Dear parents and students,

We are already far into the 2011–12 school year and I hope you have been enjoying this LIS year so far.

In the last issue we presented our new members of staff – and I trust that you have all had the opportunity to get to know them. They have all made a great start and are a real enrichment to our school. All of these colleagues are working hard every day to give your child the best possible international education and the best possible preparation for their future lives.

In this issue we are proud to publish our strategic goals 2012–2016 as our Board presented at the Open Forum last week. The Strategic Goals focus on a variety of subjects such as education, facilities, organisation, staffing, finance and community life.

This issue also reports on founding member Elke Urban who retires from LIS Board after 20 years of service to LIS. Our thanks and appreciation go to Elke Urban, who has contributed so much to our school. She definitely will be missed.

Of course there are further things to point out: Following interest from LIS parents, we would like to propose that you come and help develop several activities within the LIS community. Whether you have a lot or little spare time, your input is important. Parents choose to get involved in different areas here at LIS. Others volunteer by helping with LIS gatherings. Some parents have suggested the following ideas such as a cooking club, an international cookbook, a student & parent friendly competition, an International Day, a Teachers’ Appreciation Luncheon etc. Additional ideas involving sport, art, music are most welcome too. In order to develop these ideas we would need your collaboration, suggestions, experience and participation. So why not come, join and form one of the Event Committees to get these activities going. A launch and information meeting will be set for 21 November, please see the notice board at the entrance of the school for further details.

Finally – even if it seems to be quite early – I would like to wish you all the greetings of the season, a relaxing family break in December and a successful Year 2012.

Liane Lindenlaub
Parent Community Coordinator

1. International Family Picnic

Having a picnic during the summer months can be entertaining and a blast for the entire family. On a Sunday in mid-September family members of LIS gathered at Clara-Zetkin Park to enjoy this day of family fun. Many LIS families took the opportunity to get together, eat some delicious food and spend some quality time together. And of course, the kids had fun as well. They were playing fun games, looking for a little adventure at the playground and enjoying the outstanding food. Thank you all for that wonderful day of fun! We are looking forward to our next picnic.

Pumpkins for everybody!

This holiday was a really productive one – we produced many different pieces of art – we created colourful prints in the museum of printing arts, crafted lanterns in the Umweltgarten, did woodwork and made candles in the Kindertischlerei. We also crafted kites and tested them on the school yard. We even carved our own spooky Halloween pumpkins! Of course we didn’t spend all our time doing handicrafts. There was also plenty of time for relaxing and playing inside and outside. We went to the Zoo and did a boat trip on the jungle river in Gondwanaland. The Sterntaler puppet theatre told us the story of the princess and the pea. On Fridays after lunch the Auditorium turned into a cinema where we watched funny movies.

A big thank you to all kids and colleagues who made Holiday Hort such a great time!
The Learner Profile articulates that we aim to educate our students to become:  
1. inquirers  
2. knowledgeable  
3. thinkers  
4. communicators  
5. principled  
6. open-minded  
7. caring  
8. risk-takers  
9. balanced  
10. reflective

Roel Scheepens, Headmaster

By the time you read this Observer we will be looking back on both the accreditation process and the Strategic Day and will be looking forward to discussing with all of you what our newly articulated Strategic Goals 2012–16.

The Strategic Goals address a whole range of issues including education, facilities, organisation, staffing and finance. Our educational goals for 2016 are simple: achieve a first class international curriculum unified by the LIS Learner Profile. The Learner Profile was introduced by the International Baccalaureate Organisation in 2006 to articulate the pedagogical goals of the LIS for every learner from ages 3–18. We liked this learner profile so much that we used some of its language in our own Statement of Principles (2010) and we have now officially adopted the LIS Learner Profile itself as one of our Strategic Goals.

Of these ten, the one that always draws the most questions is the one about the “risk-taking”, which in IB pedagogy means: approaching unfamiliar situations with courage and forethought. Raising a hand to say something in class can be a form of risk taking if you don’t know how others will react to you.

