Play & Learning Newsletter

14th – 18th Feb 2022

**Dinosaur, digger, excavator, Valentine, plan, construct, heart**

Wonder words to use with your child:

The week set off with a focus on Valentine’s Day and what it means and we had lots of lovely discussions about who they children would like to give Valentine cards to, ranging from pets to friends to grandparents in particular. Making their own cards was a great opportunity for developing those mark making skills and many children now understand that marks hold significance which is an essential first step in their understanding of the concept of writing. All those little lines and wiggles you see drawn over their pictures and paper mean something to them and is their first attempt at ‘writing’ and not to be dismissed!

Dinosaurs are always a very popular interest in the pre-school and this year’s crew are no exception to that! We have used the story ‘Dinosaur Dig’ to develop mathematical skills with the children. With all of the children we are encouraging them to use their fingers to represent the number of things they can see. Starting with just 1-3 with the very young ones and moving to up to 10 with our older flying fish. Lots of research has recently been done on the foundations skills that children need to become successful mathematicians – and one of them is competent use of their fingers for number representation. We have played a fun game which helps with this too – will post an example on facebook so you can play it at home. The Flying Fish have also done lots of exploring of 5 frames, another great way to help them develop a deep understanding of the quantity of 5 and all the variations within it.

Other highlights this week have included the filling of the planters with wheelbarrows and tools. We have such hardworking members of our pre-school crew who happily filled and emptied all morning long such was their focus on getting the planters completed! Props to re-enact the Dinosaur Dig story in the sand tray, fantastic wooden block construction and big box fun have also been popular play and learning opps as well.

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** *The Flying Fish have been practising initial sound identification with a version of ‘I Spy’. W also had fun recognising long and short words (by hearing them) as we played a game with dinosaur names (ideal for this concept) and comparing them with their own.*

*The Starfish have really enjoyed moving their bodies to the rhythm (a great activity for developing listening skills) whilst moving to some different Dinosaur Stomp songs. Even the most reluctant dancer has been grooving!*

 **Out & About sessions:** No Out & Abouts this week due to staffing as Lou and Rachel were updating their first aid certificates with a two day paediatric course, and poor Nat has gone down with covid! Really hoping next half term will be better staffing wise!

|  |
| --- |
| Ideas to support your child at home: All children should have gone home with a Spring Detective sheet to complete over the half term holiday – a good reason to get out in the fresh air (maybe not on Friday though!) and encourage your child to notice the changes in nature. If you could make sure that your child brings it back in after the hols and if you happen to take any photos of them doing it please do ping them across to us via What’s App. Thank you.  |