



The British International
School of Brussels

BISB Home School Letter: May 28th, 2021

EYFS Nursery

Dear Parents,



Despite the wet and windy weather this week, we have managed to dodge the downpours and did have some much-needed time outside, but we are really hoping for some super sunshine soon! Especially as next week is the start of our Science Week and one of our experiments will be making giant soap bubbles! The show will go on of course, as they say, and if all else fails there will just be some very soapy floors inside!

However, back to this week and, as part of our theme on 'fantastic farms,' the children have become farmers themselves and have grown some very interesting goodies indeed! Take a look in your little one's home school book, to find out what wonderful crops they decided to plant. They also drew themselves doing a spot of tractor driving to help them get around the farm, to collect the abundance of fruit and vegetables and other things to take to the market to sell.

Over the long weekend, all of our caterpillars finally spun their cocoons around themselves and are now causing great excitement in the Nursery as the children cannot wait to see the butterflies nibble their way out. They even did a little tapping dance inside the cocoon while we were observing them during our circle time, which caused even more excitement and just a little bit of a squeal when someone thought it might be a spider inside instead of a butterfly! When Mrs Davies said she wouldn't mind as she liked spiders, there was an even louder gasp and someone said she was very brave because spiders were very, very, dangerous!

One of the seven areas of learning in EYFS is Understanding the World and one specific strand of this is giving the children the knowledge and experiences they need to know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. We encourage purposeful talk during group discussions, so each child can contribute and chat about the observations they make of animals and plants and why some things occur, and the changes they see. Observing a real caterpillar cocooning and then changing into a butterfly is perfect for introducing a sense of awe and wonder, along with beginning to understand the natural world and all of its wonders! I'm sure your little one will let you know when the butterflies finally emerge. To tie in with this, our talk topic for you to mull over with your child is "What came first, the caterpillar or the egg?"



A big thank you to everyone who has brought in boxes and tubes etc for our robot making, we still need a few more, so any donations before next Wednesday will be willingly accepted!

Have a lovely weekend and don't forget to log onto our Edmodo class page next week for some exciting photographs of our science experiments when we all



Butterfly week
at BISB...

become mini-Albert Einsteins, Marie Curies or CV Ramans or Kamala Sohonies (the first female student of CV Raman!) We just love science and can't wait!

Talk topic: "Why is it important not to pick wild flowers?"

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

EYFS Reception

Dear Parents,

We have exciting news to share, two butterflies have come out of their cocoons! A breathtaking experience for the children, who have been waiting long days for this event to finally happen. The butterflies' wings need to dry and become strong so they can fly. We will set them free in the garden once they are ready to fly away.

In the past few days we have been talking a lot about friendships and what it means to be a good friend, which actions we can take to help others and to make them feel included and happy. The children listened to the story 'A Rainbow of Friends' by P.K. Hallinan and we discussed the aspects that characterise good friends. Following this, they worked hard putting together paper chains to make a very big rainbow that hangs on our corridor wall and is surrounded by beautiful drawings of themselves and their friends. They were all very proud of their work and by looking at the pictures, I'm sure you will agree with us that our friendship wall is a fantastic masterpiece.



In Maths this week we have focused on counting objects in between number 10 and number 20 and recognising that teen numbers are ten and some more. For this we used toy counters which were given in small trays to each child, they counted them and had to match the number of toys with the correct written number. We also worked on addition, counting petals in two different flowers and adding them.

In Phonics we focused our attention on vowel digraphs, like oa-ow-ai-etc. and trigraphs, like igh-air-ear-etc. It is important to keep revising all the sounds we have learned throughout the year as this repetition will help the children to remember them easily when they are reading and they encounter words they feel are difficult for them to read. In your child's home school book you will find a piece of work related to this, in which the children had to say the sounds and think of a word with that sound, which matched the picture shown in the paper.

As for PE lessons, we had one indoors in which we practised our dancing and freezing skills and the other, fortunately, outside as the weather was better on Thursday. For the latter the children were asked to do animal movements... so they had to walk like bears and crabs, hop like frogs and wiggle like octopuses. Once they got the gist of it we played bear races and crab races, which made them laugh a lot!

