

Newsletter No. 4

April 2011



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Welcome from the Headteacher

By Eugenia Papadaki

Dear Families,

First we want to wish everyone a Happy Easter. We hope all families will benefit from this renewal time together, resting, relaxing and enjoying each others company. I am sure there will be plenty of amazing food to share and good family times. This newsletter is an opportunity for you to hear some new voices in the school. We have included pieces from two new members of staff. We welcome both Kathryn and Nicoleta and appreciate how they have integrated into the community, willing to share their knowledge and love of learning and how that will benefit our children in school and in their learning.

We say goodbye to a UK student teacher, Carmela. She was able to spend three weeks in grade 2 as part of her student teaching experience. Not only was she observing classes but also under Mrs Palmer Long's monitoring, she was able to teach some lessons. The children have been on many field trips and have reported their reflections. It is important we hear about the benefits of the field trips and how they have extended the units and helped children make connections in their learning.

We value literature and books and hope children will take time to relax and read over the holidays. Included are some suggestions for reading for younger children as well as a reminder of how important reading to children can be. Please note the library hours and when you will be able to check out books with your children or just browse the library for yourself. Many hours are spent on line and browsing the web. At times it can be difficult to protect children from unwanted images and information that is not appropriate for children. You will find suggestions for securing sites and helping you to provide secure sites for your children.

Please note the upcoming events in May. We hope to have many opportunities to express how important books and reading are to the education of our children. During Book Week we will be asking parents and relatives to come and read to children as well as many opportunities for children to experience books in a new way. Our coffee morning will also focus on how important reading is and what we want in our PYP literacy program. You will receive details about these events in May.

Student Led conferences will be also in May. This is an exciting time for children as they share their work with you. They will have their portfolios and will have chosen key pieces of work sharing and discussing the learning that has taken place through their units.

We end the month with a school musical. You will be pleased with the singing and dancing as well as the parts of the production that the children themselves have written.

Again, we hope everyone has a great Easter and come back ready to learn again with enthusiasm.

Happy Easter!

DIVERSITY, A WAY OF LIFE

By Nicoleta Mircea

My destiny so far has completely changed my previous way of life. I left my country for a distant land (or this is the way I looked upon Italy before coming here) but my perspective changed significantly after the period I spent here, away from my mother land. I came to realize that we are all so much nearer than we can imagine, in way of being and in thought. Since being here and despite the

prejudices that unfortunately do exist, I never saw myself as different. I love people and believe that all are intrinsically good, no matter the race, the colour or the conviction. I have a deep curiosity for everything which is different than myself, and this entices me to research and even to attract people so much different than me. My fascination with different cultures and languages led me to have my BA degree in foreign languages (English and French language and literature) and gave me the opportunity of speaking in at least 3 different languages every day. Maybe not without a purpose, I have always attracted the situations or the persons that fulfilled the curiosity I had towards diversity. So I have recently drawn towards myself a person who became so dear to me, a life partner, who comes from the far away Bogotà, Colombia. The same who, strangely, lives and works in Italy. So, by getting to know my husband, (with whom I only speak in Spanish), I automatically had to become acquainted with Italy, the Italian language and the Italian way of life. How strange could that be? :)

My child is now trilingual. I speak to him in Romanian, my husband in Spanish and since he goes to the nursery school starting from the beginning of the year, Italian became his third language, the language of his adoptive country. We breathe diversity every day; we understand and co-live as harmoniously as we can, we strive to be better every single moment of our existence and really hope to get better as citizens, parents, friends and individuals. The enriching experience of expanding one's limits and embracing the other, who apparently is so different from you, changes you forever into a better person.

If you ask me, I would be proud to answer to you that I feel Romanian, Columbian and Italian at the same time....I made diversity my way of life.

Welcome to Kathryn Fletcher

By Kathryn Fletcher

I am delighted to join the middle school teaching team and hope that the grade six students will enjoy and benefit from my math and science lessons. I am originally from Australia, but attended university in the USA, where I studied geology at the University of California, Berkeley. I taught science at the university for 6 years in the USA before arriving in Italy. Here, at the Bilingual School of Monza, I hope to share my passion for science with the students and to make the lessons meaningful and exciting experiences. I like to teach mathematics as the language of science - it is through application of mathematical ideas that we can discover important relationships and understand the physical world around us. In this way the middle school students will become proficient in another language, and have a powerful tool in their belts to meet the challenges of high school and beyond.

