Play & Learning Newsletter

10th – 14th February 2025

**Happy, sad, excited, lonely, friendly, calm, worried, nervous, angry, confused ,Love**

Wonder words to use with your child:

This week we have been focusing on ‘feelings’ through the book The Colour Monster by Anna Llenas. This is a great book for supporting children in understanding and identifying different emotions and we will be using it as a starting point to talk about feelings. Research shows that children are more able to regulate their emotions if they are able to identify what they are feeling – this is an important first step in self-regulation and also in paving the pathway to a healthy mind in future life. Our pre-school children have demonstrated the beginnings of ‘reflection’ and great language skills as they have talked about times that they have felt these feelings.

We have used puppets to act out different scenarios such as two puppets wanting the same toy and encouraged the children to identify how the puppets might be feeling and coming up with ways to solve the problem. What’s the right thing to do? How could they solve the problem? How might this help the puppets? They are incredibly good at coming up with ideas when they are sat back and observing and they can start to use these strategies themselves during their interactions with others.

The week finished 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. It also tied in beautifully with the colour monster story this week and exploring the feeling of love. 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!

Baking buddies used shapes to make some delicious valentine treat for their friends this week. Baking is still a very enjoyed and popular activity. Children who are not cooking eagerly ask what is being baked with great excitement.

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:***

The Flying fish children have been reviewing the s,a,t,p sounds again this week with lots of different games. We have also done physical Practice of handwriting with the anticlockwise movement (as in writing a c), starting with doing it in the air very large, to then getting smaller and smaller, and then doing it with large movements on trays with shaving form or paint and their fingers.

The Starfish have been singing the song ‘If you are happy and you know it’, and thinking about how we can show other feelings. ‘If you angry and you know it stamp your feet.’ If your calm and you know it ….. We have also shared the colour monster story and other stories like pip and posy to explore emotions further.

**Out & About sessions:** We have taken two more groups on the climbing challenge in Illogan woods this week. They really loved this challenge, encouraged and supported each other and worked as a team to carry large sticks. We are very proud of them.

We also played a lovely target number game with the residents at Harbour House this week which was really fun and everyone loved cheering and ooing and ahhing when someone scored 100! Eileen managed to build up the biggest score overall and the children happily clapped and congratulated her win.

Ideas to support your child at home:

Talk about feelings with your child – support them in understanding that no emotion is a ‘bad’ one. Children need to understand that they are not wrong for feeling a certain emotion, e.g. anger, and that all of us experience that emotion at times. Our role as adults is to model and teach them what is the best thing to do when they feel that emotion, whilst being realistic of their age and personality.

Being open and talking about feelings now (even ones like anger, jealousy) with your little one will pay dividends later when they are teenagers as they will be used to being able to open up about how they feel with you and knowing that they will not be judged – essential for good mental health.