

Home School Books – 09 February 2018.

Home School Book – Nursery

Dear Parents,

Most of the children have returned after last week's virus epidemic, although we still have a few coughs and colds hanging on in there. Thank you to everyone for being sensible and keeping to the school guidelines for time spent away from school for illness.

Circle time discussion this week was combined with our literacy sessions; we talked about and looked at our name, particularly the first letter of our name. We then discussed the difference between a letter sound and the name of the letter.

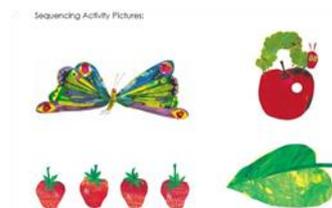
If you look opposite, you will see what was then transferred to paper. Each child had to pick out their own name from other names that began with the same letter. Name recognition is something we work on quite a lot in nursery over the year. Many children cannot recognise their own name in a situation where two or three names have the same initial letter at the beginning. For example, Sam & Sai, start with the same letter name and sound.

Each child then copied over the letters of their name using tracing paper and a name card. You can see how their pencil hold is coming along by how they managed to trace each letter. Again we do practise name writing throughout each nursery term.

We have asked everyone to write their name free hand in the home school book. Try and encourage your child to do this alone, do not do it for them, so we can compare this to the writing samples they have already done in school. It doesn't matter how they are forming their letters some children are still at the emergent writing stage or scribble stage, which is quite normal in the beginning, as is writing in capital letters. Next term we will focus on writing our name in lower case letters.

Writing on paper is only the end result of working with many other practical activities to enhance fine manipulative skills. All of the children are given opportunities to get those fingers moving with dexterity by using playdough, sand, flour, small beads and objects, tweezer movements and exercising our fingers to keep them moving!

In our maths sessions this week, the children did a simple repeating pattern activity by using the 'very hungry caterpillar' as a template. During group discussion the teacher demonstrated how to make different patterns using the magnetic balls, then each child had a turn at making their own pattern. This was then transferred onto paper and became our hungry caterpillar maths.



Despite the cold weather, we have managed to get outside most days for some much needed gross motor play; we have been learning how to play 'tag' a chasing and catching game. However the rules were somewhat changed as the game evolved, but we had great fun and kept warm at the same time!

Remember school is closed next week for the carnival holiday, so it is a great excuse to dress up and dance the days away!

Our talk topic for you all to mull over during the break is; what did the hungry caterpillar eat? And what happened to him afterwards?

Have a great break and see you all on the 19th February.

Thank you

Alison Davies, Inés van Wassenhove

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Please click [here](#) for our Nursery webpage

Home School Book – Reception

Dear Parents,

It has been a pleasing week in Reception having welcomed back most of the children who have previously been off sick. In Reception this week we have finished our farming topic by looking at the life of a farmer and all the jobs they have to do throughout the day. The children completed a magic milk science experiment watching the reaction between soap and milk.



In phonics we have learnt the digraph /ay/ as in play. The children have continued to revise the digraphs /sh/, /ch/, /th/, /ow/, /nk/ and /ng/ alongside the tricky word 'the'. They are showing increasing awareness of these as they look at stories together and spot them on the displays around the school.

In maths we have started to look at number bonds to ten. The children have learnt that number bonds are pairs of numbers that when added together make the total of ten. They have worked hard this week memorising the number pairs and can more or less state these pairs from memory.

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we go on singing animal songs to learn as many animal names as we possibly can. We have worked very hard on our green mouse books and sang all the animal songs that we know.

We would like to remind you that children are not allowed to bring in any toys from home. Please make sure that your child is not bringing anything in, otherwise it will be confiscated immediately from the child and returned to you at the end of the day.

As our next topic is all about different materials the Talk Topic for Monday 19th February will be discussing the question 'why do we need different clothes for different weather?'

We wish you a lovely break,

Naomi Irakoze and Patrick Tranter

Naomi Irakoze and Patrick Tranter

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Please click [here](#) for our Reception webpage

Home School Book – Year 1

Dear Parents,

Wow it's been so cold and wintery this week! However February is here and that means it's time for celebration again as it's the Chinese New Year next week in the holidays. We made our own dragon masks to celebrate the occasion and practised a dragon dance. I'd also like to take this opportunity to introduce Mrs Fiona King, who is doing her final teaching practice in year 1 as a trainee teacher.

