

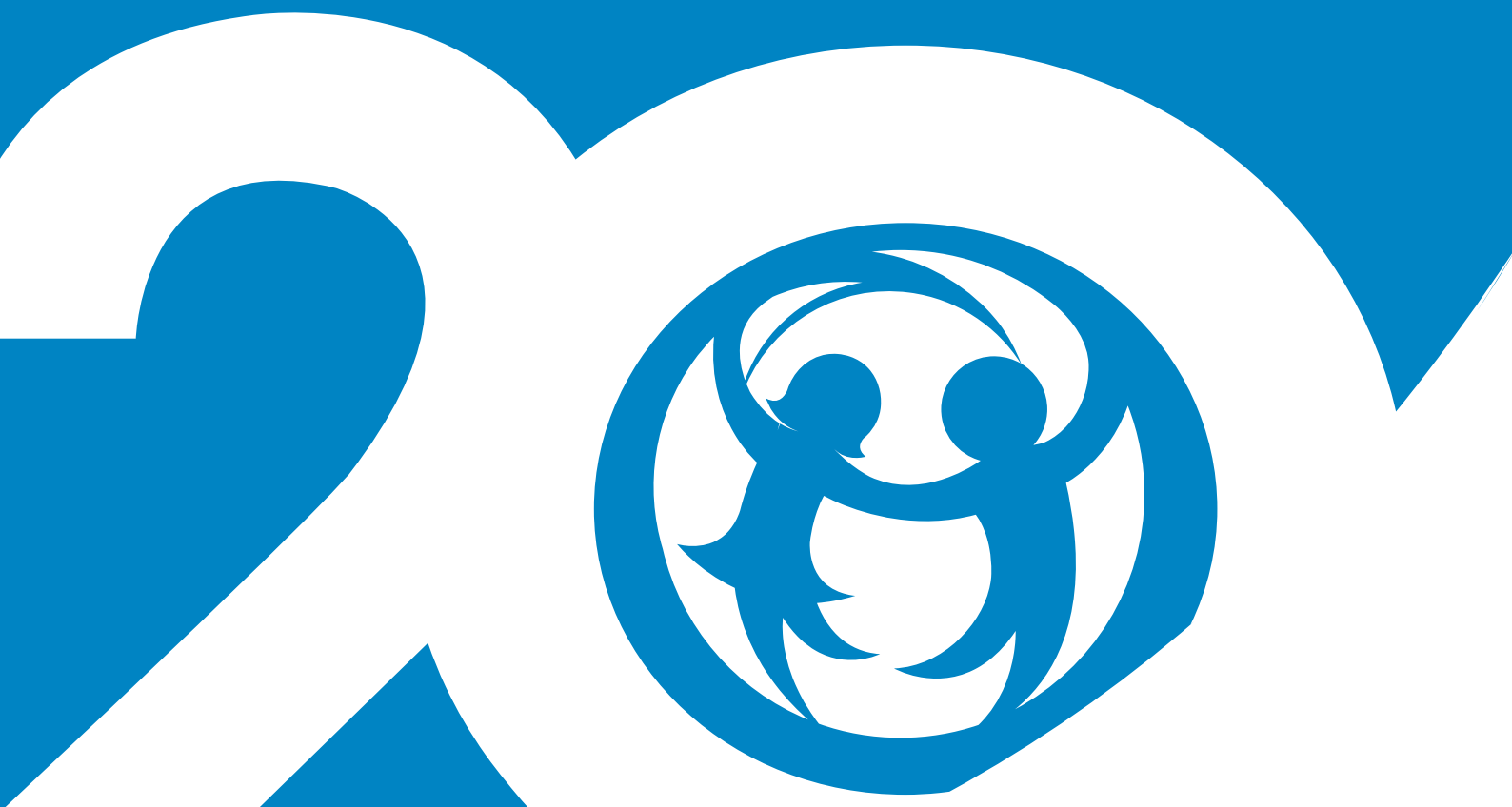
Annual Report

2021



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Foundation for Educational Services

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Published by: **Foundation for Educational Services**

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Introduction

The Foundation for Educational Services had long been waiting for the year 2021 to make an appearance on its horizon. The year was going to mark the milestone birthday of the entity; 20 years in operation, at its peak of youth, and also of experience in its related service industry. They have been 20 years marked with amazing achievements, an eclectic array of services to meet changing societal needs, changes in the organizational structure, and projects that increased and strengthened its social commitment, amongst others. So it is no wonder that the FES staff were planning and looking forward to different and memorable ways, how to immortalize these 20 years of service to the community.

However, fate had different plans. The year 2021 started and ended with the unpredictability of COVID-19 and its implications, rearing their heads again. Services continued to be affected, as an indirect result of the mitigating measures taken to ward off the infection rate. Festivities in the traditional way were very low-key or cancelled altogether. Celebrations were instead translated in more rolling up of sleeves and delivering an output that often exceeded expectations. One cannot help but feel satisfied at the intense work and solidarity that once again went into every aspect of our lives, including our role as employees, to pull one rope and tug victory to our side. At FES we see success as a reminder of our abilities; we look at problems as challenges; and regard

weaknesses as opportunities for change and improvement. The year 2021 provided us with ample instances of both, as we rallied together to face the workload on our plate.

A client who applies for one of the services offered by FES, may at times feel frustrated that there is a waiting time. We strive to keep waiting time to a bare minimum. However, the COVID-19 related measures to be addressed, not only compound the work involved to offer the service, but also the communication needed to keep the clients informed at all stages of the application process. The mission statement of the Foundation, to provide a safe environment for the learners, their families, and all stakeholders, continued to be paramount in the decisions taken, and the changes made, to enable the continuity of the services.

In preparation for 2021, the FES Management Team got together to take stock of 2020, evaluate the successes and the drawbacks, and build an even more solid plan for 2021. Whilst the educational institutions had to close for the second time around in March 2021, that time FES was prepared for this eventuality. The uncertainty surrounding the ways and means how to keep in contact with our service users had already been conquered the previous year, and measures had been taken to tweak systems and procedures for better effectiveness. The closure of the educational institutions also saw FES continue to offer the childcare service at *Is-Sardinella* in

San Gwann, for the children of front-line workers, making it possible for the selected service entities to continue operating.

FES also continued the all-day service at the San Guzepp Klabb 3-16 Centre, and at the Maria Bambina Klabb 3-16 Centre, till June 2021. These centres proved to be of great support to the parents of Church School students, operating on a rotational basis. As the months rolled on, FES dreamed of venturing into other new areas that would enhance its current services and make them accessible to more service users. Months of work and planning went into the proposal of extending the opening hours of the FES childcare centres, and also in the provision

of the Klabb 3-16 service in the Resource Centres during the scholastic holidays. The logistics and operational planning that went, and are ongoing, in these projects, are complex and time-consuming processes. However, that is what will enable FES to offer the best service possible. 2021 drew to an end with a clear roadmap for the consolidation of the current successful programmes, and for the new areas of service delivery.

All in all, the outcome of all the work done along the whole year marking the 20th Anniversary, couldn't have been a better tribute to celebrate the accomplishments of the past two decades.

FES Board Members



Ms Pamela Schembri
Chairperson



Dr Tiffany Attard
Board Member



Ms Philippa Attard
Board Member



Ms Helen Farrugia
Board Member



Ms Sharon Grech
Board Member



Prof. Andrew Azzopardi
Board Member



Mr Jesmond Aquilina
Board Secretary
In absentia Mr Mario Grima

Message by the Minister for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation

Hon. Dr Clifton Grima M.P.



Undoubtedly the Foundation of Educational Services is one of the main pillars of our educational system and has been providing an outstanding contribution to the education sector for over 20 years, reflecting its vision statement “Together we contribute to the educational development of the learner whilst supporting an evolving society”.

FES provides various services - Child Care Centres, Klabb 3-16 and SkolaSajf – a holistic range of innovative educational services and initiatives contributing to the wellbeing of our younger generations, but also giving an excellent service to the working parents in providing a good alternative where their children can further their development. The Foundation’s services, including childcare, after-school care, parental empowerment services and youth initiatives are extremely beneficial to all, ensuring learning and personal development for both parents and children. Programmes that are engaging our children in non-formal educational activities which are so important in teaching children important life skills transferable to other areas of their lives.

The FES has a rich history with impressive statistics, and I am sure that it will maintain and build on its past achievements so that it will continue to strengthen the educational journey of our children for generations to come. I am sure that looking back at the accomplishments that the foundation achieved gives all of us the necessary motivation to strive further in our next challenges as we further build on the services and programmes being offered.

During these two decades, FES has excellently managed to adapt to the ever-changing needs of our country’s economy and the varying lifestyles of our families. The foundation’s enhanced services are a testimony of a leading stakeholder in the field.

I would like to show my gratitude and appreciation to the foundation and thank the Chairperson and Members of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer, and all the employees for their commitment and arduous dedication.

I also reaffirm my commitment in giving all the needed support to the foundation, for it to continue to offer the same level of excellence and provide more innovative services, to benefit our younger generation and their families.

Message by the Permanent Secretary within the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation

Mr Matthew Vella



One may compare the Foundation for Educational Services to a passport, which is a fundamental tool for travelling. Through its work in collaboration with the Ministry for Education and Sport, the Foundation is doing an excellent job in offering a range of innovative educational activities for children of different ages. Through its commitment in the provision of after-school care while also implementing informal education initiatives, it is reaching its aims to help parents balance their work and family commitments, while also facilitating the educational voyage of children.

Furthermore, the Foundation for Educational Services, embodies a person-centred approach with a keen eye for an inclusive approach towards the activities and initiatives based on evidence-based approaches. This is highly evident in the support provided to children with a Statement of Needs based on recommendations by professionals; in the provision of services in Resource Centres to nearly 120 service users through the service offered at Skolasajf in the past year; and nearly 80 service users who made use of Klabb 3-16 service in the Resource Centres for the first time during the September Bridge Holiday period. Even more so, the impact of this Foundation is felt through the over 7,700 children who made use of Klabb

3-16 during the scholastic holiday period, complimenting the number of children who attended Skolasajf in the mentioned year. Concurrently, the Foundation is also to be commended in the quality of childcare services provided to over 600 children within its 13 centres, to continue providing support to families.

Such numbers were considerable especially in the wake of a pandemic, when parents and guardians may have been more cautious of having their children attend such centres or activities for precautionary reasons. Yet, the Foundation did its utmost to enhance its services also with the support and direction provided by Health Authorities, to bring vitality and a taste of normality that was being missed.

My augur for the Foundation for Educational Services is to continue supporting families from all echelons of society, and in the process making all services more readily available. The passion and commitment for the service provision also means that FES continues with its perseverance in its endeavour to instil a passion for learning in children of all ages and abilities. It is this kind of spirit that helps us ensure that children will never cease to grow and fulfil their potential and dreams.

Message by the Chairperson of the Foundation for Educational Services

Ms Pamela Schembri



Looking back at yet another unforgettable year for the world, it is a pleasure to see that the Foundation for Educational Services kept its momentum and retained its growth.

The year 2020 shook the world and gave us a normality that no one ever dreamt of. 2021 was similar, yet the citizens of the world were prepared and knew what could happen. The same can be said of the Foundation for Educational Services. Despite having to go online once again and halt its services physically, the Foundation was this time round well prepared and kept on offering its sterling service.

It is difficult to single out the Foundation's biggest achievement, which may be an ironic statement in view that 2021 was also the year when FES was celebrating its 20th Anniversary. Two decades of milestones, successes, and innovations. However, the roll call of winners for 2021 alone is simply too long. Over the past 12 months, every member of our community has made

a telling contribution to these standout successes. However, our most significant achievement, i.e. keeping on giving a service despite the pandemic, deserves more recognition.

During this time, the Foundation has created an online version of all contracts that were issued during the year. This proved to be an arduous task but was tackled successfully and is now less time consuming.

The Foundation ameliorated also the day to day running of the three pillars of the Foundation; the services of Skolasajf, Childcare, and Klabb 3-16.

Throughout last year, the Foundation driven by the Minister of Education, Dr Justyne Caruana, had looked into the possibility of extending the childcare opening hours from 6am to 6pm, including opening hours from 6.00am to 1.00pm on Saturdays. Following several consultation and management meetings, and works behind the scenes, this initiative will be launched in 2022.

For the first time, the Foundation also opened the Resource Centres during the September bridge holidays. Whilst the service had its logistical problems, the Foundation continued working to iron out any difficulties presented by this project, and has committed to deliver this service also in the year 2022.

The year 2021 has also seen Dermot Galea resign as CEO of the Foundation for Educational Services. Mr Galea has streamlined the Foundation in such a way that made the day to day running of the Foundation easier. On behalf of the Board Members and FES employees, I thank Mr

Galea for his admirable work throughout his time at the Foundation's helm.

During 2022, the Foundation will be gearing up to continue boosting its drive and come up with innovative ideas to better enhance its services. It will be doing so under the guidance of Hon Dr Clifton Grima, as the new Minister for Education, under whose remit FES operates its services. There will also be the new CEO, Mr Michael Bondin, who will be bringing to the table a wealth of experience in terms of leadership and management skills. I am sure that these will be skilfully used to continue strengthening the service output of the Foundation.

Message by the CEO of the Foundation for Educational Services

Mr Michael Bondin



At the beginning of 2022, after a rigorous selection process, I was entrusted to lead the Foundation for Educational Service. The timely implementation of corporate goals and objectives, while ensuring good governance and quality standards within the Foundation, is no mean feat. I accepted this post humbly and responsibly. This is an ongoing commitment that promises to sustain the great work done so far, and to continue building on the achieved accomplishments for the benefit of our clients.

During the year 2021, FES was celebrating its 20th anniversary. It was not just a reminder of a date, but a reminder of all the workers who have been part of its success. A reminder of how far we have come together and where we want to go. It is my intention that together, with the assured collaboration of my team at Head Office, and the hundreds of workers in our Childcare, Klabb 3-16, and Skolasajf centres, we continue to provide a quality service to our clients, while seeking to improve our operation through professional development and training.

The provision of service to parents of children whose age group spans from 3 months to 16 years is a demanding endeavor. It is a decisive service that helps to facilitate the work-life balance so crucial for the lifestyle of today's society. FES is already playing an outstanding role in delivering services on a national scale for the benefit of whole families. As an entity, we are working hard to not only continue improving on current services, but to also extend our service in other areas, thus increasing accessibility and inclusion.

Our service however is not limited to tend to children while their parents are at work. The quality of our service and the quality of our programs indelibly mark these young people for life. Our realm in the field of non-formal education taps on aspects of the personality and character of the student which complements formal education. Non-formal education draws on the multiple intelligences each one of the children in our care possesses and unleashes their creative potential which is somewhat limited in the formal sector. This is an area of education

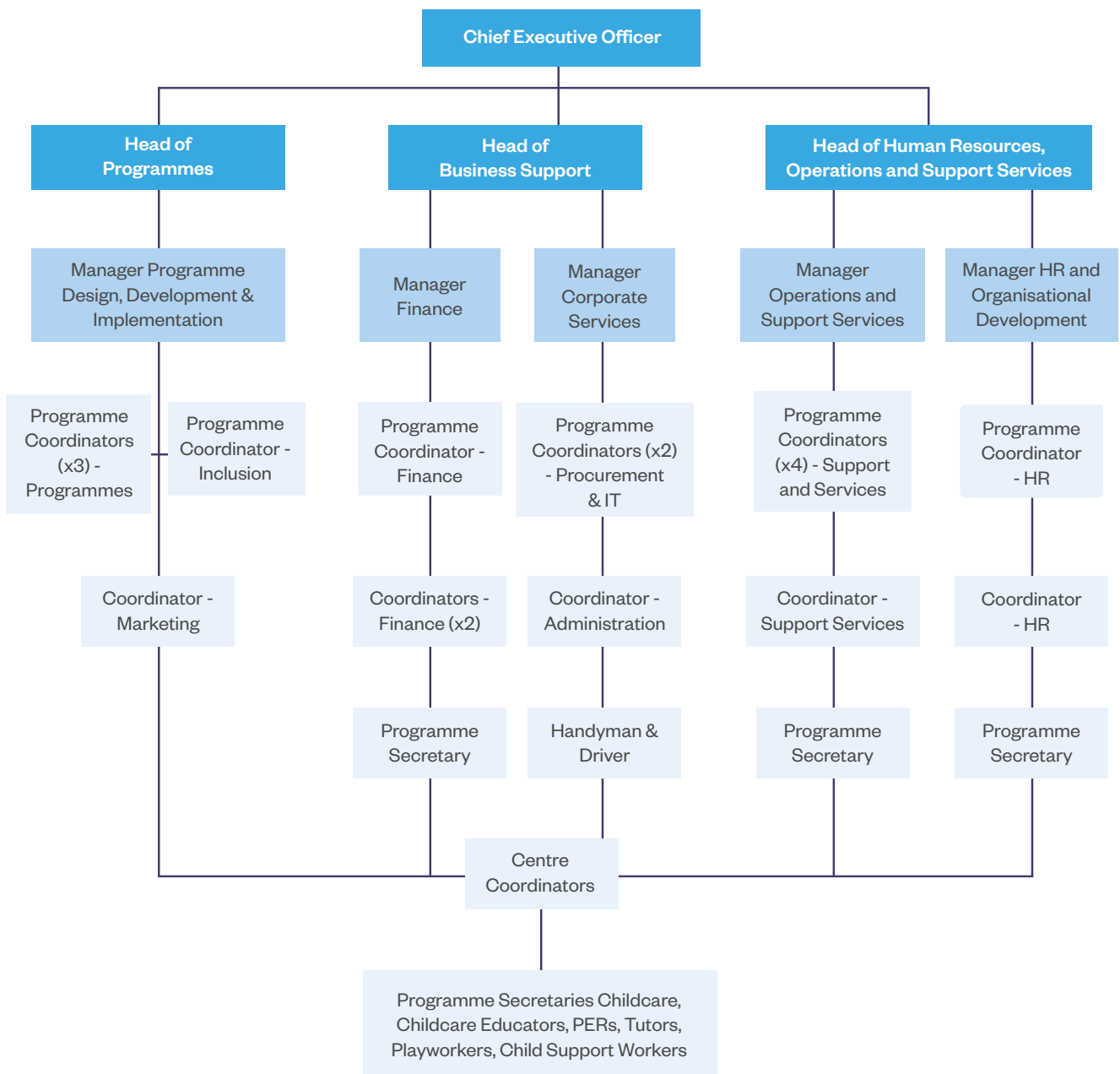
that permeates through all our services, and as FES we are committed to actively research, develop and hone our programs to continue playing our part in the children's well-being whilst helping them acquire skills beyond their school desk.

