

# INTOUCH

ISSUE 51 - December 2022



## Foreword

The **In Touch** FES Newsletter has been in circulation since 2018, and with each passing month, it is getting harder to publish. Why? Due to the difficult decision of what to leave out and not publish in its pages. The work of FES keeps getting more varied, interesting, and in demand, and hence the ever-increasing amount of information to share with our readers.

Covering all that happens at our Head Office and in our service-centres is often not possible. However, we hope that the following pages do credit to the invaluable work carried out by all our staff members, in whichever area and role they fulfil their duties.

We started 2022 by ending our celebration of two decades of operation. We also started with the leadership of a new CEO, who has a vision that complements the FES mission and enhances its portfolio. We trained hundreds of new employees and welcomed even more children in our centres. We strengthened our partnership with parents with one-to-one meetings and evaluation of feedback, leading to an extended service in six childcare centres, a full-week service in the Resource Centres during Skolasajf, and more Skolasajf centres offering extra hours according to demand. And much, much, more.

These few words do not do justice to all the work involved in reaching seemingly easy milestones. However, all those involved know what was entailed, and know also of the appreciation of the parents and our service users. And for all that, we are Thankful!

Looking on 2022, we are grateful for the opportunities that we were given, and we wish our readers the fortitude to embrace 2023 with an open heart and a strong spirit.

Out with the old, in with the new: may you be blessed the whole year through. **Happy New Year!**

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# Skolasajf donation to MCCF

The annual donation of funds collected for the Malta Community Chest Fund during Skolasajf, this year totalled to the amount of €11,334.

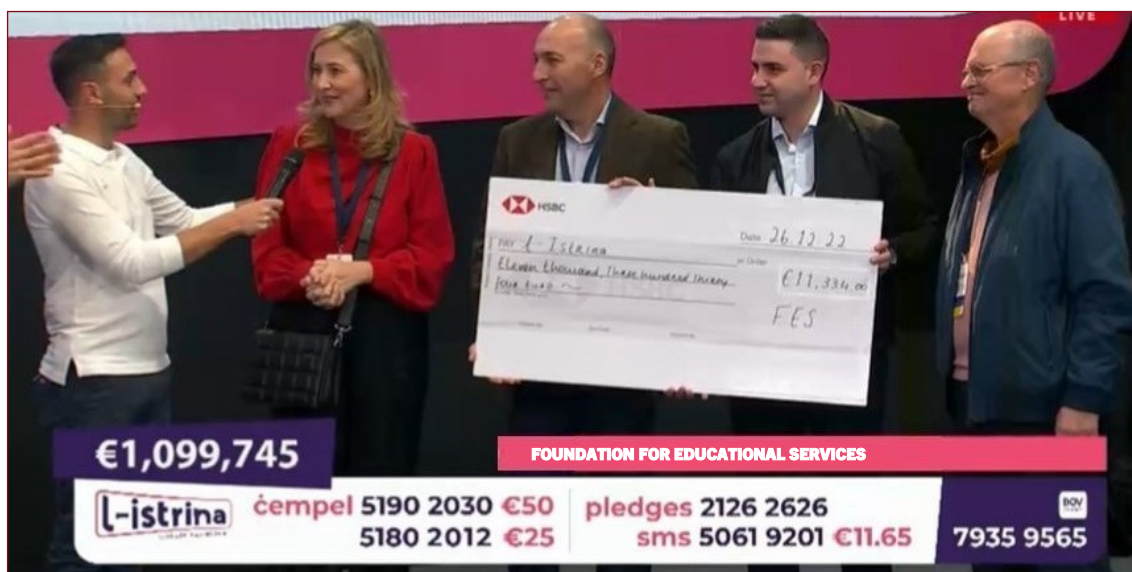
This sum was presented to **H.E. the President of Malta Dr George Vella**, during a courtesy visit at the San Anton Palace, by the **FES Chairperson Ms Pamela Schembri**, the **CEO Mr Michael Bondin**, and members of the FES management team namely, **Mr David Chircop** (Head of Programmes), **Ms Mariella Stivala** (Head of HR and Support Services), and **Mr Mark Cassar** (Head of Business Support).



*Photos courtesy of the Office of the President of Malta*

The President of Malta was greatly touched by this annual show of support by the children, parents, and staff who use the service or work during Skolasajf. He spoke extensively about how these funds will be used to help Maltese patients in hospitals abroad. His Excellency also showed great interest and discussed at length with the FES representatives, about how the FES services are increasing from one year to another.