I am sure you do not need a reminder for next Thursday's trip to Tervuren woods and playground as I know your children are very excited and talk about it all the time. Just be aware of the weather that day so you provide an appropriate coat for your child. The school is providing them with small backpacks in which they'll



carry their snack, lunch and water bottle. We are also taking with us a small exploration kit to carry out our experiment while walking in the woods.

Next week we are having a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) week in which we will be doing scientific experiments every day in the classroom. We will also have the visit of scientists from the organization 'Green Light for Girls' who will carry out a scientific experiment with the children in class.

We wish you all a happy, and hopefully warmer,

weekend and see you all back on Monday.

Kind regards,

Mrs. van Wassenhove and Mrs. Julaton receptionteacher@telenet.be

KS1 Year 1

Dear Parents,

It's been a short but very busy week in Year 1. The time to do our assessments has come and the children have shown me all the things that they have learnt throughout the year – very impressive! They wowed me with their mental arithmetic skills showing that they have learnt to double and halve numbers up to 10, add and subtract 10 and use number bonds/pairs to 10 to solve problems. Regarding problem solving, they have learnt to tell the time to the hour and half past the hour and how to count in 2s, 5s and 10s and how to identify heavier and lighter objects using weighing scales.



In Literacy this week we have finally come to the end of our phonics programme so we did a quick review of all the sounds we have covered since the beginning of the year. The children practised reading a series of words where they had to use phonics alone and demonstrated their knowledge of all these sounds, including different spellings of the long vowel sounds and consonant digraphs. They also showed me what they have learnt when it comes to reading whole texts, retrieving specific information, giving their opinion on what could happen next in a story and showing that they can explore the meaning of vocabulary and new words.



It was also time to release our beautiful painted lady butterflies that have gone from being caterpillars, to living inside their cocoons, to finally hatching this week. We discussed the life cycle of a butterfly and the different stages it goes through from egg to butterfly, and we watched them fly. We made some wishes as they flew off and we hope that they live well out there in the world. The children made some careful observations and practised drawing painted lady butterflies back in the classroom. This week we also discussed mixing colours, and the children used primary colour 'sums' to make secondary colours.

We are all so excited about next week, which is going to be Science Week in school and we have some really interesting experiments planned! The children have seen some signs of what we might be doing around the classroom and are very curious. We are also really looking forward to our class trip on Thursday particularly as the weather is looking good right now.

Talk topic: What do scientists do?

Have a great weekend, kind regards,

Camilla Rutayisire and Smita Bandaru Year1teacher@telenet.be

KS1 Year 2



Dear Parents,

The Year Two children worked incredibly hard this week to complete their assessments in reading, writing, mathematics and science to the best of their ability – and very well they all did too! They have really shown us what capable and independent children they have blossomed into over this school year and how well they have listened, absorbed and embedded their learning throughout the year. Well done Year Two – we are very proud of you all!

In addition to their efforts in the assessments, we also managed to have a lot of the typical fun we are all used to! The children finished off sewing their beautiful, drawstring seed bags by completing their stitching, inserting the string and adding beading.

We also enjoyed making our seed balls which we will eventually plant out in the local area, just like the main character in our class text, *The Promise*.

In Topic, we learned all about David Attenborough, a natural scientist and film maker of more than 300 documentaries. We found out about his early life, work and studies. The children then created their own documentaries in the style of David Attenborough by researching a favourite animal, composing dramatic and descriptive narration and then filming ourselves talking in front of a camera. We have some budding film-makers of the futures in our midst!



Talk Topic: You have done an excellent job in your assessments this week. When were you especially proud of yourself this week? What did you find easy? What did you find difficult? What will be your personal target to work on for the rest of the term? Where can you challenge yourself further?