Carmela Sita and her visit to Play English

By Carmela Sita

Currently, I am a student from Canada studying at Queen's University. I am in the process of receiving my teaching certificate for the primary and junior grades. As part of the program, the university provided, encouraged and provided current students the opportunity to explore various teaching beliefs and practices for three weeks. I have always wanted to explore the teaching methods in Italy, which has lead me here to this school. I am thankful to the Bilingual school of Monza, Play English, for allowing me to take part in this experience. I have discovered that the curriculum is different in comparison to the Canadian curriculum, and I also discovered how much higher student achievement

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is here at Play English. I have been impressed by students work. I have had various experiences back home working with students of various ages, and I have never been so amazed with students work like I have been in the grade 2 classroom. I have found that students here are more independent and creative than I could have imagined. I have seen how students work together, solve problems on their own, share ideas and how they are able to extend on their knowledge because of all this. I have seen how much responsibility students take on in their learning and how beneficial it all is. We have always been taught to take in students ideas and incorporate those ideas in our lessons, however, I have never seen it done because most teachers fear this idea. In the grade 2 classroom, I have been able to see how wonderful it actually is. Students share more ideas during discussion, and are constantly building on to their ideas, and that of their peers ideas. Because of this, students are more engaged in their learning, and are able to comprehend broader concepts. I would like to thank Kerry for accepting me into her classroom, as well as Chiara C, and allowing me to take part in observing teaching styles, interacting with their students, as well as allowing me to teach them various lessons. I would like to thank Eugenia for allowing me to take part in this experience, as well as Gloria. I would like to thank the rest of the staff of Play English and students for their support. These three weeks have flown by too quickly and this has truly been an amazing and beneficial experience. Thank you.

Fundraiser for Japan

By Grade 6 students & Miss Martha

On April 1st, at Play English in Monza, the grade 6 class organized a fundraiser for the people of Japan, where the earthquake followed by a tsunami just occurred. The class brought in some used toys, books, DVDs and baked foods like cookies and cakes. To prepare for the sale a pair of students put up some tables on which the products were to be put, the others were in the school's computer room attaching price tags on the toys and food. There were three people selling food, two in charge of the toys, other two selling DVDs and one at the till. Then, grade six students called all the other classes and told them about the fundraiser market and said to them to come and buy something; Grade six students hoped that all the children had brought money because if they didn't the fundraiser would've been a fiasco. But, luckily, most of them brought money and the ones who didn't reserve some objects so that, when the parents arrived and gave them the money, they could buy them. At the end one of the classmates counted all the money, it was a very big success: 507 Euros and 79 cents. We are looking for an appropriate source to donate our money to. We believe that our source will be the Red Cross because they don't just focus on one age group but they help every human in need.

Thank you to students, parents and teachers for all your support.

Capo di Ponte and rock carving

By grade 3 students - pictures by : Alessandro & Miss Chantelle



"The aim of the field trip was to see the rock carving. The thing that most impressed me was to discover that when prehistoric people draw men with their hands to the sky, it means they were praying the God of Sun. When they draw men with hands to the earth, it means they were praying The Mother Earth." - Pietro -



"Afterwards we went where a man told us about how the prehistoric people made things. In the following hours, we went to visit a prehistoric village, to see

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where the prehistoric people lived. After that, we went to have lunch. Like we do in school, they let us play hide-and-seek. Then, we went to the park of the incisioni rupestri. We walked a lot in the park and even in uphill!" - *Alessio* -

"At those times, there weren't drills to make holes. Prehistoric people used a straight wooden stick. They tied it to a piece of rope with another piece of wood but circle. When it turned, it made holes. Children, when they were 9 years old, they had to went inside a circle maze, that had only one arrival point in the middle of it. If they could success all tests, then they had to find a girlfriend to make children. It was really important to have many children." - *Carlo* -



Chiavenna – St. Moritz and Bernina Express

By Miss Sara & Veronica – pictures by : Shirin & Dominic

Dear Parents, Friends and Students,

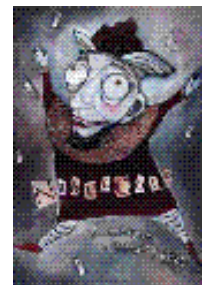
On the 4th of April the Grade 4 and 5 students went on a day trip on the Bernina Express. The visit was related to our present unit that is focused on mountain formations, volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis. We visited and had a tour of the historical centre of Chiavenna and its major monuments. Unfortunately when we arrived in St. Moritz it was raining so we were unable to visit the town, but once we were on the Bernina Express all was forgiven !! The train trip was about 2 hours around the glaciers of the Bernina, frozen lakes and other wonderful landscapes. The snow falling on the mountains, made the view picturesque. As always the grade 4 and 5 students had fun on the bus, playing games, laughing, joking, sharing lunch and spending some nice time together.



