

# INTOUCH

ISSUE 57 - June 2023



## Foreword

With just a few days away from the commencement of Skolasajf 2023 **Peace by Piece**, it is little wonder that the FES staff members at Head Office and in the centres have a hectic schedule. Whether it is answering parents' queries, scheduling meetings for parents and training sessions for staff, liaising with new partners who want to join the long list of stakeholders in the Skolasajf programme, procuring all the resources needed, and tackling financial matters which concern the service, the workload means that really all hands are on deck. Everyone is working tirelessly to ensure that every detail is meticulously planned, creating a transformative experience for all students.



This year Skolasajf will be welcoming 12,030 children; employing 2,200 staff members, of which 1833 are Playworkers and Child Support Workers; opening 54 centres; and working with over 60 partners. The staff members within the different roles have all received training, whether in-house by FES Head Office staff, or in partnership with the Institute for Education and SportMalta.

While all this is going on, we of course are still offering two other concurrent services in our Childcare and Klabb 3-16 Centres. These two services offer their challenges and satisfactions, as can be evidenced in the dedicated pages inside this Newsletter and on our Facebook pages. The encouraging words of praise from the parents of our service users in childcare are ongoing, however this time we decided to share some of them with you.

This Foreword cannot end without referring to the sad loss of a colleague of ours, Ms Carmen Formosa. An enthusiastic Playworker who was loved by children and colleagues alike, she always gave her all, in the best interest of the children. A fitting tribute to Carmen can be found in the next page.

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# HONOURING THE MEMORY OF MS CARMEN FORMOSA

During the past month, we experienced the sudden loss of our dearest colleague **Ms Carmen Formosa**.

Carmen had been working as a Playworker at our Qawra Klabb 3-16 centre for the past 4 years. She worked tirelessly and whole-heartedly to provide children with an engaging, creative and caring environment. Her time at the Klabb was always full of joy, and creativity. She was always thinking about new activities that the children would love and enjoy.

Like all those who care for children, she guided children in a journey of discovery, laughter, perseverance, and friendships. She gave her all, every day!

She was loved by all who knew her, even if they met her briefly. She will be greatly missed by us all. Thank you Carmen for all your hard work, for the love and dedication shown to the children, and for bringing joy to our daily lives. We will miss you dearly.



# THROWBACK TO SKOLASAJF 2022

...and a promise to what's in store for 2023!



22586800

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www.fes.gov.mt

# SKOLASAJF TRAINING FOR SPORTS PLAYWORKERS

The fast pace of Skolasajf preparations is at its peak and will soon come to an end, with the commencement of the service on 12th July 2023.

These preparations include training for over 1500 Playworkers, Child Support Workers, and also Sports Playworkers. The latter have in fact just completed an intensive session with SportMalta coaches, held at the Kirkop Sports Complex.

The session started with a lecture by **Mr Robert Portelli, Head of Sport Programmes at SportMalta**. Mr Portelli delivered an engaging session on the fundamental principles of physical education, how it benefits the human body, and how to encourage children to embrace a lifestyle that includes physical activity. He also discussed the use of the Skolasajf Sports and Games Manual and ways how to implement it. This lecture was followed by two gruelling sessions of group work and sport activities under the guidance of four SportMalta coaches.

The aim of this training session was of course to prepare the Sport Playworkers for their duties. However, a common comment on their way out was "Tiring but worth it".

FES would like to thank **SportMalta** for their support and commitment. We also thank the Sports Playworkers for their energy and enthusiasm, which they will transmit to the Skolasajf students.



# SKOLASAJF VACANCIES

Want to work with Skolasajf? We're still hiring!

Playworkers and Child Support Workers wanted. Ready to join?

Apply now!

Apply here and we will contact you for more information: <https://forms.office.com/e/42Aq9AKE2w>

# SKOLASAJF WE ARE HIRING!

READY TO JOIN?

CALL US !

 22586835/11



# CHILDCARE ACTIVITIES

In a lively and colourful experience, the little ones at **Il-Bejta Childcare Centre** immersed themselves in the rich Maltese culture.

They enthusiastically engaged with musical equipment, dancing and singing to the vibrant tunes of Maltese music. Their exploration continued as they delved into a traditional Maltese game called 'Passju', filled with laughter and joy as they jumped and played together. To further embrace the Maltese culinary heritage, the children were given the opportunity to prepare delicious Maltese baked pasta. Finally, they enjoyed the fruit of their hard work by eating the meal together, thus sewing also as a social activity.

Thanks to all the staff at Il-Bejta Childcare Centre for curating such a wonderful and enriching experience for the children.



