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

\*Our wonder words this week have been: combine harvester, thieves, chute,

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

 This week we have focused on farming and harvest time, as many of our younger children are very into farm vehicles and animals. We have shared information books about tractors and combine harvesters and watched footage of combines in action. This has been great for encouraging language with the children talking about what they can see and practitioners modelling and introducing new words, such as ‘header’, ‘reel’ and ‘threshing’. Next week we will be introducing the ‘Big, Red Combine Harvester’ song which contains some of the words we have introduced this week so listen out for versions of this during next week.

We have focused on the story of ‘What the Ladybird Heard’ and will be continuing with this next week. Our builders tray has been set up as the Farm that this story takes place on and it has been interesting to see and hear how the children have used it to tell the story, particularly the parts which they seem to remember the most!

 All the children have particularly enjoyed the Farm Shop roleplay area with real onions, potatoes, parsnips, swedes and squashes. They have practiced their maths skills by counting out the correct number of wooden pennies, listening to and followed customers requests for a specific number of vegetables and writing shopping lists to take to the shop.

A large basket of assorted squashes has provided lots of interest this week and encouraged some wonderful describing words, plus lots of talk about which is the heaviest/lightest, biggest and smallest. The balancing scales have been great for supporting this understanding of weight.

 The Rock Pool area had a ‘sand run’ in it this week which has helped support the Starfish children’s sharing and turn taking skills whilst they explored with friends where the balls and sand would travel to. Turn taking and sharing are often tricky skills to master but often improve with direct teaching and modelling.

**Out & About sessions:**  Yay! We managed an Out & About to the little beach, in the sunshine, on Thursday morning. We went with a maths focus in mind and initially started off by creating a seaside number line. However, the discovery of crabs claws, a whole crab and then a lobster proved far more interesting with the children being fascinated by the different body parts of these creatures plus whether they were alive or dead.

 **Sounds and Letters/language focus:**

Rhyming has been the name of the game this week with the Flying Fish – with our all time favourites ‘Silly Soup’ and ‘Rhyming Names’ being played. Both games encourage rhyme recognition and creation, thereby developing their auditory and verbal phonic skills.

The Starfish have been singing the Farm Sound Song’ which involves them picking animals and making the correct sound for that animal. This helps support their articulation of sounds, plus their ability to copy exactly what they have heard (which supports their auditory memory). Simple but effective!

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

* It is completely normal if your little one is struggling with the concept of sharing and turn taking. Modelling these skills yourself often helps them begin to develop the idea that sharing and turn taking is something we all do and has to be done. You can do this by pretending not to share with another adult and making a big fuss about it (and the other adult pretending to get upset). Ask your child if you’ve done the right thing. Let them explain what you should do. Model the thought processes we have to say to ourselves when we share or take turns and don’t want to e.g. “I really don’t want to share playing with the ball with him . . . I know that if I do then he will fell happy. . . If he feels happy then that will make me happy. Sharing makes people feel happy.” Or with turn taking – “I don’t want anyone else to have this toy. It’s just mine! Oh dear but Granny isn’t very happy, she wants to play with it too. I want her to be happy too. Maybe we could take it in turns. She can have a go and then I can have a go. Granny feels happy now and so do I”. Using a timer for a set amount of time often helps with turn taking, plus lots of praise for when they WAIT for their turn.
* The Flying Fish have really enjoyed playing Rhyming Names. You can practice this at home by making up silly rhymes to go with each of your names, e.g. “Mummy, Rummy, Tummy” or “Teddy, Eddy, Neddy”.