

Home School Books – 07 December 2018.

Home School Book – Nursery

Dear Parents

Christmas fever has officially started in nursery! The children are very excited by all of the dazzle and shine of the Christmas activities, especially our wonderful winter wonderland wall and Santa Claus's fire place with a real fire!

We all have our own traditions and festivals and some of us celebrate all or none of them but in nursery we try and encompass a taste of the ones our children are familiar with in some small way. We had our wonderful Diwali celebrations in November with all of the magnificent sights and tastes that were captured during the array of activities the children were involved in inside and outside of school.



It's now time for Christmas around the world, looking at the similarities and celebrating the amazing diversity of how many cultures around the globe take part in the spirit of the season.

We hope you enjoy this experience with your children over the next few weeks, starting with the visit from St Nicholas, who you can see opposite with your children. He comes to visit all of the good children on Saint Nicholas day in Belgium, which is the 6th December and leaves gifts in the specially prepared shoes, everyone puts out the night before. The children were very excited to see him in school and everyone was brave enough to go to him and collect their gift, some children even high fived the Saint!

We also managed to fit in the last of our topic work on 'people who help us' and this week, was all about 'fire officers' the children talked about the role of a fire officer and the fact that girls and boys can be in the fire service. Everyone then had an opportunity to role play with the fire helmets and the fire station. Ask your little one what they can remember about the discussions and listen to specific words in English they have acquired, pertaining to the topic.

As our Christmas show approaches, the children are singing their little hearts out during our music sessions and we are starting to sound quite tuneful! We have also started to make our amazing costumes and other Xmas activities. So apologies in advance for all of the paint, glue and glitter that manages to find its way home sticking to hair, hands, face and clothes, it all washes out well so don't worry!

To complement our costumes on the day of the show, could you please put your child in black or white leggings or black or white tights but NOT jeans on the morning of 17th December. You can put them on underneath their uniform jogging bottoms and then we will just remove those before the show. Everything else will be provided by us.

Last but not least, please remember nursery starts at 09.00 which means everyone should be in school at least 5minutes before this time. We are still experiencing a lot

of children coming in after this time and this causes a big disruption to the nursery children and teachers who are already in the throes of circle time. Plus they are missing one of the most important aspects of the morning, so please be thoughtful and respect the correct start time for the benefit of your child and others.

Our talk topic for discussion next week is, ‘who is Santa Claus and what does he wear?’

Until then, enjoy your weekend and if you have time, go out and about and discover one of the lovely Christmas markets that are around in Brussels at the moment.

Thank you

Alison Davies and Inés van Wassenhove

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

Home School Book – Reception

Dear Parents,

The Reception Christmas show will be held next Tuesday, on the 11th of December at 11.30 in the infant department. We hope to see you all there! You are welcome to take your child home with you after the show if that is more convenient for you. They will not be marked absent in the register if they go home early that day. We would also like to remind you that all the children must wear white tights or leggings as part of their costume. Therefore, your child will have to bring their own white tights or leggings, and it would be most convenient for us if they are already wearing their tights/leggings under their trousers!

We would also like to remind you that every morning the class starts at 09.00. This means that by 09.00 at the latest all the children should already be sitting on the carpet in the classroom. Unfortunately, quite a few children are coming to school after 09.00, which means that they miss the beginning of their class and that they are disrupting the class when they arrive late. We would therefore like to ask you to drop your child off no later than 8.55.



In phonics this week we learned the new sound /ch/. We practised writing the sound and we managed to think of lots of words that start with /ch/. In Maths we continued to learn about money and the children are still very eager to play in the shop in the classroom corner.

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we have met Saint-Nicolas; we sang him our song and he gave us “des biscuits et des bonbons” We were very impressed when he spoke to us but we could nevertheless answer all his questions.

Mostly we have been preparing for Christmas, for the Christmas show, and for Saint Nicolas’s visit. The children coloured a shoe for Saint Nicolas’s visit and they also drew beautiful pictures of him! And now we are in the process of making Christmas decorations for our lovely classroom.

Our talk topic for the weekend is: What will I be doing during the Christmas holidays? Please remember to have a discussion about this with your child this weekend, and as always, it's fine to have the conversation in your mother tongue!

