Play & Learning Newsletter

13th – 17th January 2025

Same, different, similar, favourite, more than, less than, fewer, cookies, share, divide, fair, unfair

Wonder words to use with your child:

After all the playing with empty biscuit boxes and pretend biscuits last week, we decide to use the rather old story of ‘The Doorbell rang’ by Pat Hutchins. None of the children had ever heard the story before – and they all loved it! It’s a very simple story but involves lots of mathematical thinking and problem solving which has been ideal for the stage of development that the Flying Fish children are at and for introducing concepts to the Starfish children. It’s also great for developing listening skills too as the children have to listen out for the words of ‘then the doorbell rang’ and make the relevant noise. You can imagine how much they loved doing that! We have spent lots of time sharing our cookies between different amounts of people and using our ‘subitising’ skills to help us do this efficiently.

Thank you so much for all of the cardboard boxes and contents of your recycling boxes this week! The children have used them in all sorts of creative ways – from creating their own models (they have such amazing ideas!) to using the resources in their games to add to the action or as props. So much masking tape has been used too – we are off to Poundland at the weekend to purchase some more! Using all this tape has been great for developing children’s finger muscles plus enabling them to be independent in their creation projects.

The top room has been filled with our large wooden blocks from outside alongside our inside large wooden shaped blocks, tools, hi viz jackets and hard hats. We have been encouraging working together as a team especially when moving the long heavy planks and the heavier big blocks, paying attention to how to move them safely. When they have built a structure, we encourage them to make sure it’s safe and make any adjustments they think may help. It’s been a great opportunity for problem solving and team work.

This week we introduced ‘Baking Buddies’ back. Every week a few children get to bake goodies for the pre-school crew who are in that day. The idea behind it is that the children feel good about doing a kind deed for their friends – and that everyone else appreciates the kind deed that they have done. When we ran this activity previously we noticed how the children grew in self-confidence and fostered a sense of appreciation and cheer among the children.

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** The Flying Fish have started to focus on the ‘p’ sound, working out which items in the sound box had been put in to trick them. They have also been thinking about the initial letter sound of their names and animals which begin with the same sound.

Describing and choosing different types of (pretend) biscuits has been the stimulus for supporting the Starfish children’s language skills. They have also been singing a biscuit song, listening in to the description of which biscuit to choose.

 **Out & About sessions:** We have had four out and about sessions this week. We have focused on throwing and catching skills as well as using our self-control through a variety of games that promoted both skills. We did this by visiting the astro turf once and the little beach twice ( once with the Ofsted inspector ! ) Also Mondays out and about to Harbour House was very much enjoyed by all – they made owls in pairs with the residents and really demonstrated their concentration and attention skills while doing so.

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| Ideas to support your child at home: *This week the Baking Buddies made banana bread – a very easy recipe which young children can do almost independently, plus it contains a very low amount of sugar! Our recipe is egg, dairy and nut free so everyone was able to enjoy it. Taking part in cooking supports so many skills for young children – listening and following instructions, maths, science, physical and learning about food. Plus it’s always something that they are very motivated to do! Here’s the banana bread recipe if your child fancies making them at home with you:**3 very ripe bananas**50g light brown sugar**300g SR flour**100g sultanans**1tsp mixed spice**1tsp baking powder**150ml oil such as rapeseed or vegetable** *Preheat oven to 180 or 160 fan*
* *Grease and line a loaf tin*
* *Mash the bananas and then add the sugar and oil and mix well*
* *Add all remaining ingredients flour, sultanas, mixed spice and baking powder and mix well.*
* *Pour into the prepared loaf tin and bake for 45 – 55 min until a skewer comes out a little moist but clean.*
* *Cool 10 minutes in the tin and then remove and cool completely before slicing. Can be served with butter on! Mmmm and enjoy.*
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