



The British International
School of Brussels

BISB Home School Letter: December 10th, 2021

EYFS Nursery

Dear Parents,

How lovely it was having more children return to Nursery this week, we didn't manage double figures just yet but almost! Once again thank you for keeping a good eye on those runny noses and coughs and making sure they have cleared up before sending your little one back.



The glamour and glitter of Christmas has well and truly started, so apologies if your little one is glowing in the dark with all of the sparkle and shine that is being sprinkled around at the moment! It is of course biodegradable glitter which is much friendlier for the ocean bed where most of the synthetic stuff ends up! And even at their tender young age the children are very aware of trying to keep the oceans clear of debris and rubbish, which can harm the creatures of the deep.

We went off track a little with the home school book this week and didn't stick to a Christmas theme but instead we did some number blocks. First of all we counted out the equivalent numbers with real blocks and tried to build them up in various ways, followed by watching an episode of number blocks, which related to counting and recognising numbers to ten. If you look in your little ones HSB you will see the printed version for them to count and colour in each number block character at home, We will take a look at each other's efforts on Monday and see who remembered to do their homework!

Everyone who has been present this week has continued to practise their Christmas show songs and are singing them brilliantly. Unfortunately Ms. diFine was not here this week, so they had to listen to Mrs Davies' dulcet tones! It will be an interesting show on Thursday! We will of course record them in all of their glorious and glitter friendly costumes and hats and hopefully you will also hear some fabulous singing!

Our show, as you are all aware, cannot have an audience now because of the new Covid rules but we will uploaded video clips to Edmodo for you to enjoy at your leisure, but please remember it's the trying that counts not the end result! Maybe our invite to perform at the Sydney Opera House might not come for another few years but the children will certainly have fun on the Nursery stage!

The children very much enjoyed experimenting with clay this week and have made some wonderful Xmas tree decorations and glitter beads to adorn the Nursery tree, although the creative part is indeed also the fun part, using a malleable material like clay is great for enhancing fine motor control and rolling small bits of clay in between thumb and forefinger



honeys in on using small pincer movements. This in turn leads to better control of tools such as pens, pencils and scissors.



Please remember that next week is our last one before the Christmas break and school finishes on Friday the 17th December. There will be no HSB folder from Nursery that day, but every child who makes it to the end of the week will bring home whatever Xmas creations they have managed to make. If you are leaving before the end of the week then please inform us and if you will be arriving back later than the 10 January, we would like to know that too.

Until next week, stay warm and enjoy discussing our **talk topic:** "Can you name all of Santa's reindeer and which one had the red nose?"

Thank you,

Alison Davies, Vanessa di Fine & Anna Nagy nurseryteacher@telenet.be

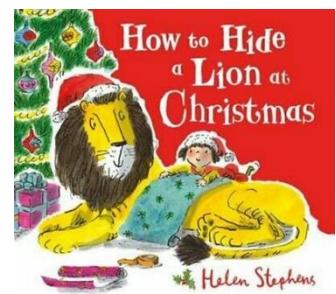
EYFS Reception



Dear Parents,

Another busy week has gone by and the children are working very hard on all the activities that have been going on in class.

We have been preparing different Christmas crafts in our art sessions which have been extended throughout the afternoons in the week. We have made wreaths, cards and ornaments as well as decorating more baubles for our lovely Christmas tree. They all feel very excited about it and they have enjoyed every moment of it. Our topic story of the week was 'How to hide a lion at Christmas' by Helen Stephens.



very excited about it and they have enjoyed every moment of it. Our topic story of the week was 'How to hide a lion at Christmas' by Helen Stephens.

In literacy we have introduced the letter sounds x, y and z and worked with words beginning with these sounds. We then compared these sounds to the other letter sounds we have previously learned and paid careful attention to how different they sound. We have been also reading a lot in class and asking the children to use full sentences when describing the pictures in the wordless books, in order to extend their vocabulary and work on sentence structure.

In maths we continued working on tracing and writing numbers in our workbooks and we prepared a piece of work that you will find in your child's Home School Book. The children had to colour Christmas ornaments following the colour code that was provided, then they had to count them and graph how many items of each ornament they had counted. This last part was a bit tricky and needed adult's guidance, in the end the children were up to the challenge by achieving a very good piece of work.



