep making me proud.



The FES Organisational Structure

The FES organisational structure, headed by the CEO, is made up of three departments. These are the Business Support Department, the Programmes Department, and the HR, Operations and Support Services Department. During 2019 there was an investment in the management team, with the addition of the role of Head of Department Human Resources to the organisational structure.

The Business Support Department offers administrative support to the Programmes Department, and to the HR, Operations and Support Services Department. This includes Finance and Accounting, Procurement, Administration, Estate Management, Information Technology & Communications. Throughout the year, human resources were added both to the Corporate Unit and to the Finance Unit, so as to be able to deal with the expansion of the organisation. This included the appointment of an Administration Coordinator and a Finance Coordinator.

The Programmes Department is the services arm of the FES. It is responsible for the design, development, and implementation of the programme in all FES centres. In the beginning of 2019, this department also embodied the Services Unit, which deals with the day to day operations of the centres. For the Programmes Development Unit to be more effective, it was decided that the Services Unit would no longer be part of this department but be combined with the HR Department. Following this change in the structure, an extra function was added

to the Programmes Department, making it also responsible for the marketing of the organisation. For this reason, there was the appointment of a Marketing and Communications Coordinator. Another development within this department was the role of the Programme Coordinator Inclusion. This role enables the entity to focus more on students who require additional attention.

This role enables the entity to focus more on students who require additional attention.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for all recruitment within the organisation. This is an important role within the structure, given that there needs to be the employment of around 1,500 workers per year for Skolasajf to operate. At the same time, there is also the management of human resources within the Head Office, the childcare centres and Klabb 3-16 centres. As

already mentioned, during 2019 there was the transition of the Services Unit to this department as well. This enabled the two units to work together better on the daily operations of all the FES Centres.

All these departments helped to coordinate a structure made up of programme coordinators, coordinators,

programme secretaries, centre coordinators, childcare assistants, playworkers with extra responsibilities, playworkers, sports playworkers, child support workers and tutors. Together, these different sections contribute towards the success of the organisation.



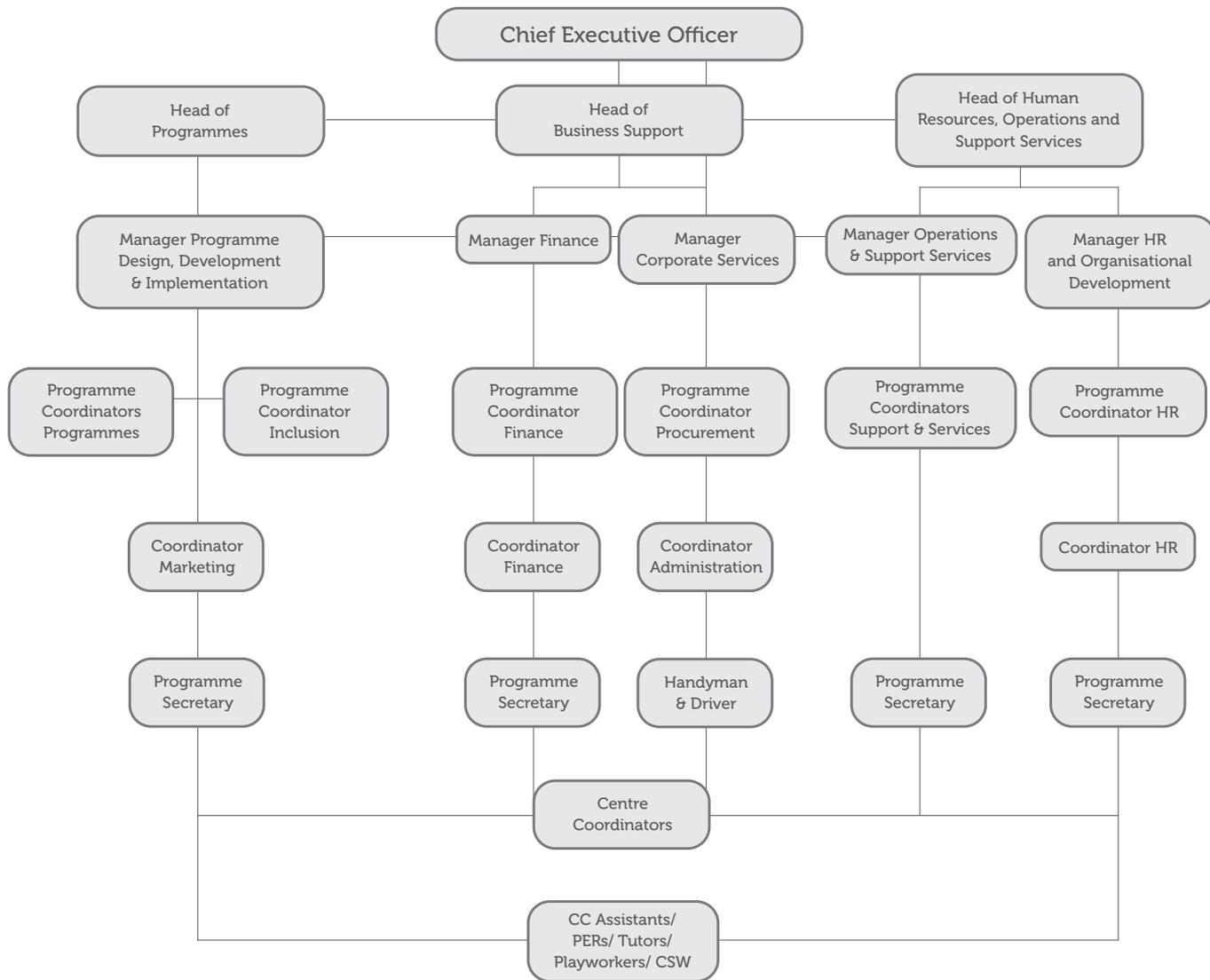


Figure 1: The FES Structure



Klabb 3-16

Introduction

Nowadays the Klabb 3-16 after-school service has become an important ancillary benefit associated with the state primary school that parents may choose for their child. However, it is to be noted that the Klabb 3-16 service is open for any child aged between 3 and 16 years, whether hailing from a state, church or an independent school.

The service's availability in the selected centres according to the demand by clients, is offering peace of mind to parents who make use of the service. Whether they need after school care for their children, assistance with their academic tasks or as a safe platform for socialisation for the child, the Klabb 3-16 service checks all the boxes.

It is this impact at such different levels that has embedded the Klabb 3-16 service as an extension of the state learning institutions. It is also a form of a partnership with the parents for a more stable synergy between work and family life.

The Klabb 3-16 Service during 2019

At the beginning of the scholastic year 2018/2019, the number of Klabb 3-16 centres increased from 26 to 28, with the opening of the service in the localities of Gzira and Imqabba. This addition in locations was retained throughout 2019, enabling many more children to continue benefitting from a programme of non-formal activities and homework assistance.

The period of operation of the Klabb 3-16 service is ongoing throughout the scholastic year. Starting at 2:30pm



immediately after school dismissal, it carries on till 6pm. During the month of June, the Klabb (as it is colloquially known) commences when lessons finish at noon. Neither does the Klabb leave parents stranded during the school holidays, as even then, the service continues to bolster the parents' work commitments with a full day of service. It is also provided during the summer months as a simultaneous service during Skolasajf; here the Klabb service is offered in the early morning and in the afternoon till the evening.

Service Use during the Holidays Service 2019

Period	Number of Service Users
Carnival holidays	728
Easter holidays	5123
Bridge holidays (June)	1543
Bridge holidays (September)	1863
Mid-term holidays	923
Christmas holidays	674

Table 1: Service Use during the Holidays Service 2019

The People Element of the Service

Service for these children is provided by a staff complement that fulfils various roles for the efficient running of each centre. The service in each centre is coordinated by a centre coordinator, who in turn may be assisted by a playworker with extra responsibilities. Homework tutors are teachers who hold a teaching warrant, employed to assist the children in any difficulties that they may encounter while doing their homework. Once the academic side is ready, the playworkers and child support workers step in to keep the children engaged in a number of non-formal activities that fall under various learning domains.

The roles of the playworkers and of the child support workers are complementary to each other, as both work to foster an inclusive and serene environment at the centre. They involve children in activities that enable them to discover and strengthen their natural competences, be they in physical games, artistic productions, or social skills, to name a few. The introduction of the service of the child support workers during the Klabb 3-16 service was a step forward to make sure that children of all abilities can make use of the service safely, and parents are assured that their children's individual needs are catered for.

Staff Employed with Klabb 3-16 during 2019

Role	Numbers
Centre Coordinators	28
Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities	15
Homework Tutors	97
Playworkers	450
Child Support Workers	45
Total	635

Table 2: Staff Employed with Klabb 3-16 during 2019

Klabb 3-16 during 2019

All these workers were essential to provide the required care and attention to 4,058 children, which is a 40% increase on the figure of 2,888 recorded in 2018.



Annual Average Active Users per
Klabb 3-16 Centre (2019)

Centres	Annual Average Active Users
Attard	179
B'Buga	113
B'Kara	129
Fgura	180
Gzira	86
Hamrun	123
Haż-Żebbuġ	115
Luqa	148
Mellieħa	203
Mġarr	104
Mosta	157
Mqabba	70
M'Scala	253
Naxxar	170
Paola	118
Pembroke	190
Qormi S.G.	137
Rabat	76
San Gwann	181
Siggiewi	85
Sliema	142
St Paul's Bay	307
St. Julians	105
St. Venera	86
Victoria	86
Zabbar A	198
Zejtun	149
Zurrieq	168

Table 3: Annual Average Active Users per Klabb 3-16 Centre (2019)



The introduction of the service of the child support workers during the Klabb 3-16 service was a step forward to make sure that children of all abilities can make use of the service safely.

Staff Development

Since a service is so dependable on the human resource element of an organisation, FES strives to focus on keeping the Klabb 3-16 staff updated on its operational policies, and also on programme implementation. This aim was reached during monthly meetings with representatives from each department of the FES Head Office. The meetings were held in small group format, facilitating discussion and exchange of ideas and good practice.

A series of training sessions were also held for playworkers with extra responsibilities, in their role as assistants to the centre coordinators. The sessions were delivered by members from each department at the FES Head Office, giving the PERs the opportunity to participate in

continuous development sessions that were tailored to the needs of their specific centres.