Finally, Stars of the Week go to: Akira, for doing an excellent job in learning the ch diagraph and for really good drawing and colouring! And Vaibhav, for being so good at practicing his writing and for always being such a kind and caring friend!

We hope you have a wonderful weekend!

Elín Hafstein and Ivana Julaton

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

Home School Book – Year 1

Dear Parents,

Highlight of the week was definitely our trip to the Flagey Cultural Centre on Wednesday, to see and hear the Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra play. They played several pieces, including an Arabian tale about an evil genius, the story of Dukas, a sorcerer, and his apprentice, and a rousing version of the Star Wars theme. The first two were visually interpreted by dancers and magicians, and the Star Wars theme had all the children waving imaginary light-sabres! All in all, it was a successful event - very well adapted for the benefit of young children. On a personal note, I was also very pleased with the children's behaviour throughout the morning.

Meanwhile, back at the coal face, this week's 'sounds of the week' were /air/ as in 'chair' and /er/ as in 'term'. The latter sound has 'long' and 'short' versions, depending on where in a word it appears: the long /er/ is heard in 'mermaid' or 'perfect', whereas the short /er/ is found at the end of many words, such as 'ladder', 'flower' etc. Some children find it quite difficult to distinguish the /air/ sound from the /er/ sound, so we practised saying, reading and writing both sounds simultaneously - you can see your child's work in this week's Home School Book.

Our Maths focus this week has been on money and coins. We looked carefully at the different coin denominations, both in Euros (for local knowledge and use) and in Pounds (used in our workbooks and assessment papers), and learnt that although the coin sizes and colours are different, the important things - the numbers - are the same on both sets of coins. The children practised making small amounts of money using multiple coin values, and learnt that there are several ways to make, for example, 9c ($9 \times 1c$, $5c + 2c + 2c$, $2c + 2c + 2c + 2c + 1c$ and so on). We went on to select the correct coins to use when 'buying' items (e.g. which two coins do we need to buy a 12c toy?), and then practised making amounts using



the fewest coins possible, which is important when the amounts of money become larger - it is much quicker to make 16c with a 10c, 5c & 1c coins than it is using only 1c and 2c coins.

Preparations for our Christmas Show continue apace - we have had a number of practices, and the children are becoming very good at saying their lines at the right time, and in many cases with clarity and enthusiasm! The soundtrack is finished, costumes are nearly complete, and we just have the re-built sleigh to re-paint!

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we met with Saint-Nicolas, we sang him our song and he gave us "des biscuits et des bonbons" We were very impressed when he spoke to us but we could nevertheless answer all his questions and he was delighted.

Talk Topic for next week will be "What do you like best about our Christmas Show?" Maths homework now takes a break until after Christmas - thank you to all those who have helped their children complete all their homework. I hope they told you they were rewarded in front of the class for having done every week's homework!

Enjoy a weekend of Christmas build-up!

Patrick Tranter and Smita Bandaru

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

Home School Book – Year 2

Dear Parents,

This has been a very creative week with preparations for the play, designs for the new Winter display on the stairs, an Arctic wonderland scene in the classroom, and most importantly – lots of music! We had our first outing to the iconic Flagey concert hall, sharing a coach with Year 1. This was an adventure in itself, with excited, non-stop commentary on everything that can possibly be seen in Brussels first thing on a busy weekday morning (including lots of Christmas trees and Santas climbing out of windows!)



Arriving in the building and walking into the concert hall with a full orchestra tuning up and getting ready to play was very impressive – the sounds, the amazing array of instruments from a golden harp to a grand piano and huge double basses, to the presenters dressed up as witches with fairy lights around their hats – it was hard to know which way to look.

The concert was ideally suited to the age of the children and they joined in enthusiastically, conducting energetically and jumping up and down to watch the dancer as he raced around the auditorium. We had worked in class on the main piece "The Sorcerer's Apprentice", and it was good to see how well the children concentrated as they recognized the music and watched how the dancers told the story in movement. We had discussed how music changes the atmosphere, adding to the



excitement and making the story scary, by watching the original Disney film clips, both with and without music, and discovering that it wasn't at all scary without the music. Hearing it played by such an enormous orchestra was really exciting and it was fun to participate – casting spells, waving our light sabres to the Star Wars music, and copying various clapping routines to accompany the orchestra.