# A WINDOW TO THE CREATIVE MINDS

*I have an only child and he does not get to meet any children his age. How can I help him to socialise?*

*I do not work, so I do not need a full day of childcare. Can I use just some hours in the day?*

*How can I help prepare my child for Kindergarten?*

These are all too common questions that we hear from concerned parents. The FES Childcare service is the optimum solution to address these concerns.

The **10am to 2pm** time window is the perfect opportunity to introduce children to social groups, learn about social boundaries, and learn about acceptable behaviour towards other people.

It is also the time that allows them to wonder and explore, as they develop physical and cognitive skills with a range of child-led learning opportunities.

If the above questions are similar to your concerns, call FES on 22586829 to learn more about our competitive rates of the centres, or send us a WhatsApp message on 79523501 .

Vacancies for your child are available especially at **Floriana, San Gwann and Birgu**.

Make the most of these hours by calling:

Floriana - It-Tgħanniqa Childcare Centre on 25982611  
San Gwann - Is-Sardinella Childcare Centre on 21372851  
Birgu - Il-Kuluri Childcare Centre on 21809285

NEED JUST A FEW HOURS  
OF CHILDCARE?

**10AM TO 2PM**

**fes**  
Foundation for Educational Services

COMPETITIVE RATES!  
CALL US 22586829

SOCIALISATION  
&  
EXPLORATION

22586800

fes@gov.mt

www.fes.gov.mt

# CHILDCARE

## REGISTRATIONS AND EXTENDED HOURS

### Extended Childcare Hours

Monday - Friday  
06:00-18:00

Birgu	Tel: +356 2180 9285
Birkirkara	Tel: +356 2598 5561
Naxxar	Tel: +356 2598 6820
Pembroke	Tel: +356 2137 6644
Haż-Żebbuġ	Tel: +356 2598 7681
Qawra	Tel: +356 2598 6996

FES Head Office TEL: +356 22586829



The FES Childcare Centres are offering the service **over a longer period of hours** in six centres.

The centers at **Birgu, Birkirkara, Naxxar, Pembroke, Haż-Żebbuġ** and **Qawra**, 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 **service.gov hubs**, for more information.

**Registrations are also open** for the remaining FES Childcare Centres at:  
**Bormla, Siggiewi, St Venera, San Gwann, Marsa, and Floriana.**

A full list of the FES centres with all the contact details can be found at:  
<https://fes.gov.mt/childcare-centres/>

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



# HOW TO APPLY FOR OUR CHILDCARE SERVICES

**1. Choose your preferred centre from the list found at:**

<https://fes.gov.mt/childcare-centres/>

You can also have a look inside of the centres, by watching the videos at:

<https://fes.gov.mt/en/Pages/Child%20Care/Videos.aspx>.

**2. You can download an application form from:**

<https://fes.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Childcare-Registration-Form.pdf>

You can also contact the chosen centre directly, ask for a tour of the place, and get the application directly from there.



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.

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.

The childcare service is offered to children until they are eligible to move on to the government Kindergarten on the 1st of February, while children who are three years of age by the end of December are eligible for Kindergarten on the 1st of October, of that same calendar year.

# CHILDCARE

## COMMENTS OF APPRECIATION

### Il-Bejta

Been a fabulous day! Never a dull moment at Il-Bejta Childcare Centre. Most dedicated staff ever ❤️

### It-Tghanniqa

Well organized ❤️ ❤️ thanks to all of you much appreciate

### Is-Sardinella

Thank you so much for this wonderful activity we had an amazing day ❤️ ❤️ ❤️

The best! Nothing but words of praise for sardinella!

### Id-Denfil

It was a lovely event. Thanks for the invite ❤️

### Il-Merill

Thank You Ms Helen, Ms Rose and Ms Lauren ❤️

### Il-Bebbuxu

Thanks tal lorganizzazjoni u proset xxx hadna hafna gost

### Il-Pespus

Thankyou for all your dedication and love with our children 🙏

### Żmeraldi

Well done all of you 😊 they all had fun and enjoyed every minute of it ❤️ 🎉 keep it up ladies xx

Well done 👍 they really enjoyed it and thanks gor everything you do with our little ones 💙 🙏 🙏 much appreciated xx

### Il-Ferrovija

Beautifully prepared and definitely fun! Well done!

### Ix-Xemx

We all had such fun.  
Thanks for the initiative.  
❤️ ❤️ 🙏 ❤️ ❤️

It was a wonderful day! Everyone had a blast educators and children 🙏

### Pizzi Pizzi Kanna

So adorable! ❤️ Well done for the organisation

Thank you to all the staff for creating this beautiful event for us to enjoy with our little ones. Well done for your dedication and care. Thank you for this opportunity

### Il-Kuluri

Love this! ❤️

Thanks so much! It was great!