Training was also provided on topical subjects to Klabb 3-16 staff through partnership with other agencies. One subject was *Autism and Challenging Behaviour* delivered by Dr Jonathan Camenzuli, Education Officer Inclusive Education from the National School Support Services (NSSS). Participating staff members talked about different scenarios that they face when carrying out their duty, and Dr Camenzuli discussed with them appropriate coping mechanisms that could help them take charge of the situation. The staff were in this way given information and practical solutions when faced with difficult situations such as oppositional behaviour, hyperactive behaviour and aggressive language among others.

FES also worked in conjunction with the Institute for Education and held a number of courses for playworkers and child support workers.

During 2019, FES offered 7 courses for playworkers which catered for 77 applicants, and 3 courses for child support workers, which catered for 54 applicants.

The playworkers course provided an opportunity to applicants who had no qualifications or experience, but wanted to work with Klabb 3-16. Following an induction session at the FES Head Office, applicants attended various lectures to prepare themselves for their role. The child support workers courses prepared applicants who already had experience as playworkers, to work with children who had diverse educational needs. The courses were delivered by a number of professionals in the field of Inclusive Education.



Topics Covered in the PW and CSW Courses (2019)

PW Course	CSW Course
Dealing with Challenging Behaviour and Disabilities	Creating an Inclusive Culture in the Classroom
Communication and Teamwork	Dealing with Challenging Behaviour
Classroom Management	Support Procedures and Documentation
Activity Design, Implementation & Evaluation	Supporting children with Individual Educational Needs
Diversity and Inclusion	Communication Skills and Teamwork.
First Aid Course	Dealing with Children’s Difficulties in Communication
	Supporting Children’s Participation in daily life through Sensory Processing Knowledge

Table 4: Topics Covered in the PW and CSW Courses (2019)

Certificate Ceremony for Playworkers

The culmination of the first set of professional development sessions for prospective playworkers held in 2018, was the certificate giving ceremony which was held on 10th January 2019. Present for the ceremony were the Minister of Education and Employment, Hon. Evarist Bartolo, the Parliamentary Secretary for Youths, Sports and Voluntary Organisations, Hon. Clifton Grima, and Permanent Secretary at the Ministry for Education and Employment, Dr Frank Fabri.

In her opening address, the Chairperson of the Foundation, Ms Elena Borg, spoke about the need to tap into the abilities of the employees as each worker brings to the table a number of skills. It is these individual skills that form the composite of a caring and learning environment for the children in their care.

The CEO of the Foundation, Mr Dermot Galea, referred to this course as filling a gap in the workforce of the Foundation. The



Foundation for Educational Services employs hundreds of playworkers for its Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf services. The aim of the course is to enable prospective playworkers to identify learning opportunities, develop them into meaningful activities, and implement them in the most engaging ways possible.

The certificate ceremony took place at Marsacala Centre and naturally celebrated

the large group of new playworkers who were receiving their certificate of course completion. However, it was also a celebration of the great work carried out in our Klabb 3-16 centres, and of the unadulterated spontaneity and talents of the children that we care for.

The staff members at the Marsascala Klabb 3-16 Centre showed great teamwork, as they all lent a hand to make the evening a success: from class activities to stage performances, from sound to crowd control...the ceremony wouldn't have been the resounding success without them. Moreover, all children, from kindergarten to primary school age, did their part and were all determined to give their best performance.

Online Convenience

The year 2019 was also a year of innovation in terms of making the service accessibility more convenient for new service users. For the first time, parents could apply for the service of Klabb 3-16 online, from the comfort of their home. This was made possible through the use of an online portal system which was also very user-friendly. Through the online portal, parents were able to provide all the necessary details, upload the requested documents, book the desired days and hours, and proceed with payments.

However, FES also took into consideration those parents who do not have access to the online system. By working in partnership with Servizz.gov, parents could visit one of the Servizz.gov hubs where an agent helped the parents fill up their registration forms and effect the requested payment.

The Programme

Every experience is a learning opportunity, and FES makes it its duty to ensure that the time spent by all children at Klabb 3-16 is a rewarding one. The programme of activities is based on non-formal activities that give



children a break from the structured routine of the academic life to the more relaxed ambience of a peer to peer learning.

Once the homework is ready, children take part in thematic activities that are delivered monthly to the centres by the Programmes Department. While each activity is represented via different areas such as science, art, craft, role play, cookery, quizzes and physical games, the learning goes beyond the mere production of the final artefact. The focus is not so much on the beauty of the drawing produced as much as the sharing of the experience between the children, the helping out in a difficult moment, and in the collection of steps taken to learn the art of problem-solving and conflict resolution in a civil manner. If the ownership of a ball during a game of football turns the competitive aspect into rivalry, the children are taken aside to look at the bigger picture of the experience. If an argument that germinated during school hours is carried forward to the *Klabb* hours, staff take it in their stride to address the matter and try to diffuse the situation.

While the children are grouped according to age, and the activities are addressed to fit the abilities of the age group, older children are always reminded to be role models to the younger ones. Older children

are engaged to help out where possible to instil in them a sense of responsibility and duty. Making them help collect and store the sports and art equipment after use is a way of reminding them of the value of things and of the duty to leave such equipment available for use by others.

Children are also reminded daily about everyone's responsibility to Mother Earth, with environmental awareness being high on the list of priorities. Staff and children are encouraged to use recyclable resources as much as possible for their activities, are reminded to switch off lights and turn off taps, and of the respect towards animals and the environment in general.

Working Towards an Inclusive Community

Respect towards all children is also embodied in making the service accessible to all. The introduction of the service of child support workers in 2019 was not just a child-sitting service but the means by which children with different learning needs could participate in all that the Klabb has to offer. Child support workers fulfill their role by tending to the physical needs of the children to make sure that they are comfortable and at ease. Once these basic needs of feeling safe and relaxed are met, children can feel at ease at trying out the activities on offer. To this aim, it is the child support worker's duty to adapt the programme of activities as needed,

focusing on the abilities of the child and on the enhancement of further competences.

The work with children who have different educational needs, however, did not stop here. FES worked tirelessly with professionals from other government agencies to enable children to access services to which they were entitled to. The assistance and direction provided by FES in such cases helped to highlight the needs of the case, identify the right agency, and bring together all the stakeholders for the benefits of the child.

Monitoring the Programme

Programme implementation is highly stressed. Staff are expected to be prepared for their session by following the programme of activities prepared by the Programmes Department, namely, by filling in the required documentation and by preparing the required resources. Support visits are carried out routinely by the programme coordinators from the Programmes Department to ensure that these steps are followed.

During 2019, 81 support visits were carried out. These visits helped the centre coordinator to iron out any queries or problems in a face-to-face discussion that facilitated better formulation and understanding of any problems present. This was in addition to the monthly college meetings at Head Office and ongoing support via phone calls and emails.

Partnerships

The programme of activities is also enhanced by a number of partners who see Klabb 3-16 as the ideal platform for their mission. During 2019, FES continued its successful collaboration with the Migrant Learners' Unit to deliver more *Making Friends Bringing Friends* (MFBF) clubs in different centres.





Five MFBF clubs were implemented in the centres of B'Kara, Fgura, M'Scala and Naxxar, with 2 MFBF clubs taking place at Fgura. With children hailing from different countries such as Malta, Italy, Hungary, Greece, Serbia, Syria, Libya, Poland, Russia, Argentina, Portugal and China, the club manages to bring an awareness and an appreciation of the different cultures. Spread over a span of ten sessions, each club aims to promote inclusion between European and Third Country Nationals. Children eat together as they are offered different ethnic meals in each session, and then participate in activities that encourage teamwork and appreciation of each other's cultures.

In line with this partnership, FES took part in the European Migration Network - Malta National Contact Point - Annual Conference (EMN), which was held in Malta on 16 October 2019 at the Palace Hotel in Sliema.

It was organised by the European Migration Network Maltese National Contact Point, the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, in collaboration with the Ministry for Education and Employment.

Entitled *The Inclusion and Empowerment of Migrant Students*, the conference provided an overview of the

educational support and opportunities offered by Malta and other EU Member States to migrant learners.

A number of speakers from different entities and countries offered presentations about their experiences, services and studies carried out about the subject. The Foundation for Educational Services was represented by the CEO Mr Dermot Galea. He gave an overview of the various services offered by FES, and how they contribute to help the family achieve a sustainable work and family life balance.

Sports and games are an important component of the Klabb 3-16 programme. Apart from the scheduled daily sessions of physical activity, FES also partnered with organisations, the speciality of which is the field of sports. The main one was SportMalta, which offered Klabb 3-16 students the opportunity to participate in the Move 360 programme. The programme brought to the centres a number of professional coaches sponsored by SportMalta. They advised the children on healthy eating including their lunch at the school and Klabb, and coached them in twice weekly sessions of moderate to vigorous physical activity.





Children were measured at the beginning and at the end of the programme, and data was recorded. This guided the children on their progress through the programme.

Another partner in the same field of physical activity was the Institute for Physical Education and Sports (IPES) from the University of Malta. This partnership was a symbiotic relationship that allowed BSc students to put theory into practice in a series of placements at the Klabb 3-16 centres, while children enjoyed P.E. lessons. These placements enabled the University students to develop skills and knowledge while experiencing working with school-aged children by planning, implementing and evaluating a programme of physical activity and games. All this was done under the supervision of the students' university tutors, and with the assistance of the Klabb 3-16 staff.

A Platform for Research

The Foundation for Educational Studies has always prided itself on being a partner that facilitates research, thus contributing to the collection of local data and to the growth of the bank of knowledge.

During 2019, there were 13 requests for research. Each application was vetted and processed to ensure compliance

with ethical and GDPR issues.

Researchers were then assisted by FES staff in any way possible, both at Head Office and at the centres.

Submissions for research for thesis and also, requests for placement that enabled the completion of academic assignments, came from different educational institutions. These included the University of Malta, the Junior College, the Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School, the Centre for Child Development, Education and Care Studies, and Future Focus. The fields of research featured different areas of studies such as education, finance, human resources, medicine, engineering, linguistics and management.

Way Forward

- Maintain the support to the centres in the management of staff and implementation of the programme of activities.
- Maintain and increase the support given to the centres in cases of managing challenging behaviour.
- Work towards a more inclusive environment by increasing the accessibility to the service.
- Maintain the relationship with external partners and the inclusion of additional programmes to the service.



