



COOL CATERPILLARS

**ANNUAL PROJECT
ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023**

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INTRODUCTION

‘Never-Ending Stories’

Our lives are never-ending stories of past, present and future events. Every action, emotion, experience, and decision leads us to something else. Our own stories intertwine with those of our friends and families, to make the narrative even richer and more vivid.

As the Early Years children start their new school year at Smiling, so a new chapter begins for us all:

COOL CATERPILLARS’ PROJECT:

The Cool Caterpillars’ project explores a set of important themes supported by four special stories which will be told in both English and Italian:

Identity

‘**The Very Hungry Caterpillar**’ by **Eric Carle** – a well-known and much-loved story for many children all over the world, The Very Hungry Caterpillar provides a colourfully illustrated story with rhythmic and repetitive language which covers a variety of learning areas including numbers, days of the weeks, food and life cycles. Most importantly, it investigates the theme of ‘identity’: we grow as a person and become a beautiful butterfly.

Emotions

‘**The Colour Monster**’ by **Anna Llenas** is a funny and sensitive book that encourages children to express and eventually talk about their emotion. At this age, like the monster in the story, emotions and how we feel can be confusing. A variety of art and craft activities, colour and emotion games inspired by the story aim to help the children understand their emotions better, to begin to express them appropriately and to understand and relate to the feelings and emotions of others.

The Changing Seasons

'Tap the Magic Tree' by Christie Matheson provides an exciting and interactive way of learning about the four seasons. The Cool Caterpillars will have to listen carefully, follow the instructions and watch as leaves and blossom magically appear, change colour and disappear following the four seasons. Magic wands at the ready!

Diversity

'I Cinque Malfatti' by Beatrice Alemagna is a fascinating story about five very different characters, neither human nor animal, who all live together in a rather unusual house. Through this story, the children will explore the theme of diversity and discover how each of these characters is special in their own way. Discovering each other's similarities and differences and getting to know each better helps children to realise that being different is not something negative but is in fact positive, just like the morale of the story 'I Cinque Malfatti'.

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') 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 Google 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 at school or online and can be booked by emailing or telephoning the office. If online, 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.

Meeting Times:

Anita Bolognini, Kim Brewster, Chiara Mascellani, & Rosie Mence: Mondays 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Philippa Waterhouse & Deborah Ascani (Early Years Coordinators): Thursdays 2.30p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

What to bring:

- A soft bag with several complete changes of clothes to be kept at school. The school uniform needs to be included as well as: pairs of comfortable trousers (without buttons, laces, ties), t-shirts, pants, knickers and socks suitable for the season
- A change of shoes
- 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
- 1 A4 cardboard folder with elastic

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 children eat lunch at 11:50 a.m. in the lunchroom. 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 dishes from around the world.

Afternoon Nap

For the children who sleep in the afternoons, they have a nap from 1.30 p.m. – 3.30 p.m. in one of their classrooms supervised by their teachers who put on relaxing music.

Each child has a nursery school bed and a bottom sheet that covers each child's bed. These are both provided and washed by 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. A dummy,

if needed, needs to be brought in a clearly labelled carrying case. This will be given home each day to be sanitised.

For the children who do not sleep after lunch, it is a moment of relaxation, quiet games and activities in their other classroom or the garden.

OUR DAILY SCHEDULE

Parents may bring the Cool Caterpillars to their classrooms in the mornings.

8. a.m. – 9.30 a.m.*	Arrival and free-play in the classroom. * We advise that children arrive no later than 9.15 a.m.
9.15 a.m. – 9.45 a.m.	Tidy-up & Carpet Time
9.45 a.m. – 10 a.m.	Toilet and snack
10 a.m. - 11.20 a.m.	Didactic activities: SMART Board activities, P.E., music, free-play in the big garden
11.20 a.m. – 11.35 a.m.	Toilet
11.35 a.m. – 11.50 a.m.	Carpet Time
11.50 a.m. – 12.10 p.m.	Lunch
12.10 p.m. – 1 p.m.	Free-play in the garden or class
12.45 p.m.	Children who go home after lunch can be collected- main door
1.p.m.– 1.30 p.m.	Children who go to sleep get ready to go to bed
1.30 p.m.– 3.15 p.m.	Relax, quiet free-play and activities
3.15 p.m. – 3.45 p.m.	Waking up & Toilet. Snack, Carpet Time: stories, songs, games & conversation
3.45 p.m. – 4.20 p.m.	Snack & Carpet Time with stories, songs and conversation
4.20 p.m.	Home time- gym door