Gabriel Bird and Ena Tolentino year2teacher@telenet.be

French - Acorn Building: Reception, Years 1 & 2

Reception and Year 1:

In French with Madame Scharf, we continued talking about the park. We carried on singing songs and watching cartoons in order to hear and remember all the new words : la balançoire (swing), le toboggan (slide), la bascule (see saw), le tourniquet (merry go round), la cage à grimper (climbing frame), le bac à sable (sandpit), le trampoline we also added words like le vélo (bike), la trottinette (scooter), les patins à roulettes (rollerskates), la corde à sauter (skipping rope) ... We also played games like cache-cache (hide and seek) and touche-touche (tag). We learnt to say “Tu veux jouer avec moi ?” and the answer “Oui, à quoi on joue ?”



Year 2:

In French with Madame Halvorsen, we finished the ' **yearbook portraits**' and we presented them in class. It's so wonderful to see how well they're able to describe themselves, use the language and express everything we've learned so far, such as the greetings, ' **Je suis**' and (I'm) ' **J'ai** (I have) 'les animaux, les numéros, les fruits, les saisons, les couleurs and la famille.

KS2 Year 3

Dear Parents,

This has been a short and intense week for us – assessment week! In Literacy, over the four days, the children developed their ideas for their alternative traditional tale, using the final scene of our recent book 'The True Story of the Three Little Pigs' as our starting point. We had lots of fun imagining our wolf 'crossing over' and finding himself in the middle of other well-known tales. With the structure of our stories fixed, we then planned where and how to fit in seven specific writing features, in order to demonstrate how well we have mastered the range of techniques we have been learning. In addition, the children did their final reading assessment task – their most challenging to date, without doubt. Overall results were encouraging, despite the fact that one quarter of the total marks were awarded for 'inference', which a number of children continue to find quite difficult. Another problem continues to be, despite constant reminders, the need to 'answer the question', so if, for example, asked to choose two words, choosing one or three will be incorrect.



In Maths, the children sat their end-of-year assessment papers – one arithmetic and two reasoning papers, together with the usual two end-of-block papers, making five in all! Again, the overall results are pleasing, although children continue to lose marks unnecessarily: I am still having some difficulty convincing them of the need to check their work before handing it in! To demonstrate my point, I shared the answers given to the sum $503-498=?$, which even a quick check should have prevented over half the class answering with '195', '185', '1001', '15' and so on! Nevertheless, they all stuck at their task, and it was clear to see that they have managed to retain or recall areas of Maths that we have not covered for a number of weeks.

Our other major task of the week was to prepare our individual pages for the School Yearbook. Each child has begun to compile a fact sheet about themselves, written as if they were spies and describing our school work as 'missions'. The ideas are in place, and we just need to tidy it all up ready for publication.

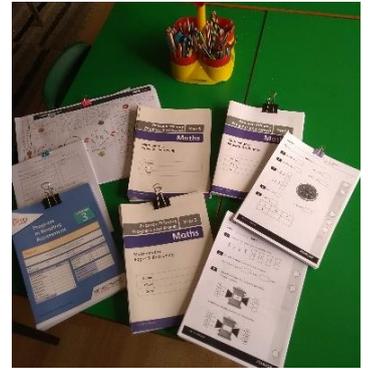
Finally, we completed another stage of our coding programme – this time learning how to control a self-driving car, by using a selection of 'hit events' (i.e if the car hits this colour/object, turn right/left and so on).

Next week is 'Science Week' – with two different experiments each day, plus two visits from outside agencies to inspire our inquiring minds – it will be very busy, probably rather messy and certainly lots of fun!

Talk topic for next week is 'There are many different types of science – how many do you know about, and which do you prefer?'

Have a great weekend!

Patrick Tranter and Naomi Irakoze year3teacher@telenet.be



Year 4

Dear Parents,

I was delighted to receive most of the homework, on time and neatly presented. As you are aware, this week children have been sitting their end-of-year tests and unless your child was absent, the tests are over. As expected, the arithmetic paper was reasonably well answered, however the reasoning papers tell a different story. These tests are designed to test how a child uses and apply his or her knowledge. Let me show you a question:

Remy buys two comics, each costing £1.65

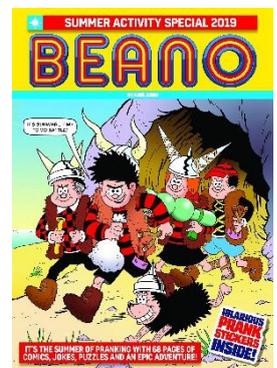
HOW MUCH CHANGE WILL HE GET FROM A £5.00 NOTE (this statement is highlighted in purple on the paper)

Space for workings and answer

Four pupils answered the question correctly

Nine pupils calculated the change having bought ONE comic

Three pupils made calculation errors.