Skolasajf 2019

The annual summer school service offered by the Government, under the umbrella of Skolasajf, was once again an all-encompassing package that cared for and delighted children who took part in it. Entitled *My Travel Journal*, Skolasajf 2019 aimed to take children on a journey of discovery of friendship, skills and experiences. Skolasajf is a form of non-compulsory education that offers children an experience in a non-formal setting, enabling them to acquire social and personal skills that are transferable to other areas of their lives.

Access to the Service

The applications for the registration for Skolasajf were opened during a press conference at the Ministry for Education and Employment by the Parliamentary Secretary for Youths, Sports and Voluntary Organisations.

During 2019, the accessibility for the Skolasajf service was increased by the online application process. Applicants could access the FES portal, <https://services.fes.gov.mt/>, aided by the online instructional video with detailed step by step instructions.

Other means of applying for the service were used namely, the website www.servizz.gov.mt, the MEDE One Stop Shop for assisted online applications, and also all MaltaPost branches.

The Service

The service once again ran for eight weeks from 15th July till 5th September 2019. Children could attend daily from Monday to Friday, from 08:30 till 12:30 hours. An extended service for working parents was also offered in selected centres, from 07:00 till 08:30 and 12:30 till 17:30 hours.

While these operational facts sum up the accessibility of the service, it does not show the manpower that went behind the running of each Skolasajf Centre. Whether big or small, FES made sure that each centre was administered according to the same policies and standards, thus ensuring that each child could benefit from the same level of service in every locality.

For this to happen, FES started on a recruitment drive in February 2019, to make sure that the number of staff members needed will be employed to meet the total demand. The total number of registered children reached the figure of 12,000 in 2019. To satisfy this need for the service, FES opened a total of 56 centres spread across Malta and Gozo.

Centres' Distribution - Skolasajf 2019

Centre Area	Number of Centres (Core Hours)	Number of Centres (Extended Hours)
Malta Centres	44	32
Gozo Centres	7	
Resource Centres	5	
Total	56	32

Table 5: Centre's Distribution – Skolasajf 2019

Hours of Service – Skolasajf 2019

Type of Service	Number of Hours
Core hours	8892
Extended hours	5570
Resource Centres	1365
Total	15827

Table 6: Hours of Service – Skolasajf 2019

Staff Members – Skolasajf 2019

Designation	Number
Regional Coordinators	10
Centre Coordinators	56
Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities	145
Playworkers	800
Child Support Workers	900
Sports Playworkers	70
Total	15827

Table 7: Staff Members – Skolasajf 2019

When staff join the Skolasajf team, they are bound to attend training sessions that will help them embark on their work experience. Employees were grouped according to designation, to attend tailor-made training sessions, where they were addressed by speakers from the FES Head Office and from other relevant entities.

The work of the Skolasajf staff members was guided by the Operations Manual and the Programme Manual, providing the regulations, policies and procedures that



help them in carrying out their duties. The Programme Manual was tailored according to the centers' target population, thus three programmes were produced; one programme for the Malta Centres, one programme for the Gozo Centres, and one for the Resource Centres.

The Skolasajf Logo

For the first time, the Skolasajf logo was created by children who attend the Klabb 3-16 centres, following a call for participation in the Skolasajf Logo Competition. The creative response produced 60 submissions, forming a kaleidoscope of colours and a display of vivid imagination.

The winning entry embodied the concept of children being the carers of Mother Earth, which in turn provides the environment where we all live. The idea of this winning entry was used to create a digital logo for Skolasajf 2019. Children from various parts of the world are seen hugging a smiling and green world, with the islands of Malta and Gozo taking the centre stage.

The creators of the entries that ranked first, second and third, were rewarded during a press conference held to launch the opening of the Skolasajf applications in March 2019.

The Programme

Children attending Skolasajf have come to expect a varied programme of activities. Produced by the Programmes Department in collaboration with a range of partners, the programme aimed to strike a balance between class-based activities and outings, hands-on projects and sessions of physical education. This combination allowed maximum use of the resources available in all the centres, while giving children the opportunity to enjoy non-formal activities with their peers.



The programme also provided staff and children with the opportunity to create a blend between adult-led and child-led activities. The latter were instrumental in allowing children to voice their opinions, express their talents and take on leadership roles. These included major centre events such as open days, concerts, sports days, and the center's exhibition.



Skolasajf Activities (2019)

Sports Days	40
Local Councils Activities	42
Partners	45
Talent Shows and Open Days	60
Fund Raising activities	68
Outings by FES	192
Centre based activities by FES	384

Table 8: Skolasajf Activities (2019)

Collaborating Partners

During Skolasajf 2019, there were 43 partners who collaborated with the Foundation for Educational Services. Between them, these partners covered all the Skolasajf centres, both in Malta and Gozo, where they either visited the centres or they hosted the children at their own venues. The list of partners is as follows:

- Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency (ARPA)
- Animal Welfare and Promotion Services Directorate
- Armed Forces of Malta
- Armed Forces of Malta Air Wing
- Armed Forces of Malta Band
- Caritas
- Civil Protection Department Malta
- Coding – an initiative by Malta - Communications Authority
- D-Capitals Big Band
- Dental Public Health Unit
- Department of Health Regulation
- ECO Gozo
- Emergency Fire Rescue Unit (EFRU)
- European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA)
- Foundation for Social Welfare Services
- Ghajn Water Conservation Awareness Centre
- Greenpak
- Heritage Malta
- Hibernians Basketball Club
- HSBC
- International Judo Federation
- Japan Karate Association Malta
- Junior Achievement Young Enterprise (JAYE)
- LESA (Local Enforcement System Agency)



- Malta Communications Authority: Safety Online
- Malta Community Chest Fund
- Malta Handball Association
- Malta Local Councils
- Malta Medical Students Association (MMSA)
- Malta Triathlon Federation
- Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) and European Commission Representation
- Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Business (MEIB)
- Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- National Literacy Agency (NLA)
- Paola Volleyball Club
- P.A.R.K. Directorate – Ministry for Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change (MSDEC)
- Prayer Spaces
- Sedqa
- Science Centre (Gozo)
- The President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society
- The Scout Association of Malta
- U.S. Embassy
- Wardija Organic Farm
- Wasteserv

The Life of Our Sea

FES was instrumental in bringing information and awareness about the devastating effects of plastic on marine life to the thousands of students attending Skolasajf. Marine pollution was a recurring topic in the programme, especially in the programme of the older children. They were shown various educational videos related to the subject, and discussions were held right after, especially about their experiences at the local beaches in Malta and Gozo.

This information formed the basis for the creation of an exhibition by each centre, entitled *The Life of Our Seas*. The children worked individually or in small groups, and



the contributions helped to build the final exhibits which were displayed in the schools' foyers.

This marine life project also enabled children to write pledges to keep a clean environment by disposing wisely and picking up litter. They also brainstormed to find ways how to reduce single use plastic, such as using reusable bags and reusable water bottles and containers instead of single use bottles and plastic sandwich bags.

This topic was further illustrated through the collaboration with the Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change. This initiative saw children from different centres participate in mass events facilitated by animators, where they were treated to games that made them think and discuss the topic of marine pollution.

HSBC, a long-term returning partner, was also part of this environmental drive. HSBC collaborated with EGEA Malta to provide sessions about water and its function in the



eco-system. Another topic that was treated was the issue of marine plastic and what can be done to reduce its quantity and impact on the marine environment.

Another partner supporting Skolasajf in the mission to educate about the lifecycle of water, was the Ghajn Water Conservation Awareness Centre. With state-of-the-art technology and educational activities that blend environmental science with fun, the Agency hosted children from 17 Skolasajf centres.

Europe and Entrepreneurship

European affairs and entrepreneurship were two topics that went hand in hand and were treated by two different bodies.

MEUSAC and the European Commission Representation in Malta provided EU-related educational fun sessions for children. The sessions were intended to enable children to understand what Sustainable *Development Goals* are, and how they are being implemented by the EU and (where possible) in Malta. Through the use of various interactive media, such as videos, slides and a game, children were able to understand better the responsibility of each and every individual, including children themselves, to give their part in reaching the global goals.

The Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Business also contributed to the Skolasajf 2019 programme. The activities involved sessions about business and entrepreneurship through the work of the Junior Achievers Young Enterprise. They provided two programmes aimed at children 8 years and over. The programmes enabled the learners to explore innovative ideas for a shop in one's community, and to set up a business in Europe. The programmes explored ways to make innovative ideas a reality, make learners aware of what opportunities are available in Europe and how to create the perfect valuable product for the chosen customers.

The best 12 business ideas took part in the Junior Entrepreneurs' Presentation Night,

and the participants were recognised for their outstanding work. The final winners were Skolasajf Attard.

The HSBC Malta Foundation and ĠEMMA within the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity, were also part of this section of the Skolasajf programme. They collaborated by providing a financial literacy programme, central to which was a workshop entitled *Needs and Wants*. The children were given a project to build a kite, but they had to plan out their resources, and decide which were essential and which were not, thus saving money from their assigned budget.

Opinions about Sustainable Goals

For the third consecutive year, FES teamed up with the European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA) to offer to Skolasajf children the opportunity of public speaking workshops.

Children from the Skolasajf centres of Paola, Naxxar and Mellieha learnt about self-esteem, the appreciation of one's talents, and how to use these values to be able to talk in public. The workshops empowered students with self-confidence, and the ability to think smart and feel smart. These skills helped the students become efficient and confident communicators. The culmination



of these workshops was a meeting with Members of Parliament, where they had the opportunity to ask questions about various subjects.

Another partner in Skolasajf 2019 was the Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society. Ten Skolasajf centres enjoyed sessions about Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Some of the children who took part were filmed on a video clip expressing their ideas about SDGs, and it was shown during the Parliament session. During the same event, children from the Paola Skolasajf Centre also acted out a play about SDGs, focusing on the common basic needs which are vital to all living things.

Local Governance

Each locality owns a lot of its governance and overall maintenance to the local council of the respective town or village. Every year, Skolasajf children take part in an activity with the local council to help them understand the value of the work carried out by the local council. The activity is also a means by which the local council is more in contact with the community.

During 2019, there were 42 local councils who accepted the invitation of the Skolasajf Centres for this collaboration. Activities varied, such as, visits to the offices of the local council where children were given information about the roles of the different council members. Other centres benefitted from sponsored visits to historical places in the same locality, while others visited people's homes where children talked to the residents and also performed for them.