Moreover, the representatives from the FES team were also invited to attend the **L-Istrina 2022** event held on 26th December 2022, to make a public presentation of the funds.



FES thanks all the Skolasajf staff members who created activities for the children and parents during the summer months, which enabled them to participate so generously in this annual show of solidarity.

# Skolasajf 2023 Logo Competition



## Skolasajf 2023 Logo Competition

**We are waiting for your LOGO!**

**PEACE by PIECE**  
~our small actions bring peace~

Email your designs to:  
**[programmes.fes@gov.mt](mailto:programmes.fes@gov.mt)**

Closing date:  
**30th January 2023**

### PRIZES:

**1st - €75 from**  
**2nd - €50 from**  
**3rd - €25 from**



It is time to launch the **Logo Competition for Skolasajf 2023**, and the Foundation for Educational Services is once again passing the creative process of the Skolasajf logo, to students from 3 years to 16 years.

The theme chosen for this year is '**Peace by Piece**'. This slogan urges people to do their part, no matter how small, as all the individual "pieces of peace" will build the peace that is so needed by everyone.

**Peace** does not mean only not fighting. It is also ways how one can learn to be calm and appreciate others; how to take care of the natural environment to pass it on to future generations; how to be honest and not sow the seeds of discord among friends and colleagues; and being able to take morally good decisions that will have a positive impact on others around us. The collective of everyone will help to build a better and stronger society.

So, children between the ages of 3 and 16 years are urged to think about what helps them define 'Peace' and create a logo that will be feature as the official themed logo for Skolasajf 2023.

This year, the Skolasajf 2023 Logo Competition is once again being sponsored by **Copyclub Live**. The prizes are vouchers redeemable against stationery items, to the value of:

**1st Prize - €75 | 2nd Prize - €50 | 3rd Prize - €25**

There will also be additional gifts kindly provided by one of our long-time Skolasajf partners, **Heritage Malta**.

Designs are to be sent to **[programmes.fes@gov.mt](mailto:programmes.fes@gov.mt)** by **30th January 2023**. If the students who participate in the competition make use of the Klabb 3-16 service, the artwork can be handed over to the Centre Coordinator.

More information and the T&C are available from the FES website [https://fes.gov.mt/en/Pages/News/Skolasajf\\_Logo\\_2023.aspx](https://fes.gov.mt/en/Pages/News/Skolasajf_Logo_2023.aspx)

**We encourage all eligible young creative artists to participate and create our logo for Skolasajf 2023! Good luck!**



# Work Opportunity in Childcare

## *‘ ‘What's it like to work as a Childcare Educator?’ ’*

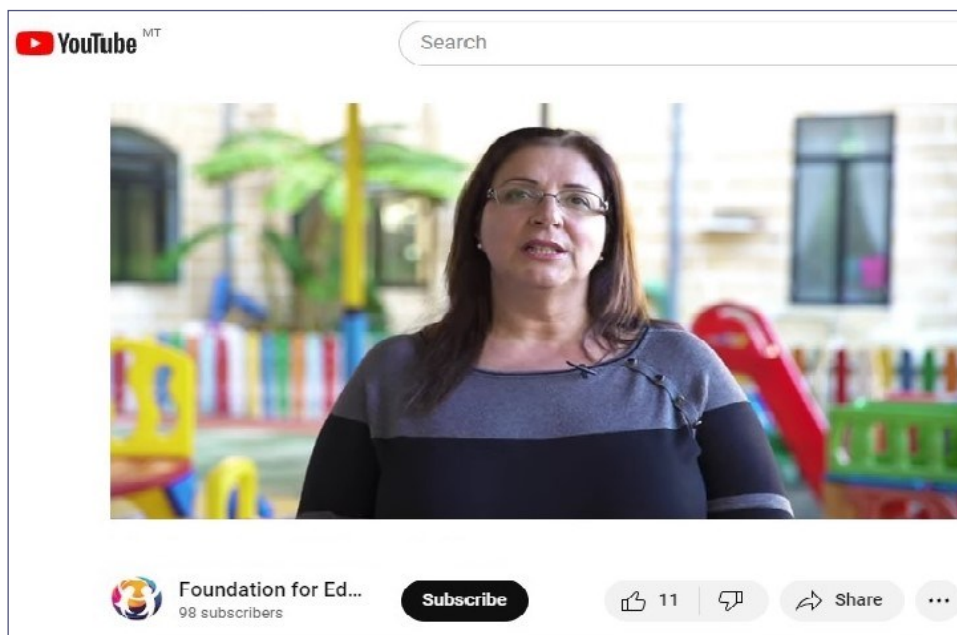
Childcare Educators are responsible for caring for infants and young children in a childcare setting, to provide social, emotional, physical, and educational assistance to support appropriate development.