"Nabuccolo" at Theatre Manzoni in Monza

By Valentina Valenti

On Monday April 4th children from Giraffe class, Grade 1 & Grade 2 went to the Theatre Manzoni in Monza to watch the show entitled "Nabuccolo", freely inspired by the opera Nabucco by G. Verdi. The theatre Manzoni, in occasion of the celebration of the 150° anniversary of the unification of Italy, promoted a lighter version of the more famous opera by G. Verdi complete with soundtrack! Children took part to the show accompanying the actors by singing the "Va', pensiero", after days of intense practicing with Mr. William. For Grade 1 & 2 children was the occasion of discovering the Opera.



VOICES FROM THE LIBRARY

By Valentina Valenti

Dear Parents,

Easter holidays are coming and what better opportunity to spend some nice time with your children?? Maybe reading a great and funny book, in the arms of mummy and daddy... so, what are you waiting

for? Come immediately to visit our library and take some books to read and enjoy with your children during Easter holiday!

The library is open every day, **from Monday to Friday from 9.00 to 9.30am (except for Wednesday)**. In the afternoon: **on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4.00 to 5.30pm. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 4.00 to 4.30 pm.**

Read out to children it's not only a great amusement, but also and especially a fantastic resource. The benefits of reading out to children are many, particularly to pre-school children. First of all, it helps the development of the language, important not only as a vehicle of communication among human beings, but also as a tool through which children elaborate and represent the reality of the world around them. Secondly, read out helps children to enrich their memory skills and to strengthen their cognitive skills. And last, but not less important, it is a incitement for children's imagination!

So, do not waste other time! Run to visit our library and stock up of books!!!

Enjoy your reading!

IMPORTANT : Book week

(scheduled on 18th,19th,20th April) has been postponed **in May, from 9th to 13th**.
Soon you will receive more and detailed information about the activities in which children, teachers and parents will be involved to celebrate books and reading !!!

BEST OF THE MONTH

by Valentina Valenti

This month we suggest you to read ...

FOR PARENTS

"Raising an emotionally intelligent child"
by J. Gottman

"Il bambino bilingue" di B. Abdelilah Bauer

FOR CHILDREN

"Piccolo Pisello" di A. Rosenthal
suggested by PINGUNI children

"Tatiana, struzza africana" di R. Chaundler
suggested by GIRAFFE children

ICT TIPS - Using Google to Make your Computer Safer at Home

By Emily Jones

Google provides an easy way to keep inappropriate search results away from your children. By using Google **SafeSearch**, you can change the way search results are filtered, helping you to keep inappropriate images and text away from the eyes of your children. To make this change, go to www.google.com in either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox (better to use the latter, although to be most safe, change these settings on all browsers on your computer), or whichever other browser you may use (Opera, etc), and find the link at the top right hand side of the page that says “**Settings**”. Select “**Search Settings**” from the options under “**Settings**”. A page will load with many settings to change (note: here you can also change the default language that the results are displayed in). Go to the “**SafeSearch Filtering**” section (near the bottom). Select the “**Use strict filtering**” button.

Optional: to be extra secure, click on the “**Lock SafeSearch**” link. You will be asked to sign in with your gmail or google accounts username and password. Then click the “**Lock SafeSearch**” button. This will ensure that only users who know your password can change the search filter settings on your computer.

April Events

WHEN	EVENT	CLASSROOMS INVOLVED
THURSDAY 14th APRIL AT 3.00pm (Monza campus)	Conference with a doctor from Comitato Maria Letizia Verga	From Grade 1 to Grade 6
FRIDAY 15th APRIL	Science Fair	Pinguini, Giraffe, Transition, Grades 1,2,3 and 4/5
18th/19th/20th APRIL	Residential trip to Tuscany and Parco dell'Uccellina	Grade 4/5
WEDNESDAY 20th APRIL	Field trip to Minitalia	Transition and Grade 1
WEDNESDAY 20th APRIL	Field trip to 'La casa di Emma'	Grade 2
THURSDAY 21st APRIL (school closes at 12.00/12.15)	Easter Bonnet Parade	Nido, Pinguini & Giraffe, Transition, Grades 1 - 2 - 3

Calendar of upcoming events

MAY						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						1

2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			STAFF APPRECIATION DAY			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
BOOK WEEK	Gr 4/5 field trip to Val Trompia ----- BOOK WEEK	Parents coffee morning ----- BOOK WEEK	BOOK WEEK	BOOK WEEK	OPEN DAY	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Pupil led conferences	Pupil led conferences	Pupil led conferences	Pupil led conferences	Pupil led conferences ----- Taster day for new pupils		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Gr 2 field trip at "Casa di Emma"			THE GREAT KAPOK TREE MUSICAL	THE GREAT KAPOK TREE MUSICAL Teatro Villoresi at 6:30pm		
30	31					