Other centres opted to be more hands-on in their work for the community by doing voluntary work such as clean-up sessions of selected areas. This was the case for example, of the collaboration between the Mellieha Skolasajf Centre and the Mellieha Local Council. The children were then treated to a visit to a war shelter in Mellieha, and were also given a certificate of participation.



The Gzira Skolasajf Centre on the other hand, collaborated with the Gzira Local Council to plant four olive trees, which are nowadays reclaiming their place in the Maltese agriculture and landscape. The trees were planted in the Council of Europe Garden in Gzira.

Meanwhile, the Imqabba Skolasajf Centre joined forces with their local council to organise a competition to design an information banner about waste separation. The chosen banner was displayed near the bring-in site of the locality.



Literacy Campaign

The National Literacy Agency was once again a firm partner in the Skolasajf project with a series of initiatives to implement the *Aqra fis-Sajf Summer Reading Campaign*.

The aim of the summer reading campaign is to encourage children to continue reading during the summer months, thus sustaining the abilities and skills pupils would have acquired throughout the school year.

Among the initiatives that the Skolasajf students benefitted from were the:

- Daily *Aqra fis-Sajf* reading sessions
- *Klabbsajf* guided reading programme
- *SURF* (Summer Reading Fun) Literacy Programme
- *Footballers Read and Write Summer Programme*
- *Għidli Storja/Tell Me a Story Summer Programme*
- *Summer Reading Challenge*



The campaign was also celebrated with the *Aqra fis-Sajf* Festival hosted by the Imqabba Skolasajf Centre. A number of personalities, including Hon Minister Evarist Bartolo, were invited to animate reading sessions with the children.

Visits by Distinguished Guests

Skolasajf students also welcomed a number of distinguished guests at their centres. These included H.E. Monsignor Alessandro D'Errico, the Apostolic Ambassador to Malta and Libya, and H.E. President Emeritus Dr Marie Louise Coleiro Preca.

They visited the Skolasajf San Bastjan Centre, where they toured the classes to enjoy the activities prepared for them, and met the staff, children and parents.

Health and Safety

Children are always gaining new skills, and as they feel more independent, they would want to explore the world around them. While it is important to encourage this step towards independence, it is also important that they are taught about everyone's vulnerability to danger, and what steps can be taken to mitigate any potential dangers.



It is for this reason that the Skolasajf 2019 programme also included a number of activities that catered for the well-being of the children, teaching them how to take care of their physical and mental well-being.

Each centre was instructed to hold a fire drill in the first few days of the Skolasajf programme. Children were taught about assembly points and how they could be accessed. They were also prepared for the fire drill through a series of class games, making them realise the importance of dropping everything that they were doing when hearing the alarm. They were also taught the salient points such as the "actions" and "rules" to be followed when a fire alarm goes off.

Skolasajf children were also given sessions about water safety in the form of class activities. Educational videos and activities were used to show the importance of learning how to be smart and safe around water, to be able to have a good time without getting hurt.

Further to the fire drill, the partner Emergency Fire Rescue Unit (E.F.R.U.)

provided children at the centres with a demonstration of the work of a fire rescue team and the use of a fire truck. Children could witness the use of the equipment and also ask questions about fire risks.

The Local Enforcement System Agency (LESA) was also present in the Skolasajf centres to implement its educational *Traffic Education Campaign*. Officers visited the centres to carry out activities aimed at different and all age groups with different activities for the different age brackets. This educational material is passed on to students in schools, and also to other members of the public through the local councils.

A healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and physical activity was also highly recommended and promoted to the children. The importance of following a healthy and balanced diet was stressed, 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. The healthy breakfast in the form of *Weetabix* cereal provided by Paolo Bonnici Ltd.



was one of the related events. 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.

The Sports and Games programme was once again a great success with the engagement of sports playworkers for each centre, focusing on a daily schedule of games for the children. Paolo Bonnici

Ltd. also sponsored the purchase of sports equipment to be used in the Skolsajf centres. A number of sports organisations was also instrumental in the bid to introduce children to sports such as triathlon, karate, judo, handball, basketball and volleyball.

Physical health was stressed also through the participation of the Dental Health Department, the Malta Medical Students Association, and of the Health Promotion Unit. Their sterling input provided children with information about the measures one



should take to avoid disease and remain physically healthy.

The well-being of a person is also determined by the mental well-being. For this reason, FES paired up with the Malta Communications Authority to deliver sessions about online safety, which also featured standing up for friends, respect for authority, empathy and sharing.

Along the same lines was the service kindly delivered by Sedqa and Caritas. Members from these entities delivered sessions about family, peer pressure and addiction. Each session engaged the children in a discussion followed by a crafts project.

Open Days, Concerts and Fund-Raising Events

No sooner had Skolasajf 2019 started that the children started asking immediately about organising the concert and the open days. These two events provide children with the opportunity to hone their talents with the help of the Skolasajf staff, who encourage them to participate in one way or another. Parents and relatives participated gladly, and halls and yards were always packed as they attended to see the showcase of dances and acts that each centre had to offer.

The children, staff and families also showed a great deal of generosity when

contributing to the fundraising events organised in every centre. Fundraising for the Community Chest Fund took place in all the centres and reached the sum of €21, 208. This was presented to H.E. the President of Malta Dr George Vella, during a courtesy visit made by staff from FES Head Office and Skolasajf Centres' staff. H.E. Dr Vella praised the endeavour shown by all the staff and spoke at length about the work of the MCCF.

Many other centres also carried out a second fund raising activity where funds were collected for registered non-profit organisations like Dr Klown, animal sanctuaries, Dar tal-Providenza, and the Karl Vella Foundation.

Over in Gozo

Skolasajf centres in Gozo also benefit from the service of a number of partners who visit the centres or host the children at their venues. For the outings to be possible, FES has once again found the strong support of the EcoGozo Regional Development Directorate within the Ministry for Gozo. By supplying the transportation, the Gozo centres were able to overcome the limitations faced by small centres and enjoyed trips to different places of interest in Gozo.





Childcare

Introduction

During 2019, the FES Childcare centres continued to provide parents and legal guardians with the opportunity to enter into gainful employment or even enrol in a course in a recognised educational institution.

One of the major roles of FES in childcare service provision is to increase access to childcare, give parents more choice and provide high quality programmes for children from 3 months to 3 years. The FES Childcare Centres provided children with access to a range of age-appropriate learning within a warm and caring environment. Our approach is based on various research studies which show a clear relationship between providing children with a solid foundation in the early years, and the children's long-term development and success.



FES Childcare Centres

During 2019, FES Childcare Centres were operational in the following areas:

Il- Bebbuxu Childcare Centre – St Venera	Il-Ferrovija Childcare Centre – B'Kara
Il-Bejta Childcare Centre - Cospicua	Id-Denfil Childcare Centre - Siggiewi
Ix-Xemx Childcare Centre - Qawra	Il-Merill Childcare Centre - Pembroke
Il-Kuluri Childcare Centre - Birgu	It-Tghanniqa Childcare Centre - Floriana
It-Tbissima Childcare Centre – Hal Qormi	Il-Pespup Childcare Centre - Marsa
Pizzi Pizzi Kanna Childcare Centre - Naxxar	Is-Sardinella Childcare Centre – San Gwann
Il-Qawsalla Childcare Centre - Gżira	Zmeraldi Childcare Centre - Haż-Żebbuġ

Table 9: FES Childcare Centres



The fourteenth centre, Žmeraldi at Haż-Zebbuġ, was officially inaugurated on 30th January 2019, in the presence of the Minister for Education and Employment, Hon. Evarist Bartolo, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Youths, Sports and Voluntary Organisations, Hon. Clifton Grima.

The opening address was made by the Chairperson of FES, Ms Elena Borg. She referred to the Free Childcare Scheme as a measure of great support by the Government, for families to continue in their work and educational commitments, while raising young children. She also described the work carried out by the FES staff, together with colleagues from the Ministry for Education and Employment, and from the Foundation for Tomorrow’s Schools, as a means of making the government childcare



centres accessible in more localities. Minister Bartolo highlighted the great positive impact on a family’s budget with the introduction of the Free Childcare Scheme, and referred to the accessibility to childcare as the first link in the educational system of the children.

FES Childcare Service Provision

The FES centres cater for children starting from the age of three months till the age of three years, when they become eligible for kindergarten. The service is offered from Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 16:00. Applications are accepted all year round and the service is offered according to the clients’ requirements. Every childcare centre strives towards the idea that children are to be valued as individuals and they are helped to develop their full potential through participation and inclusion.

The FES childcare service follows the National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities published by the DQSE.

Standard 1	Suitable persons
Standard 2	Physical environment, premises and equipment.
Standard 3	Management and organisation
Standard 4	Health and safety of children
Standard 5	Care, learning and play
Standard 6	Working in partnership with parents
Standard 7	Behavior management
Standard 8	Child protection
Standard 9	Food and drink
Standard 10	Equal opportunities and children with special needs

Table 10: National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities

Staff

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, a valid paediatric first aid and a food handling certification. Staff also has to be accredited by the DQSE so as to be able to work within our centres. The centre coordinators also meet the qualification requirements as established by the DQSE. This ensures that the centre coordinators have the experience, knowledge and skills required so to achieve the aims and objectives of the service and those of the organisation. The centre coordinators within the centres ensure that childcare assistants have the support required to be able to fulfill their duties in a way to enhance the development of the children. Any staff performance issues are discussed with the programme coordinators and management as required. Employees are encouraged to further develop their performance through supervision and training. In addition, staff members undergo continuous professional development (CPD), such as talks organised by the Early Childhood Development Association of Malta (ECDAM).

During 2019, the Foundation for Educational Services employed 98 childcare assistants on a full-time basis. The number of childcare assistants who act as relievers was also increased from 2 to 6 employees. This allowed for the successful operation of the centres even when staff were absent due to vacation leave or sick leave. Every reliever was allocated a number of centres so that support offered could be constant throughout.

Quality Assurance

Apart from the ongoing staff training, the programme coordinators of both Services and Programmes Units carry out supports visits on site to make sure that the best possible service is being provided. By the end

of 2019, all childcare centres were visited by the Quality Assurance Department from the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE), and they all were 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.

Premises

Different departments within FES work together with the individual centre coordinators to ensure that the centres are welcoming, and that they are suitable for our service users. We do our best to ensure that the premises are accessible, secure and safe. Regular visits by DQSE ensure also that the equipment and the premises are in compliance with regulations and standards of safety. For this aim, the FES is engaged in continuous refurbishments of the childcare centres.