We see the learner profile as an inspiring framework to unite what we do all the way from Early Childhood to University Applications. We are starting to articulate, as a school, how each of the ten characteristics are addressed at different age levels, and in the different subject areas of science, literacy, mathematics, social studies, languages, physical education and fine arts. By the end of the 2011-12 school year we expect to start adjusting some of our curriculum in order to better reflect the learner profile. Eight of us have now signed up for an online course titled “Inquiry into the Learner Profile”. We will be sharing our understanding of the learner profile from 2 November – 20 December 2011. This course will be a success for me if all eight of us come out of it with inspiration and resolve to put all of this into meaningful practice.

I have been involved with designing and using online courses as a teacher, but this will be my first experience of an online course as a student. I look forward to a stimulating seven weeks! As this is the last Observer to reach you before the holiday season I wish you and your loved ones a wonderful time during Christmas, Hanukkah, St. Nicholas and other cultural highlights towards the end of this calendar year.

Roel Scheepens, Headmaster

People who, more than 20 years ago, experienced German re-unification at close quarters tend to sense a sort of time warp.

On the one hand, it was a long time ago and a different world. On the other, it seems like only yesterday. And that’s how we regard Ellie Urban’s term of office on the School Board. Ellie was a prime mover behind the founding of the School, one of the original members and a Board member since inception. On the one hand, two decades ago, and on the other, just yesterday. As IS students, parents, staff and we as her Board colleagues, owe Ellie an enormous debt of gratitude for her services.

If there is one person to whom we owe the organisation, staffing and finance. Our input of many countless people is required. Help us to contribute to LIS’s growth and development! The list of topics we have begun discussing at the Strategic Day 2012–16 will tell you more. We appreciate the participation in the Open Forum on 14 November where we presented these goals.

As we write, we are preparing for the visit by the accreditation teams from the NEASC and the CIS from 5 to 11 November. The school has already profited enormously from the accreditation process, on the one hand forcing us to formalise a multitude of procedures and rules which were known but as yet unwritten, but more importantly demanding that we analyse our strengths and weaknesses and establish plans for building on the former and rectifying the latter. Whilst we await the results of the team’s examination, let us take this opportunity to thank all of the school community who have put in such a huge effort to make the necessary preparations. This applies to a number of parents, but in particular to the staff who have taken on responsibilities in addition to their normal teaching duties. Your commitment is recognised and appreciated. Because of your efforts, we can look forward with confidence to the results of the accreditation team’s visit.

Jana Nöther, Dr. Nikolaus Petersen, Christopher Smith, Dr. Sidiqi Bibelo

Dear parents

The new cohort of elected parent representatives would like to open with a quick quiz.

a) Can you name the school your child is currently attending? Can you name your child’s class teacher and their teacher’s country of birth?

b) Did you realise that the first quarter of this school year has already passed?

c) Do you know the outcome of this year’s Parent Representative Election?

d) Do you know what the LIS Parent Representatives do?

Compare your answers with the ones below.

a) US. Hopefully you will agree that this was the easiest of all the questions. However, if you got stuck on the next question, maybe it is time to come to school and update your knowledge. And while you are there, why don’t you get involved in some of the class or school activities?

b) True. The first quarter of the school year is over. Some parents and children had to settle in, find new friends, get to know new places, new people, new rules, etc. Hopefully each of us has enjoyed this first quarter and is now looking forward to the upcoming terms of the school year.

1. Alya Pender, Fabrizia Curti, Wolf-Dieter Meier, Michael Hartwig  
2. Votes were tallied shortly after the mid-September “Meet the Candidates” evening on 27 September. The group met for the first time. As you can see, the group is quite diverse – 50% expats and 50% German parents, 50% females and 50% males. Not bad, eh? These are the parents who will be serving as elected representatives until September 2012.

d) There are multiple possible answers to this question.

e) This is what parent representatives CAN do:

Bake cookies, organise parties, buy drinks for a summer evening in the park, paint balloons, sing a song to make other parents happy ... And when they do these things they are enjoying being LIS parents, but not acting in their role as representatives.