While I take this opportunity to thank the previous CEO Mr Dermot Galea for his assistance in handing over the helm of the Foundation, I would also like to extend my appreciation to the Chairperson Ms Pamela Schembri and to the Board Members for their continued support. I also look forward to continue working closely with colleagues from the different schools, departments, and

entities, as close collaborators in our service provision. I also extend my gratitude for the efficient working relationship established with the Minister for Education, Sports, Youths, Research and Innovation, Dr Clifton Grima, and with the Permanent Secretary Mr Matthew Vella.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the team of employees at the FES Head Office, and in the Childcare and Klabb 3-16 Centres, whose ongoing work makes our services possible. It is such a strong network of people of goodwill, working together for a better future, that emboldens me for this new career path that I have undertaken.

The Organisational Structure





The FES 20th Anniversary



2021 was the year when the Foundation for Educational Services celebrated its 20th Anniversary. It was in fact set up on 24th May 2001. The celebration was not just because the Foundation had reached a significant number of years in operation. It was also a tribute to the dedication and commitment manifested by all the employees who had worked hard to make our services available to the community. It is a commemoration of the effort and enthusiasm put into projects to reach vulnerable members of society, to implement integration and social inclusion. In 2021, FES celebrates the people who made, nurtured, and expanded FES, and the story of this exciting journey along the preceding two decades.

We started off the year with the launch of a special logo that incorporated the number 20 and the FES logo. This logo was used in all the FES official communication, serving as a reminder to not only the FES staff, but also to stakeholders outside the entity, about the importance of this year for the Foundation.

The main celebration of this milestone was held during a commemorative event held on 24th May 2021. The Minister for Education at the time, the Hon Dr Justyne Caruana, the Permanent Secretary at the time, Dr Frank Fabri, and the FES Chairperson, Miss Pamela Schembri joined the FES staff at Head Office to celebrate this anniversary.

Minister Dr Justyne Caruana, together with the FES Chairperson Ms Pamela Schembri, unveiled a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion when FES was founded. Minister Caruana also awarded long term employees who have been working with FES for 10 years and over, with a commemorative memento that celebrates the employees' commitment to FES.

Minister Caruana commented on their loyalty to the entity and on the service given to families in the community. These employees hail from various areas of service of FES, including FES Board Members, Head Office, Childcare Centres, and Klabb 3-16 Centres.

Minister Caruana, Dr Fabri, and Ms Schembri were also presented with a memento thank them for their support to the work and projects embarked on by FES.

The recipients of the commemorative awards for their long-term service were:
Prof Andrew Azzopardi – FES Board Member





Mr Mario Mallia – FES Board Member
 Helen Fenech – Childcare Educator
 Anna Farrugia - Childcare Educator
 Carmen Mifsud - Childcare Educator
 Joanne Camilleri - Childcare Educator
 Josette Tonna - Childcare Educator
 Nilda Pille - Childcare Educator
 Rita Cini - Childcare Educator
 Rita Balzia - Childcare Educator (in absentia)
 Bernard Grixti – Klabb 3-16 Centre
 Coordinator
 Julie Galea - Klabb 3-16 Centre Coordinator
 Akvile Barauskaite – Childcare Centre
 Coordinator/Programme Coordinator HR
 Marthese Vassallo – Programme Secretary
 (Childcare)
 Marvic Ellul – Programme Secretary (Head
 Office)
 Leanne Vassallo – Programme Secretary
 (Head Office)
 Carmel Bonello – Corporate Staff
 (Head Office)
 Lorraine Sultana – Marketing &
 Communications Coordinator

The event was also an opportunity to thank the hundreds of workers who have worked at FES, and who are still working, to make sure the best service is offered to the service users.

Each guest was also presented with a book published by FES, that traces the history of FES from its beginnings, published specifically for the occasion. Written and

edited by Ms. Therese Ellul, Manager Programmes at FES, it takes a look at the projects and services delivered along these years, always as part of the commitment to be of service to the Maltese society. The book also features a number of testimonials by long term employees, who put pen to paper to record their experiences as FES employees in their respective service sector.

The book showcases not only an abridged history of the Foundation, but also presents testimonials by long-serving employees, and satisfied parents. It is also a testament to the spirit of commitment, perseverance, and responsibility of the FES employees throughout these years. This 20th anniversary book is thus a celebration of all the workers who have, in one way or another, strived to offer their best service to the children and their families throughout all these years.

The FES 20th Anniversary Book was also presented to H.E. the President of Malta Dr George Vella, during a special courtesy visit by the FES Chairperson Ms. Pamela Schembri, and the FES CEO at that time, Mr. Dermot Galea. H.E. Dr George Vella showed great interest in the book and in the work being carried out by the Foundation for Educational Services.







The Programmes Unit

The Programmes Unit

Introduction

The year 2021 was a highly busy and motivated one, as the Programmes Department started gearing up for a return of the normal service at the centres. From the start, the Childcare and Klabb 3-16 centres were once again alight with the energy that children bring with them in their daily lives. The programmes of activities started once again to reflect the physical implementation of the programme in the centres, which allows for a more eclectic array of activities to engage the children.

This normality faced a hurdle once again in March 2021, when the educational services were closed as a preventive measure against the spread of the COVID virus. This closure meant that FES too had to suspend its Childcare and Klabb 3-16 services, until further notice was given by the Health Authorities. However, to counteract this interruption, FES staff started operating online, in a bid to remain close to the children and students. Each Klabb 3-16 centre delivered online activities and also live online help with homework.

Staff in our childcare and Klabb 3-16 centres uploaded daily activities on the individual centres' Facebook pages, enabling parents to carry out the same activities with their children in the safety of their homes. These were also shared on the main Facebook page of FES. Another service that was

delivered was the regular live connection with the children and their parents, giving the children an opportunity for live interaction, and also acting as a support group for the parents.

Once that period of uncertainty was over, the Programmes Department returned to the grind to continue mentoring the Childcare service, to supervise the implementation of the Klabb -16 programme, and to finalise the Skolasajf 2021 programme.

This was also possible thanks to an additional component to the Programme Design, Development and Implementation (PDDI) department. The staff complement at the Programmes Department continued to be strengthened with the recruitment of the third Programme Coordinator. This additional staff member was instrumental to plan more focused care of the centres, as it enabled the cohort of centres falling under one's remit, to be smaller. This addition contributed to improvement in terms of mentoring of staff, programme development, quality assurance, and overall support of the centres across the three services.

By the end of 2021, the Programmes Department comprised seven staff members, as follows:

- Head of Programmes
- Manager Programmes
- Three Programme Coordinators (PDDI)

- Programme Coordinator (Inclusion)
- Marketing and Communications Coordinator

The staff members within the PDDI section of the Programmes Department carried out a total of 106 support visits to the Klabb 3-16 Centres (61 physical visits and 45 online), and 41 support visits to the Childcare Centres (33 physical visits and 8 online). There were also 46 centre visits carried out by the PC Inclusion (41 physical visits and 5 online) in all the services.

Childcare

The Rolling out of the Child-Led Approach

The implementation of the child-led approach started in January 2021 at *Il-Bebbuxu* and *Is-Sardinella* Childcare Centres. Despite the initial concerns, the childcare educators were all prepared to start this different way of working with the children, especially as a lot of theoretical training had already been given during the previous year in seminars and case studies.

With the onset of the implementation of the Child-Led Approach in these centres, each centre received a two-hour refresher course of online training, since the COVID-19 mitigating measures restricted physical access to the centres. During the training, the concept and process of the Child-Led Approach were re-visited, including the related documentation that was going to be used. As the staff started implementing this approach in the childcare centres, the Programmes Department kept constant touch with the centres, to provide the Centre Coordinator and the Childcare Educators with ongoing support via the online meetings.



One of the main benefits of the Child-Led Approach is that the childcare educators observe the children to elicit their different interests and needs. The information gleaned from this process enables the childcare educators to adjust the planning of their ensuing activities. Teamwork was very important as all the childcare educators needed to share ideas and reflect on the process. In due time, the Childcare Educators practising this approach started to note a difference in the children's engagement and confidence.

More centres were ready to switch to the Child Led Approach, however the Covid mitigating measures limited this process. The limitations included the closure of educational institutions, the issue of social distancing, and the isolation of bubbles. These measures restricted the space and interaction that are the ideal set-up for the Child-Led Approach, allowing the children to explore the various resources presented to them as a match to their interests. However, the work continued gradually as the Childcare Educators adapted to the circumstances to enable the children to benefit from the child-centred approach to learning.

The April Childcare Seminar

The April Childcare Seminar took the form of workshops on the theme of the Child Led Approach, with a focus on practice and reflection. Titled 'Sharing the Good Practice', childcare educators got a better insight on the way Child Led Approach was being implemented in the two centres chosen for the roll-out of the CLA. The Childcare Educators spoke about their experience as they implemented the Child Led Approach with the children in their centres, helping to build on best practices and initiating a forum for discussion and sharing of ideas.

In fact, the Childcare Educators from *Il-Bebbuxu* and *Is-Sardinella* centres shared their practices with the rest of the Childcare Educators from the other centres, using images and video clips. This enabled them to present a clear picture of the toddlers' and babies' engagement and creativity when creating activities that stem from and build on the children's own interests.

The photos and videos used were taken taken along the training and implementation process, depicting the children engaged in different learning opportunities. There

was also a presentation exhibiting the same learning opportunity to show the different ways how it was extended in different centres. In this way, the Childcare Educators could analyse the learning opportunities including the resources used, and the the engagement and interaction going on between the children and the educators.

The Childcare Educators also participated in separate workshops to discuss the level of interaction and engagement between educators and children; ways and means how to extend learning opportunities; and the reference to certain learning domains and the Learning Outcomes related to them.

The November Childcare Seminar - The LORA Technique (Listen, Observe, Reflect, Act)

The second FES childcare seminar was held on 9th November 2021. This seminar, titled the **LORA Technique**, referring to the the importance of a process of thought that builds on the previous steps for the most efficient outcome. In fact it focused on the practice of listening, observing, reflecting, and then acting, as a way of



guiding one's work within the early childhood education setting.

The subjects on the agenda focused on the Child Led Approach type of learning, how Reflective Practice improves performance, the Serve and Return Communication technique, and how one can Make the most of Supervision Sessions. These different sections addressed the needs and scenarios faced by both the Centre Coordinators and the Childcare Educators.

- **Benefits of the Child-Led Approach**

During this session, staff members from the *Il-Bebbuxu* Childcare Centre shared their experiences as they implemented the Child Led Approach in their centre. They reflected on the benefits derived from this practice in the different activities of the day. They also focused on how this approach has helped in the inclusion of children during the delicate settling-in period, and also in the case of children who have different educational needs.

The following are some quotes which left a noticeable impact on the colleagues.

The CLA has helped the child and has helped me.

The CLA has helped this particular boy interact with his pers. It was the first time that I have seen him smile.

I get emotional thinking about the great strides forward seen in the development of this girl since we started the CLA.

At the end of the session, the childcare educators were invited to prepare learning opportunities that scaffold the learning, based on the development of a child's potential reaction to a pre-prepared resource.

- **Reflective Practice for Childcare Educators**

For this session, the Childcare Educators were presented with an overview of the importance of reflective practice, and how this could be put into practice when working with children. The benefit of reflective practice is that it increases self-awareness, allowing the practitioner to evaluate one's actions and outcomes, identifying weaknesses for improvement, and strengths for eventual repetition. In the process, the practitioner develops one's thinking skills and becomes more engaged in work processes. A follow-up workshop invited the childcare educators to use reflective practice in the re-evaluation of an activity that they had previously carried out with the children in their care. They were guided in this exercise by a set of questions to produce a more in-depth evaluation.

- **Serve and Return Child Interactions**

The 'serve and return' session focused on using simple two-way interactions with the children. This term stems from the back-and-forth messages between the child and caregiver, following from the basic





concept of communication as the process of sending and receiving messages, or transferring information from one part (sender) to another (receiver). All this helps to build neural connections in the child's brain which support the development of communication and social skills.

The child "serves" by reaching out for interaction to occur with the childcare educator. This can be done through various verbal and non-verbal cues, such as eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, babbling, or touch. The childcare educators in turn should be alert to such cues to return the serve with the appropriate responses, which can range from verbal replies, to gestures and simple games.

- **Making the most of Supervision Sessions**

The fourth session in the training seminar was aimed specifically at the Centre Coordinators, and focused on the Supervision Sessions carried out in the centres with the staff members. These sessions are an opportunity to monitor staff development and progress in their career path. This part of the seminar was instrumental for the Centre Coordinators, in the way that they lead their team of

Childcare Educators. This is especially so, since many times we tend 'to listen with the intent to reply', when what is really needed is 'to listen to understand'. The main issues that were discussed were the power of observations, body language, the skill of practicing active listening, and having inclusive conversations. Also on the agenda were tips on how to support oneself to be 'in the moment' and also how to efficiently deliver constructive feedback.

It is important that one aims to create a community of individuals who actively listen to the children and to each other. The childcare educators in turn work together to create a nurturing environment for the children to grow safely and reach their full potential.

The way the supervision sessions are carried out was evaluated, and the concept of SMART goals was applied. This channelled the discussion to how these goals help to improve the chances of succeeding to reach a goal. The session provided participants with an opportunity to take part in a workshop where there was a great exchange of ideas and personal experiences within the various teams.

The following quote captures the essence of the session and the feedback received from the participating centre coordinators:

“Through supervision one can know how the educators are feeling during work, what obstacles they have, how they are working as a team, share ideas on how to improve the service, share ideas on the learning opportunities done, and help each other as well. As a centre coordinator I also feel closer to them through the supervision sessions”

The external environment in a childcare centre

The commitment of FES to continuously refurbish and upgrade its childcare premises to reap the full benefits for the service users and staff, extends also to the outdoor areas. The external environment plays an important part in the children’s growth and development. Playing outdoors is important for developing capacities for creativity, problem solving and intellectual development, among others. Outdoor play also has clear physical benefits for developing children including helping them to acquire gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination and helping to prevent obesity. Research also shows that children who have trouble concentrating benefit from playing outdoors, as after playing outdoors these children are better able to concentrate on tasks.

The natural environment also gives staff members the opportunity to teach children about the value of caring for the world in which we live. Seeing plants grow and change through the different seasons and climatic conditions, helps children to understand and learn more about nature. Bearing all this in mind, the Centre Coordinators look for ways and means how this opportunity is made available to the children in their centre, such as was the idea behind the transformation of an



internal yard at Zmeraldi Childcare Centre, into a gardening area for the children. A new tent to provide shading, turf on the ground for a grassy look, and pots, soil, and tools, transport the children into the natural world within the comfort and safety of their own centre.

A gardening activity provides a range of benefits for young children, even at such a tender age. Apart from having fun digging the soil, there is also the creative and scientific aspect as they observe the seeds which they would have planted and cared for, germinate, and grow into plants. Their fascination is nurtured as they start to understand the cause and effect of placing the seed in the soil and watering it. This little garden space will be another useful tool to help children grow to love nature and learn about the environment in a safe and pleasant place.



Klabb 3-16

The service in the Klabb 3-16 Centres is delivered by staff members in various roles, however their contribution is not independent of one another, as all have to perform their duties to deliver a holistic service to the child.

The role of the staff within the Programmes Department is to ensure that the synergy between the members of staff is present and conducive to a learning environment. The Programme Coordinators of the Programmes Department carry out Support Visits in the centres to monitor the supervision by the Centre Coordinator and by the Playworker with Extra Responsibilities; the level of HW help being

provided; the engagement of the children by the Playworkers; and the support being provided by the Child Support Workers. Any shortcomings are addressed by the Programme Coordinators by discussing them with the staff members involved, identifying SMART goals to guide them on a way forward, and by following up on the flagged shortcomings till they are resolved.