Service Users

All families from different socio-economical backgrounds can benefit from the childcare service. These could range from single parents



FES Contribution Policy

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

Table 11: FES Contribution Tariffs for Childcare Services

on social benefits seeking employment, parents who wish to send their child to integrate with other children, parents in employment, or social cases. Within the FES Childcare Centres, we ensure that parents are made to feel welcome and that we are partners with them to ensure the development, welfare and safety of their children. Parents are constantly informed of the development and progress of their children.

Priority is given to those parents in employment or in education, and who benefit from the government's Free Childcare Scheme. Priority is also given to those families identified as social cases by the FSWS.

The FES contribution policy provides also the opportunity for those parents who are not in employment to benefit from the service just the same. The contribution is worked out based on the combined family income which is assessed through means-testing.

By the end of 2019, 676 children made use of FES Childcare Service Provision, of which 512 families benefitted from the government's Free Childcare Scheme. Eighty-nine (89) parents made use of the FES Contribution Policy, of which 14 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, Birgu	40	33	3	1
2	Il-Ferrovija, B'Kara	41	36	2	1
3	Il-Bejta, Cospicua	41	17	10	1
4	It-Tgħanniq, Floriana	40	28	6	2
5	Il-Qawsalla, Gżira	49	21	14	2
6	Żmeraldi, Haż-Żebbuġ	9	4	5	0
7	Il-Pespux, Marsa	35	31	3	1
8	PizziPizziKanna, Naxxar	61	53	2	0
9	Il-Merill, Pembroke	78	69	2	1
10	Ix-Xemx, Qawra	44	33	6	3
11	It-Tbissima, Hal Qormi	52	46	1	0
12	Is-Sardinella, San Gwann	66	47	12	2
13	Id-Denfil, Siggiewi	59	41	12	2
14	Il-Bebbuxu, St.Venera	64	49	3	0
	Totals	680	508	81	16

Table 12: Number of Service Users in FES Childcare Centres in 2019

Collaboration with Professionals

FES Childcare Centres work in close collaboration with different professionals such as Appogg, FSWS, 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.

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. Dr Chris Sciberras, 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 schedule 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 2019, 201 of the children attending FES childcare centres were developmentally screened by Dr Sciberras, 24 of which were referred to speech therapy and 17 to CDAU.

Policies

As per one of the standards already mentioned above, the childcare centres are required to have a written manual of policies and procedures which is made accessible to staff and service users.

FES Childcare Centres aim to create an environment for all that:

- Is immediately welcoming through warm, nurturing and positive interaction between staff, children, parents and visitors;

- Fosters a genuine sense of caring, security and well-being;
- Encourages each child to develop to his or her fullest potential;
- Ensures that the individual's physical necessities of health, safety, nutrition and quality 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 Foundation for Educational Services 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 fully abide by this standard, FES regularly updates the Childcare Operations Manual which mainly includes policies in relation to the service provision, the well-being of the child, programme implementation, issues related to HR, Finance 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.

Students

Over the years, FES gained expertise in childcare and management of childcare settings, and this allows our staff to support students in their placement. In fact, during 2019, FES continued to offer students the opportunity to carry out placements within its fourteen childcare centres. Throughout these placements, students were given the opportunity 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

Childcare Centre	Children Screened in 2019	Children Referred to Speech	Children Referred to CDAU	Referred Follow-Up by a medical professional
1 Il-Kuluri, Birgu	23	3	4	3
2 Il-Ferrovija, B'Kara	24	4	0	1
3 Il-Bejta, Cospicua	14	2	1	4
4 It-Tgħanniqa, Floriana	15	2	0	1
5 Il-Qawsalla, Gżira	6	0	0	0
6 Żmeraldi, Haż-Żebbuġ	15	1	2	4
7 Il-Pespus, Marsa	19	4	6	5
8 PizziPizziKanna, Naxxar	23	1	1	0
9 Il-Merill, Pembroke	12	0	0	0
10 Ix-Xemx, Qawra	7	0	1	2
11 It-Tbissima, Hal Qormi	7	1	0	0
12 Is-Sardinella, San Gwann	6	1	0	0
13 Id-Denfil, Siggiewi	17	0	2	2
14 Il-Bebbuxu, St.Venera	13	5	0	2
Totals	201	24	17	24

Table 13: Children Referred for Further Screening

entities like MCAST, Jobsplus, Centre for Development Education & Care, and Future Focus.

FES also accepts students who want to carry out research within its childcare centres. During 2019, the Programmes Department approved three research requests from University students reading for a BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care.

The Programme of Activities

All the programme work carried out in the FES Childcare Centres is governed by the 10 National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2206). They are the benchmark for the planning, the development and the implementation of relevant programmes in childcare.

Maximising the Playtime Potential at the Centres

Children's learning and development is continuous. That means that every minute of the childcare assistants' contact time with the children is used as a learning opportunity. This takes place during the children's routine at the centre which includes settling-in and breakfast; snack time; lunch and nap time. The programme of activities is aimed at developing the holistic development of each child, planned around this routine.

The programme of activities and learning opportunities based on play that are implemented each day in each childcare centre is built around monthly themes. These themes were planned and decided between the childcare centre coordinator and the childcare assistants of each respective centre. The childcare assistants are encouraged to plan meaningful, age-appropriate, interesting and engaging activities that will motivate the children to actively participate, even without adult intervention. To ensure that children do reach their full potential, the childcare centre coordinators ensure that the activities address all the domains of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2012).



Resources

FES keeps the childcare centres equipped with the necessary resources and equipment that will help the children to develop their play. During 2019, centres were equipped with tuff trays for the exploration of different materials, sensory tiles, a range of books in English and Maltese, and puppets.

The resources made available for the children are also in the form of refurbishment, such as the installation of new mirrors. The mirrors were placed strategically low as their purpose is to enable the children to look at themselves. Infants and toddlers can develop their pre-reading skills from the use of mirrors by learning pronunciation. The use of mirrors can also be beneficial to young children because they build up or expand their vocabulary and develop their identification skills during the process. Childcare assistants can also implement interactive play activities using mirrors, such as imitation games which aid in promoting self-awareness and eventually, in the emerging of the children's self-esteem.

The resources are all age-appropriate and accessible to the children at all times. The childcare assistants created their own resources as well, such as sensory boards and boxes, puppets, books, visuals and other resources that are deemed to enhance the



children's learning and development. All the resources and equipment are safe, cleaned regularly and well-maintained.

Read with Me Sessions

The FES Childcare Centres also host reading animators from the National Literacy Agency. The *Read with Me* sessions were held weekly in the FES Childcare Centres of Il-Merill (Pembroke), Il-Pespus (Marsa), Pizzi Pizzi Kanna (Naxxar), It-Tbissima (Hal Qormi), Ix-Xemx (Qawra) and at Il-Bejta (Bormla).

During 2019, these five centres hosted 336 *Read with Me* sessions, with 48 of them at It-Tbissima being for the exclusive use by the community.

During these sessions which are organised by the National Literacy Agency, the animators engaged the children through the reading of stories, the singing of nursery rhymes and other related activities. In certain centres, the sessions were also open to the community.

Training of Staff

The continuous development of staff is a highly regarded topic at the Foundation for Educational Services. During 2019 FES has provided training for the staff of the childcare centres in various areas.

Child-Centred Pedagogy - One of the main training needs was the preparation to move towards a child-centred pedagogy. The aim of this approach is for the programme of activities to merge from the children's interests. Play is self-initiated but nurtured and enhanced by adults and the surrounding environment. Rather than focusing on the planning of one main activity in a day, the staff were trained on how to provide different learning opportunities throughout the day.



Training to the childcare centre coordinators and programme coordinators was carried out at the Head Office by Mr David Chircop, Ms Therese Ellul and Ms Kathryn Xuereb. The training session started with an overview of the approach, followed by an explanation of the process, detailed with examples. The process was also linked to the learning stories. In the last part of the session, group work was carried out. Each group was given a topic and asked to work out a mind map and practical learning opportunities using the new documents. Practice was shared by everyone.



Childcare Seminars - 2019

April	November
Autism in Children (0 – 3 years) by Dr Keith Pirotta	Nithaddtu mat-Trabi u Naqrawlhom by Ms Miriam Schembri.
Creativity by Grace Izzo	Nurturing Play Occupations and Sensory Processing Skills in Young Children by Ms Nathalie Buhagiar.
Infectious Disease by Dr Tanya Melillo	Actively Listening and Talking to Infants and Toddlers by Dr Charmaine Bonello

Table 14: Childcare Seminars - 2019

These training sessions were repeated in different schools and colleges with all the centres in small clusters to ensure all the childcare assistants had the opportunity to discuss all arising concerns. In every training session that was carried out, the fundamentals of early childhood education and care were revised along the process to emphasise their importance.

Bi-Annual Childcare Seminars - The two annual staff training days were held in April and November. On these days, all the childcare assistants and childcare centre coordinators had the opportunity to meet together, share their practices and continue to upgrade their professional knowledge. All the staff who attended the training were presented with a certificate of participation.

Level 5 Workshops - This training was provided to prospective childcare assistants who have acquired the Level 5 certification and are interested in working as childcare centre coordinators with FES. The aim of the workshop was to prepare the childcare assistants to address the programme design, development and implementation stages from a mentoring point of view when in the role of a centre coordinator. The training emphasised the importance of national standards, focusing mainly on those that are directly related to programmes and how these should be put into practice in the centres.

Induction Training - This training was carried out with new childcare assistants and childcare coordinators to familiarise themselves with their respective role from the programme's perspective. The programme of activities was explained with an emphasis on providing the children with stimulating learning opportunities. Childcare coordinators were advised to ensure that good practice is carried out, and offer support and guidance where necessary.

In-House Seminars - The Foundation for Educational Services (FES), in collaboration with the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate offered a seminar to all the childcare centre coordinators, entitled *Infant and Young Child Feeding*.

The seminar was chaired by Dr Mariella Borg Buontempo and opened by Ms Charlene Vassallo. The topics which were addressed during the seminar were *Oral Health in Infants and Young Children* (Dr Ethel Vento Zahra), *Weaning Guidelines, the New Recommendations* (Ms Lucienne Pace), *Supporting Breastfeeding Women in Childcare Centres* (Ms Pauline Fenech), and *Overfeeding in Maltese Babies* (Ms Helen Borg).