2. LIS OBSERVER www.intschool-leipzig.com

Leaving the questions and answers of the quiz, we would also like to say the following ...

Words of thanks: We wish to officially thank the former parent representative group. The school has improved over the last years and the first cohort of parent representatives actively contributed to that improvement. Wherever we go, whoever we contact, we learn that the former team has established good relationships and defined the role of the parent representatives well. This is great! Thank you and please continue to be here for us in case we need some advice and experience.

Words of understanding: Our work will only be as good as we, as you, the parents of this school – want it to be. We need you to contact us. A school is not something that you ever finish and improve. We want to hear from you. Contact us. Share your knowledge. And while you are there, why don’t you get involved in some of the class or school activities? However, if you got stuck on the next question, maybe it is time to come to school and update your knowledge. And while you are there, why don’t you get involved in some of the class or school activities?

If you prefer to speak to us directly, contact us via phone or email and schedule an appointment.

Your Elected Parent Representatives: Alya Pender, Wolf-Dieter Meier, Michael Hartwig, Fabrizia Curti

Roel Scheepens, Headmaster
We have been pretty active this October Holiday. Nearly everything was Halloween-related. We carved huge pumpkins, made jewellery out of their seeds and made creepy looking cupcakes. Now we can also scare our families with self-made Halloween mobiles and pumpkin paper masks. At the Umweltgarten we made pumpkin lanterns to be well equipped for trick-or-treating. We also enjoyed sport activities in the gym or outside on the football pitch and our time in the German school sporting half term activities while collecting leaves, nuts and sticks for our decorative autumn baskets. After all we now have a lot of experience in getting prepared for Halloween and even learned to fly a kite – without wind.

On Thursday, the 6 October, our French class, consisting of about a dozen students, decided to cook some typical French food in the Hort kitchen. Kindly, Madame Bludau bought all of the ingredients beforehand, so we did not have to worry about anything. Our group was going to cook a quiche and an apple cake (Tarte aux pommes), crepes, and Croque Monsieur. It was really interesting to read all of the recipes in French and to translate them into English! After a few mishaps and mini-disasters, we finally managed to bake a quiche and an apple cake, made some crepes and delicious hot chocolate. We all sat together at a big table and ate everything, until our stomachs were so full that we could hardly breathe!

We had sport next and no one could run or even move. However at lunch we ate the tarte, which was delicious. I think we should repeat this, it was so much fun and the food was great, nevertheless we should do it on a day where we don’t have to move anymore afterwards.

On Monday 21st October we had the opportunity to experience a French cooking class in French class. The class was divided into three groups: La cuisine était très amusante. Différents groupes ont dû faire court différentes choses (des crêpes, des tarteux aux pommes ou des quiche). En fin le résultat était savoureux et très délicieux. Une expérience avec la cuisine française! Merci beaucoup, Madame Bludau !

Elke Urban had been living in Leipzig for twenty years and had experienced the lack of freedom in the GDR. During the time leading up to the Peaceful Revolution, when people in Leipzig started to protest against the system, Elke Urban saw the chance for a new school: one, where children wouldn’t be intimidated but be encouraged to form their own opinion and express it without fearing disadvantages; one that would be diverse and also make room for different perspectives on the world. A participant, in Leipzig’s famous Monday demonstrations, she carried a sign that said “Wir wollen freie Schulen” and so leading the call for self-governing schools in Leipzig.