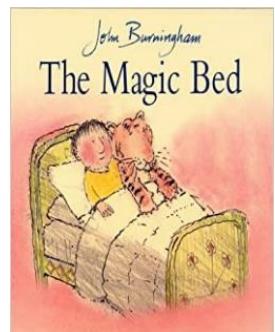
You will also find in your child's HS Book, a memory game provided by Madame Scharf for them to practise their Christmas vocabulary in French. They have the instructions on how to play,

they can colour the pictures, cut them out and then find a partner to play with! Have fun!

We finally managed to have two sessions in the week for PE! We played Mrs. Crocodile, Traffic Lights and sack races in teams.

The other storybook of the week was 'The Magic Bed' by John Burningham which tells the story of a boy and the bed his parents buy for him in an old furniture shop. The secret is that the bed is magical. However, the boy needs to find the secret word, which begins with 'm' and ends in 'y', to start the magic. When he does, the magic bed takes him on the most amazing and fantastic adventures flying over rainforests, swimming with dolphins and to the land of gnomes and fairies. The children really liked the story and so for next week's **talk topic** I would like them to think:

If your bed had magic powers and could take you to any place, where would that be?
What things would you see there?



Our Christmas Show was planned to be on Tuesday 14th of December and we were expecting to have parents in to watch their children performing the songs they have practised so hard for the last weeks. Unfortunately, due to the new regulations regarding Covid, parents are not allowed to come into school so we have decided that the show will still go on and we will record it and upload the videos for you to watch at home. We have had a costume fitting this week and you can imagine the excitement of watching themselves all dressed up in nice Christmas outfits ... no more details about it or the surprise will be spoiled! Regarding outfits, we do not need anything special from home, we have got all we need in school. It is on a Tuesday, so we expect all of them to come to school wearing their PE uniform, green joggers.

To finish the week, the children were allowed to have a very special treat. We watched a short film about Christmas, in which Santa's sleigh broke and he had help from a little boy who helped him give out all the presents. The children loved it!

We wish you all a lovely weekend.

Mrs van Wassenhove and Mrs. Julaton

receptionteacher@telenet.be

KS1 Year 1

Dear Parents,



It's been an unusual week with many twists and turns but, as usual, the children have responded with fortitude and good humour. We are so proud of them. They are coping well with the masks and we have regular breaks throughout day where we increase our distance from each other and take them off.

Christmas craft activities with masks on!

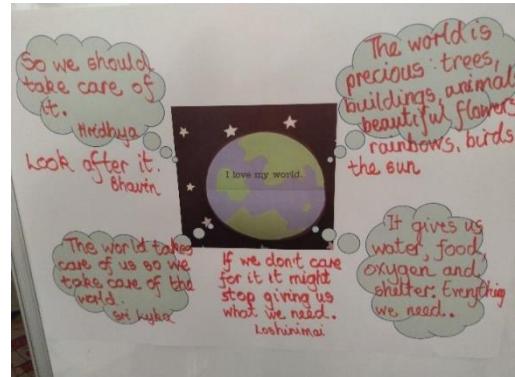


I understand that this has been an unsettling time for families too and I would like to thank you too for your care, concern and support.

LITERACY

We read the book '10 Things I can do to Help my World' by Melanie Walsh. The children were then asked to write down their own ideas of things they could do and then write questions about issues they wanted to explore. They showed most interest in energy use, deforestation and animal conservation. We have also begun some short burst writing where the children were given a Christmas picture as a stimulus.

Year 1 pupils were asked what the comment, 'I love my world' meant to them.



MATHS This week we began to add three small numbers by spotting bonds to 10 or doubles in order to complete calculations more quickly and efficiently. We also took the opportunity to begin some Christmas themed Maths.

Here we are preparing for our Maths lesson by finding bonds to 10 in a pack of playing cards.



ART

We've enjoyed lots of Christmas art themed activities this week making cards, decorations, a wreath and even a tree which has pride of place in the classroom.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

We enjoyed using a painter programme on the iPads. We began by experimenting with the selection of brush effects available and then created our own Christmas pictures. They were also invaluable for practicing the rapid recall of Maths facts via some fun and engaging online games.



TALK TOPIC: When we spoke this week about why we love our world, someone said that it gives us what we need. What does that mean? What does the world give us?

Have a wonderful weekend!

Miss Corrigan and Mrs. Bandaru year1teacher@telenet.be

KS1 Year 2

Dear Parents,

Many thanks to you and to the children for all your work this week. We were very impressed with the extent to which the children kept track of their timetable and presented themselves on time for the Zoom lessons.