Other matters related to other aspects of the service are also noted, and are in turn referred to the relevant department back at Head Office.

The Programme of Activities

The Klabb 3-16 Centres are a perfect platform to provide children with the opportunity of engaging in non-formal educational activities. From the activities, children derive secondary benefits in the form of transferable skills (social, emotional, problem-solving etc.), which they may apply in other areas of their lives.

The staff in the centres are provided with a bank of resources that include both games and thematic activities. Apart from the monthly Programme Manual, there are also two Sports and Games Manuals, and a series of filler activities such as quizzes, puzzles, simple yoga, and mindfulness exercise. All this material is intended to arm the staff member with resources that make possible structured and focused engagement with children.



The PDDI Department is in charge of creating the monthly thematic programme of activities for the Early Years and for the Primary sectors, with activities that span various learning domains. This enables variety of activities that are sure spark one's imagination, whatever the interest of the child may be.

When preparing an activity, the Programme Coordinators keep in mind various criteria

to make the actual implementation possible. These are:

- The age of the children
- Their abilities and interest
- The educational outcomes
- The resources available
- That the activities are safe
- That they can be adapted

The themes of the 11 Programmes published by the PDDI section during 2021 were:

Months for the Year 2021	Theme
January	Exploring Space
February	Caves, Caverns and Crystals
March	International Days
April	Spring Time
May	Respect
June	We Need our (Vitamin) Sea!
July Bridge Holidays	Making Friends
September Bridge Holidays	Bye Bye Summer, Hello Autumn
October	Celebrations
November	Home is where the heart is!
December	Spreading Festive Cheer



The Life-Skills Programme

Between October and December 2021, the Programmes Department worked to draw up a short Life-Skills Programme aimed for children of 9 years of age. The programme was a pilot project and was held at the Haz Zabbar Klabb 3-16 Centre. It was made possible thanks to the invaluable support of trusted partners, who have always been ready to help further the non-formal education of our service users.

Schools teach children how to read and write, and other academic subjects; this programme went a step further to enable the students to partake of knowledge about situations that they may face in their life and in the changing social circles within which they engage with their peers. The partners enrolled for this pilot project delivered presentations and hands-on activities according to their field of expertise, however common areas were also addressed, such as communication and interpersonal skills, decision-making and problem-solving, self-awareness and assertiveness, amongst others.

The Life-Skills Programmes featured the following five topics:

1. Safety awareness
2. Managing Personal Finances
3. Using Recreational Facilities and Engaging in Leisure Activities
4. Personal and Social Skills
5. Cyber Safety and Cyber Bullying

The first session was delivered by the Civil Protection Department, the aim of which is to respond to incidents that involve Fire and Rescue of all nature. CRP also assists other entities in dealing with emergency situations that might endanger human and/or animal lives and property. The participation of CRP in the Life Skills Programme in fact focused on teaching all age bracket about

the importance of safety awareness, to safeguard oneself and also the life of others.

Another partner was HSBC Malta, who sponsored Junior Achievement Young Enterprise (JAYE) Malta Foundation. The session focused in Managing Personal Finances and had the objective of exposing children from a young age to the concept of careful budgeting and appreciating the value of products and services.

SportMalta also offered its support, furthering its mission is to engage the Maltese nation in an active lifestyle, through the promotion and development of sport for a healthy, inclusive, and successful nation. The session, titled 'Using Recreational Facilities and Engaging in Leisure Activities' focused on the importance of being familiar with the benefits of incorporating physical activity in one's daily routine, how the students could evaluate the different sports opportunities, and how to choose the sport activity most suited to one's abilities and interest.

The national agency for youth Agenzija Zghazagh, was also a reliable participant, especially in view of the agency's mission to manage, implement and coordinate the





National Youth Policy, and to promote and safeguard the interests of young people.

The session, titled 'Personal and Social Skills', focused on how one can deal with stress. During the session, stress was discussed from the point of view of a 9-year-old student, and the discussion helped the children identify instances in one's life where stress may affect personal

health and overall well-being. The students suggested instances when they may feel stressed, such as when meeting new people, studying for exams, and starting lessons in a new class or school. The scenarios were used as the basis for the development of the class discussion.

The interactive session gave ample space to the children to express themselves, where they shared what makes them feel stressed. The most common stressor shared across the group was family especially when parents argue. They also mentioned sibling rivalry, family expectations at school, chores, bullies, the pressure to succeed at school, and daily homework commitments. The children were encouraged to think of how our body can exhibit stress and were advised on how stress impacts our body function. However, stress is something that is part of life even for children, so children were also guided through a practical session of mindfulness, to give them tools to deal with stress. The group was finally reminded that if they ever feel overwhelmed by stress, they should tell their parents or their teacher, as help is readily available.





The last session was carried out by the Cyber Crime Department within the Malta Police Force, and focused on 'Cyber Safety and Cyber Bullying'. The primary role of the Cyber Crim Department is to provide technical assistance in the detection and investigations of crime wherein the computer is the target, or the means used. The participation of the Department in the Life Skills Programme was possible because, in coordination with the Community and Media Relations Department, members of the Cyber Crime Department also visit schools, youth organisations, local councils and other activities held in the community to promote responsible internet use as well as provide tips on how to lessen the chance of being victimised over the internet.

In today's technological age, where nearly everyone has an online presence in some form or another, it is of utmost importance to be knowledgeable about the correct way to use the internet, and how to protect oneself from any undesirable actions from other online users.

Unfortunately, tales of young people being bullied online, often by their own peers, are becoming common occurrences. Such vile behavior should be nipped in the bud, and one of the ways to do so is to empower the victims by making them aware of how they can react and put a stop to it.



Topics and Partners

Main issues discussed

Safety Awareness

delivered by
Mr Godwin Sghendo
and to Ms Leanne Newel
from the Civil Protection
Department

- Leading causes of accidents
- Identify safety signs
- Identify unfamiliar odours
- Identify unfamiliar sounds
- Fire drills, leaving a building in an emergency and following an evacuation route
- Fire prevention and how to act in case of a fire

Managing Personal Finances

delivered by
Ms Elizabeth Pulo from
JAYE Malta, supported
by HSBC Malta

- Count money and make correct change. Manage a savings and checking account.
- Maintain a personal budget and keep records.
- Demonstrate personal finance decision-making skills.
- Make responsible expenditures.
- Opening a bank account
- Types of bank cards

Using Recreational Facilities and Engaging in Leisure Activities

delivered by
Mr Carmel Gauci
from SportMalta

- Demonstrate knowledge of the benefits of sports activities
- Individual versus Team Sports – pros and cons
- How to avoid sports injuries
- Factors to consider when one chooses to participate in a type of sport activity

Personal and Social Skills

delivered by
Ms Pamela Sammut
and Mr Shaun Busuttil
from Aġenzija Żgħażaġh

- Identifying scenarios where one may feel stressed
- how one can deal with stress
- how stress may affect personal health and overall well-being
- everyday stressor such as family relations, homework pressure, and hostile schoolmates
- tools to deal with stress
- asking a trusted adult for help

Cyber Safety and Cyber Bullying

delivered by
PC Justin Debono from the
Cyber Crime Department
of the Malta Police Force

- What is Cyber Bullying?
- Am I being bullied online? How do you tell the difference between a joke and bullying?
- What are the effects of cyberbullying?
- Who should I talk to if someone is bullying me online? Why is reporting important?
- I'm experiencing cyberbullying, but I'm afraid to talk to my parents about it. How can I approach them?

The LLAPSI + Project Conference and Klabb 3-16

The Foundation for Educational Services (FES) has worked together with the Migrant Learners' Department (MLU) since 2018, on a project titled *Making Friends, Bringing Friends (MFBF)*, as part of the Language Learning and Parental Support for Integration PLUS (LLAPSI+) project, part-financed by the European Union through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020. This ambitious project sought to bring together various cultures for an appreciation of different traditions and practices, and an understanding of the common values of friendship and respect.

The collaboration on the MFBF Project came to a close in 2021. In the period between 2018 and 2021, FES helped to organise 12 *Making Friends Bringing Friends (MFBF)* Clubs in 7 different Klabb 3-16 Centres, in the localities of M'Scala, Fgura, B'Bugia, B'Kara, Naxxar, St Paul's Bay, and Victoria (Gozo). The MFBF Clubs were an afterschool creative initiative with the aim of improving accessibility for TCNs, providing an opportunity for newcomer learners to work together, and strengthen the relationship between different cohorts including EU nationals and the hosting community. The MFBF Clubs brought together different cultures for an appreciation of different traditions and practices, and an understanding of the common values of friendship and respect.

On 10th November 2021, FES was invited to take part in the LLAPSI + Project Conference organised by MLU, where the various actions within the LLAPSI+ Project were discussed, including the MFBF Clubs. Guest speakers on the day were the Minister for Education, the Hon. Dr Justyne Caruana, and the Parliamentary Secretary for EU



Funds, Hon. Dr Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi. Both referred to the importance of education, which translated into the Language Learning and Parental Support for Integration (LLAPSI and LLAPSI+) Projects.

The LLAPSI+ Project Conference has helped to further appreciate the importance of the service offered by FES with the MFBF Clubs, as part of a much bigger project with far reaching benefits. These benefits do not refer only to the number of students reached, but also in terms of the educational and social impact on the students and on their families. The LLAPSI and LLAPSI+ initiatives provided also leverage for the schools in the path of creating a integration programme for the migrant students. The educational aspect of the students who attended the MFBF Clubs was facilitated and enhanced by peer socialisation within a sphere of transcultural exchanges of ideas and traditions. The mingling of different cultures and beliefs within this club helps to drop differences by the wayside, and builds a common ground of understanding and appreciation. The collaboration between FES and the Migrant Learners' Department thus proved useful at promoting inclusion between Maltese, European, and Third Country Nationals. A total of 213 students took part in this initiative.

The MFBF Clubs were just one of the actions within the LLAPSI+ EU co-funded project which sought to provide opportunities and



services to support the inclusion of learners and their families coming from migration. In fact, the MFBF Clubs were part-financed by the European Union through the project LLAPSI+ (MT/2016/AMIF/4.01). The key speakers Ms Jane Farrugia Buhagiar, Mr Daniel Meilak, and Ms Miriam Consiglio gave extensive presentations about the Project Actions, focusing on:

- Language learning as a means of Inclusion and Integration
- The summer intensive language courses titled 'Language to Go'
- Teaching and Learning Resources
- The MFBF Clubs
- The Community Liaison Team and Psychological Support
- The refurbishment of the MLU building

The conference came to a close with a number of comments from the participants who included various stakeholders, such as Heads of College Networks, Heads of Schools, Community Liaison Team members, and partnering entities amongst others. The encouraging comments and the insightful experiences were a testament to the positive impact on the students, on their families, and on the school community as a whole.

Skolasajf 2021



The Programme of Activities

The Skolasajf service was offered between 12th July and 3rd September 2021. The service was officially launched by the then Minister for education, Hon. Minister Justyne Caruana, when she visited the Qawra Skolasajf centre to see the ongoing work by the staff. She praised the FES staff for their continued hard work, and all the staff employed at the centres, whose service ensured that the children follow a programme of non-formal educational activities, always within the parameters of the health protocols issued by the Health Authorities.

Minister Caruana was accompanied by the FES CEO Mr Dermot Galea, the Maria Regina College Principal Mr Patrick Decelis, and the Qawra Skolasajf Centre Coordinator at the time, Ms Edera Said.

The main theme for Skolasajf 2021 was built upon the slogan 'An I in every winner'. This slogan aimed to punctuate the importance that every individual has his own individual talents which can make him successful in his chosen path. Every person, whether a child and adult, should be encouraged to cultivate their strengths, and to feel good about their abilities. Together we can contribute to be a winning team.



Following the choice of the main theme of Skolasajf, FES launched the Logo Competition for Skolasajf 2021. The competition was on a nationwide scale for children from three years upwards. The final logo was inspired by the winning design submitted by Dasa Kitic. It was based on the concept of a multicoloured pinwheel, representing diversity and the contribution that each one of us gives to propel forward our personal and common good.

A pinwheel moves forward thanks to the force of the wind, which is the knowledge that each one of us must cultivate and use to achieve his dreams. Everyone must make sure that the pinwheel continues to spin and turn forward by taking advantage of each opportunity to develop our talents, to grow and learn.

Skolasajf workers were instrumental in the implementation of the Skolasajf Programme. The activities presented in the Programme Manual brought to the attention of the Skolasajf 2021 participants, a number of sub-themes that help explore the main theme 'An I in every winner'.

The activities were researched and had a number of learning objectives that spanned across different learning domains. The activities were a medium for non-formal learning, that not only allowed the children to socialise with peers, but to also discover new skills and talents that were easily transferable to other areas of their lives.

The programme had a number of modifications to help mitigate the conditions brought about by the COVID-19 situation. The measures taken were in line with the current directives as issued by the Health Authorities. The modifications to the programme included the elimination of any outings, concerts, open days, activities of mass groups, mixing between classes, any

form of games that include contact between the players, and any visitors to the centres. Students did activities which were class based and online, taking in consideration social distancing and avoidance of possible instances for cross contamination.

All these restrictions had quite an impact on the programme, with a heavy onus on the Programmes Department to make the class-based activities as varied and engaging as possible. The final Programme Manual presented to the Skolasajf Centres to help the Playworkers and Child Support Workers deliver the programme, had 60 activities for the Early Years, and 57 activities for the Primary sector. There were also a number of complementary documents that served as fillers in between activities, that provided in-class physical movement, and also Sports and Games Manuals for further direction for structured outdoor activities.

The children attending Skolasajf 2021, were also kept motivated through a number of competitions that not only spurred their creative abilities, but also made them think and ponder about social issues such as children's rights, the environment and the effect of climate change, financial literacy, and animal rights.



Partner	Competition Titles
EU Delegation to the Council of Europe, Permanent Representations of Andorra and San Marino to the Council of Europe.	My Rights, My Voice
HSBC Malta	Climate Action Network
JAYE	The Final Event was won by the Qrendi Skolasajf Centre
Gemma	Money Monsters Art Challenge
Saving Our Blue Campaign	Maggie`s Next Adventure Competition
Blue Flag Malta	Blue Flag Competition
Animal Welfare Directorate	This is My Pet/Favourite Animal

The 'My Rights, My Voice Competition' was organised by the EU Delegation to the Council of Europe, Permanent Representations of Andorra and San Marino to the Council of Europe. It had the main objective of raising awareness on the rights of the child, and promote the work of the European Union, the Council of Europe and like-minded partners in that respect. The activity involved children creating artistic and/or musical videos produced by children aged 10 to 17 on the rights of the child. This activity promoted meaningful child participation, created space for children to raise their voices and share their own perspectives on their own rights.

The Climate Action Network (CAN) is a global network of more than 1,500 civil society organisations in over 130 countries driving collective and sustainable action to fight the climate crisis and to achieve social and racial justice. CAN convenes and coordinates civil society at the UN climate talks and other international fora.

The purpose of the Climate Action Network Competition during Skolasajf 2021 was to bring more awareness on what the Maltese

Government and businesses can do to improve our environment.

As individuals we can take bold and urgent action for the protection of the rights of nature.

The Climate Action Network Competition was organised by HSBC representatives. Each competing centre had to prepare a video and take part in a quiz. The Skolasajf Siggiewi Centre won the quiz and received beautiful book gifts.

The Partners

The Animal Welfare Promotion and Services Directorate - Officers delivered presentations to increase the love and attention for animals, and educate people about how they can help injured animals by calling 1717. They also provided recorded material to be used in class.

BeSmartOnline - carried out by FSWS Agenzija Appogg together with the Office of the Commissioner for Children, the Directorate for Learning

and Assessment Programmes (DLAP) and the Malta Police Force (Cyber Crime Department), to raise awareness on the good use of technology and how to be techno savvy to avoid being scammed. There was also information about the Internet Helpline to support children, parents, and professionals, and a hotline for the general public to report online material that could lead to child abuse.

Central Bank of Malta Online Sessions -

These sessions were aimed at promoting awareness of the Euro Bank note and counterfeiting. Children were also taught about different ways how they can detect counterfeits.

E-Bugz – a project run by the Malta Medical Student Association (Public Health), together with the Ministry of Health, the Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control Directorate, and the Ministry of Education. The project involved a series of peer education sessions given to children on microbes, the importance of hand and respiratory hygiene, and antimicrobial use.

Malta Medical Students Association (MMSA)

-The main goal of the session was for the children to realize that everyone is good and talented at something, whether it's sports, creative arts, or academics, and that all are equally important. The session will discuss how to figure out what they're good at and why it's important to try out new things and hobbies.

Faraxa Publishing – This publishing house took part via live online sessions where children could interact with authors as they read their books, and also via recorded book reading sessions by their respective authors.

JAYE Malta Foundation in collaboration with HSBC - carried out a programme *Europe My Business* which explored the

European dynamic of entrepreneurship and how it encourages cross-border entrepreneurship through a process of business planning and creation.