The Foundation for Educational Services has opened applications for the post of full-time Childcare Educators within its 12 childcare centres. The Childcare Educator works within a team who, under the guidance of the Childcare Centre Co-ordinator, ensures the well-being of all the children and support their access to learning, including those with special needs.

The Childcare Educator has the responsibility to meet the individual children's needs, through play and learning opportunities and general care. The Childcare Educator's responsibility and accountability for the children's well-being must constantly remain within the Childcare Centre's policies and procedures.

The link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndeJrmzk4K0> provides a testimonial from one of our Childcare Educators, giving a first-hand account of her experience as a Childcare Educator in a FES Childcare Centre.

Interested candidates for this post for an indefinite contract. may apply through this link: <https://recruitment.fes.gov.mt/Home/Profile?eq=DjS1krQAXWo%3d>



**Applications close on Monday 9th January 2023 at noon.**

# The Christmas Spirit at.....

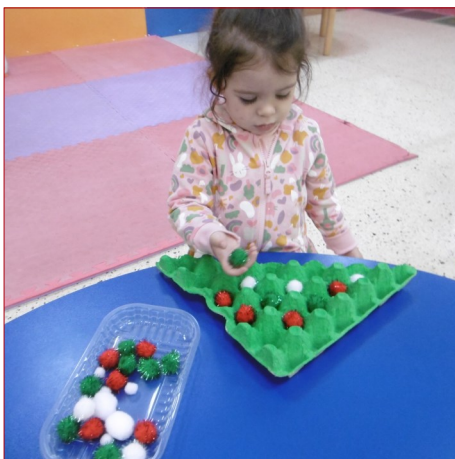
## .....Pizzi Pizzi Kanna and at Il-Pespus Childcare Centres

Activities in the FES childcare centres are in full swing, not only to create a festive atmosphere for our cherubs, but also to offer them meaningful engagement in activities. These activities are opportunities that lead to a specific learning outcomes. While the childcare educators carry out research and plan, they also observe and accommodate the children's interests, allowing them to learn and wonder.

The educators at **Pizzi Pizzi Kanna, at Naxxar**, got children acquainted with their very own snow and snowman; a concept that is alien to the environment of our country, but which comes to life in our imagination. A variety of resources were made available to the children, which were the perfect tools to trigger the children in being confident enough to take up the opportunity to be creative and imaginative. Cornflour and oil created fake snow, while recycled shredded paper replaced the imaginary snowflakes.



At **Il-Pespus at Marsa**, the Christmas activity centred on a story-telling session, with age appropriate props being available to bring the story to life. These included different forms of Christmas trees and baubles. The children took their turn to decorate the trees, establishing their creative flair and helping to build the tree as a collective effort.





# The Christmas Spirit at.....

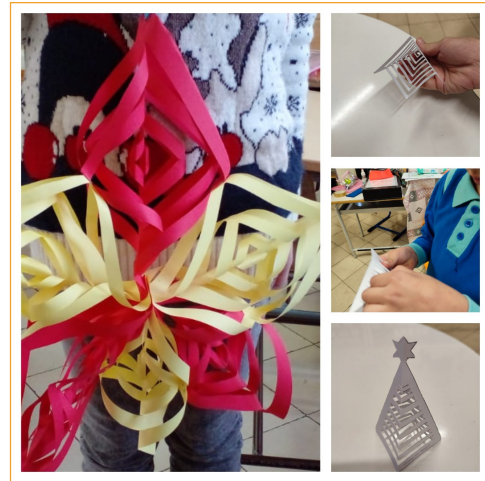
## .....Klabb 3-16 B'Kara

The Christmas spirit is shining at the **B'Kara Klabb 3-16 Centre**, with all the Christmas craft activities being prepared. They are being used to embellish the centre, and to send to the different homes of the students. Both our youngest of students and the older ones enjoyed making these activities.

