

**CATTERPILLARS  
DIDACTIC PROJECT  
SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022**



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## INTRODUCTION

### ‘CONNECTING OURSELVES’

Today’s world connects us to a new digital era and pioneers the way for future learning. Smiling leads our children through this process always keeping in mind the importance of their personal, emotional and social development.

The teachers offer their children a variety of opportunities to explore and investigate, to get to know themselves as individuals but also to meet different people, beliefs and cultures recognizing them as an enrichment. We offer them a Community, the Smiling Community, within which they feel safe and will be able to flourish and grow to become citizens of the modern world.

### BRIGHT & COOL CATERPILLARS’ PROJECT:

#### Our Body

What does our body look like? What can our bodies do? What do our bodies need? These are three questions which will be investigated by the Caterpillars during the course of the year as they make connections between their bodies, senses and emotions.

#### Emotions

With the help of Ernesto the colour monster, the Caterpillars will learn to express and talk about their emotions. He will encourage the children to think about others and their feelings too. Through fun activities with the colour monster, the children will develop problem-solving skills, work in teams, help each other and play cooperatively, thereby developing social, language and communication skills.

#### Our Community

Who am I? Who are we? This part of the project focuses on both the individuality and the generality of the class. Our caterpillars learn more about their classmates, their families, what their interests are and who has pets. A community is made up of similarities and differences; the most interesting and fun part will be discovering them. Once the children have connected their individualities and stories, they will feel part of the Caterpillar group and join the Smiling Community.

## HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE CARRIED OUT

The classroom is often organized into different areas, linked to the Early Years didactical project with a variety of activities for the children to choose from and a range of materials both natural and recycled, for the children to use. These stimulating areas provide teachers with a perfect opportunity to observe and listen to the children, allowing them to create activities in response to their needs and interests as they change and develop through the year. Consequently, the Early Years project is carried out through a series of mini-projects which combine structured cross-curricular activities led by an adult and child-led activities. Both are aimed at developing the emotional and cognitive development of each child. Play, in its many forms, is an important part of the project, as it is through play that children learn. They continue to develop social skills as they play in groups and develop their own identity in relation to others and the surrounding environment. Play allows them to discover, feel, make decisions and make choices, actions which they will then experiment with in real life. Through play, children begin to learn to respect the rules, take turns and other essential skills for their development.

### Early Years' Google Classroom

Didactic digital learning at school (DDI – 'Didattica Digitale Integrata') plus learning and staying connected online from home (LEAD - 'Legami Educativi a Distanza') have become an integrated part of the Italian national curriculum. Smiling has chosen to give each class its own virtual classroom where teachers post photos of activities, songs or games linked to class topics. This is ideal for families who would like to reinforce learning at home and take part in school life. Families are encouraged to visit the classroom regularly and are welcome to post comments or photos of work done by the children at home.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### Meetings with Teachers

These meetings are an ideal opportunity for families and school to work together and focus on the child and his/her learning journey. They are held online and can be booked by emailing or telephoning the office. Parents will be given a code in order to join the video conference on 'Meet', accessed by

their child's account which they are given when they enrol at Smiling.

- **Cool Caterpillars:** Cecilia Masina & Erika Ongaro : Mondays 1.30 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.
- **Bright Caterpillars:** Laura Bubola, Chiara Mascellani & Joanita Stande: Tuesdays 1.30 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.
- **Philippa Waterhouse & Deborah Ascani (Early Years Coordinators):** Thursdays 2.30p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

### What to bring:

- A soft bag with a couple of complete changes of clothes to be left at school. The uniform needs to be included as well as: pairs of comfortable trousers, t-shirts, pants, knickers and socks suitable for the season;
- A change of shoes in case of an emergency;
- 1 packet of wet-wipes;
- For children who sleep in the afternoon, a soft bag which contains a small flame-resistant pillow (25cm x 40cm x 5cm) with a pillow case and a flame-resistant cover/blanket (75cm x 100cm) suitable for the season.

PLEASE LABEL THE ABOVE ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

### Reminders:

- **School uniform is compulsory.** This consists of the school t-shirt or dress and the jumper, hooded top or tank top with the school logo. All pupils are expected to wear plain navy blue trousers/leggings or skirt and plain navy blue tights.
- Shoes without laces and trousers without buttons/fastenings to allow children to move freely during activities and to encourage autonomy
- Toys, soft toys and books from home are not allowed
- For safety reasons, bracelets, necklaces and jewelry in general are not allowed.

## THE DAILY ROUTINE

### Snack

At 9.45 a.m. and 3.45 p.m. a healthy snack is provided for the children. It is a time to sit together, taste new foods and develop language skills. Snack consists of fresh, seasonal fruit, crackers or biscuits and sometimes a cake. On Friday afternoons there is a special snack prepared by our cook. Please do not bring food into school.

### Lunch

The Caterpillars eat lunch at 11:50 a.m. in the lunch room. The school cook prepares all meals and we encourage the children to try new foods. Lunch consists of a first course and a second course, followed by fresh fruit or a desert. The menu, which can be found on the school's website, provides a variety of well-balanced and healthy dishes which also includes regional cuisine. International festivals are also celebrated and children are encouraged to try food from around the world.

### Afternoon Nap

For the children who sleep in the afternoons, they have a rest from 1.30 p.m. – 3.30 p.m. in their classroom. The child can bring in a dummy, if needed, in a clearly labelled carrying case. This will be given home each day to be cleaned.

The bottom sheet that covers each child's bed is provided and washed by the school. A pillow, a pillow case, a sheet and cover provided by the family will be sent home every Friday to be washed and should be returned on the following Monday\*.

For the children who do not sleep after lunch, it is a moment of relaxation, quiet games and activities.

*\*Due to the current health situation, school will provide a bag in which all sleep items will be kept. This bag is to be thrown away at home on Friday and a new one will be provided by school for the week on Monday.*

## OUR DAILY SCHEDULE

Parents are asked to please bring and collect their child on time to avoid crowding outside the school and to keep classes separate.

8.00- 8.10	First arrival- gym door
8.30 – 8.40	Second arrival- gym door
8.00 – 9.30	Free play
9.30 – 9.45	Tidy-up & Carpet Time
9.45 – 10.00	Toilet and snack
10.00-11.20	Didactic activities, SMART Board activities, outdoor structured activities, music, free-play in the big garden
11.20 – 11.35	Toilet
11.35 – 11.45	Carpet Time
11.50 – 12.10	Lunch
12.10 – 1.00	Free-play in the garden or class
12.50	Children who go home after lunch can be collected- main door
1.00 – 1.30	Children who go to sleep get ready to go to bed
1.30 – 3.30	Relax, quiet free-play and activities
3.30 – 4.20	Snack, Carpet Time: stories, songs, games & conversation
4.20 – 4.30	Home time- gym door