I'm not sure whether it was the inspirational music that had an effect, but our rehearsal today was fantastic – the singing was bright and in tune and the energy levels were definitely high. Nearly everyone knows the words for all the songs and can join in with the actions at the right moment. Mr Tranter has worked wonders on Santa's sleigh and the scenery is taking shape as the paint goes on – a messy business, but great fun. The programmes are complete, the costumes are nearly there with robins and reindeer popping up everywhere, so with one week to go we should be ready in time.

Christmas arrived in the classroom with an arctic landscape lit up and ready for decorations. Symmetrical Christmas tree silhouettes look striking against the snow, and, having found out about the Aurora Borealis, we are trying to decide how best to portray the Northern Lights. We also had fun painting pictures of ourselves for the new Winter display. We experimented with mixing colours for our clothes and faces and then watched a video on how to draw faces. More symmetry and more measuring as we worked out where to put eyes, noses, mouths and other features.

Other maths included estimating and measuring classroom objects, using place value cards to work out addition and subtraction challenges, and making different amounts of money with a range of coins. In literacy we read several Christmas stories, did a special 'Santa's setback' word search based on essential Year 2 spelling words, and talked a lot about everything we have done this week. Our animated Advent calendar is great fun every morning, providing lots of games and challenges to play in every spare minute, so the days are certainly busy.

In French with Mrs Halvorsen, we had a short week, due to the Flagey outing. We reviewed 'les jours de la semaine, les numéros, and les couleurs' (days of the week, numbers and the colours), we also went over some 'St Nicolas' vocabulary related to food and clothing. We colored and cut our 'St Nicolas Mitre', we sang and practiced our song for the Christmas show: Le Père Noël est enrhumé.

Our talk topic for the week is “If you were a musician, what instrument would you like to play, and why?”

Have a lovely weekend enjoying all the festivities and decorations around the city.

Jane Still and Ena Tolentino

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

Home School Book – Year 3

Dear Parents,

Venez, venez St Nicolas! The holiday season has well and truly started in year 3. Alongside rehearsing for our winter show and continuing to make props we also had a visit from St Nicolas on Thursday. It was great to practise our French and ask him lots of questions. We found out how old he is, what his favourite colour is and how he knows which children have been good! We started making Christmas cards in our art lesson. The children used their drawing and design skills to draw their own patterned stylish Christmas tree and then we practised writing a Christmas message to our families inside the card using our best cursive handwriting.



This week in literacy we finished reading Harry Miller's Run. It was a fantastic story and we enjoyed discussing the book afterwards. We talked about what happened in the story, what we learned about Harry Miller and whether we would recommend the book to our friends. We then wrote a book report on the story. We also started to discuss newspaper reports and talked about what a headline is, how newspaper reports are often structured in columns and written in chronological order with a summary paragraph at the beginning and end. We then read an example newspaper article and tried to identify these features in the text. In grammar we did an end of unit writing task about our favourite meal. The children tried to write in grammatically accurate sentences and use punctuation correctly. They also tried to describe their favourite meal in sufficient detail to be interesting to read, including conjunctions to make their sentences longer and using adjectives to add detail.

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we got to meet Saint-Nicolas, we talked to him and asked him all the questions we wanted. We sang for him and received "des biscuits et des bonbons". We gave him the letters we wrote and decorated for him and he was impressed with the way we could talk to him.

In French with Mrs Halvorsen we talked about the use of the 'article défini' (the definite article) and how it's used in gender and number following the noun it describes. We talked about St Nicolas and the vocabulary related to this Belgian tradition, we sang the beautiful song Grand St Nicolas and we finished writing and designing "Une lettre pour St Nicolas"(a letter for St Nicolas).

In maths we did our end of autumn term review. The children revised using the frog method and partitioning to solve addition and subtraction sums with two 2 digit numbers. We talked about showing how we worked out a problem by using written jottings. The children made a given amount of money using two different combinations of coins and tried to solve word problems involving addition and subtraction.