Reading the question is of paramount importance, therefore, we shall continue to focus on solving multi-step word problems until the end of term in preparation for Year 5.

The sun has arrived! (Mrs Tranter)

This week, our science lesson focused on identifying plants, especially the common wild plants that we see in parks and gardens around Brussels. We used the app pl@ntnet on the iPads to photograph plants, and then to identify them using the matches suggested by the app. This required practising the scientific skill of close observation, in order to see which of the suggested species matched the colour, shape, and arrangement of the flower and leaves in our own plants. We learnt that many plants are known in by different common names in different English-speaking places (including, for example, such names as *runaway robin*, *creeping Charlie*, *cat's foot* to refer to ground ivy). We also learnt about Carl Linnaeus and his introduction of the two-part scientific naming system for organisms.

In PE this week, we played more games with the parachute, this time involving balls of different sizes and masses. We practised team work again, trying work together to bounce the balls off the parachute, while an opposing team tried to throw them back on. This proved to be very hard work for the group bouncing the balls off the parachute. (Mrs. Read)

Once again, the week has flown past, but the discussions of the last few weeks seem to be having an effect and there has been a much calmer, concentrated atmosphere in the classroom, which is just as well as we tackled our end-of-year assessments! The last reading test is quite a challenge, so I was very pleased to see that the detective skills are clearly continuing to improve and that there were far fewer silly mistakes due to

not reading questions carefully and not following instructions. Well done, Year 4s – you certainly have made progress and are becoming very proficient readers with a growing understanding and appreciation of language and how it is used.

We put our writing skills to good use, by finishing off our Bee Hexagon books with additional information on bee anatomy – did you know that a bee has five eyes?! We continued our work on newspaper and television reports and reporting, adding stage directions to our scripts and looking at the way that language changes depending on whether texts are intended to be read by a reader, or to be spoken out loud. Next week is Science Week and back-to-back experiments – it's going to be a great week!



A highlight of this week was the superb collective performance in the Cricket final against the Year 5s. The whole class was up for the challenge (and we definitely knew it was going to be a very tough one) and, whether it was facing the unbelievably fast bowling, cheering loudly from the terraces (and occasionally fielding the odd ball!), waiting attentively for that elusive catch, or racing down the wicket to add just a few more runs – everyone played their part and made the most of the opportunity. Abhih lead his team brilliantly to a well-deserved second place in the

tournament, with Diya winning player of the match – a great team effort from the entire class – true Legends 😊 and great 'Fair players' in defeat. Well done to the Year 5s for a superb performance. (Mrs. S)

Talk Topic: What are you most looking forward to about Science Week and what would you really like to find out about?

Enjoy the weekend,

Beverly Tranter year6teacher@telenet.be Kate Read EALteacher@telenet.be Jane Still headteacher@bisb.org

Year 5

Dear Parents,

This was a tentative assessment week. We kicked off with writing. The children imagined being a soldier and wrote a letter home from the Front. I'm expecting good things because, when not being assessed, the class wrote war poems, and they were brilliant.

I was worried that with the content and the poetry they would need a lot of scaffolding (a lot of examples and help) but the children were inspired and got the mood exactly right.

On our final day of the week, it was the PIRA reading test. The 3 set texts were all about pirates so I hope that Lockdown online and our fantastic topic on those old buccaneers and corsairs will have left them experts and pirate pros. Or at least able to read the question and answer them properly and not give 5 words where the paper asks for 2!



We have not quite finished the Abacus Maths course for the year, so I have put off the 3 Numeracy tests. Next week it probably won't fit as it is Science Week. In this, there will be a week-long project in class, while each class is getting a visit from the Cap Sciences Science 'animateurs'. Besides that, all things chemical, physical and biological will be coming our way! I'm sure it will be great.

