Play & Learning Newsletter

6th -10th January 2025

Weather, frozen, ice, melting, frost, blowing, gale, breeze, strong, gentle, direction

Wonder words to use with your child:

It has been so lovely to see all of your little ones faces again after the Christmas break. They have returned with enthusiasm and full of all they did during their holidays.

Well, this week has been a perfect week to focus on ‘Weather’. We’ve experienced the full force of the rain, wind and icy weather and all that January has to offer – with a lovely bit of sunshine at the end of the week. During afternoon group times they have spent time talking about different weather and if they like/dislike it and why (great for language development), voting on their favourite weather type and comparing it to friend’s favourites (prompting mathematical talk and thinking) They have loved observing the properties of ice and exploring while playing with it.

We have also read different ‘weather’ stories to widen our understanding of the weather further, with Jack Frost by Kazuno Kohara and The Wind Blows by Pat Hutchins. These stories have been great for prompting talk about how the weather effects the environment and the children recalling and reflecting upon their experiences of it.

This week the home corner was turned into a cookie shop with biscuit of all shapes plus loose parts to inspire creations. There has been lots of lovely co-operative play amongst the children using these resources and some great mathematical skills being used naturally within their play. Couple this with the tray of dried pasta /oats in the top room with various tubs and containers with spoons and serving spoons there has been LOTS of wonderful mathematical talk and thinking going on this week!

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** The Flying Fish have used the Sound Box to find out about the sound ‘s’, exploring objects that begin with this sound and learning the action that goes with the sound. Recognising the actual letter is not important at this stage in their development, we only introduce it as an aside; the main focus and intention is to tune their ears into hearing the initial sound that a word begins with. This is a very tricky skill and takes LOTS of practice (months and months of it sometimes) so do not worry at all if your child struggles with it – they are in the process of acquiring the skill and it is very unusual if they can do it instantly!

The Starfish have spent time listening to the stories One windy Wednesday and Soggy Saturday by Phyllis Root. They started learning the weather song and linking it to the stories that we have been reading. Learning a new song (and actions) is actually great for encouraging listening and attention skills plus developing new vocabulary – whilst also working those memories.

 **Out & About sessions:** We decided to let the children settle back in this week as we have had 3 new star fish children attend their stay and play sessions with us.

|  |
| --- |
| Ideas to support your child at home: Us Brits love to talk about the weather – so why not use it to your advantage in supporting your child’s language skills? Having a chat about what the weather is like each day, introducing them to different weather words (dependent you’re your child’s age and stage) – like *blustery, showers, drizzle, gale force, dreary , ‘blowing a hooley’ etc.,* are all unusual words in a little one’s language experience. Using them with your child will help to widen that vocabulary bank which ultimately benefits their future success at school.  |