Our talk topic for next week is – 'What is a new year's resolution? Can you think of at least one new year's resolution that you'd like to achieve in 2019?'

Have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards

Camilla Rutayisire and Fiona King

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

Home School Book – Year 4

Dear Parents,

It was St.Nicholas /San Nicolaar/ Week, this week. It was the usual puzzle of ‘Does he come the night of the 5th or the 6th?’ but either way, we got to see and meet him on Thursday. The children had prepared thoroughly in French class for his arrival and in Year 4 they had made their all- important Shoes for placing under the Juniors Christmas Tree. (Apparently, tradition has it that they should be placed by the fireplace or a radiator but we don’t have the first and where’s the romance in the latter - right???)

Face to face the children listened, queued up to meet and asked him questions and they sang him his song. They impressed him with their spoken French and were all spellbound with fascination.

To keep our excited feet on the ground, we kept busy adding 4-digit numbers, dividing by 10 to produce decimals and learning various ways to solve a calculation instead of just cutting straight to ‘long form’.

We also set off in our quest to produce a compendium of fairy tales. Our budding Grimm Brother and Sisters, Hans Christian and Charles Perraults, have started producing what we hope will be a mighty, 18-tale talking book of stories. With 2 weeks left to do it, will it get published in time...?!?!

At the time of writing, I hope that we will have learnt about the Battle of Trafalgar in Topic but there’s a lot of wonderful things going on at present so the timetable can get reshuffled at times like this.

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we got to meet Saint-Nicolas, we talked to him and asked him all the questions we wanted. We sang for him and received “des biscuits et des bonbons”. We gave him the letters we wrote and decorated for him and he was impressed with the way we could talk to him.

In French with Mrs Halvorsen we talked about the use of the ‘article défini’ (the definite article) and how it’s used in gender and number following the noun it describes. We talked about St Nicolas and the vocabulary related to this Belgian tradition, we sang the beautiful song Grand St Nicolas and we finished writing and designing “Une lettre pour St Nicolas”(a letter for St Nicolas).

What we definitely did was play hockey, learning crucially how to use the reverse stick side. This is very tricky skill but helps the children to avoid constantly drifting left until they eventually run out of space and hit the wall (sounds funny but if they can’t manipulate the ball to the left,...)



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And that was our week.

Our Talk Topic for this week is: What is your character in the play like? Are they like you?

Best wishes

Tim Stedman and Fiona King

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

Home School Book – Year 5

Dear Parents,

Even the children can feel time passing quickly. We were just speaking about how we could illustrate time flying and time marching on. There are only 2 weeks left of this first term of the year.

In Numeracy we began the week by placing decimals on a numberline and then ordering them. We have done our second maths test of the year and the results are pleasing and positive we have also corrected our tests and in this way we can hopefully learn from our mistakes.

In Literacy we began a project which you will already be aware of. We spoke about complimenting people and then began a project of compliment gifts. This involved us choosing 6 random classmates and then preparing their ‘presents’. This was done by colouring and cutting out the presents before writing our compliments inside. We then posted these into our trays before sticking them onto a compliment sheet. The children took great care and effort in this project and it was really heartening to see all the smiles and appreciation. We continue with our words of the day which, this week, began with k. We learnt about words such as kindle and knowingly. The class do not let me forget about this daily activity.

Tuesday, being international conservation and Cheetah day, saw us watching a video about the cheetah and discussing their endangered status. We then widened this discussion to talk about other animals on the endangered list such as elephant, rhino, gorilla and the tigers. We also watched a bit of a live safari where we saw elephants and wild dogs which are both endangered as well as other interesting animals.



Preparations for our winter play are in full swing. I am especially proud of how we, as a class, are comfortable in our knowledge of our lines and song words.

We got to do some more dancemat typing with Mrs King this week and the children really love this activity. It is teaching them how to type carefully and to build up speed. There was also coding time where the children took advantage of the hour of code activities.

We had a visit from St Nicolas on Thursday. Or shoes had been made and were waiting for him to fill with goodies. Being very small he managed to fit in a clementine and then gave us each a packet of biscuits and other goodies.

