Play & Learning Newsletter

9th -13th Dec 2024

Pine tree, baubles, tinsel, pine needles, spiky, advent calendar, decorate

Wonder words to use with your child:

Christmas truly arrived at pre-school this week! We have focused on the hot topic of Christmas trees as we knew that many of the children had got theirs up at home already and so had lots to say on the subject 😊. We have used the book ‘Pick a Pine Tree’ by Patricia Toht; a lovely book which goes through the process of how a pine tree turns into a Christmas tree. It has prompted lots of talk and conversations between the children about their own trees, where they got them from, if they are artificial or real and all the wonderful things they have decorated them with – great for providing opportunities for the children to think about similarities and differences between themselves and their friends.

The story inspired some wonderful small world play and many of the children used wooden blocks, mug and threading trees, wooden trucks and little people to re-enact their own experiences of tree buying/decorating and also that of the events of the book. Laces were used as tinsel and some imaginative use of other resources to make baubles. Wonderful play to watch!

Possibly the most exciting thing to happen all week though was the arrival of Elvis the Elf, fresh from the North Pole, to learn how to be kind and caring, just like the children are to everyone in the pre-school crew. He has brought us a lovely Christmas book each day to read and our collection is growing fast.

Other highlights this week have included lots of elf and Santa play with costumes, wrapping paper and lots (and lots!) of tape (great practice for those fine motor skills, although we have lost many things this week only to discover them ‘wrapped up’ in oodles of paper and tape 😊!),

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** The Flying Fish have continued with their focus on hearing and matching words beginning with the same sounds, playing Christmas themed games to provide opportunities for practising this skill.

The Starfish have spent time exploring the contents of a Christmas bag which is full of decorations and other Christmas related goodies. The children have been learning the names for these objects whilst also investigating how they feel and smell, all the time developing their growing vocabulary banks.

 **Out & About sessions:** This week we were able to take many of the children out to walk up and visit the reindeer at Gwel an Mor. The children had a job to do when they got there - telling the reindeer not to forget to pick Elvis up on Christmas Eve! They spent ages watching them and talking about the different parts of their bodies, wondering about why one reindeer only no antlers and which, of the three, was their favourite and why. We also spent time watching the goats too – which were equally as fascinating!

We also had two visits to Harbour House this week where we played Christmas bingo with the residents. The second visit was very special as zoo lab brought along some very interesting animals and told us lots of interesting facts about them. We met Tank the glowing scorpion, Luna the corn snake, Twiggy the Asian stick insect and Gary the giant African snail. The children got to hold and stroke many of them and they were incredibly gentle and asked very thoughtful and interesting questions.

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| Ideas to support your child at home: If you have any spare wrapping paper at home let your child use it for pretend wrapping of presents, maybe using a large sock as a stocking, to inspire Santa role play. If your child is one of the younger members of pre-school, encourage them to say what each present is and who it is for. The older children could pretend to write labels on the present – they will usually make a few marks (lines and squiggles – don’t expect any readable letters at this stage). Encourage them to say what they have written, so they feel that the marks they have made have a purpose – a really important concept for young children to grasp.  |