When the fall of the Berlin wall suddenly broadened the horizon and the country’s borders were no longer a dead end but an entrance to the world, founding an international school in Leipzig was the obvious thing to do. Among other things, this was the idea: an international school for Leipzig. In the GDR, one political system had collapsed and now there was room for new ideas. The new system and all its bureaucracy had not yet been fully established. Everything seemed to be possible. “There had never been such freedom before and never has been since. It was just the right time to found a school. The world was now open and there should be a chance for children to be educated in that sense.” It all began on 29 October 1991 at 3.30 pm in a school in Gohlis.

The Leipzig International Choir was founded in 2007 as a parent & teacher choir of LIS under the guidance of conductor Howard Arman, and has since then continually developed into a well integrated part of community life here in Schleuelig. The Bethanienkirche is well-known for its good acoustics and is often used as a recording venue. You will absolutely enjoy this concert. Admission is free.

For more information, please check the school website or contact le@intschool-leipzig.com.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR
Leipzig International Choir
Wednesday, 21 December 2011 at 19:30, Concert at Bethanienkirche, Stieglitzstraße 42, Leipzig-Schleuelig

Leipzig International Choir will be performing La Fiesta de la Posada, a Christmas Oratorio composed by the well known jazz musician Dave Brubeck. Please note the concert date and come for an evening of music on 21 December at 19:30.

The founders still needed money, after 20 years of service to Leipzig International School, founding member Elke Urban has announced yes to the programme dictated from above and implemented by the teacher. They feel the need to belong and understand that their involvement in the programme means adopting a present system of values.

And they feel relief as they depict their experience and understand what it means to have freedom of opinion. Freedom is precious. This is what Elke Urban reminds us of time and again. This is what she told the assembled audience in her keynote speech to the Second Conference on Peace organised by the Stiftung für die Frieden (Institute for Peace). And this is what she wants every child to consciously understand through education.

Elke Urban was honorary in 1995 with the Bundesverdienst Kreuz, Germany’s highest civilian award, for her work in founding independent schools. LIS was one of them and expresses its gratitude to 20 years of visionary leadership that has led to a school with now 680 students and 98 teachers.
Strategic Goals 2012–16: Coming of Age

Complete the growth phase of the school and establish the structures of a mature organisation.

1. Complete the growth phase of the school.
   By 2016, the school will have reached its final size. Over the period we need to complete the programme of investment in the premises and facilities typically associated with first-rate International Schools.
   a. Grow the school to its final size (around 950 children and students)
   b. Complete the building and facilities investment programme (Early Childhood Centre, additional floor on multi-purpose hall, sports fields)
   c. Equip the school with the necessary resources, especially:
      i. Information technology
      ii. Laboratories
      iii. Expand the library into a resource centre at the heart of the school
      iv. Arts facilities (music, performance, visual arts)

2. Create an organisation strong enough to withstand fluctuations in personnel or the economic environment.
   For the past ten years we have enjoyed a favourable economic development in the region and have benefited from consistent personal leadership at Board and Management level. We now need to create structures that ensure the school continues to flourish even if there are changes at Board and school management level and even if there is an economic downturn.
   a. Establish a strong educational management structure, so that changes at leadership level do not impair the continuity of the school.
   b. Prepare for a change in the chairmanship by 2016 by recruiting new Board membership with the capacity to take over the role.
   c. Move to a constitutional model which a) enables the accumulation of financial reserves which will protect the school against future economic downturns, and b) ensures continuity of governance.
   d. Put LIS on a financial footing strong enough to withstand short-term downturns in economic climate.

3. Implement the recommendations resulting from the accreditation process.
   The accreditation process has surfaced and will surface a number of recommendations for improving the quality of the school and its operations. As part of that process, the core objectives and values of the school were reformulated. The recommendations now need to be implemented, and the school’s statement of principles needs to permeate all aspects of the school and its operations.
   a. Maintain our commitment to admitting students from different financial backgrounds even against a background of possibly increasing tuition fees.
   b. Formalise the admissions process to ensure that prospective students fulfil the admission criteria and to ensure that the school can meet the students’ needs.
   c. Devise metrics and reporting thereon to assess the degree to which our core objectives and values are pervading the school and its operations.
   d. Put in place a monitoring system to oversee the implementation of accreditation recommendations.