The younger ones recycled material and created some Christmas ornaments including Christmas baubles and Santa's Reindeers, which they could easily hang on their Christmas Tree at home. The older students got their origami grooves on, by folding recycled paper and creating a Christmas Tree Origami. This activity kept our children focused, while they practised their precision and perseverance.

Another group of children created Pinecone Owls. By using pinecones, our students re-used nature's little gifts to create a wonderful ornament that can be hung on the Christmas tree or gifted to others.

All this thanks to the centre's staff who used the December programme of activities titled '**A Green Christmas**'. This is a way how to encourage children to be resourceful, creative, thoughtful, and sustainable, during this festive period.



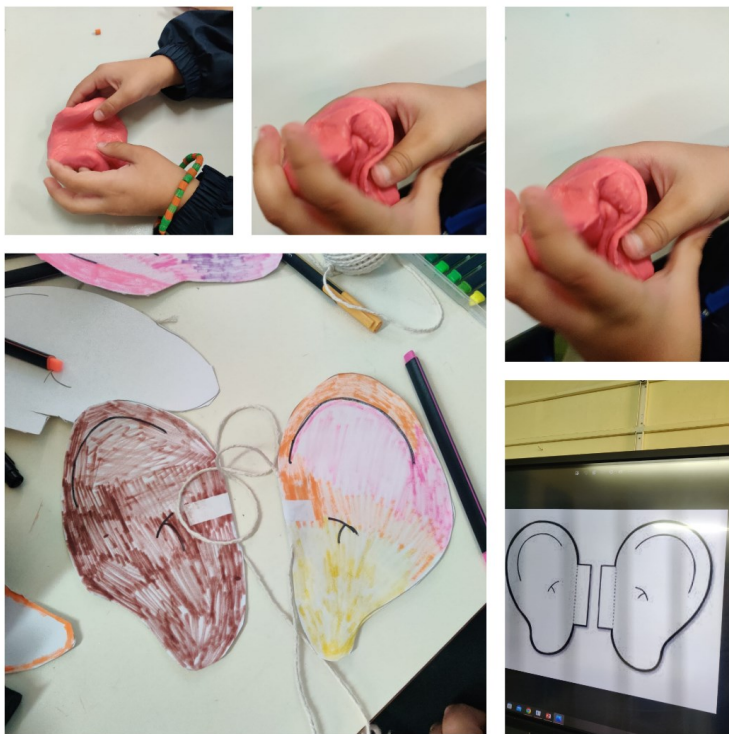
# Using Literature to teach Values

The thematic Programme of Activities issued monthly by the Programmes Department at FES, is an essential tool to keep children who are using the Klabb 3-16 service engaged, through its use as a learning medium via non-formal activities. The learning domains vary to provide an eclectic array of activities, and they include the art of storytelling.

Story-telling activities can be very imaginative, giving rise to opportunities for self-expression. However, their content is also the perfect resource to teach children about moral values and reasoning. The latest book used in the Programme of Activities, is **Roald Dahl's "The BFG"**. While "The BFG" is ridiculous, hilarious, and dark, it also has a sentimental message at its core, which the students in our Klabb 3-16 centres embraced fully as they worked through the activities with their Playworkers and Child Support Workers.

Children's books often carry storylines that model appropriate social behaviour, and help children to relate to characters and experiences, parallel to their level of understanding and maturity. Children's literature provides excellent examples from which students can learn, such as conflict resolution, sharing, dealing with emotions, and about interpersonal relationships, with reminders about the essential dignity and worth of individual human beings.

The storyline of "The BFG" follows young orphan Sophie, and her friendship with the Big Friendly Giant. The Big Friendly Giant and Sophie remind us how friends come in different sizes and shapes. No matter what, they are always there for us. True friends encourage us to be brave, to stand up to be counted, and above all they respect us and include us in their daily lives.

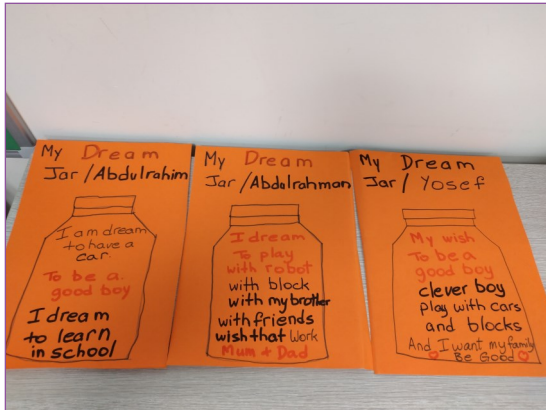


True friends also find time to really listen to us, and the BFG reminds us about the importance of listening to each other. By listening to each other, and caring for them, we are able to bring peace to others, and also build on our own happiness and inner peace. Expression our emotions and finding an ear that listens and understands, helps to build a community of empathy and understanding.