In the lessons, the children were adept at muting and unmuting themselves as needed. They took turns and listened to each other and to the teachers, and they maintained their attention very well.

We were also impressed by the work produced at home. Please remind your child to bring all the work they managed to complete to school next week, once we are together again.

Our main focus this week was on Maths and Literacy. In our Maths work, our aim was to reinforce and develop the concept of multiplication. The experience of making arrays with different objects helps children to understand multiplication as a form of repeated addition, and as a way of counting in 2s, 3s, 4s etc. It also helps children to see the commutative nature of multiplication ($2 \times 3 = 3 \times 2$), as well as giving an insight into division, and its relationship with multiplication. We also took time this week to revise some of the essential concepts covered this term.

The Literacy focus was on poetry. This gave us the chance to revise some key language features, including alliteration and the past simple tense and how to use it in questions (as in "Did the mouse make a mess in Malta?"). We read and wrote together a poem with a repeating phrases (Antarctica), an alliterative poem (The Animals' Tour of Europe) and finally an acrostic poem (Thursday's winter poem).

The children benefited greatly from the chance to read individually with Mrs. Tolentino, and she was delighted to hear the progress they are making.

We tried to make sure that we covered the final part of our Science unit: Healthy eating. We have already discussed in school what we need to live, including food, exercise, air and mental health. We have seen how our own health relates to the health of our planet.

We are very much looking forward to seeing the children in person again. Again, very many thanks for your support this week.

Please find a moment to have a conversation with your child about our **Talk topic this week: how is home learning different from school learning?**

Mrs. Read and Mrs. Tolentino year2teacher@telenet.be



The Reception children
enjoy Year 1's mini
performance of 'Eddie and
the Penguins'

Music - Acorn Building:

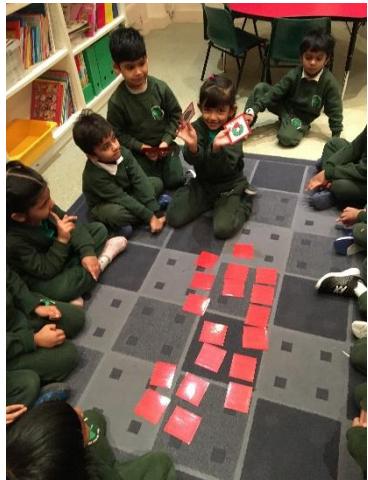
Years 1 & 2

In Year 1 this week we performed a short version of our Christmas show 'Eddie Saves the World'. We did it in school and for a very special guest: the Reception class! We very much enjoyed performing on the stage with our costumes and props. The experience of standing in front of an audience and to hear them clapping and cheering for us was certainly unforgettable!



The Year 2 children, working at home this week, listened to Spring, from Vivaldi's Four Seasons Violin Concertos. They drew some pictures of Spring scenes and wrote their thoughts about the music.

French - Acorn Building: Reception, Years 1 & 2 with Mme. Scharf



Reception:

In French, we have been talking about Christmas and learnt many new words pertaining to this celebration. Saint-Nicolas and papa / père Noël were a little confusing but we still had great fun learning, singing and drawing lovely "sapins de Noël". We played a memory game of which you will receive two sheets of paper with the same pictures that you can (colour if you like) cut out and play at home. We learnt to say "Joyeux Noël".



Year 1:

In French, we have been talking about Christmas and everything that goes with this very special celebration. We have been singing our song "Quand le père Noël vient me visiter" which describes the way he is dressed and drew his picture. We also went on vivenoel.com a very interesting website with special activities for Christmas. We even managed a word search with vocabulary pertaining to Christmas.





Year 2:

In French with Madame Scharf, we had an online class about Christmas and learnt vocabulary pertaining to Christmas. vivenoel.com proved to be a great website with very interesting activities which the children can do by themselves. We sang our Christmas song “Quand le père vient me visiter” which describes his clothing.

KS2 Year 3

Dear Parents,

What a difference two days make! From a near-full turnout last Friday to an almost empty classroom this Monday! Bravo to those children who did come to school on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, but the reduced number of children meant that after all our hard work in preparation, the end-of-term writing and Maths assessments could not take place.

Nevertheless, in class, we did manage to fit in a reading session each day, where we practised answering comprehension questions on different text types, and in Maths we practised division (using our knowledge of the times tables) and moved on to division sums which leave remainders (e.g. $23 \div 4 = 5r3$).