4. Improve the quality of the educational offering to a level which renders LIS a school of choice for parents and students.
   Many of our results on international benchmark tests and international examinations are already very good. We now want to further strengthen the quality of the educational programme by achieving a clearly articulated international curriculum, unified by the IB Learner Profile at all levels, and delivered through a common approach in line with our Statement of Principles. We want to expand curriculum offerings to cater for a broader range of student needs. We want to expand our non-classroom educational offerings.
   a. Adopt the IB Learner Profile as the framework for all teaching, learning and assessment at LIS.
   b. Formalise and document the curriculum in terms of learning outcomes, and introduce a system to ensure that the same content is delivered at the same grade, irrespective of the teacher from time to time.
   c. Introduce the IB Career-Related Certificate for the more vocationally talented students.
   d. Introduce further foreign language options.
   e. Support every student’s mother tongue development.
   f. Expand offerings in the Arts subjects.
   g. Articulate the developmental curriculum for the Early Childhood Centre.
   h. Significantly increase the quality and quantity of the international and intercultural experiences for students.
   i. Establish partnerships with local institutions to enrich student learning beyond the classroom.
   j. Place stronger emphasis on the development of personal skills.

5. Become an employer of choice for teaching professionals.
   We want to make LIS an employer of choice for teaching professionals who are motivated by more than just money. While the salaries offered need to be competitive, the really selling points for this school need to be the other aspects of job satisfaction: the atmosphere, the quality of the working environment, as well as room for personal growth and professional development. We want to become a professional learning community where working conditions are such that all members of staff can develop their creativity and professionalism.
   a. Maintain sufficiently competitive salary levels.
   b. Improve the other working conditions for the faculty (IT support, administrative support, office space, storage space, teaching space, preparation time, professional development) to a level which is clearly above average for international schools.
   c. Significantly increase the release time for positions of responsibility.
   d. Implement a staff appraisal procedure focused on quality as well as on personal and professional development.

6. Grow the provision of Student Support Services.
   At the heart of our mission is our openness to students of varying academic, linguistic and financial backgrounds. We wish to increase the opportunities for all students to access teaching and learning at LIS. At the same time we need to adjust the admissions process to ensure all students can profit from the educational offerings and that no students are disadvantaged, either by not having their own needs met, or by other students not having their needs met.
   a. Maintain an inclusive admissions policy.
   b. Test extensively for students’ needs before and upon admission.
   c. Extend ESL provision both before and after admission.
   d. Extend the provision of Student Support Services, in particular in the area of Learning Support.
   e. Implement effective practices in each subject area to address the needs of students of exceptionally high ability, achievement and/or talent in that domain.

7. Improve our interaction with the regional community.
   Supporting the regional community is an integral part of our mission. We now want to strengthen our partnerships for learning with parents, with alumni and with the local community.
   a. Strengthen parent participation in their children’s education.
   b. Reach out to the local community to explain our principles and the way in which we put them into practice.
   c. Establish the school as a centre for intercultural understanding and partnership for the community.
   d. Establish strong relationships with local opinion leaders and stakeholders.
   e. Establish a functioning alumni organisation.
   f. Upgrade the website to state-of-the-art.
New Drop-Off Regulations and Routine starting 23 November

A new procedure has been developed collaboratively between parent representatives and administration. Cooperation and courtesy are required to make it work. Please read on.

If you can identify with the cartoon on this page, you may be quite happy to learn that the change starting on Wednesday, 23 November, the morning routine in the parent drop-off area will change.

Why the change?