Having worked already in the Junior department, she will now be working with me to teach some of the children's lessons starting this week and finishing just before the Easter holidays.



In literacy this week we revised all of the phase 3 sounds from letters and sounds. After the half term break we will be moving on to phase 4, the consonant blends. We will be looking at words with initial consonant blends such as 'crab', final blends such as 'hand' and triple blends such as 'crunch.' We also revisited the story of 'The Three Billy Goat's Gruff.' We discussed the character of the troll and we made wanted posters. The children used some interesting words to describe the troll such as big, mean, angry etc. In maths we have learned the pairs of numbers that make 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. We used these facts to solve addition and subtraction problems. We also looked at addition and subtraction stories e.g. 'there were 5 aliens in the spaceship and three more came, how many are there now?' The new maths homework game is 'Bop a bird.'

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we are still singing songs to learn the parts of the body and we are doing quite well. We also exercised saying "J'ai mal à la tête; j'ai mal au ventre; j'ai mal aux dents" etc. ... We also learnt to say "j'aime" and "je n'aime pas" and "je préfère".

In art this week we revisited the work of Kandinsky and we made our own paintings of buildings in his bold and colourful style. These can be seen on our big colourful topic display board in class. We also talked a bit about the carnival tradition in Belgium and the children made some lovely carnival masks to celebrate with colourful paper, sequins and feathers.

We hope you have a lovely half term break,

Kind regards

Camilla Rutayisire and Ivana Julaton

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Please click [here](#) for our Year 1 webpage

Home School Book – Year 2

Dear Parents,

The weather has been rather chilly all week but we have handled it well.

In Literacy we focused on grammar and, in particular, the present and past tense. We worked in our skills builder workbooks and completed exercises relating to this focus. Our homework this week relates to our class work and we will also revise punctuation with another exercise. In phonics we have been looking at alternative pronunciations of vowels and some consonants. We combined our Computing with literacy and wrote explanation texts for our QR codes.

In Numeracy we revised time and, in particular, the quarter hours. We did this using both analogue and digital clocks. We also touched on rounding to the nearest 10. We learned that 5 is the mid-way between 0 and 10 and the point where we round up. After this we did our half term tests to show how much we have learned and retained.

In Science we continued looking at habitats and looked at polar habitats in particular. We discovered that the poles have days of total darkness and light. We also discovered that the area within the Arctic and Antarctic circles is called the tundra and the reason no trees grow is that the ground is permanently frozen. We looked at the animals that live in this inhospitable habitat and noted how they were suited to it. Their fur is white and they have large layers of fat or blubber to keep them warm. <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/nature/habitats/polar/#emperor-penguin-chicks.jpg>



In Art we worked on our habitat posters that we had started with Mrs Prescott last week. These are almost finished now. We also made a Valentine's Day card which I am pleased to say turned out really well.

In PE we finally managed to go outside where we played a new class game. This team game includes hopping from hoop to hoop and eliminating opponents by a simple game of rock, paper, scissors. The girls won and we all had a super duper time. This is one to repeat.

In Computing we transformed our information texts into QR codes. These have been printed out and are awaiting the final touches before being put up around the school.

We will then invite the other classes to scan them. I am so pleased to see that the children fully understand what a QR code is, how to generate one and, most importantly, how to read one.

In French with Mrs Halvorsen, we worked on “Mon épicerie” (the food shop) where we could draw, colour and describe everything we buy and have in a food shop. We also learned how to use “Il y a” (there is/ there are) and we reviewed, je mange and je bois (I eat and drink).

The talk topic this week is: How are penguins and seals suited to life on earth and in the water?

Enjoy your half term break and stay safe and warm.