# KLABB 3-16

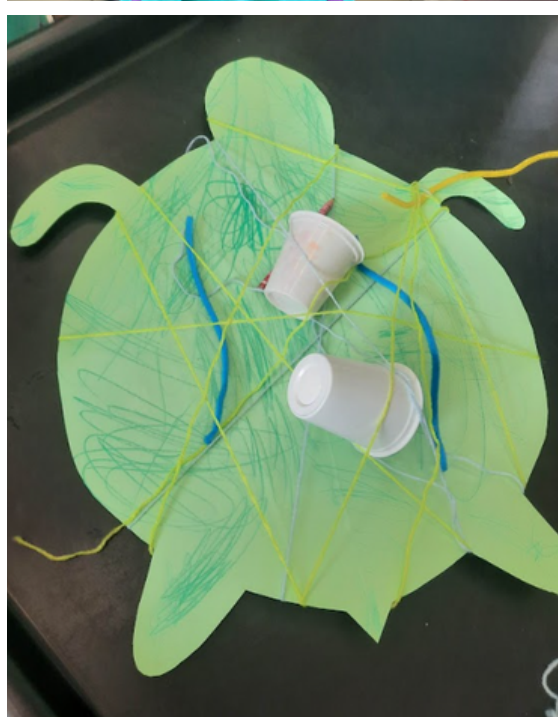
## ACTIVITIES

Our students at **Sigġiewi Klabb 3-16** engaged in a variety of activities centred around turtles, oceans, health and safety, and, of course, honouring all the incredible fathers out there. It was a perfect blend of education, fun, and appreciation, leaving lasting memories for everyone involved.

Our little explorers were thrilled to embark on a journey to learn about the fascinating world of turtles. They gained insights into different turtle species, their habitats, and the challenges they face in the wild. Then they also engaged in health and safety activities. They absorbed valuable knowledge about emergency preparedness, the importance of personal hygiene, and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. These lessons will undoubtedly stay with them, equipping them with the tools to keep themselves and others safe.

Of course, we couldn't let Father's Day go unnoticed! The students celebrated the amazing dads who provide love, support, and guidance to their children. The children crafted heartfelt handmade cards, expressing their gratitude and admiration towards their fathers.

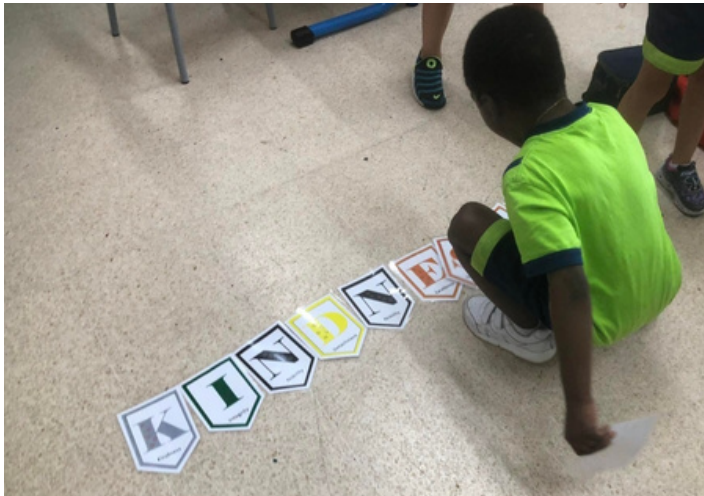
Thank you to all the staff at Sigġiewi Klabb 3-16 for giving our students such learning opportunities.



# MUSIC ACTIVITY

## KLABB 3-16

At **St. Paul's Bay Klabb 3-16**, the children were actively participating and engaging in music activities led by **Ms Yvette Grixti**. The vibrant musical environment allowed them to explore various instruments, develop their musical skills and rhythm, and foster an appreciation for music. Ms Yvette's guidance and passion for music created a nurturing space where the children could express themselves creatively and discovered the joy of making music together.



# ONGOING REFURBISHMENT

As the Maltese summer sun has started to show its might, it limits the amount of time that one can stay outdoors. To mitigate this problem and give the children at the FES Childcare Centres more time to enjoy their outdoor activities, the yards have covered areas to provide shade. In the case of **Ix-Xemx Childcare Centre**, two gazebos have been set up in the large exterior area.

The size and material of the gazebos provide protection against the UV rays and the lethargic effect of the heat. The additional shaded area is proving to be the perfect place for picnics, water games, storytelling....and of course, the children themselves will also suggest opportunities how these two shaded nooks can be used.



# MEET OUR EMPLOYEES



Name: **Luana Sheehan**

Role: **PER at Qawra Skolasajf**

## **What does your role as a PER at Skolasajf entail?**

Being in one of the largest centres, my work as a PER is very wide and carries with it a number of responsibilities which I share with my other PER colleagues. My work includes responsibilities towards the children, towards my colleagues, towards parents and towards the Centre Coordinator. I liaise with the coordinator in accomplishing the needs of the centre in relation to resources and stationery needed. It is my responsibility to cater for the different year groups in the centre.