This mode of communication was one of the subjects of discussion between the playworkers and the students. They explored and discussed why it is important to listen to people and not just hear them. Using the popular story of The Big Friendly Giant, they created the big ears of the BFG. The BFG has enormous ears that he can swivel and move about, so very different from the other giants. His ears are what makes him special.

# Using Literature to teach Values..cont'd

The BFG uses his fantastic ears to listen for dreams and catch them, and then blew happy dreams into the rooms of children as they slept. In fact, the concept that dreams can come true and that one should work for them, is one of the other themes in "The BFG". Other lessons encountered in this imaginative story are that one should not judge people by appearances, to give people a chance, and that one can be strong on his own.



The images presented here show some of the activities carried out at the Klabb 3-16 Centres of Qawra and B'Kara, in relation to the book "The BFG".

**Well done to all! Truly lessons worth sharing!**



# Ongoing Professional Development

The FES December calendar had more training opportunities scheduled for the FES staff member who work in the Klabb 3-16 and in the Childcare Centres. The purpose of this ongoing professional development is to improve the skills and acquire new ones, keep abreast of latest development in the field, and be informed about new company policies and practices.

One of the training sessions was part of the series of **refresher courses for Playworkers and Child Support Workers**. The aim of this course is to inform the workers about the objective of the service both as a service to the parents and on a national level; to guide about classroom management and about the importance of the activities that should be carried out to keep the children engaged; how to deal with challenging behaviour and inclusion; and also about matters related to Data Protection and HR issues.

The refresher course for Playworkers and Child Support Workers started in September and shall be an ongoing appointment on the FES Training Calendar to make sure that all new employees are reached and given the right helping hand to work in the Klabb 3-16 Centres.



Another course was for the staff in the FES Childcare Centres, who attended a Fire Warden course.

The objectives of this course were to make the participants aware about the dangers posed by fire, and help them understand the causes and effects of fire. They were also guided on how to identify the risks that can lead to a fire in the workplace, and how to reduce these risks. Apart from the awareness about potential fire hazards in the workplace, the Centre Coordinators were also advised about evacuation methods, and how to make risk assessments.

# Meet Our Staff Members

Name: **Michael Bondin**

Role: **CEO at the Foundation for Educational Services**

## **The year is nearing its end...any regrets?**

The great Sinatra comes to mind. Regrets, like him I have had a few but fewer still worthy of mention. I do what I have to do, and I take pride in seeing things through without exemption. I took on the role of the CEO at FES in January 2022 and had to leave my previous employment as a Head of school, a role which I cherish a lot, right in the middle of a scholastic year. I had to cut short a programme of works, leave behind a dedicated staff with set tasks, and most of all a body of students who were my heart and soul. I moved on, and I soon found myself immersed in another world, full of exciting and intriguing new challenges, and full of learning which I gladly took on. A year that has passed in a jiffy.



## **Gifts abound at this time of year; do you prefer giving or receiving?**

The joy of giving exceeds by far the joy of receiving. I do not consider myself as a materialistic person. While I do enjoy giving presents much more than receiving them, I take pride most in being of service to others. An honest and spontaneous smile brightens up my life, for it communicates genuine affection and appreciation.

## **The festive period is also a time for introspective reflection; how does this effect you?**

Christmas takes me back to when I was a child, and I cherish the values that the true meaning of Christmas brings with it; a warm, loving, innocent feeling. Unfortunately, the stillness, the quiet, the simple, and the quaint, clash heavily with the bright and loud commercial aspect of the festive season, and this somewhat saddens me.

## **Any changes that you would like to make in your life during 2023?**

Change is an important aspect of life. Change is a process by which one reflects and evaluates on a current situation and comes up with ways how to improve. At FES I would like to continue with changes not for the sake of change in itself, but to improve on our services. Coming from outside of the Foundation, I had the opportunity of looking at the service from a different perspective. Now, I am in a position to put forward proposals for consultation, and discuss improvements to the service for the benefit of the Foundation and of the society which we serve.