In the very few years since LIS moved back into the school building at Königstrasse, the student population has increased by 60%, resulting in a much higher density of traffic at drop-off time. Increasingly a “me first” attitude and discourteous parkers – most significantly those parked on the sidewalk – jeopardise the safety of the students coming into and out of the school. Others delay the teachers entering the school grounds by blocking the gate or inhibit the smooth operation of the trams by double parking or by making “creative” turns in the street.

By creating a steady, slow flow of cars in the drop-off area and in front of the school, this problem should be addressed as much as possible within the limitations of our city location.

What is new?

Starting on 23 November, there is absolutely no parking or standing in the drop-off area on the school playground. A short Kiss & Go loop will be created. To make it possible for all the cars to proceed through this loop between 8:00 and 8:30, the time on site must be limited to Kiss and Go.

This means:
- do not turn off your engine,
- do not leave your car,
- do leave the spot for the next car as soon as possible,
- and do turn right when you exit the drop off area. (If you need to travel away from the city on Königstrasse, just drive around the block as shown on the diagram.)

What stays the same?

Two thirds of the area directly on Königstrasse right in front of the school is a drop-off zone. The area is marked by two official ‘short stops only’ traffic signs which indicate that parking is allowed during the indicated times – morning and afternoon. Drivers may make short stops in this area and may get out of their car in order to help children safely onto the sidewalk. However, drivers are expected to remain with their car.

If you wish to bring your child into the building, find parking in a neighbouring street and walk. This is generally easily possible with a foot journey of two blocks.

No car should be parked on the sidewalk; it endangers pedestrians and especially small children not always visible to the driver when maneuvering the car on and off the side walk. Keep in mind that children do not expect to watch out for cars where those are not supposed to be. They believe rightfully that the sidewalk is a safe place to be! So please help us keep the children safe!

Plan International is a global children’s charity which has been operating since 1937 in 48 countries.

Plan international supports needy children by investing in education, medical aid and children’s rights. Not only does the organisation improve the lives of the children, but also living standard of their communities. The organisation is funded with donations and differentiates from UNICEF since the donor is assigned a child to whom letter contact is held.

We have always felt strong about asking people and told my class about Plan International. Together we have organised cakes sales, a sponsoring run and collected donations. We chose Ghana since Africa is a continent which suffers greatly from poverty. It was also clear that we would support a girl, since girls are still seen as less valuable. Since December 2008 my form group has monthly supported Plan International by donating 25 Euros each month. Out of this money, food and other things are paid for.

Our sponsoring child is called Toibatu Issify and is 15 years old. Toibatu lives together with her parents who are both peasant farmers. She attends primary school. The family lives in a house made of unfired mud bricks with a corrugated asbestos roof. She has access to water from a well and a mobile toilet van. In the area Plan International is currently supporting the training of farmers and strengthening children’s rights.

I would like to thank everyone who has donated money and especially the business office for transferring the money each month! Please support Toibatu!

Leine Hack, 11JS, Sponsoring child coordinator

Sponsoring Child in Ghana

Dear Families,

We know how sometimes difficult it can be to settle in a new place and find some personal help with children, for your convenience there is a list of Secondary students at LIS who are doing babysitting. The list mentions the areas of Leipzig where they are available and the languages they speak.

Contact details of babysitters are only available upon personal request to Viane Lindenlaub our Parent community Coordinator.

Dear Parents,

The 21-25 November is Mother Tongue week at LIS. Help us share and celebrate our languages and cultures! There will be after-school events, similar to those that took place last year. You can expect to see activities that encourage language and cultural awareness.

We’d also like to encourage the importance of First Language during the school day. We welcome any parent volunteers who would like to come in and read or share stories about their heritage during Mother Tongue week. If you are interested in being part of this project please contact the Mother Tongue Co-ordinator, Andrea Dumette at andrea.dumette@intschool-leipzig.com.

Thank you for your support!

"There are hundreds of languages in the world, but a smile speaks them all." (Anonymous)

End Grade 2

Teacher for 4 years at LIS

Hannah Hall

got married in USA duringOctober break. Mimi Gardner and Paula Garnham attended and took along best wishes from LIS staff and students.