All those who attended the seminar were presented with a certificate of participation.

Basic Fire Fighting and Prevention – This training was held at FES Head Office and was attended by the childcare centre coordinators and members from FES Head Office.

The course provided information about what to do in the event of a fire. It also focused on the responsibilities of people who are assigned fire safety duties, especially when they have to control fire hazards; how they can fulfil their fire safety duties and ensure the safety of all people in the building.

The participants were also instructed on the different types of fire extinguishers and the practical use of a fire extinguisher.

First Aid Courses - These are continuously upgraded to ensure that all the staff are honing their skills and acquiring new knowledge and techniques that can be put into practice in the centres. During 2019, 15 childcare assistants upgraded their first aid certificate.

ECDAM Training - The Foundation for Educational Services has also invested in the membership of the organisation of *Early Childhood Development Association of Malta* (ECDAM) to encourage childcare assistants and childcare coordinators to attend the monthly educational sessions organised by the association. The sessions provide support and information to early childhood educators working with children from 0 to 7 years of age. These sessions are held by local and foreign professional lecturers.

Level 5 Diploma - The childcare assistants and childcare coordinators are always encouraged to upgrade their level of competences. Nine (9) childcare assistants have acquired their certification in Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Children's Care,



Learning and Development. This certification will make them eligible to manage a childcare centre.

Meetings with Centre Coordinators

Besides the training that was carried out, all the childcare centres' staff members are supported regularly to ensure that the National Standards and the Programme Department guidelines are being followed.

Monthly Meetings - Meetings at the HO are held with the centre coordinators once a month. This keeps an open communication with all the members. An agenda is drawn up to discuss issues that would have arisen during the previous month. It also gives the childcare centre coordinators the opportunity to discuss and share their concerns and/or good practices.

One-to-One Meetings - During the monthly meetings, each coordinator had the opportunity of a more personal individual meeting with the Manager Programmes (Ms Therese Ellul) and Programme Coordinator (Ms Kathryn Xuereb). The aim behind these meetings was to tackle issues that were centre-based.



- **Support Visits** – Regular visits are made to each centre. During 2019, each centre was visited twice with additional visits where the staff needed more support. The total of these support visits by just one programme coordinator amounted to a number of 35 visits. The aim of these visits was to:
 - Give support to all the staff members;
 - Observe the daily routine of the centre;
 - Monitor the interaction of staff with the children;
 - Oversee the implementation of the programme, the resources being used and learning opportunities being provided for the children;
 - Check the documentation of activities and evaluations, logbook hours, and learning stories.

Small group planning was introduced during these support visits. The childcare coordinators worked out a plan on how to encourage the childcare assistants to work in small groups of two or three, and each group had to be responsible for its own plans each week. This would ensure that the children's individual needs are being met.

Visits by the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE)

The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) holds annual visits to childcare centres to ensure that the children are receiving a high-quality educational experience and suggests recommendations for further improvement. The outcome of these visits can affect the renewal of the centre's registration.

The general outcome of these visits to the FES Childcare Centres was a positive one. The Quality Assurance Department (QAD) acknowledged the commitment of the staff to plan, prepare and implement appropriate activities. It also recognised the training being given by FES to upskill the staff towards a more emergent curriculum. At the same time, the reviewers listed down recommendations that each centre should follow to continue to improve the quality of the service. From the Programmes' Department point of view, these recommendations were actioned with training to all the staff, who were provided with theory and workshops.

Parental Involvement

In accordance with the National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006), FES

highly encourages parental involvement with the belief that parents can contribute towards the overall well-being of their children and the quality of service.

During 2019, the FES Childcare Centres endeavoured to continue working in collaboration with the parents in these various ways:

- By maintaining an open communication that started during the settling-in period of the children;
- Regular meetings were held to discuss the child’s development;
- Parents were invited to organised open days in the centre, where they were invited to view their children at play. Fifteen (15) open days were held during 2019;
- They were also invited to quarterly outings to educational places which are age-appropriate, safe and relevant for the children’s learning and development. These outings are important as they continue to consolidate the relationship between the staff, the parents and the children. Eleven (11) outings were organised during 2019;
- Parents were invited to participate in the Moving-On Celebrations in the transition of the children from the childcare setting to the kindergarten classes. These occurred twice in each centre, namely, in the months of January and September, totalling to 28 Moving-On Celebrations.

Partnerships with Other Agencies

Children come from different backgrounds with different needs. Some children may require extra attention which may be due to their social background or a noticeable lack of development in a particular area.

FES does not operate on its own but works in multi-disciplinary teams to be able to offer the best care plan for each individual child. During 2019, FES continued to work with the parents and professionals such as



from Aġenzija Appoġġ, Speech Therapists, CDAU personnel, and Early Intervention teachers. This collaboration ensured that 24 children were referred to speech therapy and 17 were referred to CDAU.

The work of these professionals provided a sound foundation on which the childcare assistants could discuss any concerns and queries from their observations of the children. The recommendations were also useful to create a personalised care plan for the child. This form of programme development enabled the children to reach their developmental goals and achieve the stipulated learning outcomes according to their age bracket.

Way Forward

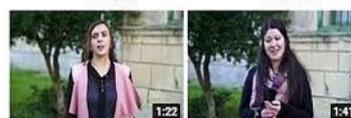
1. Continuation of the refurbishment of childcare centres including that of Pembroke Childcare Centre, and the transfer of Qawra Childcare Centre to the new primary school in Qawra.
2. Continuation of training of the centres’ staff members in order to implement the child-centred pedagogy in the programme of activities.



Interview with a Klabb 3-16 Playworker 0:16

Interview with a Childcare Assistant 0:52

Interview with a Childcare Assistant 2:52



Interview with a Childcare Centre Coordinator 1:22

Interview with a Childcare Centre Coordinator 1:41



Marketing and Communications

The function of Marketing and Communications within the Programmes Department saw the creation of a number of opportunities to highlight the work of FES.

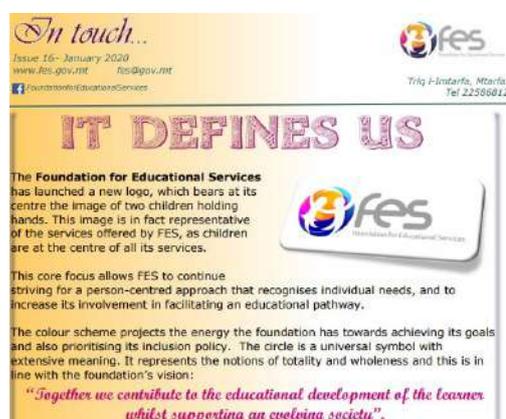
These included a number of television and radio programmes where FES representatives promoted the services of the Foundation, and gave information about upcoming events. There were also articles in local newspapers and on online platforms.

The online media was also kept updated through daily uploads on the FES Facebook page to showcase the work in the centres and Head Office, and also videos of Skolasajf events on the FES YouTube Channel. The latter was also used to upload videos featuring parents and staff giving testimonials about their experiences of FES services and job opportunities respectively.

Media coverage was created also through press conferences to launch the Skolasajf applications, the opening of the latest FES Childcare Centre Zmeraldi, and the opening of Skolasajf 2019.

The coverage of FES events also happened with the organisation of celebrations that marked the end of specific projects and programmes. These included the certificate giving ceremony at the end of the first set of professional development sessions for prospective playworkers, and the debate session at the Parliament of Malta, for children who completed a Public Speaking Course during Skolasajf.

The FES newsletter *In Touch* continued to be produced by the Programmes Department,



reaching its 15th edition by the end of 2019. The FES newsletter is issued monthly and serves as a medium to highlight the work of the Foundation across all its services. It is distributed to internal and external customers, and is also available on the FES website.

Communication with internal and external clients was also maintained through the collection of feedback where respondents could give their views on how the services provided by FES could be improved.

This was done through several online surveys, the data from which was then analysed and reports were drawn up. These were then distributed to the various departments for their review, to draw conclusions from the data, and use it to make informed decisions.





HAPPINESS
IS LIKE
A BUTTERFLY

Corporate Services

Introduction

For the Corporate Services function, the year under review brought about a number of changes which eventually led to the better administration of the ever-increasing needs of the FES. In April, a Programme Coordinator Procurement joined the department. This addition led to the centralisation of procurement under one section, thus further ensuring that the public procurement regulations are being adhered to and maximisation of resources is achieved.

In June, a handyman joined the department, further assisting all FES Centres with general maintenance issues, thus providing a quicker and more efficient service to all centres.

Another addition to the team was that of a Coordinator Administration in July. This new position provided further support to general administration duties and other IT related matters which are always on the increase. Finally, also in June, a part-time Administration Assistant joined the team, providing further general administration assistance to the whole department.

Such developments assisted the Corporate Services to function and serve better the needs of the entity whilst at the same time coordinating the move of the FES Head Office to new premises in Qormi which proved to be very energy-consuming. This occurred subsequent to a year-end and the smooth running of such task proved the commitment and effort shown by the Corporate Services function.

Estate Management

A lot of time and energy was invested in the closing off the tender for the leasing of new premises and coordination of works within the same premises. This entailed



liaising with MEDE and the Department of Contracts with regards to the preparation of contracts and awarding of a variation to increase the total area. Various meetings were also held with architects and as soon as works starting progressing, daily visits onsite were also carried out to ensure that the specifications highlighted in the tender were being met. At the same time, an inventory of all furniture at Head Office was made in order to facilitate matters for the upcoming move in early 2020.



Concurrent to all this, various other works were carried out within the FES Centres. With regards to childcare centres, the works and procurement of items for Žmeraldi Childcare Centre were finalised at the beginning of 2019. This centre was officially opened on 30th January 2019.

Issues emanating from the Health and Safety and DQSE reports were addressed in a bid to obtain a compliance report. By end of 2019, the childcare centres at B'Kara, Marsa, Haż-Żebbuġ and Gżira had acquired such compliance in terms of health and safety. In addition, the corporate services manager attended a training on health and safety organised by the Occupational Health and Safety Authority. Following information obtained from this course, all childcare centre coordinators and another 2 employees from FES Head Office were trained in firefighting.

With the introduction of the handyman at FES, various day-to-day maintenance issues were dealt with in-house there and then. However, in cases where more specialised attention was required, assistance was requested from both the MEDE maintenance team and the Foundation for Tomorrow Schools (FTS), depending on the exigencies.