Valeria Vetter

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Please click [here](#) for our Year 2 webpage

Home School Book – Year 3

Dear Parents,

This has been a week of journeys and exploration. We set off on Tuesday to find out all about potatoes at the Brussels Mill and Food Museum in the restored windmill in Evere. It was a bitterly cold morning, so we took the tram and then walked to the museum and back – it’s good to see that energy levels are returning and that road awareness is increasing; we crossed major roads and walked along pavements safely, watching out for traffic, obstacles and other pedestrians. The visit and workshop were in French, but the children impressed the guide with their extensive knowledge of potatoes, and impressed me with the effort they all made to follow the explanations and to participate, in French! We had a great time making potato waffles, and thoroughly enjoyed eating them, hot off the griddle.



In maths we worked on measuring shapes and perimeters, and started to look at angles – identifying right angles and using a protractor to measure acute angles. We also completed the Abacus mid-term maths tests, generally with good results, although there are still far too many silly mistakes due to not reading the instructions carefully.

In Literacy, we finished our dragon descriptions and illustrated our ideas using either pencil crayons or paint. We decided to draw the dragons in detail first, and then add colour. The results are fantastic – we managed to mix colours, to create different shade effects, and to paint tiny details very precisely by using fine brushes. The dragons will be winging their way across the display board on their journey to the

mountains. In the meantime, the dragon egg has acquired a nest and is being guarded by a baby lizard!

In French with Mrs Halvorsen, we visited le Moulin d'Evere (the Mill) and got to see the expo on 'la pomme de terre (the potato). We learned so much about this crop and everything related to it. We also got to set up our own 'épicerie' (food shop) in a joint class with Madame Scharf. We learned how to use l'article partitif (the partitives) du, de la, des.. to express 'some and any'. We talked about what type of food you can sell and buy à l'épicerie and we role played a fun scene where they had to use 'je voudrais du/de la. (I would like some) s'il vous plait.

In preparation for Book Week next term, we started reading 'Jack Fortune', a thrilling adventure story set during the late 18th century, in which a boy and his uncle set sail for India in search of a hidden valley in the Himalayas, and a rare species of plant. We are really lucky to have the author, Sue Purkiss, visiting us during Book Week, so we will be able to ask her questions not only about this particular book, but also about the writing process itself. The story gives us the opportunity to imagine how it must have felt to be an explorer at that time, and how exciting (and dangerous) the journeys were.



Our talk topic is: Imagine you were Jack Fortune arriving in Brussels. How would you describe the city?

Enjoy getting out and about next week, or staying at home and reading some good books!

Jane Still and Ena Tolentino

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Please click [here](#) for our Year 3 webpage

Home School Book – Year 4

Dear Parents,

This week was a bit busy. Year 4/5/6 went to the potato exhibition in the mill of Evere (it's the last mill in Brussels!). We went into 2 groups: the first group was called Baked Potato, the second one was called Chips. The 'Baked Potatoes' cooked in pairs in the workshop kitchen but Arsalan was left to work with Mr Stedman. The Chips went on the tour and when the Baked Potatoes group finally finished, the Chips group went to bake and the baked potatoes did their tour - it was fun! Then, when all the groups finished, we ate our delicious potato chocolate tarts.



When we got out, we went to a park and to eat our lunch. Mrs. Tranter let us play in the park. I hope your child saved you parents a potato chocolate tart for you!

<http://www.bisb.org/project/trip-to-the-food-museum-patate-exhibition-at-the-mill/>

On Thursday, the Year 4 learnt about fitness and muscles. After some theory, we did an experiment about how muscles work and the excitement grew. We spread out in 3 groups to build a working arm model. Two of the groups finally finished but the other group pulled a few muscles and experienced tendonitis (rubber bands and paper clips not conforming to the jobs given them).

<http://www.bisb.org/project/y4-science-bicep-tricep-arm-muscle-model/>

In Numeracy, we found equivalent fractions and simplified while in Literacy the children learnt who Princess Diana was. Too young to know too much, the Year 4's were absorbed by the story of the landmine lady and a death in a tunnel. Work involved trawling the internet to find out everything about her.

Topic took an artistic turn as we also made charcoal or chalk drawings of sporting statues. The children love being creative and this activity blew the cobwebs and perhaps the winter away.