During Skolasajf, I am able to organise outings and activities by communicating with partners for the centre-based activities, sending weekly emails with information on the weekly activities and outings to parents, dealing with everyday issues and checking on the day-to-day class activities as scheduled by the relative Playworkers. I also prepare, along with my PER colleagues, the reconciliation sheets after every activity and after concluding financial matters relative to the specific activity. Lastly, there would be the need to help the Centre Coordinator with the administrative work like recording of Sick Leave and Vacation Leave, preparing the monthly signing sheets and to photocopy the essential forms and applications.

## **Now that Skolasajf is 2 weeks away, how are you preparing for the start of Skolasajf?**

Preparation would include: organizing the setting up of the office assigned to the administration, choosing the best transport prices for the scheduled outings and contacting partners for the centre based activities, choosing the best venues for the outings according to the different age groups, assigning classes according to the applications sent, joining in meetings with the Centre Coordinator, with parents and with staff, preparing the calendar of events, concluding pending Klabb 3-16 work,, answering emails regarding requests by parents, photocopy of needed forms and preparing for the needs of the year group assigned to me by the Centre Coordinator. This year I will be in charge of the Kinder classes and being a Kindergarten Educator myself, I feel that I am in a very good position to know how to adequately deal with this particular year group.

## **Which is your favourite and least favourite part of your role?**

The favourite part of my job is organising outings and activities, as well as making sure that all is in place so that the children will be satisfied and will enjoy what Skolasajf has to offer. The least favourite part is when I would have to pinpoint certain discrepancies in the behaviour of the staff, especially if they are things which would have been noted and addressed to times before.

## **Do you remember your first day as a PER? Were you nervous or excited?**

I remember when I first was assigned the job of a PER, I was very excited and quite proud of myself. I was a bit nervous too, however I was determined to do the best I could. It was quite an experience for me, as the Centre Coordinator in the Centre I was working in was about to leave and therefore I knew that I would have to deal with the situation on my own despite the fact that I was new to everything. However, I must have made a good job of it as the new CC who came some six months after was very pleased and satisfied with what I had been doing. Looking back, I'm proud of myself that I took this step in my career.

## **What advice do you have for someone wanting to apply as a PER?**

I would advise anyone applying for the PER post to know in detail what the duties and responsibilities of a PER entail and that the most important thing is to be ready to liaise continually and discuss seriously any issues with the Centre Coordinator. It's such a rewarding role to have!

# MEET OUR EMPLOYEES



Name: **Mario Borg**  
Role: **Regional Coordinator**  
**Skolasajf**

**Skolasajf is not a new experience for you. What roles have you covered in the past years?**

I started Skolasajf as part of my summer placement when I was still doing my course at University. Since then I haven't stopped. I have seen Skolasajf grow from an office manned by five people to a whole organisation with all its departments and responsibilities. I must say that FES has responded to the needs of the times and have grown significantly. I have been in the roles of Playworker, Coordinator, Regional Coordinator and Regional Coordinator

Coordinator Inclusion. I have loved and gave my utmost to each and every role. Never a dull moment.

**This year you will be returning the role of Regional Coordinator (Inclusion). What are the issues which you will be dealing with?**

As a Regional Coordinator, I will be giving support to the Centre Coordinators, Playworkers, Child Support Workers and other school staff with regarding to Inclusion of SEN Students. Our philosophy is for all children and young people within our Centres to have a quality programme, instruction, and support and at the same time have fun and enjoy the Skolasajf Programme. This would entail empowering, mentoring and supporting as much as possible for all students to have an interactive and positive experience. When I visit schools I love sitting down with the students and do hands on activities with them. They are my motivation and I learn a lot from them.

**Your professional occupation is that of a teacher. How does the Skolasajf experience enrich your full-time job?**

Definitely. From the Skolasajf experience you learn a lot of Skills and insights which you take with you in Winter. Being in different roles enriches you with skills and experiences.

**If you had to give one piece of advice to Skolasajf employees, to practice inclusion that ensures all students can access learning, what would it be?**

Always be positive, and open. Challenges always crop up but with a positive attitude we will find the best solutions. Assisting students and being their voice whilst helping them to reach their best potential is very motivating.

**Skolasajf is a demanding project, yet like many other colleagues, you return from one year to another. Why?**

I love the experience, and fulfilling my responsibilities when doing my role gives me great satisfaction especially when I feel that I am helping and supporting others.

# Photo of the month



Photo by: Jefflyn Grech

Bahá'í Gardens at Haifa, Israel







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