Ex Grade 2 got married in USA during October break. Mimi Gardner and Paula Garnham attended and took along best wishes from LIS staff and students.

Lena Huck, 11JS, Sponsoring child coordinator

Counsellor’s Corner

Years ago, long before “character education” was a term on everyone’s lips and a proactive in the curriculum of all the US schools, I came across an article with a list of traits that children should ideally learn as they grow and mature into adults.

Traits Teens Should Learn On Their Way to Maturity

Source: Growing Pains, Beth Wisniewski, Los Angeles Times

Responsibility: Realising your actions always have consequences and making yourself accountable for what they are.

Self-control: Stepping to think what is a useful, sustainable response in a given situation instead of just “popping off”.

Looking ahead: Planning your life, not just around today’s pleasures, but in terms of next week, next month, and next year.

Understanding: Learning what others think and why you have a good reason to care.

Motivation: Developing goals in your life, as well as the desire to work hard for them.

Decision-making: Learning to judge a situation and make suitable choices by evaluating both the positives and negatives, including your own values.

Love: Learning to give as well as receive love, and to share closeness and true concern, tenderness and loyalty.

Self-reliance: When you have developed the other traits, you will have enough faith in your own judgment and ability to run your life well, without dependence on your parents or other adults.

Confidence in one’s self as an individual. Mature people value their own selves well enough to believe strongly in their own values and goals. They care what other people think, but not to the point where they can be pressured into behaviour they don’t truly approve of for themselves.

The tricky part about these traits is that they can’t be taught just as school through a character education programme or by teachers. These are the sorts of things that begin and end at home and can only be enhanced and encouraged at school. However, when a child becomes stuck in any of these areas, a school counsellor can help that child find his way through, helping him build and develop these skills and giving the parents ideas on how to encourage this process at home.

Susan McCullough, School Counsellor
World AIDS Day 2011

On 1 December World AIDS Day is held each year. World AIDS Day raises awareness and supports the victims of AIDS. Many campaigns inform people about the horrible disease and fight against stigma. Our school has organised events for this important day for many years. By selling red ribbons and holding assemblies awareness has been created.

A group of student together with Mr. Osthof will organise activities for World AIDS Day this year. Starting on 28 November there will be a display informing students and the community about AIDS. An assembly will be held in the school. Red ribbons will be sold and the money will be donated.

This year a specific project in Zimbabwe will be supported. Orphans’ Edu and Agri Support is an organisation which supports educational opportunities and agricultural incentives in Zimbabwe. Sister Mary Frances Kibes is the Head of the organisation together with her staff members she enables children a life time opportunity. The orphans are enabled to attend school, receive a school uniform and food. Without donations these children would suffer immensely from malnutrition and their access to education would be denied. The organisation has had a lot of success with their programme. Hence, the support orphans have had the chance to get jobs and escape poverty)]

Support this project to get jobs and escape poverty. Please support this project to help these children.

The Fireflies mixed age group started off at the beginning of last school year 2010/11. We had a somewhat rocky start. The group was very challenging at the beginning having PS2 repeats (starting their 2nd school year in Primary School) as well as PS1 children who came new during the school year. The teachers were also new to each other and a common ground for teaching practices and expectations still had to be found. After about half a year things started to get smoother: the group started to come together and the older children began to appreciate the younger children in the group.

It was wonderful to see the children interacting in different situations. The older children were so proud of their status and being able to show off their knowledge or using their skills by leading the younger children. The younger children enjoyed being led by older, more experienced children and were eager to copy them as much as possible. In May, the Firefly teachers passed out a parents’ survey which came back with very positive comments. The group was eager to copy them as much as possible. The Firefly project is a wonderful group enjoying the variety of the children’s abilities, knowledge and maturity. The teachers do feel that they keep on improving their practices, by using their joined knowledge and experience, by not being afraid of trying out new things, and by keeping a close eye on what is happening in class. In this sense we are truly experiencing a very worthwhile ‘learning from each other’ environment.