## **The best Secret Santa gift that you have ever received.**

Actually, this year is the first time that I ever took part in such an event. So, I guess I can safely say that this year's present is the best that I have ever received.

# Meet Our Staff Members

Name: **Mark Cassar**

Role: **Head of the Business Support Unit at the Foundation for Educational Services**



## **The year is nearing its end...any regrets?**

No regrets at all. I think this year was filled with a number of successes, rather than failures. On a personal matter, following my marriage in 2021, my wife and I managed to move to our new home. We also managed to spend our 'official honeymoon' at various beautiful places in the heart of Italy.

Additionally, with the lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions, the theatre became once again open to a public audience. I used to act in a comedy that used to be held annually prior to the COVID pandemic, and this year marked its return to the stage after a hiatus of two years. Therefore, I found myself acting once again, which is one of the hobbies that is most dear to me. Apart from the work and commitment involved to research and bring to life a fictional character, with its own personality

and psychological qualities, drama also provides opportunities to socialise and make new friends. All these characteristics are pivotal to making my hobby so exciting and one that I look forward to doing on a regular basis.

## **Gifts abound at this time of year; do you prefer giving or receiving?**

Very interesting question. It depends from, or to, whom. I don't particularly like receiving surprises, as they disrupt my plans. However, I like giving gifts to my wife, and not only at Christmas. I like to surprise her with spontaneous gifts from time to time. However, as for the other members of my family and friends, I tend to find it quite difficult to decide what to buy them. So, to be honest, I would prefer receiving gifts from them, though of course I do reciprocate the kind offerings.

## **The festive period is also a time for introspective reflection; how does this effect you?**

I always look forward to this time of the year. This festive season gives me a chance to spend more time with my family members, particularly with everyone being more available to hold events and house parties, enabling us to meet up over drinks and some nibbles. I enjoy making the most of these moments, remembering the days when we were young and carefree, and enjoying the Christmas school holidays. They are precious events for me also because during the year, it is very difficult to meet up and dedicate this type of quality time for each other. Unfortunately, everyone has a busy schedule these days.



## Meet Our Staff Members.....cont'd

**Any changes that you would like to make in your life during 2023?**

I can think of nothing in particular. However, I would like to improve my time management skills, both on a personal and professional level. Though I am not someone who makes long-term plans, I do look forward to increasing my travelling abroad, particularly throughout the summer months. This will require some extra effort from my end, as it will coincide with the annual Skolasajf event. Planning ahead will be key in order to have adequate distribution of the workload, that increases significantly during the summer months.

**The best Secret Santa gift that you have ever received.**

I think this was way back in 2016, when I had the chance to participate in the Secret Santa for the first time at my previous workplace. This was a personalised printed mug, with an image of myself during a TV drama role as a police inspector, and a humorous caption.



I still use it for my daily coffee at work, and I am still proud to show it to my workmates .



# FES CHILDCARE NEWS

## *Longer Hours of Service at FES Childcare Centres*

The FES childcare centres have started to offer the service over a longer period of hours in six of its centres.

The centers can be found in the localities of **Birgu, Birkirkara, Naxxar, Pembroke, Ғaž Žebbuğ and Qawra**.

These centres are now accepting children between 6am and 6pm, from Monday to Friday.

Parents interested in using this service are encouraged to contact FES, or any of the chosen centres, or visit the [servizz.gov](http://servizz.gov.mt) hubs, for more information.

Queries to FES can be asked via 22586829 or via email to [fes.gov.mt](mailto:fes.gov.mt).

Alternatively one can call the centres directly and speak to the Centre Coordinators, who will be more than happy to assist with any queries.

**Il-Kuluri**

**Birgu - Tel. 2180 9285**

**Il-Ferrovija**

**B'Kara -Tel. 2598 5561**

**Pizzi Pizzi Kanna**

**Naxxar -Tel. 2598 6820**

**Il-Merill**

**Pembroke -Tel. 2137 6644**

**Žmeraldi**

**Ғaž Žebbuğ -Tel. 2598 7681**

**Ix-Xemx**

**Qawra - Tel. 2598 6996**



Parents who are currently using the service in a centre without the extended hours, can opt to apply for a transfer of service according to vacancies.