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we got to meet Saint-Nicolas, we talked to him and asked him all the questions we wanted. We sang for him and received “des biscuits et des bonbons”. We had previously written him a personal letter. In grammar, we revised some “homonymes” and “les articles partitifs” as part of our “let’s go shopping” vocabulary topic. We also acted out shopping scenes.

In French with Mrs Halvorsen, we worked with different action verbs and we introduced the important verb ‘Aller’ in order to talk about ‘le futur proche’ (the near future). Since we’re getting ready for St Nicolas we started working on our Christmas project - “Une lettre pour St Nicolas” (a letter for St Nicolas) and we baked delicious ‘speculoos’.

Please don’t forget to return the permission slip for our Lapland adventure on the day after the show.

The talk topic for this week is: How could we help in the conservation of endangered animals?

Have a super weekend,

Best wishes,

Valeria Vetter and Ena Tolentino

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Please click [here](#) for our Year 5 webpage

Home School Book – Year 6

Dear Parents,

The festive season has arrived; the atmosphere in our entrance hall was magical on Monday morning and the delight and excitement on the children's faces, when they saw the Christmas tree, was heart-warming. The Christmas production is uppermost in our minds; we shall be rehearsing daily from now on. Thank you for sending in the costumes so promptly.

We are coming to the end of our various projects: Wonder, Shakespeare and Diamonds are Forever, which we have all enjoyed immensely. At the moment, we are revising for the Abacus maths test next week; preparing for the debate - ‘Are computers better than books’ and listening to any outstanding news reports and lessons from ‘Around the World in 80 Treasures’. The students are frantically sewing the seams of their diamond cushions; there are some very able needle-workers in our class.

This week in maths, we revisited adding, subtraction, multiplication and division of fractions. Also, we revised how to order, add and subtract negative numbers. It took time and concentration, but the students were thrilled with their 'top copy' essays about the Kohinoor. Being able to construct a balanced argument is a skill that the majority of students find difficult at secondary school, so our pupils have a head start!

In French with Mrs. Scharf, we got to meet Saint-Nicolas, we talked to him and asked him all the questions we wanted. We sang for him and received "des biscuits et des bonbons". We had previously written him a personal letter. In grammar, we revised some "homonymes" and "les articles partitifs" as part of our "let's go shopping" vocabulary topic. We also acted out shopping scenes.

In French with Mrs Halvorsen, we worked with different action verbs and we introduced the important verb 'Aller' in order to talk about 'le futur proche' (the near future). Since we're getting ready for St Nicolas we started working on our Christmas project - "Une lettre pour St Nicolas" (a letter for St Nicolas) and we baked delicious 'speculoos'.

We had a very important discussion and presentation about 'digital footprints'. I was impressed with the children's awareness about this important topic and their knowledge of the consequences of irresponsible behaviour online.



Tennis was great fun; we have some brilliant tennis players in Year 6; at times, the atmosphere was as intense as at Wimbledon!

Our Talk Topic for this week is 'Do I behave responsibly online?'

Still to come - The Christmas production, Adventures in Lapland, class parties - it's all action in Year 6!

Best wishes,

Beverley Tranter and Ena Tolentino

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

English as an Additional Language

Dear Parents,

In these last weeks of term, in the EAL small group sessions, we are practising seasonal vocabulary. We are also revising the grammar points and vocabulary that we have covered since September, and I am listening and looking out to hear and see the children using these language elements in their speaking and writing.

The Junior Department EAL group this week revised the essentials of correct word order in sentences, and using the correct tense. We also revised the use of prepositions. We read a non-fiction text on the subject of the festival of Christmas, learning the new vocabulary, and noticing the key features of the text, including headings, sub-headings and paragraphs.



The Year One and Two EAL group this week, in connection with their class maths work on money, talked about what we can buy with money, and looked at Euro and cent coins. Year One are talking about our school in their class, so we prepared for this by making up and writing simple sentences about our school. We spent some time talking about the visit of St Nicolas to school.

The Reception EAL group this week revisited the story Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see? (which we read in October) and played a simple picture game to practise phrases in the form : I think it is a blue horse etc. We also practised simple common words, and related them to the letter sounds covered in class. We had an interesting conversation about the visit of St. Nicolas.

I wish you a very happy weekend.

Kate Read

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