**Pre-school Play and Learning Newsletter for 7th – 11th January 2019**

A warm welcome back to everyone and a smiley ‘hello’ to the new little people and their families who are joining our pre-school crew!

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

The children have settled back into the pre-school routine very smoothly and been full of chatter about their Christmases and favourite presents. This week we have talked a lot about our ‘favourite’ of different things. This is a topic the children love to discuss and even the most reluctant talker will add their opinion during conversations about ‘favourites’. We have been encouraging them to see how they share similar/different ‘favourites’ with their friends, and that more than one person can like the same thing (a tricky concept for developing minds to understand). We have introduced our **Wonder Words board** where each week we will have focus vocab that we will be using with the children with the aim that it will help extend their vocabulary bank. This week the words have been – ***favourite, similar and different***. It’s lovely to hear these being used by the children in conversation and questions with each other.

We have been observing the peeking shoots of the sprouting daffodil bulbs with much excitement and the children have been predicting what will happen next to them.

During the holidays we rearranged the layout of the playroom and it has been interesting to observe the effect it has had on the children. They have suddenly started utilising certain areas in the room more frequently than before and - very interestingly – the boys have started to engage in mark making more frequently!

**Out & About sessions:** We had two sessions this week at Portreath Primary School’s Outdoor Area. We focused on working as a team to get Rebekah from the island (a tree trunk) to her house (the shed) without falling in the crocodile infested water. It was a long distance and the children had to search further and further to find resources they could use. There was much ‘high five-ing’ and cheers when the last stepping stones were laid so she could reach home safely. Challenges such as this help develop their levels of willingness to ‘keep going’ – such an important attitude to have in all areas of life.

**Sounds and Letters/language focus:**

The Flying fish reviewed the letter sounds we focused on last term by playing The Islands game, where they have to ‘swim’ to either the p or s island depending on the object they are holding. We will be introducing further letter sounds over the next few weeks, focusing the children’s listening skills on identifying the initial sound that a word begins with. They have also played games with magnetic letters to create their names, counting how many letters they have in their name, putting them in the correct order and matching letters to their name cards. This will help them with remembering the letters in their name when they come to write it.

Louise has focused on encouraging the Starfish children to talk confidently to the other children about their favourite Christmas presents and to listen to what their friends are saying. She has also been reading stories and playing musical instruments, again encouraging them to express which is their favourite, counting how many children like a particular thing.

**Ideas to support your child at home:**

* Talk about ‘favourites’ with your child. Discuss what their favourite colour/food/page in a book/ thing to wear/toy is and encourage them to ask you and other family members what theirs is. With the older children ask them ‘Why’ something is their favourite so they begin to explain their preferences. Use the words ‘similar/different’ when having conversations together and you are comparing things/opinions.