In Science we looked at shadows and learnt that a shadow is ‘an area of dark where light has been blocked by an opaque object’. We used torches and various shapes to examine the effect on the shadow of moving a light source closer to or further from the light. In our Topic session, we discussed the Gods, kings, beliefs and rituals of the Shang dynasty, and I was impressed by the children’s own additional knowledge, which shows that they have been doing their own research – well done!

The usual multiple Christmas art and craft projects started well, with sewing, painting, symmetry and origami all on the agenda, but were cut short by the class closure. You may well find that they re-appear as part of next week’s home-learning activities! 😊

Talk Topic for next week is ‘Would you rather come to school or stay at home?’

See you on Zoom next week.

Enjoy the weekend,
Patrick Tranter and Naomi Irakoze year3teacher@telenet.be

Year 4

Dear Parents,

While it has been a bit quieter in class than usual we've continued to have loads of fun this week getting into the Christmas spirit! We have done lots of art projects in our 'arty afternoons' this week including making Christmas cards using pencils and watercolour paints and handwriting a



poem for the inside. We also helped to decorate the Oak department Christmas tree and it is looking marvelous and welcoming in the entrance hall. We have made some cheerful calendars for 2022 with a mosaic theme. We talked a bit about what mosaics are and the children had a go at making their own design using tiny bits of paper 'tiles' instead of ceramic ones. I was impressed at their patience and persistence with creating their work as it is quite a time-consuming process!

In Literacy we finished our Mrs C unit on writing persuasive adverts. The children began by researching the eco-product they were going to write their advert for, the 'Good-Edi' edible takeaway coffee cup. We watched a short video where the inventors of Good-Edi explained their invention and then we went on the website and looked for ideas we could use in our advert such as unique selling points, testimonials, a web address and how to find and order the product. We then planned our writing in detail and thought about the language features of a persuasive advert such as using direct address questions, puns, alliteration, imperative verbs and positive adjectives. The children then wrote their own persuasive adverts, and I was really impressed by the quality of the language they used and how well they attempted a piece of work in a lesser known genre of writing compared to narrative stories and non-chronological reports. Some of the puns they came up with were really creative!

In Maths we learned about multiplication and division. We started by reminding ourselves of the grid method of multiplication, a very helpful way of breaking down bigger multiplication problems into small manageable steps. We then moved towards using the column method of multiplication and how it relates to the grid method. We then turned our attention to division and reviewed the 'chunky chimp' method otherwise known as chunking or the 'number line' method. We then briefly started to look at how this relates to the vertical/long division method through jottings.

In Science we completed our topic on electricity by looking and insulators and conductors. We made a simple circuit to test that our components were working and then the children inserted various materials into their circuits to see if they conducted electricity or not. We found that many, but not all, metals conduct electricity but plastic and wood are insulators.



Kind Regards,
Camilla Rutayisire
Year4teacher@telenet.be



Year 5

Dear Parents,

While some of the other classes faltered and fell by the wayside, Y5 held firm, stuck to it and shone very brightly for it. Thank you very much, parents. 🙏

We had a magnificent week and both I and the children had a wonderful time. It whizzed by. They busily used their hands, their hearts and their heads.

They enjoyed sewing the finishing touches to their tree decorations; using forcemeters to drag my shoes around the classroom: getting their hands on brushes, chopsticks, sandpaper and fabrics to explore friction; and painting beautiful Christmas scenes.



Our Paperman Write Stuff unit is building to a crescendo and the class thrilled at watching and then describing near-miss, chase and ‘precipitous action’ film clips and then listening to cataclysmic classical music pieces. Web-searching and generating abstract and collective nouns was a treat and, to a child, all were motivated and couldn’t stop. What images and feelings did the expressive music conjure up in them?

We also watched Paperman go to desperate measures to find happiness and rich language presented itself to the children as they built their usual creative sentences.

The class also began their chosen careers presentations using Keynote - research and following a design specification were required and eagerly executed.



This week, I observed something of a subtle but clear battle of the sexes. In needlework, the girls sit down and go to work efficiently while the boys stand up and chat about what they're going to do but ultimately need help threading and getting started.....and getting out of trouble when needle and thread don't obey. In our science friction experiment, the girls began by drawing up their results tables and carefully getting prepared, while the boys leapt onto the Newtonmeters like jabbering jack o'lanterns, fiddling with the gadgets and straight onto the test shoes. You'll have to find out who had the greater degree of success! 😊 It was also striking how much noise 9 children can make even with a mask on. 🎧 😱



In the few, short communication Zooms we had this week, several of our ‘sibling rule’-bound children appeared from home to join us including our new classmate, Umaiza, who everybody was absolutely thrilled to meet for the first time.