JAYE Malta Foundation in collaboration with HSBC - carried out a programme *Our Community* which was an interactive series of sessions delivered over two days presented to pupils aged 7-8/9. They were led through a discovery of how people and businesses operate within a community. They assess the needs and wants of communities and understand how money moves in their community. A closing event was held for these programmes, which saw centres pitching their business ideas. This event was won by the Qrendi Skolasajf Centre.

'Europe Direct Valletta' and 'Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta' - The interactive sessions enabled the children between the ages of 9 and 14 years, to understand what it means to be a European citizen, and how each one of us can contribute towards effecting change. The sessions, themed 'Building tomorrow, today' reached 260 children attending 26 centres in Malta and Gozo. The feedback of the students about changes for a better society was collected and presented to Hon. Carmelo Abela, then Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, and Hon Dr Justyne Caruana,



then Minister for Education. This feedback was presented in the form of a declaration on behalf of all the participating children, by two students from the Fgura Skolasajf Centre, Amy Lanzon, and Naomi Farrugia. The declaration revealed that children would like to live in a society in which they feel safe and protected. They would like to be surrounded by a healthy environment with more open spaces and have free time to practice sport and to spend time together.

Missio – Missio is the international mission agency of the Catholic Church in Malta. It strives to make a difference in the lives of people and communities in need. Supported by HSBC Malta, representatives presented culture sessions of different countries and made related crafts activities. The aim was to help the children realise how through the understanding of cultures, we can understand and empathise with others to live in harmony.

Sedqa (Malta Branch) – A programme designed specifically for children at primary level and early stages of secondary school years. The topics discussed were self-worth and self-love, addictions, and coping, with related activities according to the age group of the students.

WasteServ - These sessions introduced the children to the activities carried out by Wasteserv and how this entity works towards safeguarding the environment. WasteServ is responsible for organising, managing and operating integrated systems for waste management.

Prayer Spaces in Schools (Malta) - Prayer Spaces presented opportunities where children of all faiths and none, could explore life's questions, spirituality and faith in a safe, creative and interactive way. Many have an

interest in the non-material aspects of life, the spirit or soul, and want to explore how these ideas and experiences help them to develop their own sense of identity, self-worth, personal insight, meaning and purpose. Through Prayer Spaces, the children were invited to reconnect with their inner selves and with God through practical ways of expressing their innermost desires, pains, aspirations, relations, and thirst for meaning in life. Children and young people could explore life questions and interact in a safe environment, irrespective of their faith background.

Transport Malta - Transport Malta is a government body in charge of overseeing transport in Malta. Representatives used presentations and video clips to hold online sessions and create a forum for discussion about Sustainable Mobility and European Mobility Week.

The Malta Police Force – Officers from the Malta Police Force delivered talks regarding the police work and duties. This enabled the students to better understand the duties of police officers, and appreciate even more the sacrifices and dangers that they endure to protect the members of the community. Other topics discussed were how to use the emergency number 112, rules and regulations to follow on the road, and awareness about "stranger danger".

Inizjamed - Inizjamed is a voluntary non-governmental cultural organization, committed towards the regeneration of culture and artistic expression in the Maltese Islands and actively promotes a greater awareness of the cultures of the Mediterranean. The Inizjamed sessions provided children with creative writing workshops led by authors Leanne Ellul and

John Portelli. The children worked on their own writing and shared it during the second session.

Marine Litter Campaign Initiative - The Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning (MECP) launched the Marine Litter Campaign. During Skolasajf they delivered a recorded session which was distributed to all the centres collaborating with the Saving our Blue Campaign, targeting students aged 5 to 10. Furthermore, a live online Q and A was held with six classes of children between the ages of 9 and 10 years from different centres. The Q and A was conducted by officers from the Environment and Resources Authority and covered the topics addressed during the recorded session. An online activity book was also distributed to the playworkers, in order to carry out activities with students, to engage and help them develop a better understanding of the marine litter problem.

Robocoach – delivered by Energy Investment Ltd, the session included online streaming of age-appropriate education programmes, aimed at instilling a curiosity in students about science, technology, engineering, arts and maths through fun activities. The sessions helped the children to learn in a fun way whilst trying to bridge the digital divide.

Heritage Malta – the Maltese national agency for museums, conservation practice and cultural heritage offered various educational material and activities. These included recorded hands-on sessions that enabled the students to work under the guidance of the class playworker. Other activities were the “Ask the curator, scientists, naturalist, conservator” sessions, where students benefitted from a brief

presentation followed by a live question and answer session.

bBrave- bBrave is an anti-bullying NGO, set up with the purpose of raising awareness on different forms of bullying, to facilitate assistance for individuals suffering from bullying and for the reform of individuals displaying bullying behaviour in Malta. During Skolasajf bBrave carried out an interactive online presentation with our students with the intention of educating more about bullying and its effects. Through their presentation bBrave wanted to assist individuals suffering from bullying, to connect with the right support system.

Financial Literacy Campaign – ĠEMMA Know, Plan, and Act, within the Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity, and the HSBC Malta Foundation, carried out a session called ‘Healthy Choices’, referring to both nutritional and financial choices, children explored how to make smarter choices to be able to lead healthier lives such as free exercise options, cooking with seasonal vegetables. The students then shared their work and what they had learnt whilst playing the game.

Dental Public Department Malta – The sessions delivered by this Department promoted oral health, and increased awareness on the connection between oral health and general health.



GreenPak Coop Society Ltd – delivered presentations about the Recyclable Waste Collection Scheme. These were followed up by related class activities by the playworker, such as games/craft/quiz.

The Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society -Through this activity the Children's Hub within the Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society consulted children in a fun and inclusive way regarding play. The session was based on a story with the main character being a robot named ATLAS 031, which explained how he wishes to find out more information regarding play.

Blue Flag Malta – Blue Flag Malta in collaboration with the Malta Tourism Authority carried out an activity which was aimed at raising awareness about the care of our seas to ensure the life of the creatures that live in the sea, and also how human life depends on the sea too. The activity was tied to three competitions to further propagate the message, where children could participate through the media of drawing and painting, photography, and videography.

Agenzija Zghazagh – Youth workers from the national youth agency guided participants to explore their personal skills and to look at effective ways to express their views in class. This in turn led to participants discovering their learning styles; how to work with fellow students effectively; how to learn to be active students; how to deal with conflict; how to get support from school; and how to manage time both at school and home

Fondazzjoni Sagħtar – Fondazzjoni Sagħtar is an independent and autonomous voluntary organisation, whose main purpose is to serve a social and educational function among educators and

students in Malta and Gozo. Participation involved online sessions to introduce the children to the Sagħtar magazine and encourage them to read it. The popular story of *Lawra d-Dinosawra* was used in the meetings and the children were given the opportunity to send in a drawing of Lawra to take part in a competition with the chance to win a one-year subscription to the 2021-2022 printed version of *Sagħtar* for the scholastic year 2022-23.

Malta Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (MSPCA) - MSPCA is the oldest animal welfare and homing centre in Malta, with the aim of re-homing and giving animals the very best in love, care and attention. MSPCA carried out a workshop in the centres, the aim of which was to improve compassion and kindness towards animals. It also thought the Five Welfare Needs of animals. The workshop was discussion based with some art activities at the end of the session.

The Malta Health Students' Association (MHSA) - MHSA is a senate recognized students' association at the University of Malta within the Faculty of Health Sciences. They delivered 3 activities aimed at helping students recognise signs of well-being and how to take care of oneself. Students were first asked to sit down for 1 minute. Then they were shown how to find their radial pulse and count it. The second activity focused on the capacity of the lungs. The students were given a brief explanation of why our body needs oxygen and how the lungs work. The third activity was focused on body structure with a Human Skeleton Jigsaw Puzzle.

Earth Systems Association – This organisation presented a short presentation about Earth pollution, specifically water pollution. This presentation included

several activities such simple crafts and an experiment, which were both related to the topic of water pollution.

Blue Flag Gozo - The Blue Flag program is run by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), an independent non-profit international organization. The National Blue Flag operator for Malta is Nature Trust (Malta). The Blue Flag works towards sustainable development at beaches/ marinas through strict criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, and safety and other services. Different online interactive sessions including quizzes, videos and games were provided to different groups in the centres in Gozo. In Gozo, there are three beaches that qualify for the Blue Flag status. These are Ramla Bay, Hondoq ir-Rummien Bay, and Marsalforn Bay. The EcoGozo Directorate oversees the beach management program of the Blue Flag beaches. Sessions were related to the geology and geography (one about each bay); marine litter, microplastics and keeping our beaches clean; and marine life and biodiversity (what they need, how they live, dangers and extinction). All sessions were varied and linked to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Melita Safety Training Services – This organisation provides sessions tied to their remit of providing medical, first aid, health and safety, industry, fire and working at heights courses. The sessions were adapted towards school age children in a bid to raise awareness about first aid and environmental factors when considering safety.

Sedqa Gozo Branch - Sedqa is a national agency that works in the field of substance abuse, compulsive gambling and other

dependencies. Activities enhanced the students' understanding of their coping skills, including what lies beneath the surface within us. Activities also raised awareness about the consequences of addiction, and promoted self-love and care. One of the main outcomes of these activities was that students learn how to adopt a happy and healthy life-style.

Schola Cantorum Jubilate – This organisation is a private youth choir that seeks to improve the overall image of choral music and get more people involved in the world of choral singing. The children were introduced to choir singing with the aim of familiarising them with what goes on in a choir room.

Emergency Response and Rescue Corps (ERRC) -ERRC offers water rescue service at popular beaches around Gozo and Comino during the summer months. It also offers ambulance services and first aid posts during public events. The sessions centred upon environmental factors that affect safety, basic First Aid, and safety at the beach.

Performance By Malta International Arts Festival – this included recorded material sent to all centres, including a video to help in the distribution and implementation of a project titled 'Beethoven Forever', that presented an entertaining journey through all of Beethoven's 9 symphonies.. An education pack for the class playworker was distributed to all playworkers, with a page dedicated to each symphony, and information that guides the playworkers on how to explain the different executions of the symphonies to the students. Each symphony was animated in the video with short descriptions.

The Sports Programme

Once again, the Sports Programme was given a big focus, as part of the ongoing drive by the Foundation for Educational Services to include and increase structured games and sports in its programmes. This is due to its educational aspect, and also as a social commitment to increase physical activity amongst young children, especially in view of the rising problem of child obesity.

The Sports and Games programme focused on teaching skills to children, which are fundamental to so many sporting disciplines. The aim was to inspire children to acquire physical competences that are transferable to other areas in their quest for an active lifestyle. FES stressed with all the Skolasajf Sports Playworkers the importance of implementing the Sports and Games Programme with all the children, and all the staff to act as role models and participate as well.

The Sports Playworkers were guided in their task by the Sports and Games Programme Manual, compiled by staff from the Centre for Physical Education and Sport within the Ministry for Education. The Sports Manual contained activities to be implemented during the programme and during the Sports Day. The activities are sectioned according to each week as there was a progression of activities.



The successful outcome of the Sports and Games Programme was thanks to the Sports Playworkers, but also to the invaluable help of the Education Officer Physical Education (Primary), Mr Marvin Spiteri, and to the Heads of Schools, as they made available an amount of sports equipment to be used during Skolasajf.

During Skolasajf 2021, FES employed 84 Sports Playworkers.

Inclusion

Every child belongs

Every child needs to feel that they belong to the centre where they attend. During the year 2021, all FES services strived to put this concept of inclusion into practice. The work of the Programme Coordinator (PC) – Inclusion, within the Programmes Department had the ongoing commitment to evaluate the children's needs and make sure that their inclusion within the centres' setting was supported on all fronts.

The FES Inclusion Policy

The FES Inclusion Policy continued to provide guidance to all educators in the collective endeavour to place the child at the centre of their practice. The policy advocates the values of collaboration and respect between all stakeholders so that all educators respond effectively to the child's individual educational and developmental needs. Therefore, the FES Inclusion policy exhorts its educators to adapt the pedagogy and resources to the child's needs, and to seek professional support when they feel that some children may be at risk of exclusion. In fact, during 2021, 45 meetings were carried out with professionals in various fields, to discuss the children's needs.

Operational Procedure for the Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf services

As a first step in this direction, the PC -Inclusion assisted those children who applied for the Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf service and had a Statement of Support. The PC Inclusion vetted all the applications containing reference to a child's Statement of Support, for the main principle of whether support during the above-mentioned services was to be given. The PC Inclusion works with the criteria that given FES services are of a non-formal nature, the child should be given independence as much as possible during his / her attendance at the Klabb 3-16 and / or Skolasajf Centre. However, if it is seen that the child would still benefit from support, then this is provided subject to staff availability.

In addition, all stakeholders involved in the child's learning, namely, the Child Support Worker, the Playworker, the Regional and Centre Coordinator, and the parents/legal guardians were also supported by the PC Inclusion. However, the main focus remains on the child. The role of the PC Inclusion necessitates that visits are carried out at the centres to observe the children in their natural 'play' setting, and then develops an Action Plan together with all the stakeholders, including any professionals who may be already seeing to the child's needs. The recommendations as set in the Action Plan, act as guidelines for the staff members when carrying out their duty with the child, and they work towards the goal of meeting the set targets.

The Services during the Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf services

Support to children with a Statement of Needs during the Klabb 3-16 service, was provided to 275 children. 80 Child Support Workers (CSWs) were employed to provide this service both during the after-school service and during the scholastic holidays. These CSWs not only followed the Plan of Action as drawn up by the PC Inclusion, but also the adapted Programme of Activities, as part of the same Action Plan to reach the designated goals.

The same direction was given to CSWs working during Skolasajf. Skolasajf is the largest project of FES to date, with the number of children who have a Statement of Support continuing to increase from one year to the other. During Skolasajf 2022, FES employed 728 Child Support Workers to support children with a Statement of Needs. For the second time running, FES also employed a Regional Coordinator (RC) Inclusion. The remit of the RC Inclusion was to support the Skolasajf Resource Centres and other mainstream schools on site, as directed by the PC Inclusion. This joint effort continued to be instrumental in effectively supporting children's needs.

Working closely with the National School Support Services, the PC Inclusion ensured that children needing medication were catered for by the nursing contractor. Medication was administered in all the mainstream and Resource Centres. In fact, during Skolasajf 2021, 16 children made use of the nursing service in the mainstream centres, while resident nurses were provided in all the Resource Centres..

Support in the Childcare Centres

It must be noted however, that the PC Inclusion does not cater only for children having a Statement of Support, but also for children who are still too young to be diagnosed and hence do not yet have a Statement of Support. These are children below the age of 3 years and who attend the FES Childcare Centres. Children in the childcare centres who exhibit challenging behaviour, have a disability and/or a medical issue, or are showing signs that their development is not at par with the child's chronological age, are referred by the Centre Coordinator to the PC Inclusion. Once again, observations are carried out at the centre, meetings are held with all stakeholders, and an Action Plan is drawn up to help the Childcare Educator when caring for the child and supporting him/her to reach his/her developmental milestones. During 2021, there were 138 children in the FES childcare service, who were followed by the PC Inclusion.

In addition to the PC Inclusion, the Programmes Department the three other Programme Coordinators in charge of programme development and implementation within the centres, also carry out visits to support all the stakeholders within the three different services. Their ultimate purpose of such support visits is to pass the important message to all educators that they are to create an environment whereby all children belong to the centre. The three PCs work in synergy with the PC Inclusion to not only report observations, but also give a common direction with respect to children's skills and physical development. Emergent observations are those related to the wealth of benefits being enjoyed by children with different educational needs, who are engaging in learning opportunities modeled on the Child Led Approach. The



Childcare Educators practising this approach are reporting more confidence and increased communication with peers, by children who previously were showing signs of anxiety, lack of interaction, and also difficult behaviour.

The role of the Childcare Educators in making sure all children are included, is paramount, as they are the primary care givers. Apart from the ongoing support by the PC Inclusion, they also received training in Challenging Behaviour. The training included a number of workshops so that childcare educators could discuss their main concerns and arrive at possible solutions as guided by the PC Inclusion.

Training for all Childcare staff continued to take place using an established online platform, due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The main focus centered on the 'Emergent Curriculum' or as it is also known as the 'Child Led Approach'. An important contribution was made by the team of Il-Bebbuxu Childcare Centre, whereby they shared videos and answered questions of how the Child Led Approach was being implemented in their centre. This sharing of good practices enabled all the Childcare Educators to appreciate the value of such an approach and that despite the problems

posed by the pandemic, the emergent curricular goals are in fact achievable. A number of childcare centres also received training on Challenging Behaviour.

Responding to External Organisations

The Foundation for Educational Services has continued to cooperate with the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) whereby the FES Social Board vets and accepts FSWS referrals for Childcare, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf. Once the FES Social Board receives all the required documentation, each application is processed and successful applications benefit from exemption of fees and from prioritisation of access to the services. During 2021, the FES Social Board approved 17 cases for Childcare, 10 for Klabb 3-16 and 38 cases for Skolasajf. It must be pointed out that the majority of the Skolasajf social cases were eligible to be exempted from paying both for the core programme and for the extended hours.