Finally, we sat our spring reading test papers. The results were a 'mixed bag' but one thing was very much evident. On the whole, those who change their readers more regularly (and not just since January), fared better. Swarnima is a case in point. She increased her grade by 20%. Is it because she is a good student? They are all good students but we are talking about small margins here. She has changed and read her book pretty much daily since September and she, and others like her, performed well. Children who read succeed.

And that was our week.

This newsletter was co-written by Arsalan with a dash of Tala.

Best wishes

Tim Stedman and Ena Tolentino

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Please click [here](#) for our Year 4 webpage

Home School Book – Year 5 / 6

Dear Parents,

This has been another extremely busy week to finish off this half-term. Finally, on Thursday, after two weeks of sickness, everyone has returned. This unavoidable disruption has affected our lesson schedule. Delayed dictation and spelling tests took place on Thursday and most of the results were very encouraging. The students have proved to themselves that hard work is rewarding! We have discussed personal responsibility quite a lot during the past weeks, and it would be wonderful if, after half-term, we aimed for a 100% success rate in: punctuality, wearing correct uniform, handing homework in on time, preparing for dictations and spelling tests, completing comprehension questions with full answers (using evidence from the text) and remembering to bring a recorder or ukulele for music lessons, and a red pen!

The Year 5&6 gadget designers are putting the final touches to their blueprints for a range of new gadgets for Alex Rider. They have also studied explanation texts and technical language, so that the user understands immediately how to operate the item. We have also studied the binary number system and will be working on codebreaking in the near future.

With the LAMDA examinations over by Monday lunchtime, the students breathed a sigh of relief! I am sure that their hard-efforts will be rewarded when their results arrive in six-eight weeks.

We enjoyed another superb trip to the Mill; the potato-chocolate cakes were delicious. On our return, we decided to take advantage of the glorious sunshine, so we had a picnic lunch and a vigorous stroll through Parc Josephat.

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we went to visit the potato exhibition at the Mill in Evere, which was all in French but we were well prepared. We finished the week summarising the whole potato topic.

In French with Mrs Halvorsen, we learned so much about la pomme de terre (the potato) and everything related to it. We also got to set up our own 'épicerie' (food shop). We learned how to use l'article partitif (the partitives) du, de la, des .. to express 'some and any'. We talked about what type of food you can sell and buy à l'épicerie and we role played a fun scene where they had to use 'je voudrais du/de la (I would like some please) s'il vous plait.

With book week fast approaching, all of the children in the department are enjoying story time with Mrs Still, who is reading Jack Fortune by Sue Purkiss (Oskar's grandmother). Mrs Purkiss will be visiting us during book week, when the students will be able to buy signed copies of her book.



Wishing a relaxing and peaceful half-term holiday.

Best wishes,

Beverley Tranter and Ena Tolentino

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Please click [here](#) for our Year 6 webpage

English as an Additional Language

We have enjoyed a busy week in the EAL sessions.

The Junior EAL group spent some time reading different recipes for cooking potatoes, in preparation for the visit to the mill. We found the imperative verbs in the recipes, and learnt the vocabulary of cooking verbs. There is a very long list, including: peel, chop, grate, heat, fry, bake, garnish, sprinkle, decorate, and very many more. We grouped them as preparing



verbs, cooking verbs and serving verbs. Fortunately, everyone seems to like potatoes, and expressed great interest in the recipes.

The Year 1 and 2 EAL group had a very interesting discussion about what it would be like to live on a small island (like Katie Morag in the story books that Year 2 have been reading). We made a chart showing good things and bad things about living on Katie Morag's island (which is the real Scottish island of Struay). Notable bad things included the lack of cinemas and buses, but we thought the sheep, seals and birds would help make it a good place to live. We also spent a session talking and writing about the good things we see in each other.

The Reception EAL group this week enjoyed watching a short film about animals on a farm, predicting what would happen next in the story (with phrases such as "I think he will ask for help", "I think they will run away"), and practising the vocabulary of the farm topic. The children have done well to learn the words relating to this topic, and we are now working on putting the words into sentences.

I wish you all a very happy holiday, and look forward to seeing the children again after the half term break.

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