Play & Learning Newsletter

20th - 224thth January 2025 Wonder words to use with your child:

**Dinosaur, digger, excavator, stomp, plan, construct, herbivore, carnivore, prehistoric**

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 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.

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 Props to re-enact the Dinosaur Dig story in the sand tray in the rock pool and in the top room and in the rock pool area.

Big bird watch

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** *The Flying Fish have been practising initial sound identification with metal mike, the sound box and our cross the river game. We recapped p and s sounds and introduced t sound and action. We 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!* The Starfish have developed their language skills and vocabulary around the dinosaur story, plus have been singing lots of dinosaur songs with actions; encouraging attentive listening so they know which action to do when.

 **Out & About sessions:** We made some lovely wooden dinosaurs at harbour house in pairs and demonstrated very thoughtful careful work. We have also been palaeontologists digging for fossils at the little beach twice this week with our new large diggers. The children made some fantastic discoveries and really enjoyed it. It really sparked their curious nature and imaginations.

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| Ideas to support your child at home: Getting out in the fresh air and encouraging your child to notice the changes in nature during the different seasons provides lots of conversation starters.eg The trees are already starting to grow buds in preparation for spring time. When the weather is suitable try and go on a bird watch with the sheets we sent home or observe the birds in your garden. The RSPB have the big bird watch this weekend if you want to join in.Mindfulness when out can be a lovely calming activity for children such as tuning in and noticing the breeze, sounds and sensations around us with a listening moment is great for our mental health and helping us feel calm. It can help us learn to slow down, pay attention to the present moment and develop better focus and self-awareness. Mindfulness breathing activities can particularly help impulsivity and restlessness and give a feeling of calm and contentment.  |