Another inclusive collaboration that continued throughout 2021 was that with the Karl Vella Foundation (KVF). The Karl Vella Foundation was established to provide educational and psychological support to children in families disrupted by serious illness or loss of a family member. FES

continued to support KVF by providing the services of two Playworkers, who provide non-formal educational activities to children making use of the KVF service. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed upon by the two entities, continues to solidify the FES' social commitment, and supports KVF in its mission.

Another extension of the FES Service was achieved following collaboration with the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD), and various parents' lobby groups. In September 2021, FES managed to offer the September Bridge Holidays service in Resource Centres for the first time.

Training in Inclusion held by FES

The Playworker and Child Support Worker Courses organised by FES in collaboration with the Institute for Education (IfE), propound the values of diversity and inclusion by seeking to highlight the importance of the educators' commitment to the principle that every child should feel that they belong to the centre. In addition, these seek to instil the spirit of inclusion with its course participants. For instance, the Playworker Course is primarily open to those 'mothers' who would like to either return to the world of work or seek work experience despite not having formal qualifications. The Playworker course gave some individuals a taste of academic success who in their own words, 'they had never experienced before'.

The Foundation for Educational Services will always endeavour to ward off prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination so as to abide by Article 21 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. FES is thus committed to the inclusive philosophy which, put simply, seeks to ensure that every child belongs to the centre s/he attends.



Courses, Placements, and Ongoing Professional Development

Training in Trauma Response

As part of FES Continuous Professional Development, all Childcare Centre Coordinators attended a seminar titled, 'Being Attachment Aware and Trauma Responsive'. The session was conducted by Ms Johanna Rizzo, Counsellor, Fostering at FSWS – Alternative Care.

The objective of the seminar was to increase the awareness and understanding of the meaning of attachment and trauma in children. Parents, guardians, and educators would be in a better position to provide more effective parenting, care, and teaching, if they have a basic idea of the various parts of the brain and their functions. Knowledge on how trauma affects brain development of traumatised children, can help one to understand more why they behave the way they do. Such an understanding will in turn enable one to respond to challenging behaviour, in a way that is therapeutic and that facilitates healing, as opposed to adding further distress to these vulnerable children.

English Language Proficiency Course

An entity whose offering to the market is service-based, relies on having a well-trained staff complement that enhances the value to the customer. Bearing this in mind, FES has planned a number of courses for the various roles working within its three major services. These have included a heavy investment by FES, in an English Proficiency Course for all the

childcare centres' staff. The subject was treated as English as a Foreign Language, and was tailor-made to meet the needs of a childcare environment.

The course, spread over two cycles of 13 weeks each, aimed to equip childcare educators with the language knowledge and communicative skills required to enhance their daily work practices. This not only facilitates administrative tasks such as record keeping, but also enhances the literacy skills needed when carrying out activities with the children.

The course was coordinated by the Programmes Department with an English Language School. Due to the the pandemic restrictions at the time, the course was held online. The logistical planning of the timetables took in consideration the uninterrupted delivery of the service, and rostering schedules.

Courses for Klabb 3-16 Roles

FES has continued to organise the Playworker Course and Child Support Worker Courses in collaboration with the Institute for Education (IfE). During 2021, 4 Playworkers Courses and 1 Child Support Workers Course were held. The Programmes Department was an active participant in these courses, not only from the point of view of their organisation and coordination, but also in the content delivery since there is a marked focus on the staff's list of duties and level of performance.

The *Playworker Course* seeks to make participants familiar with the environment of a Klabb 3-16 centres, and the aims of the service in providing a space conducive to non-formal education. One is to note that the course was not attended solely by applicants new to the field of working with children.

The course was also attended by students, be they University or MCAST students, who appreciate the value of the course especially if their area of study is not related to Education. They enrolled in the course as they felt that it prepares them for the role of a Playworker.

The course components of the Playworker Course are:

- Dealing with Challenging Behaviour and Disabilities
- Communication and Teamwork
- Classroom Management
- Activity Design, Implementation & Evaluation
- Diversity and Inclusion

There is also an intensive Induction Training session with the different departments of the FES Head Office, and a First Aid Course. Following the theory sessions, the Playworkers are placed in a centre where they undergo a job shadowing experience.

The *Child Support Worker Course* is an internal opportunity for Playworkers, as eligibility for the course requires a period of work as a Playworker. The Child Support Worker works on a one-to-one basis with children who have a statement of needs, hence their understanding of what is inclusion, and of different conditions, is important. The course prepares participants by addressing the following topics:

- Creating an Inclusive Culture in the Classroom
- Dealing with Challenging Behaviour
- Support Procedures and Documentation
- Supporting children with Individual Educational Needs
- Communication Skills and Teamwork.
- Dealing with Children's Difficulties in Communication

- Supporting Children's Participation in daily life through Sensory Processing Knowledge

During 2021, FES continued to organise a totally in-house course for *Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities*, with every department at Head Office delivering a n information session relevant to its remit. This was another internal opportunity that enables progress in one's career within Klabb 3-16. The person in this role assists the Centre Coordinator, and in the absence of the Centre Co-ordinator, even replaces him/her, especially during the Skolasajf afterhours service (12:30 till 17:30). Candidates for this role need to be able to deal with the required administrative and clerical tasks, customer care needs, and also help in the operations of the centre on a daily basis.

People who are eligible for the role are competent in effective communication and conflict resolution, can plan strategically, and can assess, mentor and guide staff performance. Therefore, the course was offered to arm the workers with the knowledge about the FES Policies and Standard Operating Procedures, and also about the daily operations of the centre. This knowledge helps the chosen PER to:

- Maintain a good and effective relationship with the students, staff and parents
- Manage conflict between staff
- Supervise children and staff
- Oversee the implementation of the programme of activities
- Handle the FES Portal and managing clients' accounts
- Oversee the daily operation of the centre
- Respecting the GDPR and Data Retention Policy

The contribution of the Programmes Department in this course delved at the transition of a Playworker to the new role. This makes one knowledgeable about what is expected in a classroom setting and how this knowledge should be used to monitor performance, make sure that the children are being engaged with structured activities, how to evaluate age-appropriate material, and the issue of data protection when recording activities, amongst other matters.

Further Collaboration with IfE

The Foundation for Educational Services was invited by the Institute for Education (IfE), to participate in an event about the Micro-Placement Initiative by the same Institute.

Micro-placements offer an opportunity to participants attending courses organized by IfE, to obtain first-hand experiences in industries that operate within a different environment to that of schools. These placements normally involve short-term projects where the participants would be supervised and are often focused on particular tasks or short-term projects.

The Minister for Education at the time, Dr Justyne Caruana, addressed the event, starting that such an initiative helps educators to expand their horizon by exposing them to different realities. These



in turn help the educators to be able to identify the potential of a student and work on developing it.

Marketing

A functional division of the Programmes Department is the Marketing Department, which oversees the promotion of the mission of FES and its services. This department plays an important role in reaching out to customers and to the community at large, while creating an overarching image that represents the Foundation in a positive light. The work carried out is both through physical means and online.

The physical presence of FES in events, media appearances, and conferences, serves as networking opportunity, as a way of promoting the entity's services, and as a positioning strategy to explain why the entity's offerings are directly applicable and relevant to today's society.

On the other hand, maintaining an active social media presence and online presence reflects well on the reliability of FES, and fosters trust between the entity and its customers. The function of publishing online content and establishing a social media presence serves as a way to communicate, meet customers' needs, and build trust even before a direct relationship is established.

The duties of the Marketing Department

Among the duties covered by the Marketing Department, one may include:

- Defining and managing the FES brand through the interaction that customers

and partners experience when they interact with the entity.

- Customer care through the answering of queries via the FES online instant messaging systems such as Messenger and Whatsapp. This includes also following-up of queries with other departments to ensure that customers are served. This process serves to connect with clients on a personal level, creating a more meaningful relationship with the customer base, and serving as market research through the identification of means for improvement and customisation of the services
- Marketing proactively to identify the FES services and produce materials and communications that get the word out.
- Producing marketing and promotional material such as online content, posters and publications, to describe and promote the FES services.
- Creating content for the FES website and Facebook page. This is done daily and promotes activities carried out across the three services (Childcare, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf). It also serves to inform the public about job vacancies, and training opportunities with FES.
- Monitoring and managing the FES social media page, monitoring the FB pages of the centres, and also what is being posted about the entity online.
- Producing the monthly FES newsletter, and the FES Annual Report, which serve as media for internal and external communications.
- Organisation and coordination of media events such as the FES 20th Anniversary Celebrations, the commencement of the Skolasajf 2021 service at the Qawra Skolasajf centre, and the opening of the new childcare centre *Ix-Xemx* at Qawra.
- Liaison with media houses and platforms for the promotion of the FES services.

These included advertising, advertorials, interviews and talks, on magazines, newspapers, and radios and television channels.

Press Releases, articles, and TV appearances, produced by FES

22 Press Releases

newsbreak.du.mt, *FES Celebrates its 20th Anniversary* (January 2021)

newsbreak.du.mt, *Skolasajf 2021 Kompetizzjoni Disinn tal-Logo* (January 2021)

newsbreak.du.mt, *FES Recruiting for Skolasajf 2021* (February 2021)

newsbreak.du.mt, *Is-Servizz ta' Klabb 3-16 Imur Onlajn* (March 2021)

newsbreak.du.mt, *Ghajnuna B'Xejn fil-HW mill-Klabb 3-16* (March 2021)

newsbreak.du.mt, *Kors Għall-Iżvilupp Professionali Għal Playworkers Prospettivi* (November 2021)

newsbreak.du.mt, *20 Sena Mit-Twaqqif Tal-Fundazzjoni Għal Servizzi Edukattivi* (May 2021)

Times of Malta, 20 years young (23.04.2021)





[EDUKA magazine](#), *Il-Fundazzjoni ghal Servizzi Edukattivi – 20 Sena ta' Servizz* (June 2021)

[Television Malta News](#) - Skolasajf Applications 2021 (24.03.2021)

[Television Malta News](#) - Childcare services for Essential Workers (21.05.2021)

[Television Malta News](#) - Extended Opening Hours Childcare (24.05.2021)

[tvm.com.mt](#), *Extension of Hours Childcare Centre* (19.7.2021)

12th January 2021 - TV appearance on TVM *Illum ma Steph*

31st May 2021 - TV appearance on TVAM

8th June 2021 - TV appearance on *Illum ma Steph*

21st October 2021 - TV appearance on FLiving *Spalla ma' Spalla*

26th October 2021 - TV appearance on ONE TV *Espresso*

26th October 2021 - TV appearance on NET TV *Bejnietna*

Other Media mentions

[Independent.com.mt](#), *Applications for Skolasajf 2021 open* (March 2021)



[maltabusinessweekly.com](#) / [newsbook.com.mt](#) / [timesofmalta.com](#), *JAYE Malta to Lead 'Learning by Doing' at Skolasajf* (June 2021)

[Lifestyle & Culture](#), *JAYE Malta to Lead 'Learning by Doing' at Skolasajf* (June 2021)

[stradarjali.com](#), *Mqabba Feast Activity at Skolasajf* (August 2021)

[Times of Malta](#), *Poetry Transforming the ordinary into extraordinary* (August 2021)

[sem.gov.mt](#), *Closure of Skolasajf 2021* (September 2021)

[Times of Malta](#), *Saving our Blue says 'thank you'* (October 2021)

The use of Facebook as a Marketing Tool

The use of Facebook continues to serve as an ideal platform for direct communication between FES and its stakeholders. By the end of 2021, FES had well over 21K of followers. Throughout the same year, the Marketing section of the Programmes Department maintained regular posting on the FES FB pages, with 470 posts throughout the year, and monitored that regular posts were also done on the Facebook pages of the childcare centres.

These pages were not only a showcase of the activities, keeping parents updated and prospective clients interested, but also served as a first point of contact in the Customer Care are of the service. Queries about the services reached FES, and could be answered, in real-time.

The public FES childcare centres' pages, and the closed group Klabb 3-16 centres, also proved especially useful in the period of remote work when the children centres were closed in March 2021. The FB pages served as a direct channel of communication with the clients and offered activities to keep the children occupied.

This strategy of continuously updating the FB pages continued to help to increase its level of awareness among the general public. This is clearly manifested in the incremental increase of Likes that the FES FB page has been garnering from on year to another. The value of the number of Likes reflects an increase in the expression of affinity and interest in the FES services,

more engaged users, and better reach of the content through sharing.

Facebook Likes

November 2019	14, 948
December 2020	17,565
December 2021	19,753

Appreciating the value of the potential of marketing via a Facebook post, during 2021 FES invested in 11 cycles of pay per click adverts, allowing for the creation of custom audiences for each Facebook advertising campaign created. These campaigns were mostly promoting the applications for the childcare service, and HR related vacancies. These cycles had an average reach of 6800 per cycle. 3087 of the clicks went on to visit the FES website, which was an effective way of driving traffic from active users.

Facebook was also a point of reference for parents requiring about the FES childcare service. The following table compares how many of the enquiries resulted in actual applications for the service.

Month	Number of FB requests	Number of intakes
January	18	10
February	32	6
March	14	2
April	28	17
May	35	10
June	25	8
July	21	6
August	23	8
September	22	8
October	21	4
November	20	5
December	4	1
Totals	263	85

Three main activities organised for the media

During 2021, the Programmes Department organised three main events for which there was an invitation for press coverage. These were the 20th Anniversary Celebrations at the FES Head Office, the official commencement of the Skolasajf 2021 service, and the inauguration of the new childcare centre *Ix-Xemx* at Qawra.

The event to mark the 20th Anniversary of FS was chosen to be the exact day of the month when it was set up, which was 24th May. The concept behind the event was to celebrate the work that led FES to its current position. The work for the event started from months before, including the organisation of the logistics of the event, the invitation of distinguished guests and long serving staff, the order of commemorative tokens, and the writing, design and publication of a commemorative book.

The official commencement of Skolasajf 2021 was organised at the Qawra Skolasajf Centre on 13th July 2021. The Minister for Education at the time, Dr Justyne Caruana was accompanied by the FES CEO at the time, Mr Dermot Galea, as she visited various classrooms to see the ongoing work of Skolasajf. She praised the FES staff for their continued hard work, and all the staff employed at the centres, whose service ensures that the children follow



a programme of non-formal educational activities, always within the parameters of the health protocols as issued by the Health Authorities at the time.

The official opening of the new childcare centre *Ix-Xemx* at Qawra was another milestone in the FES provision of childcare services. The hard work by the FES Corporate Department was in turn celebrated with the organisation of the media event to showcase the airy and welcoming premises. The new premises were officially inaugurated on 11th August 2021, by Minister for Education at the time, Dr Justyne Caruana, who referred to the contribution being made by childcare centres in the educational pathway of children in their early years. Present for the opening were also the FES Chairperson Ms Pamela Schembri, the FES CEO at the time, Mr Dermot Galea, and the Centre Coordinator Ms Romina Haber.

Signs for the Childcare Centres

In a bid to continue marketing its childcare centres, FES undertook a signage project for each centre, not only to embellish the outer facades of the centres, but also to give a warm welcome to the youngsters, and give the centres the FES corporate look. The signs also enable better identification and location of the centres.

The project was entrusted to the care of the Programmes Department, who worked on the concept. The designs had to be eye-catching, so one had to take in consideration colour, contrast, images, fonts, and sizes, and also make them relevant to the sector of the service.

The signs were designed according to the physical structure of the facades, with two signs being created where space allowed,



and positioned in key places to draw the most attention to them.

The main sign was the name of the centre with a design derived from the name of each centre. A second sign shows a number of children happily running towards the centre, based on the idea that this is a visual witnessed everyday by FES Childcare Educators, as the children run to greet them to spend the day in their care.

Throughout the project, the Programmes Department found full support and assistance from the Corporate Department, from the procurement from suppliers to the approvals from the relevant authorities, and right up to the installation of the signs.



The signs that were put up during 2021 were the ones at Il-Merill Childcare Centre at Pembroke, at Is-Sardinella Childcare Centre at San Gwann, and at Ix-Xemx Childcare Centre at Qawra. Since each of these centres are on school grounds, clients may be confused which door to access. The bright and vivid colours of the signs are now a clear indication to the entrance of these centres.

This project will be continued during the year 2022.



Corporate Social Responsibility

The element of Corporate Social Responsibility remained a constant in the remit of the Programmes Department, with a commitment to motivate, enlist, and deliver help to noble causes. Choosing deserving entities out of the many who carry out sterling work for the community at large, is not easy task. However, each year FES carries out a set of activities to lend its support for selected organisations that are close to our hearts.

The environmental aspects of CSR were also a prime concern for FES. The process of using technology for sustainable purposes, works to balance ecological considerations with economic success. Reducing energy consumption, investing in renewable resources, and involving employees in waste management efforts are all aspects of environmental CSR that can reduce the carbon footprint.

The idea of giving back to the community does not stop at the Head Office Level. The sense of altruism is carried forward also in our centres, where children are taught from

an early age the values of empathy and consideration. Childcare, Klabb 3-16, and Skolasajf Centre carry out philanthropic and community services as a way of learning how to be good citizens.