The drawing shows the working together of a PS1 and PS2 child. Chiara and Anouk helped each other and when Ms. Sisu asked if Chiara could draw the picture she said: “No, but Anouk did the unicorn, because she is so good at it.”

Dynamics of the Earth: Japan

World there are 1511 active volcanoes, 46 of them in Japan. An active volcano is defined as a volcano that has erupted in the Holocene (the last 10,000 years).

If one lives in earthquake, volcano or tsunami hazard zones, one must be aware of the risk that comes with it. It is impossible to predict threats. Nevertheless, the risks can be reduced by the people should always be ready for these. Thus, an arch of volcanoes. Thence, a new country is born. This happens along the plate boundaries and therefore several islands are formed – Japan consists of four main islands and 6800 other small islands. Japan lies from the ocean and thus became a habitable land mass although only 20% of the land is used for industry, agriculture and settlement – especially the coasts. The Japanese islands are among the north western part of the Pacific Rim which is famous for its many volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

A picture from the children working together.

School Garden: Chiundura with Sister Mary Frances Kibes

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What the teachers do notice is that since the beginning of the new school year the children have definitely come together as a wonderful group enjoying the variety of the children’s abilities, knowledge and maturity. The teachers do feel that they keep on improving their practices, by using their joined knowledge and experience, by not being afraid of trying out new things, and by keeping a close eye on what is happening in class. In this sense we are truly experiencing a very worthwhile ‘learning from each other’ environment.

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One of the largest Christmas markets in Germany invites you for a stroll from 22 November through 22 December. Leipzig Christmas market dates all the way back to 1458. Open from 22 November through 22 December, its six areas are set in chime with the fascinating historical scenery of the Leipzig city centre. With more than 250 twinkling stalls embedded harmoniously in the historic centre, Leipzig Christmas market is not only one of the oldest but also one of the most popular and largest Christmas markets in Germany. Visitors are offered a multitude of festive delights: marvel at the world’s largest free-standing Advent calendar; indulge in numerous culinary delights or explore the city’s traditional medieval market. Traditionally, the main area of the Christmas market is Marktplein market square where visitors can marvel at a seasonal Christmas tree as high as twenty meters, and enjoy a wide variety of performances at the market square stage. On Augustusplatz a 38-metre-high Ferris wheel offers seasonal views from a lofty height. The Finnish village on Augustusplatz has become a classic over the years. The enticing scent of smoked salmon and fruity Gögi (a mulled wine made from berries) draws visitors to the Scandinavian tents and stalls. Leipzig Christmas market is also valued for the many pleasures it holds for children. Be it the Fairy Tale Forest on Thomaswiese (grass area in front of St. Thomas) with its many scenes from various fairy tales or the market square stage where kids can meet Santa Claus for a chat, little visitors will definitely enjoy being here. As for grown-ups, there is a wide variety of traditional handicrafts and local food on sale. The world’s largest free-standing Christmas calendar, with its 857 square meters, in Rößchergasse alleyway, is designed by Leipzig schools each year. Every day, one of the huge windows, sized three by two meters, will be opened in front of the marvelling visitors at 4:30 pm from November 1 to 23 (Dec. 24 at 11 am). The historical Christmas Market of “Ancient Leipzig” at the Naumburger square entices visitors with local traditional crafts and art. Dainties such as oven-fresh pretzels, Pulsnitz gingerbread or the very popular red wine punch invite visitors to stay just a little bit longer. Other main attractions include handcrafted Christmas decorations from the Erzgebirge or a large selection of toys, earthware or herbs. Equally, visitors may not want to miss to listen to the traditional performance of the trombonists staged at the balcony of the Old Town Hall (daily at 6 pm, on Saturdays and Sundays at 1 pm and at 6 pm).