Maintenance issues that were addressed in childcare centres are as follows:

- Gzira Childcare Centre: refurbishment of centre which included the removal of skirting, plastering and painting;
- Birgu Childcare Centre: fixing of membrane, installation of a new fire alarm system;
- Qormi Childcare Centre: purchasing of LED panels for all the centre that will be eventually fixed in 2020;
- Bormla Childcare Centre: total renovation of bathroom, painting of baby room and parts of the play area, purchasing of a fire alarm that eventually will be fixed by summer of 2020;
- San Gwann Childcare centre: installation of bollards and speed bumps close to the centre's main door as a means of protection of both staff and parents;
- Naxxar Childcare Centre: a meeting room was converted in a baby room. This was freshly painted, a sink installed and equipped with the necessary furniture. In addition, the membrane on the centre's roof was fixed and parts of the centre painted;
- Pembroke Childcare Centre: an aluminium partition in the baby room was





removed. This was adapted and installed next to the main entrance of the centre to give a greater sense of organisation and security when the parents drop off and pick up their children;

- Marsa Childcare Centre: major structural works were carried out within the Marsa Primary School, the same building where the childcare centre is located. Even though there weren't any works being carried out on our premises, various meetings were held to establish the safest way of how the works could still be carried out without affecting the health and safety of the staff and children attending the centre. This is ongoing subsequent to year-end with the works expected to be completed before the start of the Scholastic Year 2020-2021;
- Santa Venera Childcare Centre: the fence in the outdoor area was changed to aluminium, since the previous structure made of wood was not durable and was creating a number of health and safety hazards to children;
- St Julian's Childcare Centre: assistance was provided in the evaluation of the tender for furniture to be supplied. In addition, consultation was done with

MEDE and FTS in relation to the works required to be able to open such a centre;

- Marsascalea Childcare Centre: similarly to St Julian's Childcare Centre, various meetings were held in relation to the works required to be able to open such a centre. An inventory list of all the items purchased was also compiled;
- New Qawra Childcare Centre: an onsite visit was done at the new primary school where the FES will be shifting its current childcare operations. Feedback was provided to the FTS on the plan proposed.

With respect to various childcare centres, the Corporate Services' function assisted in the privatisation of a number of centres. This entailed the change of private operators in 3 childcare centres located in Paola, Luqa and Għargħur finalised on 28th November 2019. Amongst the work carried out, this included basic maintenance tasks, procurement of equipment required and the making of an inventory of these centres.

Various other maintenance issues related to Skolasajf and Klabb 3-16 centres were addressed. These were as follows:

- Gżira: staff working at Gżira Klabb 3-16/Skolasajf were sharing electricity through an extension from the childcare centre next door. By year-end, the FES was able to furnish this office with its own electricity and sockets making it independent from the childcare centre;
- Mosta: during Skolasajf, major works were carried out within the Mosta Primary School A where all the drainage system had to be changed since it was very old and not functioning properly. Through collaboration with the precincts officer and MEDE maintenance team, the works were carried out in a very short time span without affecting the day-to-day operations of one of the largest Skolasajf centres operated by the FES;
- Naxxar: during Skolasajf, major works were carried out to the façade of the

Naxxar Primary School. Areas where the works were being carried out were cordoned off and different entrances used until the situation was addressed;

- Fgura: during Skolasajf major works were taking place within both schools of Fgura Primary A and B. These entailed the changing of all aluminium apertures and the plastering of the schools' façades. Coordination with the FTS was taking place on a daily basis by the centre coordinator and Head Office to ensure that no health and safety issues were present for the children attending;
- Rabat: discussions were held in order to shift the Klabb 3-16 currently operating in Rabat Primary B to Rabat Primary A since major works were being planned in such schools. In view of this, an aluminium partition was installed in Rabat Primary A to secure an office space for the centre coordinator;
- Various Skolasajf centres were further equipped with fans to ensure more adequacy for the summer heat as well as intercoms, to ensure more security in relation to access in and out of the schools.

In addition, with the help of the administrative assistant and the coordinator administration, each Klabb 3-16 centre had its own inventory for the first time, with the equipment and resources properly marked in each centre where this was possible.

Procurement

In 2019, the addition of the Programme Coordinator Procurement helped to further consolidate the procurement function. This helped the entity to centralise all procurement under one department, except in those situations where a site visit had to be coordinated directly by the centre coordinator.

The Programme Coordinator Procurement became in charge of issuing all the request for quotations falling under the €5,000 threshold, issuing purchase orders and regrets emails, and ensuring the items ordered are delivered. In 2019, a total of 854 purchase orders were issued which varied from the procurement of the day-to-day requirements for all centres such as basic furniture items, toys, stationery, toners and cleaning material to other more specific purchases such as insurances, accounting services, legionella testing, tabards for childcare assistants and website development amongst others.

Apart from this, the Programme Coordinator Procurement became in charge of all the tendering process. To facilitate such matters, the Manager Corporate Services attended a refresher course related to public procurement regulations, whilst the Programme Coordinator Procurement was provided with in-depth training by the Department of Contracts on the same subject, together with how to use the Electronic Public Procurement System (EPPS) and the Green Public Procurement. Below is a list of the tenders/requests for quotations on which the FES has worked on throughout 2019 on the EPPS:

- DES 120/2017 - Request for Proposal Leading to an Award for the Leasing of Office Space for the Foundation for Educational Services: this tender was issued for the third time and eventually awarded in 2019. In addition, a request for variation to increase the area leased was done and awarded successfully;
- MEDE/MPU/FES/001/2019 - Tender for the Provision of External Auditors for the Foundation for Educational Services for Three (3) Years: this tender was issued in November 2019 and by year-end, the Evaluation Committee submitted the Evaluation Report for feedback to be

- provided by the Ministerial Procurement Unit at the end of 2019;
- MEDE/MPU/FES/002/2019 - Tender for the Supply of One (1) New Low Emissions Motor Vehicle for the Foundation for Educational Services (Malta): this tender was issued twice, the first time no bids were received, and the second time, the Evaluation Committee submitted the Evaluation Report for feedback to be provided by the Ministerial Procurement Unit at the end of 2019;
 - MEDE/MPU/FES/003/2018 - Tender for the Supply of Stationery and Recycled Office Paper for Skolasajf for 24 Months: this tender was published in February 2019 and 5 bids were received. It was successfully awarded on the 25th May 2019 for a total contract value of €54,060.50 excluding VAT;
 - MEDE/MPU/FES/04/2018 - Tender for the Provision of Clerks to Administer the Payroll Support Services to the Foundation for Educational Services (Skolasajf 2019): this tender was published twice, with the first time resulting in no bids being submitted whilst the second time, 1 bidder only was interested. However, this was over budget and thus, the tender was cancelled;
 - MEDE/MPU/FES/005/2018 - Framework Agreement for the Supply of Drinking Water Canisters and Water Dispensers at the Foundation for Educational Services: this tender was published on the 10th June 2019 and 3 bids were received. The contract was awarded on the 27th September for a total contract value of €37,400 excluding VAT;
 - PMC/FES/01/2019 - Preliminary Market Consultation – PMC for the Provision of a Payroll System: this was issued on the 8th of May 2019 as a market research exercise before the drafting of the proper tender. Apart from the information submitted, those interested were also requested to deliver a presentation at the FES premises;
 - RFQ/FES/01/2019 - Quotation for the Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of a Fire Detection System for the FES Childcare Centre, Birgu: this quotation was awarded on the 13th September 2019 for a total value of €2,285.00 excluding VAT. The work was carried out in November 2019;
 - RFQ/FES/002/2019 - Call for Quotations for the Leasing of Three (3) Brand New Energy Efficient Multifunctional Photocopiers for the FES Childcare Centres for 24 Months: this quotation was awarded on the 24th September 2019 for a total value of €4,284.00 excluding VAT;
 - RFQ/FES/003/2019 - Call for Quotations for the Leasing of Three (3) Brand New Energy Efficient Multifunctional Photocopiers for the Foundation for Educational Services for 24 Months: this quotation was awarded on the 13th September 2019 for a total value of €4,284.00 excluding VAT.
- Information Technology (IT)**
- Throughout 2019, all Klabb 3-16 centre coordinators were provided with a new laptop. The Coordinator Administration was in charge of liaising with MITA and the centre coordinators to have these laptops set up and ensure they were functioning properly. By end of year 2019, laptops for Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities (PERs) were also acquired with the intention of distributing them in the first quarter of 2020.
- Apart from this, all childcare centre coordinators and programme secretaries had their laptops/computers changed since these were quite old and slow. Once again, the Coordinator Administration assisted all staff to have their laptops in good working order, sometimes even visiting the centre to address certain issues.
- In November 2019, both the Manager Corporate Services and Coordinator Administration attended a training organised by MITA in relation to the new ERFS system

that was introduced in 2019. This helped the FES to familiarise itself with this new portal in order to continue raising the necessary ERFS as the need arises.

Various technical issues were addressed with MEDE IMU and MITA which included interruptions in internet service, and involved the adding of new network switches in centres, the assigning of Microsoft licenses, installation of printers and other day-to-day problems as they arose. Moreover, discussions started with MITA in preparation for the office move from Mtarfa to Qormi to ensure that the server room in the new offices is well-equipped to provide a smooth transition.

The Coordinator Administration also assisted centre coordinators in cases where there were problems with the telephone service. The necessary reports were filed with the service provider to ensure faults are attended to and where required, emergency mobile phones and internet dongles were provided.

The childcare centre in Santa Venera experienced problems in its internet provision. After various weeks of troubleshooting with MITA and MEDE, the centre's internet connection was changed from Schools network system to Corp network system, thus solving the problem.

Communications

In 2019, an annual report covering the years 2017 and 2018 was prepared. Information was collected from the various departments and amalgamated into one report. After issuing quotations for the design and printing, the report was finalised and distributed accordingly.

The design of Skolasajf 2019 logo was commissioned in order to take a more professional approach. This was used throughout Skolasajf and published through various channels, such as printed material,

roll up banners, videos and interventions of television stations.

Assistance was provided during training sessions organised by the Programmes Department. This included the printing of certificates and the coordination of catering services.

The year 2019 saw FES stepping up its efforts to having a more regular presence in the traditional and new media. The objective was to always make the services offered by FES to the general public, better known and hence, more accessible to the public at large.

During 2019, FES featured in 6 radio and 7 television shows. The work of the organisation was also covered in 18 press articles, both online and in newspapers; this notwithstanding that reporting requirements are imposed on FES to publish/announce various reports on the government gazette throughout the year.