Highlight of the week may have been Friday’s orienteering held entirely in the Oak building. Getting the *whole* school to themselves, the Y5 were particularly looking forward to invading and getting a sneak peek at the deserted Y6 classroom!! We'll see how they got on.

And that was our week.

Have a good weekend,

Talk Topic: How (in what ways) have you been sage (good) for Saint Nicholas this year?

Best wishes, Tim Stedman & Mrs Tolentino year5teacher@telenet.be

Year 6

Dear Parents,

All I can say is that we are very much looking forward to returning to Year 6 HQ next week. There is nothing quite like the magic of walking into our classroom in the morning.

So, what have we been up to during our Zoom sessions? Latin, Science and reading.

Pupils were introduced to the delightful Mr Furber – if only more Latin teachers were as inspirational as he is! In the first three lessons, we looked at the grammatical terms nominative and accusative before learning how to translate simple Latin sentences. Using Aesop's and Phaedrus' fables, students practised the nominative and accusative by translating fables about a camel and a river and a hungry royal tiger and a clever monkey. Pupils then progressed to learning about the six different person endings of regular verbs.

Continuing with our previous work on the Periodic Table, in chemistry, students learnt what is found inside atoms, how to draw atoms and began to interpret the periodic table. They developed a deeper understanding of what we mean by 'properties' in science and discovered about how the periodic table has developed over time by investigating the work of Döbereiner, Newlands and Mendeleev.

Pupils learnt about common properties of metals and how this makes them suitable for a variety of uses – new vocabulary included: malleable, ductile and sonorous. Finally, they observed how compounds behave as new substances and how to write chemical equations: sodium + chlorine = sodium chloride

During the afternoons, pupils were given a variety of tasks to consolidate their learning from the morning online sessions.

We hope to finish reading our class book about Noor today; she is now being interrogated by the Gestapo and is still refusing to give them any information.

TT: Not having your camera on during Zoom sessions – what do you think?

Happy weekend,

Beverley Tranter year6teacher@telenet.be

Music KS2 - Oak Building with Miss di Fine

(Years 4,5, 6) This week we discovered the magical world of P. I. Tchaikovsky with his Russian fairy ballet "The Nutcracker".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McdnfAmi8A4>

We read about the story of the composition from the German author E.T.A Hoffmann. We met all the characters and dancers from the Royal Opera House in England.

We learned how a ballet's production is created and performed.

The year 6 class had fun performing some pieces from the Nutcracker with cups and kitchen spoons!



French - Oak Building

Year 3:

In French with Madame Scharf, we have been talking about Christmas and learnt new words relating to this very special celebration. We played a guessing game, we discovered vivenoel.com and played vocabulary games.



Year 4:

In French with Madame Halvorsen, we've had a busy and fun week talking about the approaching Christmas festivities and we got to review and explore new and old vocabulary and images that we relate to la '**Fête de Noël**', such as 'le Père Noël, le sapin, la crèche, les santons, les anges, les cadeaux, la bûche de Noël, le houx, la couronne, la guirlande etc.. Then, we set up a series of exciting Christmas activities, songs and witty riddles where they had to resort to their oral skills and quickly come up with an answer related to the vocabulary we've covered this week.



Year 5



In French with Madame Halvorsen, we've been so busy discussing the approaching '**Fête de Noël**' (Christmas) and getting started on our exciting '**Lettre au Père Noël**' where we can see how well they can talk about themselves, what they like, what they do, what they look like, talk about their characters, families, favourites, friends, food, sports, books, etc.. Then, we set up a series of exciting Christmas activities, songs and funny riddles where they had to resort to their oral skills and quickly come up with an answer related to the vocabulary we've seen this week. More to come!

The History, Geography and Culture of Belgium with Mme. Scharf

In French geography and history in Year 3, 4 and 5 we solved alphabetical quizzes about everything we have learnt so far and I was amazed to see how much the children remember: countries, provinces, regions, cities, rivers, communes, languages, royalty ... they know a lot about Belgium.





How much do you
know about
Belgium?