Another initiative was taken by the FES Childcare centre Il-Pespus at Marsa. The staff at the centre contacted the charity Puttinu Cares Foundation, and they were encouraged to donate various kinds of stationery. This is because the children in hospital, like the children at our childcare centres, love to draw and create all types of crafts and arts. The staff and parents of the children at Il-Pespus helped raise over 230 euros and bought all the required items, in the hope of bringing some joy and colour to the children undergoing treatment at the Rainbow Ward at Mater Dei Hospital.

Fund-Raising Activities

The fund-raising activities during 2021 were carried out by staff members and service users across the services and also at the FES Head Office.

The following is a breakdown of the money collected for the different beneficiaries.

Name of Beneficiary	Amount collected (€)
Dar Merhba Bik	4329.23
Hospice Malta	3066
Dar tal-Providenza	240
Puttinu Cares	1559.37
Malta Community Chest Fund	11,606.98
Total	20,801.58



- **Dar Merhba Bik**

The year kicked off with fund raising activities directly connected to the 20th Anniversary celebrations. After some research, it was revealed that Dar Merhba Bik, the non-governmental organisation that offers shelter for female victims of domestic violence and their children, was in dire need of refurbishing its playroom. The room needed an upgrade in terms of materials used, and the furniture and toys available for the children to use. An official communication to all the FES Klabb 3-16 and Childcare Centres, and with the Head Office staff, put the gears in motion to organize a series of fund-raising events in the first half of the year, for this cause. In the end, the final collected by service-users and staff members was €4,329.23.

The cheque was presented to Ms Elaine Pavia, Head of Services at Dar Merhba Bik, by the then FES CEO Mr Dermot Galea, and the Head of Business Support, Mr Mark Cassar.

The following highlights describe some of the activities held by different centres in aid of Dar Merhba Bik.

Klabb 3-16 Attard - Students at Klabb 3-16 Attard held a series of activities to learn about different endemic trees and plants. At the end, a container was filled

with seeds and students were asked to guess the number of seeds in the container. The container was then opened and the seeds were counted. The participant who managed to guess the exact number (or the one who came closest) won a book with information, photos and illustrations about endemic plants of Malta.

Klabb 3-16 Zejtun - Klabb 3-16 Zejtun embarked on a project to create crafts from recycled materials by one of the staff members. A donation was requested from the service users in exchange for the gift. These crafts were given to the students as a suitable gift for Mother's Day.

Klabb 3-16 Mqabba - A special Sports Day was organised as a fund-raising activity in aid of the Dar Merhba Bik. The event was according to the theme 'We can be superheroes in real life by helping and respecting each other'.

Il-Qawsalla Childcare Centre, Gzira - Staff geared up to hold a Muffin Baking Day. The childcare educators and the children baked a total of 20 Honey and Banana Muffins as part of the day's activities. These were distributed to the parents, against a small donation for this worthy cause.

Ix-Xemx Childcare Centre, Qawra - The centre organised a gardening event to collect donations for Dar Merhba Bik. Children were able to participate first-hand by planting sunflower seeds. They helped in caring for these plants until it was time for them to be given to those who gave a donation for the fund-raising activity for Dar Merhba Bik.

- **Pink October and Movember**

A constant in our CSR calendar is also the Pink October awareness campaign. Staff

from the Head Office, and employees and service-users from the Childcare and Klabb 3-16 centres, organised fund-raising activities to help NGOs that work with cancer patients, and with their families, in their journey to recovery. This show of solidarity also helps one to be more aware of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, and also that regular check-ups can help find potential health issues before they become a problem. Early detection gives you the best chance for getting the right treatment quickly.

The activities also continued in November in solidarity with the Movember Awareness Campaign. An activity at Head Office was tied to the Maltese tradition of celebrating the feast of St Martin. St Martin of Tours, whose feast is celebrated on 11th November, is well known for his altruistic act of donating half his cloak to a homeless man. Staff at the FES Head Office took a cue from this legendary act of kindness and ordered a custom-made Borza ta' San Martin.

The proceeds from the San Martin initiative were added to the PINK October donations also from the childcare and Klabb 3-16 centres, adding up to a total of €3066. These funds were passed on to the Malta Hospice Foundation.

Other initiatives for Pink October also included the Puttinu Cares Children's Cancer Support Group in the list of beneficiaries and raised the sum of €688.27 for this NGO.

- **The Annual Fund-Raising Activity for the Malta Community Chest Fund**

Skolasajf 2021 once again showed a great show of altruism and support to a worthy cause, with the successful fund-raising



activities in aid of the Malta Community Chest Fund. This annual activity is a show of solidarity by the students and their families, and the employees working during Skolasajf. This year the amount collected was the handsome sum of €11,606.98. It was collected over the span of the eight weeks between July and September, when the Skolasajf 2021 service was in operation.

In spite of the restrictions and hardships brought about by the pandemic, everyone understands and appreciate the invaluable work done by the MCCF. It is no wonder then, that Skolasajf managed to champion once again this charitable initiative so successfully. The funds were collected through a series of fund-raising events, which not only showed the altruistic nature of the students and staff, but also their creative approach to such a noble cause. From cooking activities to quizzes, from car washes to gardening activities, everyone was hands on deck to make sure that each respective centre's effort reached its maximum potential.



The donation was presented to H.E. the President of Malta, Dr. George Vella, by members of the FES management team. H.E. Dr Vella thanked everyone for their commitment and for promoting the fundraising activities every year. He referred to the numerous requests for help and how all the money collected will be spent to help families in dire need of financial help.

- **Skolasajf Centres' donations to other entities**

Another entity that benefitted from fund raising activities by the FES centres was Puttinu Cares. The Zurrieq Skolasajf organized a Sports Day, participation for which was against a donation. The enthusiastic participation led the generous sum of €751.00. From the FES childcare sector, staff at Il-Bejta Childcare Centre created activities for the children to produce a take-away craft item for the parents. This resulted in a donation of Euro 120.10 given to Puttinu Cares.



Staff and students at the Siggiewi Skolasajf Centre organised a fundraising activity in aid of the Dar Tal-Providenza. On the day, children got creative and went to school wearing different and original hairstyles to keep to the day's theme of Crazy Hair Day. While the children had fun admiring the creations of their friends, they also contributed donations, and raised the sum of €240. The sum was presented to the Dar tal-Providenza Director, Fr Martin Micallef.

- **Food bank Campaign**

Christmas 2021 also saw FES relaunching the Reverse Advent Calendar Campaign, amongst its service users and staff members. Spurred by the motivation that no one should go hungry, especially in the times when everyone is stocking up for family meals, centres collected non-perishable food items for the Foodbank Lifeline Foundation. A representative from the Foodbank Lifeline Foundation was kept quite busy as he went around the different FES Klabb 3-16 and Childcare centres, with a final stop at Head Office, to collect the food donations. These donations will help this NGO to face the ongoing challenge of being always stocked on food supplied to feed those in need. Once again it was an exercise in solidarity that taught children and adults alike how to be altruistic with people in need.



Reducing Our Carbon Footprint – The FES HR Department Goes Paperless

During the month of May 2021, the preparations for Skolasajf 2021 were at their peak within all the department at the Foundation for Educational Services (FES). A major sector of this work is the recruitment and engagement process of approximately 1800 new employees with FES. This motivated the HR department to embark upon a project aimed at reducing its collective carbon footprint, and in the process also protect its stakeholders during the then still ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Following meticulous consultations with the legal counsel, FES transformed its contract signing process from a physical one into a Digital Cloud-based system. This consisted of transforming all manual documents into digitally fillable contracts and forms, legalised by digital signatures of the respective parties mentioned in the contracts.

This project's environmental and health benefits included:

- The reduction in the use of hard-copies of the contracts (well over 30,000 sheets), thus helping to decrease the clearing of forests and of carbon-capturing trees
- Reducing the use of photocopiers (including toners) and filing material, all of which use precious metals, plastic, and energy.
- Reducing the fuel used to transport materials and paper, as well as the fuel used by 1800 employees to commute to Head Office and back, for the sole purpose of signing their contract for employment.
- Reducing the contagion factor in the days of significant pandemic concerns,

as less people were attending the same public space at Head Office, thus contributing to Malta and Gozo's efforts in battling the COVID-19 transmission.

- Apart from the green benefits, going paperless has an encouraging list of benefits that impact the bottom line of the Foundation itself. Being a public entity, it is commendable that it seeks to reduce expenditure for better use of the public funds that have been entrusted to its use. Among these benefits one may list:
 - Reducing the costs associated with the printing of contracts
 - Less wear and tear on the printers thus minimising costly maintenance repairs
 - Employees can focus on other tasks rather than having to physically prepare, schedule, assist and process the engagement process
 - Increased efficiency through the digitization of paper-based documents, providing better ease of access to information.

Another benefit resulting from this change in operation was related to better information security. Digital cloud-based storage replaces paper-based storage and filing systems, thus increasing the employee's data protection. There was also the added advantage of automated backups, which eliminated the risk of data loss.

Eliminating these costs and time-consuming tasks resulted in savings and planning time, that FES used in developing other projects aimed at furthering its carbon footprint reduction. Initiatives like these, help to make FES a sustainable entity that strives to protect the planet's finite resources, which we all need to be able to operate and thrive.



Environmental Concerns during Skolasajf

The topic of living a more sustainable way of life to be able to take care of our environment, and taking care of animals, are recurring subjects very much to the heart of educators and students alike. This shared value is the underlying theme in the activities related to the environment and animal welfare, held in our centres. The following are just two examples that occurred during Skolasajf 2021.

Zurrieq Skolasajf along with other activities prioritized the importance of giving something back to our community and helping stray cats who are vulnerable to the elements and who depend on human kindness to survive. This initiative focused on providing shelter, especially during the cold winter months. The students took the initiative to restore an old and abandoned shelter and turn it into a loving home for the local stray cats.

This project was not just a hands-on activity that gave students the skills involved in restoring an discarded shelter. They also learnt to think of others and help those in need. They also fostered respect to all society members and nurtured a greater sense of community.

In the Attard Skolasajf Centre, the environmental concern took the form of a tree planting activity. The centre donated an Araar tree which was planted just outside of the school grounds, to be enjoyed by the whole community. The tree was planted in the presence of the Mayor of Attard, Mr Stefan Cordina, and the children who lent a hand in the digging and shovelling of the soil. Besides showing an appreciation for the end of another successful Skolasajf, the tree was planted to help embrace the values of responsibility and respect towards the environment and their locality.





The Human Resources, Operations
and Support Services Department

The Human Resources, Operations and Support Services Department

HR Department

The service during 2021

The HR Department consists of four employees under the supervision of the Head of HR, Operations and Support Services. These are the Manager, Programme Coordinator, Coordinator and Programme Secretary.

Given that three out of the four employees within the HR Department were engaged throughout this year, the focus was to ensure that all employees within the Department are familiar with the processes of the department. One objective was to ensure that the HR Department strengthens the relationship with the centre coordinators and becomes also more visible with the rest of the employees within the entity.

Support to the staff complement was achieved through student placement. The HR Department accepted students who were studying administration at MCAST and supported them throughout their internship. This enabled the students to get a better understanding of the recruitment processes involved. They also had the opportunity to appreciate the different procedures

involved to support employees within the organisation. The HR Department also hosted MITA students during the summer period. These students had the opportunity to support the department in various administrative duties.

Skolasajf 2021

The year 2020 saw a new way how the recruitment process was done. Due to the COVID situation it was difficult to get employees to Head Office for the interviews and for the signing of the contracts. The situation was redeemed via the online processes, whereby a digital form of the contract was sent to the employees, who signed it with a digital signature.

The recruitment process for the year 2021 remained the same as 2020 and all interviews for the following posts were carried out online: playworkers, child support workers, playworkers with extra responsibilities and sports playworkers. The employees received a link for an online questionnaire which they answered at their own convenience during the stipulated time. The interviews for the Centre Coordinators

and Regional Coordinators were done in the form of face-to-face interviews online through Microsoft Teams. This process enabled the Human Resources Department to continue with the recruitment process throughout the months of February 2021 till July 2021, thus overcoming the hurdles caused by the COVID situation.

The recruitment process related to Skolasajf 2021 began as early as November 2020. This included revision of job descriptions, preparation of vacancy forms and preparation of interview questions and contracts. There was also an increase in the number of calls issued to allow immediate placements. The digital contracts continued to be used as the newly appointed employees were sent an email with all the employment documents that they were required to fill in and sign. All the employee's employment documents were then saved digitally on an HR OneDrive document for ease of reference. This step also reduced a lot of printing and filing that would usually be done by the HR department, and would prove to be very time consuming. This initiative reduced the carbon footprint produced by the HR department.



Table 1, titled Skolasajf 2021 Recruitment Statistics, explains the different roles employed and the number of employees engaged for Skolasajf 2021. Even though the number of children registered for Skolasajf in 2021 was around 8,000, which was 4000 less than 2019, still, the number of employees required for the service was on average the same. This happened because of the bubble system that was used in schools, as per directives of the Health Authorities due to COVID protocols, when doing classroom classifications.

Call Title	Persons Recruited Externally
Playworker Skolasajf	862
Child Support Worker Skolasajf	728
Playworker with extra Responsibility Skolasajf	132
Centre Coordinator Skolasajf	56
Regional Coordinator Skolasajf	11
Sports Playworker Skolasajf	85
MITA Student	32
Total	1,906

Table 1:- Skolasajf 2021 Recruitment Statistics

As in the previous year, induction meetings for Regional Coordinators and Centre Coordinators were held online. The number of employees recruited were as described in Table 1. Included with these were also those employees on an indefinite contract who were working during the scholastic year in the Klabb 3-16 service, and then continued working during Skolasajf 2021. It is important to highlight that some of the employees on an indefinite contract chose to work a different role for Skolasajf. This is encouraged so that employees would have a holistic experience of the different roles within the entity. It also helps with the development of new skills and knowledge.

All employees working for Skolasajf received an Employee Handbook. This incorporates all policies and procedures related to HR. The aim of this handbook is to provide the employees with a clear picture as to what the Foundation stands for, highlighting its aims and objectives as well as providing a clear direction of what is expected of the employee. One of the major policies described in the Employee Handbook is the Disciplinary Policy. Given the high number of employees working within the entity over a period of ten weeks, it is very important to have a procedure related to situations where issues arise with the employees' performance and behaviour. Once again, during Skolasajf 2021, the Regional Coordinators were encouraged to deal directly with issues arising in the centres. If the issues persisted, the Regional Coordinators liaised with the respective departments, to get further direction. The focus all along, however, was on guiding the employees to improve their behaviour and performance. This entailed formulating a way of discussing with them their mistakes, advising on a way forward, and monitoring progress whilst providing feedback. This

required the cooperation of staff from other departments at all levels.

Due to the COVID situation, there were a number of employees who resigned half-way through Skolasajf, and others who were forced into mandatory quarantine. These led to a situation where the process of recruiting and engaging new employees was ongoing throughout all Summer.

Childcare

A major task of the HR Department this year was to carry out the Paediatric First Aid Training Course to all the staff, including the Centre Coordinators, Childcare Educators and Programme Secretaries.

There were also support sessions by the HR department, specifically held by the HR Programme Coordinator with the Centre Coordinator of each Childcare Centre. The aim for these sessions were to discuss and evaluate HR policies and procedures that include:

- Rostering issues
- Issues of staff availabilities
- Discussion on the compliance of staff with needs of the service



- Disciplinary issues and procedures
- Reviews of staff's Personal Appearance and Dress Code
- Feedback on the staff meetings of the centre
- Vacation Leave Concerns

Klabb 3-16

Throughout 2021 a new centre was opened at Gharghur school, therefore taking the number of operating Klabb 3-16 centres offering after hours up to 31. The number of employees employed on average throughout Klabb 3-16 till end of year 2021 was as follows: -

- Centre Coordinators - 31
- Playworkers - 483

- Tutors - 99
- Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities - 16
- Child Support Workers - 80

Recruitment

Table 2, titled Recruitment for 2021 depicts the different calls issued within 2021 related to full time jobs (Head Office and Child Care) and part-time jobs (Klabb 3-16). This data excludes recruitment done for Skolasajf. This process of recruitment helped the organisational structure to strengthen itself and immediate action was taken where required to ensure that service provision is not disrupted.

Call Title	Persons Engaged throughout 2021
Manager Human Resources	1
Manager Finance	1
Programme Coordinator Programmes	2
Programme Coordinator Human Resources	1
Programme Coordinator Finance	1
Coordinator Finance	1
Coordinator Support Services	1
Coordinator Human Resources	1
Coordinator Procurement	1
Centre Coordinator Childcare	5
Child Care Educators Relievers	6
Child Care Educators	4
Centre Coordinators Klabb 3-16	5
Playworkers Klabb 3-16	228
HW Tutor Klabb 3-16	39
Child Support Workers Klabb	45
PER Klabb 3-16	4

Table 2:- Recruitment for 2021 (excluding Skolasajf)

The HR Department liaised directly with the Services Department together with Centre Coordinators respectively to ensure that vacancies within Klabb 3-16 centres were filled immediately. This required an intensive recruitment process to ensure that the appropriate staff with the required eligibility criteria were employed.

