Play & Learning Newsletter

9th-13th January 2023

Weather, raindrops, sunshine, hurricane, pouring, drizzling, force, direction

Wonder words to use with your child:

Well, this week has been a perfect week to focus on ‘Weather’. We’ve experienced the full force of the rain and wind that January has to offer – with a little bit of sunshine thrown in for a few minutes (literally!) on Thursday afternoon. Learning all of our Jolly January evening songs has been a great way to get the children thinking and talking about the different conditions we experience in Cornwall. 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) and observing and exploring the effects of wind and rain through using a rain gauge and ribbons to work out wind direction. SNOW came out as the most favourite weather which is interesting given how little (if any) experience of snow the children have had. It just goes to show the impact of stories and films/programmes/Christmas has upon little one’s minds!

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 cake shop with recipe books, a till, playdough and 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 measuring resources in the glittery water tray and there has been LOTS of wonderful mathematical talk and thinking going on this week!

The Starfish (and Flying Fish on quieter days) have LOVED the dinosaur shredded paper world in the Rock Pool area. The adults may have been wondering why on earth we decide it was a good idea to use shredded paper (it has literally been found in every part of the pre-school!) but it has been a great resource for inspiring weather play with snow and rainstorms for the dinosaurs to experience 😊.

 ***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 learning the new weather songs and linking them to 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. They have been loving singing the songs – although will no doubt not sing any at all on the Jolly January evening!

 **Out & About sessions:** The weather has not been conducive to Out & Abouts this week but we did manage a trip to our new allotment on Tuesday morning. The Parish Council have very kindly given us one of the allotment plots in the gardens at the beginning of Lighthouse Hill. It is perfect for our crew and we are really looking forward to planning how to use it with them over the next few months. If anyone has any spare seeds or gardening equipment we would really appreciate it. This week we focused on pulling up the weeds!

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| 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.  |