Further promotional support was also provided with the constant updating of the FES website and Facebook page, which provided visitors with the most recent news and developments about each of the Foundation's services. A new initiative in 2019 was that all FES Childcare Centres were now visible on Google Maps, making it more accessible to parents and other stakeholders.

The FES You Tube Channel was also kept updated with the uploading of video clips that served as testimonials from 18 staff members and 7 parents about the various job opportunities at, and the services of, the Foundation.

The FES newsletter *In Touch* was also issued regularly each month, and by the end of December 2019, it had reached its 15th edition, in addition to a separate, special edition for Skolasajf 2019. The FES newsletter features highlights from all the work being carried out by the staff at Head Office and in the Childcare and Klabb 3-16 centres. It is sent to all the staff and service users, and is also



Testimonials by parents about the Skolasajf service



Testimonials by parents about the Skolasajf service



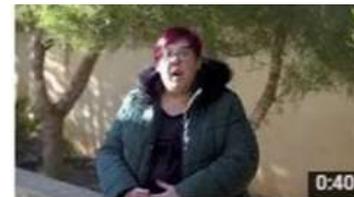
Testimonials by parents about the Skolasajf service



Testimonials by parents about the Skolasajf service



Testimonials by parents about the Skolasajf service.



Testimonials by parents about the Skolasajf service

distributed via the MEDE and intranet service.

Further marketing initiatives were undertaken to promote the new online portal where parents can register their children for Klabb 3-16 and continuously pay the applicable fees, topping up their respective online accounts for the use of additional hours in Skolasajf. Support was also provided to centre coordinators who were provided with a proper log in username and password.

Skolasajf

As mentioned previously, the tender for Skolasajf stationery was issued and deliveries were carried out smoothly. All items required for Skolasajf to operate were acquired on time, and further centralisation was adopted. These included polo shirts which were handed out to the centre coordinators for the first time, first aid boxes, mobile phones, cleaning material and other consumables. When centres requested additional items, deliveries were effected within one week.

The contracts that bind the FES with the respective head of school for the 8-week Skolasajf period were distributed to centre coordinators earlier in order to give them more time to liaise with the respective head of school.

In 2019, all centre coordinators were asked to carry out a fire drill during Skolasajf. This was done in collaboration with the Programmes Unit, and the necessary paperwork was handed over to the Corporate Services Department as proof that the fire drill was actually carried out.

Various visits were carried out across centres, especially those where the necessary maintenance was being carried out as explained in previous sections. Interventions were done when health and safety concerns were noted, and when cleaning issues arose.

Data Protection

During 2019, the Corporate Services Manager attended various training programmes related to data protection. This resulted in the updating of the FES Data Protection Policy and drafting of the Retention Policy. By end of year, this was distributed across all centres, and centre coordinators were encouraged to refer to it before destroying any documentation. Such exercise was also being carried out at Head Office, where all departments were being involved in the reviewing of documents located within the FES archive room.



Corporate Social Responsibility

The corporate social responsibility of FES, is a commitment that presents itself in the various divisions of the organisational structure of the Foundation. In fact, in 2019, a total of €24.132.26 was donated to various non-profit organisations.

Maltese Catholic Action - All the branches of FES collaborated to raise funds for the social housing project in Balzan by the Maltese Catholic Action. The funds went towards the project of turning a dilapidated building into a shelter for the homeless, Dar Regina Pacis. The total sum of €1,641.26 was presented to the representative of the Maltese Catholic Action, Ms Sarah Caruana.

Dr Klown - The Id-Denfil Childcare Centre at Siggiewi organised a Dr Klown activity, whereby staff, children, and parents, could meet these angels in white. The funds collected by Id-Denfil Childcare Centre contributed towards the training of 9 new Klown Doctors.

PINK October - The fund-raising activities from the Pink October events managed to raise the handsome sum of €1,200, which was donated to the Hospice Movement, to the Marigold Foundation, and to the Puttinu Cares Foundation. This sum was collected from donations by the FES Board, the staff at FES Head Office, and by children, parents and staff at the various Klabb 3-16 and Childcare centres.

L-Istrina - The sum of €21, 208 donated to L-Istrina, was generated from the hard work of all the Skolasajf centre coordinators,



playworkers with extra responsibilities, playworkers, child support workers and sports playworkers. They created activities for the children and parents during the summer months, that enabled them to participate in this annual show of solidarity. The donation was presented to the President of Malta, H.E. Dr George Vella, by the FES CEO Mr Dermot Galea.

Other donations – Skolasajf centres also organise fund-raising activities towards other officially registered non-profit organisations. These included the Karl Vella Foundation,

Noah's Ark, the Richmond Foundation, Dr Klown, the Puttinu Cares Foundation, and Dar tal-Providenza. The total sum added up to €1,702.11.

Foodbank Lifeline Foundation - Another annual contribution by FES staff and service users, is that towards the Foodbank Lifeline Foundation, which distributes non-perishable food items to people in need. Everybody's contribution served to create a humbling show of generosity, however a special mention goes to one of the children attending at our centres.

A Year 3 student in one of the Klabb 3-16 centre used his own pocket money to gradually buy all the food items listed on the Reverse Advent Calendar. This heart-warming show of altruism is just a touch of



Beneficiary Organisation	Reason	Amount Donated
Maltese Catholic Action	To turn a dilapidated building into a temporary shelter for the homeless, called Dar Regina Pacis	€1641.26
Dr Klown	To help provide clown doctor services at Mater Dei Hospital	€83
Hospice Malta, Marigold Foundation, Puttinu Cares Foundation	Pink October campaign	€1200
Malta Community Chest Fund	L-Istrina campaign	€21,208
Karl Vella Foundation	Skolasajf fund-raising event	€400
Noah's Ark	Skolasajf fund-raising event	€205.11
Richmond Foundation	Skolasajf fund-raising event	€200
Dr Klown	Skolasajf fund-raising event	€455
Puttinu Cares Foundation	Skolasajf fund-raising event	€242
Dar tal-Providenza	Skolasajf fund-raising event	€200
Totals		€25,834.37

This heart-warming show of altruism is just a touch of the type of values which are carried forward in our centres, and which are present in the hearts of our service users.



the type of values which are carried forward in our centres, and which are present in the hearts of our service users.

Karl Vella Foundation – In October 2019, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Foundation for Educational Services and the Karl Vella Foundation. Through this MOU, the Foundation for Educational Services pledged to offer support that enables the Karl Vella Foundation to continue operating its services from the KVF Centre, within the grounds of

the President's Kitchen Garden. The MOU was signed by the FES Chairperson of FES, Ms Elena Borg, and the CEO Mr Dermot Galea, the co-founder and Chairperson of the Karl Vella Foundation, Ms Claire Chircop, and the Permanent Secretary within the Ministry for Education Dr Frank Fabri.

The signing was witnessed by H.E. Dr George Vella, the Minister for Education and Employment, Hon Evarist Bartolo, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Sports, Youth and Voluntary Organisations Dr Clifton Grima M.P.





Financial Statements

FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
Annual Report and Financial Statements - 31 December 2019

Schedule I

Detailed statement of comprehensive income

For the financial year ended 31 December 2019

	Pages	2019 €	2018 €
Government Subvention		1,620,000	700,000
Other income		3,100	12,141
Surplus/(Deficit) from operations	26 – 27	(386,757)	347,486
Total operating surplus		1,236,343	1,059,627
Administrative expenses	25	(1,042,422)	(762,680)
Surplus for the year		193,922	296,947

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Schedule II

Detailed statement of comprehensive income

For the financial year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€	€
Administrative Expenses		
Accountancy Fees	9,008	56,464
Advertising and recruitment fees	3,010	2,643
Audit Fee	3,776	4,130
Bank and Other Charges	6,463	4,148
Cleaning	6,739	4,918
Consumables	3,319	6,940
Depreciation Charge	49,589	35,670
Fines and Penalties	-	30,391
Honoraria	23,500	26,598
Educational Material	4,531	-
Insurances	10,829	6,497
Licenses and fees	6,189	1,205
Motor Vehicle expenses	3,044	2,325
Office expenses	16,586	8,811
Professional services	56,498	15,937
Repair and Maintenance	2,796	1,212
Stationery and Printing	7,843	6,524
Staff Development	2,128	-
Subcontracted workers	17,612	13,935
Sundry Expenses	32,472	3,286
Telephones	6,215	8,230
Transportation Costs	653	104
Wages and Salaries	769,621	522,712
	1,042,422	762,680

FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
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Schedule III

Detailed statement of comprehensive income (operational segments)

For the financial year ended 31 December 2019

	Child Care 2019 €	Skola Sajf 2019 €	Klabb 3-16 2019 €	Other 2019 €	Total 2019 €
Income from clients	77,805	534,717	503,138	-	1,115,661
Subsidy from government	1,238,227	-	-	-	1,238,227
Total revenues from operations	1,316,033	534,717	503,138	-	2,353,888
Reimbursements					
Government	2,093,626	1,878,704	1,638,279	190,056	5,800,664
EU Funding	-	-	-	4,366	4,366
Total reimbursements	2,093,626	2,110,739	1,638,279	194,422	5,805,030
Total inflows	3,409,658	2,413,420	2,141,418	194,422	8,158,918
Expenditure					
Operational expenses	383,601	353,869	125,117	2,860	865,446
Wages	1,887,221	3,889,442	1,790,847	112,719	7,680,229
Total outflows	2,270,821	4,243,311	1,915,964	115,579	8,545,675
Net surplus/(deficit)	1,138,837	(1,829,890)	225,454	78,843	(386,757)

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Schedule IV

Detailed statement of comprehensive income (operational segments)

For the financial year ended 31 December 2019

	Child Care	Skola Sajf	Klabb 3-16	Other	Total
	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
Total revenues from operations	1,145,977	524,602	383,875	-	2,054,454
Reimbursements					
Government	1,922,114	2,110,739	1,144,646	170,006	5,347,505
EU Funding	-	-	-	-	-
Total reimbursements	1,922,114	2,110,739	1,144,646	170,006	5,347,505
Total inflows	3,068,091	2,635,341	1,528,521	170,006	7,401,959
Expenditure					
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
Total outflows	2,109,082	3,331,224	1,479,051	135,116	7,054,473
Net surplus/(deficit)	959,009	(695,883)	49,470	34,890	347,486



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