# APPLYING FOR OUR CHILDCARE SERVICE?

*Many prospective clients ask us about the process how to choose a centre, and how to apply for our childcare service. In a nutshell, here is how:*

- i. Choose your preferred centre from the list found at [https://fes.gov.mt/en/Pages/Centres/centres\\_child\\_care.aspx](https://fes.gov.mt/en/Pages/Centres/centres_child_care.aspx)
- ii. You can also have a look at the inside of the centres, by watching the videos at <https://fes.gov.mt/en/Pages/Child%20Care/Videos.aspx>
- iii. You can download an application form from <https://fes.gov.mt/en/Pages/registrations.aspx>
- iv. You can also contact the chosen centre directly, ask for a tour of the place, and get the application form directly from the centre.



- i. Children can be registered at the centre by handing over to the Centre Coordinator, the filled-in application form together with the necessary documents. Only one application per child is to be submitted.
- ii. The Centre Coordinators and the FES FB Messenger service, are always available to answer your queries. The Centre Coordinators will also be available to help you fill in the application form.
- iii. The childcare service is offered to children until they are eligible to move on to the government Kindergarten. Children who are 3 years of age by end of April are eligible for Kindergarten on the 1st of February, while children who are 3 years of age by end of December are eligible for Kindergarten on the 1st of October, of that same calendar year.



# TRAIN AND WORK WITH FES



## PLAYWORKER COURSE

A **SHORT** course  
for a **LONG** term job opportunity.

The course that gives  
**you**

\* the **SKILLS** required for the job  
and

\* **PAYS** you for on-the-job training

**17 or older?** Check your eligibility  
and apply through the link below.

Apply >>> [recruitment.fes.gov.mt](https://recruitment.fes.gov.mt)

☎ 22586821

✉ [programmes.fes@gov.mt](mailto:programmes.fes@gov.mt)

# Work with FES

*A number of internal and external calls  
for opportunities to train and work with FES.*



## INTERNAL CALLS

- ◇ COORDINATOR – MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS - REF. NO: 955 Expires On: 04/01/2023
- ◇ REGIONAL COORDINATORS SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 957 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ REGIONAL COORDINATOR (INCLUSION) SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 958 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ CENTRE COORDINATOR SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 959 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ CENTRE COORDINATOR (RESOURCE CENTRE) SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 960 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ PLAYWORKER WITH EXTRA RESPONSIBILITIES SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 961 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ PLAYWORKER WITH EXTRA RESPONSIBILITIES (RESOURCE CENTRE) SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 962

Expires On: 23/01/2023

- ◇ CHILD SUPPORT WORKER SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 963 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ CHILD SUPPORT WORKER (RESOURCE CENTRE) SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 964 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ PLAYWORKER SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 965 Expires On: 23/01/2023
- ◇ SPORTS PLAYWORKER SKOLASAJF 2023 - REF. NO: 966 Expires On: 23/01/2023

## EXTERNAL CALLS

- ◆ CHILD CARE EDUCATORS - REF. NO: 956 Expires On: 09/01/2023
- ◆ PLAYWORKERS KLABB 3-16 (PART-TIME) - REF. NO: 949 Expires On: 04/01/2023
- ◆ CHILD SUPPORT WORKERS KLABB 3-16 (PART-TIME) - REF. NO: 950 Expires On: 04/01/2023
- ◆ TUTORS KLABB 3-16 (PART-TIME) - REF. NO: 951 Expires On: 04/01/2023
- ◆ PLAYWORKERS DEVELOPMENT COURSE - REF NO: 953 Expires On: 09/01/2023
- ◆ CHILD SUPPORT WORKER COURSE - REF NO: 954 Expires On: 09/01/2023

Click on <https://recruitment.fes.gov.mt/> to apply,  
and to get more information, including salary rates, eligibility criteria and job descriptions.  
For any queries, call [22586830/35](tel:2258683035), or write to [hr.fes@gov.mt](mailto:hr.fes@gov.mt)

*The FES Chairperson,  
Board Members,  
CEO,  
and the staff at Head Office,  
extend our best wishes for  
the New Year*

**2023**

*to  
all the staff members,  
service users, clients,  
and partners.*







**Zentrum Business Centre**

**Level 1, Mdina Road**

**Qormi**

**Opening hours: 8.00am - 3.15pm**



[@FoundationforEducational Services](#)

To remove your name from our mailing list, or for any questions and comments, please [click here](#)

22586829

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fes@gov.mt

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www.fes.gov.mt