Training

Training is an important aspect offered by FES to its employees. This is mainly because it represents a good opportunity for employees to grow their knowledge base and improve their job skills to become more effective in the workplace. The training plan for the 2021 year focused on:

- Courses for playworkers
- Courses for child support workers
- PER Training Course
- First Aid Training
- Paediatric First Aid Training
- Food Handling
- Mental Health First Aid Training and
- Health and Safety in the workplace

In 2021 as well, the HR Department liaised with the Programmes Department in the organisation of the development courses for Playworkers and Child Support Workers. The HR department also liaised with all the other departments of FES and carried a 6-session course for prospective PERs for Skolasajf 2021.

First Aid training helps employees learn to be more conscious of safety in the workplace, leading to a reduced number of accidents and injuries. Minimizing risk to workers and decreasing workplace incidents is a benefit to everyone, but for employers, it has implications within all aspects of business operations. A first aid course was

offered to several employees of the Klabb 3-16 service. The Paediatric First Aid training was offered to employees in the childcare sector.

Food safety and food hygiene are important as they ensure that the food produced and how it is handled makes it safe for consumption. If food safety and hygiene are not maintained, consumers could become seriously ill with food poisoning and foodborne illnesses. The food handling training was offered to employees of both the Klabb 3-16 Centres and Childcare centres.

Staff within the HR Department attended a course on mental health. The Mental Health First Aid teaches adults how to assist other adults who are developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. The course also provided some useful information on how to assist persons who have a history of a mental illness. This knowledge is an asset to have in the HR department.

The employees working in childcare were also given training related to Health and Safety in the Workplace. This training focused on good postures when sitting and working at the computer as well as healthy ergonomics desk set-up.

At the end of 2021 the HR Department was also involved with other Departments in the organisation of a training calendar for the year 2022. Discussions involved the continuation of the courses for Playworkers and Child Support Workers, another course for prospective PERs for Skolasajf 2022, continuation of the First Aid training and Paediatric First Aid training, AED training and fire-fighting training.

• Plans for 2022

One of the projects for the HR Department for 2020 was the application for the FHRD Award in Human Resources. The award was not achieved, however, during 2021 work was done on the recommendations received. These recommendations, as explained hereunder, will form the basis of the work planned for 2022 within the HR Department. These include:-

- Writing a code of ethics for all employees within the entity;
- Writing a Diversity and Inclusion policy;
- Providing a more integrated approach to Corporate Social Responsibility activities;
- Setting up a system of exit interviews;
- Supporting the Management team in the organisation of a process for recognition awards
- Organising a climate survey within the entity for all levels across the organisation
- Working on a process of employment reviews where the Head of HR is to be part of the process
- Developing a holistic HR integrated system;
- Setting up a system for continuous professional development;
- Formulating specific procedures for succession planning;
- Organising a social committee to work on the organisation of social events.



Operations and Support Services Department

The Service throughout 2021

The Operations and Support Services Department is responsible for the supervision of the day-to-day operations of the different services offered by FES, which are Childcare, Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf. The Services Department has to work hand in hand with the other departments within the entity to ensure a smooth running of the service, however it is also responsible for tasks related to the admin of the centres, such as checking about staff availabilities in the centres, and availability of classrooms in schools for service delivery. The latter was even more important during these past two years since, due to COVID, children had to be clustered into bubbles, to prevent as much as possible the spread of the virus. Bubbles had to be discussed, reviewed and amended accordingly by the Programme Coordinators to ensure that human resources were used to their maximum potential.

The present structure of this department is the following: Head of Human Resources and Operations and Support Services, Manager Operational and Support Services, four Programme Coordinators, a Coordinator, and a Programme Secretary.

The role of the Programme Coordinators within the Services Department

The role of the Programme Coordinators within the Services Department is to support the centre coordinators in admin matters that may affect the day-to-day operations of the service. All Programme Coordinators

have a number of Childcare, Klabb 316 and Skolasajf centres that fall under their remit. When services related issues arise, the Centre Coordinator reports to the respective Programme Coordinator (Services). In their absence, the other Programme Coordinators and/or Manager Services take over. Programme coordinators communicate with their centre coordinators on a daily basis, either through emails or telephone. Monthly support visits are carried out. Due to COVID, support visits started online but later the Programme Coordinators resumed their physical visits at the centres. Every four weeks, the Programme Coordinators have to vet their centres' timesheets, checking that every employee is paid according to the hours worked and also to ensure that no extra shifts and/or hours are being claimed for.

The role of Coordinator within the Services Department

The Operations and Support Services Department was further strengthened throughout 2021 with the engagement of a Coordinator. The aim was to provide further support to the unit in the administrative duties, so that the programme coordinators would have more time to dedicate on centres' related queries.

The Coordinator is responsible for the transport of the Klabb 3-16 and Skoalsajf services. There should be constant communication with the Transport Section of the Ministry for Education, to ensure that there is a smooth running of the transport service. The Coordinator also communicates with the Heads of Schools, from where the transport departs, to ensure a safe transition between the two services. The Coordinator is also responsible of the CRM which is a database incorporating all queries received

from Servizz.gov. These queries are to be answered in a timely manner.

The role of the Programme Secretary within the Services Department

The Programme Secretary is an essential role within the Services Department, being a bridge between outside queries to the department and the department's staff members. All queries received either on the FES generic email and telephone calls are answered by the Programme Secretary. The programme secretary then forwards queries which are pertaining to a specific centre to the respective Programme Coordinator (Services) or to the Manager Services, as deemed necessary.

The Programme Secretary is also responsible to collect monthly reports and statistics for all services provided by FES.

Klabb 3-16

At the beginning of 2020 there were 30 centres operating in different schools in Malta and Gozo, offering the after-school hours service. Following parental requests from Gharghur, and after an expression of interest among the parents in Gharghur, it was decided that a new Klabb 3-16 centre would open in Gharghur in September 2021. This decision helped to reduce the number of students attending the Naxxar Klabb 3-16. For this reason, a new Centre Coordinator was employed, together with further staff working as playworkers, child support workers and tutors.

From January 2021 to June 2021 there were also two other centres Maria Bambina at MCAST Paola and San Guzepp at Sixth Form

Msida. The role of these two centres was to support students attended church schools, but whose schools were operating on a roster basis due to COVID. This meant that children had to have supervision to follow online lessons. This created a problem for those parents who had to be physically present at work and could not stay at home with their children. These centres gave the opportunity to students to attend online and participate actively in the lessons under the supervision of a playworker. The centres stopped operating in June 2021.

Throughout the scholastic months of 2021, Klabb 3-16 had a total number of 4,367 completed registrations. As per procedure, all applications are to be submitted online through the FES Portal. Once again, FES liaised with Servizz.gov, whose role is to support those potential service users who would be having difficulty to apply and pay online. Servizz.gov also answer calls and emails from the general public about Klabb 3-16 which calls are received on 153.

As of September 2021, there were 31 Centre Coordinators in Malta and 1 Centre Coordinator in Gozo. There were 16 Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities (PERs) who assist the centre coordinators in centres which have more than 100 registrations. Other workers involved in the operations of Klabb 3-16 are playworkers, child support worker and tutors.

Once again operations within Klabb 3-16 centres were influenced directly by the COVID pandemic. One of the biggest challenges throughout 2021 was to keep the students in distinct groups/bubbles, so as to limit the transmission of COVID. Contact was maintained with the Heads of Schools to try as much as possible to group children who will be making use of Klabb 3-16 after school, together in

the morning too. This was to avoid the mixing of children. Moreover, more staff members were employed so to cater for the increased number of classes. Staff were guided to adhere to guidelines by the Health Department. A standard operating procedure for contact tracing in case of a positive case was set up following instructions by the Health Authorities.

In March 2021 Klabb 3-16 services were transferred online for the period that schools were closed. Centre Coordinators liaised with their staff who recorded their activities and then these were shared online with the service users. Therefore, children could still follow activities provided by the playworkers and child support workers. Also, children could still get assistance in their homework from the tutors who were available online on a daily basis.

- **Klabb 3-16 during holidays**

The Klabb 3-16 service is offered also during the scholastic holidays, to students of working parents. Service during the holidays is available from 7am till 5.30pm. The table hereunder explains the number of applications received for the holidays throughout 2021.



Period	Number of Service users
Carnival Holidays	698
Easter Holidays	502 applications but no service was given since schools had to close again due to the COVID-19 situation
Bridge Holidays (June)	1472
Bridge Holidays (September)	2197
Mid-term Holidays	1163
Christmas Holidays	1196

During the September Bridge Holidays, the 5 Resource Centres also offered the service. The centres are Helen Keller at Qrendi, Maria Regina College Young Adults Education Resource Centre at Wardija, Guardian Angel at Hamrun, San Miguel at Pembroke, and the Sannat Special Unit at Sannat in Gozo. The number of service users was as follows :-

Guardian Angel	16
Helen Keller	11
San Miguel	14
Wardija Resource Centre	33
Sannat Special Unit	5

Malta

Closed Centre	Hosting Centre
Vittoriosa/Sengglea	Cospicua
Valletta	Floriana
Xghajra	Kalkara
Pieta	Marsa
Mtarfa	Rabat
Kirkop	Safi
Msida	St. Venera

Gozo

Closed centre	Hosting Centre
Ghajnsielem/Qala	Nadur
San Lawrenz/Zebbug	Gharb



Number of applicants for Skolasajf 2021 (Core Hours)

Name of centre		Number of applicants	
Attard	285	Pieta	13
Birkirkara	281	Qormi SB	119
Birżebbuġia	160	Qormi SĠ	176
Burmarrad	33	Qrendi	66
Cospicua	21	Rabat A	175
Dingli	67	Safi	30
Fgura	366	San Ġiljan	109
Floriana	64	San Ġwann	270
Gharghur	126	Senglea	8
Għaxaq	144	Siggiewi	236
Gudja	63	Sliema	307
Gżira	107	St. Paul's Bay	215
Hamrun	203	St. Venera	247
Kalkara	51	Tarxien	64
Kirkop	11	Valletta	28
Lija/Balzan/Iklin	121	Vittoriosa	7
Luqa	166	Xgħajra	26
Marsa	42	Żabbar A	237
Marsascula St Joachim	295	Żabbar B	95
Marsascula St Anne	158	Żebbug - Malta	254
Marsaxlokk	8	Żejtun	290
Mellieħa	260	Żurrieq	248
Mġarr	178	Total no. of students in Malta	7739
Mosta	258		
Mosta Annex (KG)	170		
Mqabba	131		
Msida	23		
Mtarfa	14		
Naxxar	250		
Paola	170		
Pembroke	293		

Resource Centres

Name of the centre	
Guardian Angel Rc Hamrun	34
Helen Keller RC Qrendi	14
San Miguel RC Pembroke	19
Sannat Special Unit - Gozo	6
Wardija Resource Centre	45
Total no. of students in Resource Centres	118

GOZO

Name of centre	Number of applicants
Victoria - Gozo	116
Xaghra - Gozo	69
Ghajnsielem - Gozo	10
Gharb	29
Kercem - Gozo	36
Nadur	47
Qala	18
San Lawrenz	3
Sannat - Gozo	50
Xewkija - Gozo	40
Zebbug(San Lawrenz/ Gharb) - Gozo	8
Total no. of students in Gozo	426

GOZO

Name of the centre	AM	PM
Victoria - Gozo	22	46
Xaghra - Gozo	3	1
	25	47

Number of applicants for service in centres offering after hours

Name of the centre	AM	PM
Attard	87	115
Birkirkara	82	136
Birzebbuga	43	54
Cospicua	5	8
Fgura	104	143
Floriana (Valletta)	19	17
Gzira	26	51
Għargħur	30	42
Hamrun	67	81
Luqa	41	70
MarsascalaSt Joachim	65	107
Marsascala St Anne	54	86
Mellieħa	51	103
Mġarr	46	62
Mosta	86	94
Mosta Annex (KG)	60	79
Mqabba	38	46
Naxxar	71	118
Paola	54	71
Pembroke	66	138
Qawra	91	164
Qormi SĠ	60	75
Rabat B	43	58
San Ġiljan	20	67
San Ġwann	90	130
Siggiewi	54	75
Sliema	43	148
St. Paul's Bay	59	125
St. Venera (Msida)	77	102
Żabbar A	80	97
Żabbar B	23	29
Żebbuġ - Malta	67	74
Żejtun	73	92
Żurrieq	50	68
	1925	2925

The operations in the Resource Centres, required the Services Unit to liaise with the MFED Transport Section to extend the service of a number of routes. Moreover, to make this service possible, FES had to involve an outside contractor. The Services Unit were liaising on a daily basis with the contractor regarding issues related to transport supervision, and rostering of staff.

Skolasajf 2021

Skolasajf is an annual national programme catering for learners during summer holidays. It extends the services usually provided by Klabb 3-16, such that it offers our service users an educational experience during the summer holidays. This programme is offered in a number of schools around Malta and Gozo, so as to meet the needs of the families.

In 2021, the service of Skolasajf was provided in 58 primary schools across Malta and Gozo, and also in five Resource Centres. All centres offer the core programme of activities between 8:30am and 12:30pm. However, 35 centres also offered extra hours of service from 7:00am till 8:30am, and from 12:30pm till 5:30pm. Extra hours are offered to children of working parents. As from July 2021, the number of centres offering the extra hours increased, as the Gharghur centre was added to the list.

There were also some centres, both in Malta and Gozo which, due to the limited number of applications received, were amalgamated with other centres. Transport was provided for students travelling from the closed centres to the host centres. The following centres were amalgamated as follows:

- **The impact of COVID on Skolasajf 2021**

Despite the services being impacted by COVID, there was an increase in the number of registrations for Skolasajf. Just like in the previous year, all Skolasajf employees adhered to the COVID guidelines issued by the Health Department. Class ratios had to be stipulated, depending on the physical size of the classrooms. Centre Coordinators ensured that the concept of bubbles was respected at all times.

Just like the situation in Klabb 3-16 for 2020-2021, one of the biggest challenges throughout Skolasajf was to keep the students in groups (also called bubbles) so to limit the transmission of COVID if and when required. Even though the number of applicants for Skolasajf was less than Skolasajf 2019, there was still the need of the same number of classrooms and the same number of staff. Centre Coordinators were instructed how to do the students' classification in way to avoid mixing of students between the core and the extended hours. This helped to avoid the mixing of children throughout the whole day. Staff were guided to adhere to guidelines by the Health Department. A standard operation procedure for contact tracing in case of a positive case was also set up for Skolasajf following instructions by the Health Authorities. Guidelines were adhered to and in fact there were no transmission cases in the Skolasajf Centres.

Childcare

During 2021, FES operated thirteen childcare centres. Each childcare centre offers quality childcare services in order to support and strengthen the family unit,

guided by the underlying principle that the family is the best environment for personal growth. The main aim of the centres is to offer a personalised service of quality care for all children up to 3 years of age.

The Services Department is also responsible to assist the childcare centres in their daily operations. The FES Childcare service is provided from Monday to Friday between 07:30 and 16:00, excluding Public Holidays and shut down days. The Childcare Centre Coordinators are responsible to roster staff in childcare centres. Childcare Educators are rostered to cover service hours and according to the exigencies of the service.

There is also liaison to ensure that slots within the childcare centres are filled up as much as possible and that children on the waiting list are kept at a minimum. Applications for childcare centres are received by the Centre Coordinators either through emails, phone calls or even walk ins in the centres. Every application will be processed, and an individual assessment will be carried out in order to determine the applicant's needs. Applications are filled in and submitted manually. Throughout 2021 work was done to prepare a system of online applications. This will be finalised in 2022.

The following list provides a description of registrations per centre.

Centre	Total number of service users in 2021
Birgu, Il-Kuluri	48
Birkirkara, Il-Ferrovija	54
Cospicua, Il-Bejta	30
Floriana, It-Tgħanniqja	42

Gżira, Il-Qawsalla	26
Haż-Żebbuġ, Żmeraldi	56
Marsa, Il-Pespis	26
Naxxar, Pizzi Pizzi Kanna	65
Pembroke, Il-Merill	69
Qawra, Ix-Xemx	40
San Ġwann, Is-Sardinella	40
Santa Venera, Il-Bebbuxu	44
Siggiewi, Id-Denfil	63
Total	603

One of the major issues for the year 2021 was provision of service whilst adhering to COVID measures. Centre Coordinators were responsible to ensure that the children were always in the assigned group as much as possible. It was also the role of the Services Department to support the Centre Coordinators to adhere with this measure.

Centre Coordinators are also encouraged to ensure that staff performance is of high quality. This requires daily monitoring of what is going on in the centre, regular supervision with staff and assisting employees where required to deal with day-to-day issues and challenges. Centre Coordinators work together with the Programmes Department, Services Department, and Human Resources Department to address issues related to staff performance. This consolidates the FES beliefs that employees' effectiveness is the critical component in improving children's achievement. The wellbeing of employees is of utmost importance and hence, FES always strives to provide an adequate support to those in need. With this in mind, employees are encouraged to refer to their centre coordinator on any problems encountered who in return, will do their utmost to assist the employees by clarifying expectations, helping in meeting expectations, provide high-quality feedback and support.