Anyway, we took a step closer to the end game in Numeracy with study of: area of shape (cm²); volume (cm³); and %.

Elsewhere, finishing touches were put to field ambulances, parachutes finally got airborne and events in the First World War were put on a chronological path. A good week.

Oooh, and we won the cricket tournament. And splendidly. We keep the trophy into Y6, next year!

And that was our week. Have a good weekend.

Best wishes

Tim Stedman

year5teacher@telenet.be

Our Talk Topic for this week is: What makes an effective war poem and a war poet?

Year 6

Dear Parents,

We are all relieved that the end-of-year tests are finished and are now looking forward to all the thrilling activities planned for the end of term: cricket matches, Cats – the musical, picnics in the playground etc..

Next week is Science Week; our project 'Stop the spread' is about the global issue of infectious diseases. Students will be asked to design, build and test a model of a hand washing device and produce educational materials for children in Kenya, to encourage hand washing.

Our end-of-primary school sleepover will be on the last night of term. The school will provide a barbeque: vegetarian and chicken options, breakfast and refreshments for this memorable occasion. We shall also be going for a 'picnic in the park' – details to follow.

A Call to Spy (also known as Liberté: A Call to Spy) has just been released, the film is inspired by the true stories of three women who worked as spies in World War II: Virginia Hall, Noor Inayat Khan and Vera Atkins. Year 6, having completed SOE training, studied Noor Inayat Khan in detail and are aware of Virginia Hall (the American spy with a wooden leg). This film is a perfect reminder of our emotional and thrilling Year 6 project.

I was met with Baroque bling double-page spreads on Tuesday morning – what a feast for my eyes! After I had fought my way through the dresses, diamonds and dazzling palaces, I found the real treasure – carefully crafted written compositions – what a joy to read!

On Friday, we began our BBC Microbit module The BBC Microbit is a pocket-sized computer that introduces pupils to how software and hardware work together. <https://microbit.org/>



The sun is shining!

TT: Noor Inayat Khan was singing a song whilst in captivity; most of you recognised it; why is this song significant?

Happy weekend,

Mrs Tranter year6teacher@telenet.be

French - Oak Building:

Year 3:

In French with Mme Halvorsen, we finished the '**Year book portraits**' and we presented them in class. It's so refreshing to see how well they're able to describe themselves, use the language and express everything we've learned so far, such as greetings, age, '**Je suis**' (I'm) '**J'ai**' (I have) '**J'aime/ J'adore**', regular verbs such as 'dessiner, nager, jouer' etc. We also worked on '**les adjectifs et les antonymes** (the opposites) and we reviewed '**l'accord de l'adjectif**' and how to transform **l'adjectif** when dealing with masculine, feminine, singular or plural nouns.

Year 4:

In French with Madame Scharf, we dedicated the week to putting into practice two very important verbs also called auxiliaries : être (to be) and avoir (to have) in the present tense. We have been using them to describe people and to introduce ourselves. The children wrote a description of someone in their class. They read it aloud and we had to guess who it was. We also continued working on the presentation about ourselves for the yearbook.

Year 5:

In French with Mme Halvorsen, we finished the '**yearbook portraits**' and we presented them in class. It's really impressive to see how well they're able to describe themselves, and use the language to express everything we've learned such as verbs '**être & avoir**', '**J'aime/ J'adore**', sports, food, films, songs, regular and irregular verbs, the future tense etc..

We also worked more on **les verbes pronominaux** (reflexive verbs) ending in **-er**. We got to compare them and see the difference in use with 'les verbes transitifs'.

Year 6:

In French with Madame Scharf, we have been working on how to describe ourselves for the yearbook by reading and listening to many other descriptions. We also worked really hard on the passé composé : we practised verbs using "avoir" and tried to learn all verbs using "être", not a very long list but not that easy. We read the biography of the famous French footballer Zinedine Zidane. We also listened to a few songs to help us realise that French people do use this tense a lot to speak about the past.



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