The Business Support Unit

The Business Support Unit

The Corporate Services Department

Introduction

2021 for the Corporate Unit within the Business Support Department, was characterised by an added focus on the procurement and maintenance functions within the unit. Since the Foundation's services and needs are on the increase, this added more weight to the procurement function of the unit. Purchases of a higher volume and value eventually lead to more tenders so as to abide by the Procurement Regulations. Moreover, an advantage of closing centres due to the pandemic, was that of having the possibility to carry out maintenance works that would not have been possible to do with the children and staff present. The Foundation tried to exploit this period and a lot of maintenance works were carried out.

It was also a year where more staff joined the unit, with a replacement for the Coordinator Administration thus providing greater support to both in terms of procurement and maintenance, and a Programme Coordinator for Technical Support.

Estate Management

Following the moving of the Head Office in 2020, one can say that things settled

down well in 2021. A risk assessment was carried out and evacuation plans drafted. In addition, discussions were underway with the landlord to have a second exit which would be very beneficial in case of an emergency. Towards the end of year, budget was also allocated for more windows to be added to the façade – in fact these were ordered at year's end.

- **Childcare Centres**

The Foundation took the opportunity to carry out major refurbishment works in several centres, some of them when they were closed due to the pandemic. For the first time, the Foundation also engaged the services of a warranted architect to provide advice in the several projects that were carried out.

Apart from the normal day-to-day issues, the below list describes the major works carried out in childcare centres.



1. Birgu – the centre’s membrane had to be changed since rainwater was seeping into the centre resulting in damage and affecting operations. Following a request for quotations, a contractor was engaged to remove the old membrane and apply a new one. At the same time, the water tank was changed since it was damaging the membrane. New fittings were also affixed. Following this, the centre was freshly painted from the inside. Work was split across 3 different weekends in order not to hinder operations. This helped to fix those areas which were damaged by water leaks and to give a fresh new look to the centre.
2. Bormla – Frosted stickers were installed on the glass panes of the main door and of the windows leading to the school corridor, to further ensure the privacy of the children and staff within our centre.
3. San Gwann – this centre was plastered and painted both from the inside and the outside. Frosted stickers were installed on the glass panes of the main door and of the windows leading towards the street, for added privacy. A new colourful sign was also installed on the façade. In addition, discussions were held with the then Ministry for Education, to refurbish an unused part of the outdoor area. Towards year’s end, works had started whereby the overgrown grass and rubble were removed, and works were about to start to create a small garden.
4. Floriana – the outdoor area of this centre was separated from that of the school with a wooden aluminium fence which was quite old. This fence was replaced with a new aluminium one, which is sturdier. Towards the end of the year, it was noted that water was seeping through one of the bathrooms and a damaged roof was exposed. Following an inspection by an architect, this was deemed safe to use till maintenance works were scheduled to start in 2022.
5. Pembroke – the centre’s outdoor area and main entrance were freshly painted and plastered. It was also noted that this centre did not have appropriate storage space and part of the corridor was sectioned to build a storage space. Following an architect’s visit, plans were submitted to the Planning Authority for the necessary permit, which then allowed the engagement of a contractor to create the necessary structure in gypsum. As at year’s end, this project was nearing completion and was to be fitted with the necessary furnishings. This centre also had a new colourful sign installed on its façade.





6. Siggiewi – the fence separating the centre’s outdoor area from that of the school was replaced with an aluminium one.
7. Haz Zebbug – an unused internal yard, was transformed into a garden area. The Precincts Officer helped with levelling off the floor, installation of a green net, and painting of the area. In addition, a wall mounted mirror to be used during the programme of activities was affixed along the length of the Baby Room, more blinds were installed, and at year’s end an aluminium fence was ordered to further section the centre’s large outdoor area to provide a safer area for the babies.
8. Naxxar – this centre was plastered and painted both from the inside and the outside. The work was carried out when the centre was closed because of the pandemic. A galvanised steel ladder was installed in the outdoor area to create better access to the centre’s roof and all the lights were changed to LED panels. Frosted stickers were fixed on the glass panes of the main door as well. Towards end of year, it was noted that water was leaking into the centre and the membrane

had to be changed. Such works are planned to take place in 2022.

9. Marsa – all the lighting panels in Marsa were changed to LEDs. In addition, a new outdoor gate was installed adding more security in terms of access to the childcare centre.
10. Santa Venera – the centre was refurbished during its closure due to the pandemic. Unfortunately, right after the refurbishment was finished, water damage was noted in one of the beams. Following a visit by an architect, dangerous areas were closed off and discussions started with the landlords to schedule the works. Between August and October 2021, several beams were changed, others were re-enforced, and an old theatre stage was removed since it was disintegrating.
11. Qormi CC – as at end 2021, the childcare centre in Qormi was still closed due to the structural works in the school. However, this space is now being used as a store by the Foundation.
12. Qawra – after a number of meetings with the DQSE and discussions with the Foundation for Tomorrow Schools, the childcare centre in Qawra was moved from its old premises to the new primary school in the same locality. Movers were





engaged to transfer furniture and toys that were required from the old centre, and assistance was provided in the setting up of the new one. The centre was officially opened in August 2021, was equipped with an Automated External Defibrillator (used to help those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest), and branded with a new sign on its external gate and on its façade. Right after, works were carried out to remove the furniture from the old centre to hand over the premises back to the Housing Authority.

Apart from interventions in the existing centres, the Corporate Services Unit also assisted to finalise works within the new centres at M'Scala and St Julian's. As at year's end, the DQSE had visited both centres and a list of recommendations was put forward for the Foundation to implement. Discussions were underway with the Foundation for Tomorrow Schools to finalise all the works required, and assistance was also given by the Foundation's handyman.

Routine servicing in all the centres, such as AC servicing, fire extinguisher servicing, electrical appliances testing, legionella

testing, and pest control was carried out. Towards the end of the year, a Health and Safety Officer was also engaged to carry out a risk assessment in all centres. Moreover, an architect was engaged to liaise with the Planning Authority to get the necessary permits to continue installing signs across the remaining childcare centres.

- **Klabb 3-16/Skolasajf Centres**

General maintenance interventions were done in both Klabb 3-16 and Skolasajf centres. In June 2021, the centres at MCAST (San Guzepp) and Junior College (Maria Bambina), which were used to provide a service to Church school students who needed home schooling during the Covid pandemic, were closed. This decision was taken since the situation in schools in relation to COVID-19 was improving and the demand for such services was very low. Thus, the necessary arrangements were done by the Corporate Services Unit to remove the Foundation's resources from both centres and keys were given back to MCAST and Junior College respectively.

In September 2021, a new Klabb 3-16 centre was opened in Gharghur. Following a site visit, the necessary resources and equipment were acquired.

In addition, the Skolasajf service for the 5 Resource Centres was extended for a further two weeks after the end of Skolasajf. The necessary resources were supplied to assist such centres and continue operating.

Procurement

The Procurement function is getting more important for the Foundation. Purchasing is getting larger and more complex, frequently requiring expert advice on what is the best way forward, both in terms of value as well as to adhere to the public procurement regulations.

Throughout the year 836 purchase orders were issued. Purchases which were considered important include: a series of corporate gifts to mark the Foundation's 20th anniversary, tabards for childcare educators reflecting the Foundation's new logo, the introduction of waste collection services at the Naxxar and San Gwann childcare centres, changing of all office chairs at Head Office with ergonomic ones, furniture protectors for all childcare centres, digital cameras for all Klabb 3-16 and childcare centres, and a scaffolding system to be used by the FES handyman. A van was also acquired through a direct order, since a tender was issued 4 times consecutively, each time proving to be unsuccessful. This was because either no bids were received, or the bids received were technically non-compliant. Another quote was issued to procure the services of care workers, to be able to extend the Skolasajf service offered in Resource Centres. Considering the urgency of such requirement, this was also

issued as a direct order which was approved by the Ministry for Finance.

Apart from the minor items for which the regulatory 3 quotes were requested and received, as explained above, the list below explains the tenders/requests for quotations which were dealt with throughout 2021:

• Call for Quotations

1. RFQ/FES/001/2021 - Provision of Architectural Consultancy Services by a Warranted Perit
2. RFQ/FES/003/2021 - Provision of Legal Services
- RFQ/FES/004/2021 - Drafting of an Insurance Tender for the Foundation for Educational Services
3. RFQ/FES/005/2021 - General Hand & Messenger
4. RFQ/FES/006/2021 - Medical Services
5. RFQ/FES/007/2021 - Purchase of Brand New Low Emissions Crew Cab Van
6. RFQ/FES/008/2021 - Part-Time Administration Assistant
7. RFQ/FES/009/2021 - General Hand & Messenger
8. RFQ/FES/010/2021 - Provision of Architectural Consultancy Services by a Warranted Perit
- RFQ/FES/012/2021 - Part-Time Administration Assistant
9. Requests for Quotations on the ePPS
10. CFQ/FES/002/2021 - Leasing of Two (2) Brand New Energy Efficient Multifunction Printers for the Foundation for Educational Services

• Tenders on the ePPS

1. CT2223/2021 – Tender for the Provision of Childcare Educators for the Foundation for Educational Services for a Period of 24 Months

2. CT243/2020 – Framework Contract for the Supply of Stationery and Recycled Office Paper for the Foundation for Educational Services for 36 Months
3. MFED/MPU/FES/001/2021 – Tender for The Supply of One (1) New Low Emissions Crew Cab Van for the Foundation for Educational Services SPD1/2021/170 - Leasing of Thirteen (13) Brand New Energy Efficient A3 Colour Laser Multifunction Printers for the Foundation for Educational Services
4. SPD1/2021/11 – Tender for the Provision of Management and Support Services on the Services Portal and the Recruitment Portal of the Foundation for Educational Services for 60 Months
5. SPD1/2021/187 - Re-Issue - Tender for the Provision of Management and Support Services on the Services Portal and the Recruitment Portal of the Foundation for Educational Services for 60 Months

Tenders that are still works in progress are:

- CT2223/2021 – Tender for the Provision of Childcare Educators for the Foundation for Educational Services for a Period of 24 Months – as at end of year, this tender was in the appeals period.
- SPD1/2021/170 - Leasing of Thirteen (13) Brand New Energy Efficient A3 Colour Laser Multifunction Printers for the Foundation for Educational Services – as at end of year, this tender was at evaluation stage.
- SPD1/2021/187 - Re-Issue - Tender for the Provision of Management and Support Services on the Services Portal and the Recruitment Portal of the Foundation for Educational Services for 60 Months – as at end of year, this tender was at publication stage.
- A tender for the provision of insurance services is currently being drafted.

- A tender for the provision of care workers is currently being drafted.

IT

2021 was the first full year whereby the Foundation had its own Programme Coordinator Technical Support. All Centre Coordinators were encouraged to channel their queries related to IT through to this Programme Coordinator. Where possible, first hand assistance was provided to resolve the issue. However, there were also instances whereby MFED and MITA's assistance was required due to technical restrictions and permissions.

Procurement of IT related equipment was done by the Programme Coordinator Technical Support, and where tenders were involved, assistance was provided during evaluation. Such purchases included walkie talkies for Klabb 3-16 centres to be used for centre-wide communication; cameras for all Klabb 3-16 and childcare centres following discussions with the Office of the Commissioner for Data Protection; laptops for Playworkers with Extra Responsibilities; dash-cams and trackers for the FES owned vehicles; and a laptop suitable for graphic design for the Marketing Unit, amongst others.

All leased photocopiers were being monitored in terms of usage mileage and technical functionality, both in the centres and at Head Office. The supplier was contacted whenever troubleshooting was required, or else new users had to be added to the system. Where Skolasajf was concerned, communication was carried out with both the supplier and the schools in question, to provide the necessary codes to be used during Skolasajf. These codes were helpful to keep track of the machine's usage rate by Skolasajf staff, and schools could

be reimbursed according to the usage per code. There were also situations where printers within Klabb 3-16 centres had to be replaced where these were beyond repair.

In 2021, the FES website was subject to an audit by the Malta Communications Authority. A meeting was held whereby the changes required were discussed. All the changes that could be done internally were finalised, however some of the updates needed to be made by MITA. Regular website updating was always carried out, and the creation of new accounts/deletion of old accounts was done on a regular basis.

Towards the end of 2021, an exercise was being made to determine which childcare centre has a CCTV camera, its retention period, and identification of supplier. The reason behind this exercise is to create a CCTV Policy which is fully compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations later on in 2022.

In 2021, the staff in the Corporate Unit started attending regular Technology Briefings held by MITA. The scope of these meetings is to keep the staff updated with changing MITA policies and any new projects in the pipeline.

Administration

In May 2021, the Coordinator Administration was moved from Finance Unit of the department, to the Corporate Services Unit. This role has changed slightly from what it used to be in the previous year. With the introduction of the Programme Coordinator Technical Support, the Coordinator Administration is no longer responsible for technical related duties, thus having more time to assist in basic administration.

All day-to-day maintenance tasks started to be channelled through the Coordinator Administration. Together with the Manager Corporate Services, the jobs were scheduled according to urgency and priority. Distribution of work between the handyman and driver also became easier with the Foundation's acquisition of a second vehicle.

In 2021, the Foundation started using a new tender for stationery. This involved reviewing all the orders received from centres, sending them to the supplier, and ensuring that delivery is made. Invoices were then checked with the actual order made and passed on for payment. This task is quite a lengthy one for Skolasajf, since the total number of centres increases drastically, and orders are larger.

With regards to cleaning, issues of non-performance related to cleaners continued being reported to the Ministry and to the contractor. Cleaning material was procured at Head Office level and distribution took place from the FES main storage area directly to all the Skolasajf centres.

The Coordinator Administration and Administration Assistant also worked together to ensure that all inventories were updated. With regards to Klabb 3-16, this exercise had to be postponed to 2022 since in December the centres were closed because of the pandemic.

Data Protection

In the role of Data Protection Officer, the Manager Corporate Services continued to address queries related to data protection. Following feedback received from staff, the Data Protection and the Retention Policy were being updated on a regular basis to ensure that all aspects related to the FES areas of work were being covered.

Finance Department

FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES Annual Report and Financial Statements - 31 December 2021

Statement of comprehensive income

	Year ended 31 December	
	2021 €	2020 €
Revenue	10,663,988	11,520,969
Operational expenses	(10,008,718)	(8,747,693)
Surplus from operations	655,270	2,773,276
Administrative expenses	(1,363,056)	(1,236,255)
Other income	-	-
Finance costs	(6,398)	(5,844)
(Deficit) / Surplus before tax	(714,184)	1,531,177
Tax expense	-	-
(Deficit) / Surplus for the year – total comprehensive income	(714,184)	1,531,177

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Schedule I

Detailed statement of comprehensive income

For the financial year ended 31 December 2021

	Schedule	2021 €	2020 €
Government subvention		1,175,000	1,802,755
Surplus/(Deficit) from operations	III	(519,730)	970,521
Total operating surplus		655,270	2,773,276
Administrative expenses	II	(1,363,056)	(1,236,255)
Finance expense		(6,398)	(5,844)
Surplus for the year		(714,184)	1,531,177

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Schedule II

Detailed statement of comprehensive income

For the financial year ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
	€	€
Administrative expenses		
Accountancy fees	68	25,562
Advertising and recruitment fees	7,951	1,400
Audit fee	3,776	3,776
Bank and other charges	16,981	9,816
Cleaning	19,882	10,696
Consumables	4,969	19,549
Depreciation charge	79,494	69,334
Depreciation charge of right-of-use asset	107,122	79,296
Honoraria	26,250	25,703
Educational material	52	1,049
Fines and penalties	5,008	-
Insurances	14,079	11,750
Licenses and fees	12,187	1,302
Motor vehicle expenses	128	6,743
Office expenses	39,403	16,633
Professional services	16,281	11,330
Repair and maintenance	1,577	1,418
Staff development	184	1,289
Subcontracted workers	19,942	20,207
Sundry expenses	159	8,107
Telephones	12,097	8,655
Transportation costs	1,255	12,375
Donations and sponsorships	-	7,313
Wages and salaries	974,211	882,252
Marketing expense	-	700
	1,363,056	1,236,255

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Schedule III

Detailed statement of comprehensive income (operational segments)

For the financial year ended 31 December 2021

	Child care	Skola sajf	Klabb 3-16	Church schools	Other	Total
	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021
	€	€	€	€	€	€
Income from clients	116,583	539,658	353,836	-	-	1,010,077
Subsidy from government	1,169,765	-	-	-	-	1,169,765
Total revenues from operations	1,286,347	539,658	353,836	-	-	2,179,842
Reimbursements:						
Government	2,100,000	2,634,571	2,463,218	-	109,952	7,307,741
EU funding	-	-	-	-	1,404	1,404
Total reimbursements	2,100,000	2,634,571	2,463,218	-	111,356	7,309,145
Total inflows	3,386,347	3,174,229	2,817,054	-	111,356	9,488,987
Expenditure:						
Operational expenses	(404,691)	(646,651)	(214,773)	(28,954)	(49,528)	(1,344,597)
Wages	(2,035,447)	(3,558,295)	(2,969,238)	(-)	(101,140)	(8,664,120)
Total outflows	(2,440,138)	(4,204,946)	(3,184,011)	(28,954)	(150,668)	(10,008,717)
Net surplus/(deficit)	946,209	(1,030,717)	(366,957)	(28,954)	(39,312)	(519,730)



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