**Pre-school Play and Learning Newsletter for 9th – 13th December 2019**

**Advent calendar, baubles, tinsel, label, delivery**

Wonder words to use with your child:

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

The children have greatly enjoyed the Santa’s Workshop role play area where they have been able to create presents from junk modelling, write and post cards (plus other odd items – we’ve found all sorts inside the post box! 😊) and (the most favoured activity of all) wrap up items to their hearts content! They have had to work out if they have cut a large enough piece of paper to wrap their presents, use their fine motor skills to cut the paper and masking tape, and also practiced mark making with the labels they have written. It has also inspired lots of Santa and elf role play.

Creating and decorating Christmas cakes has been the focus in the sand tray where the children’s mathematical skills have been developed through pattern making, counting amounts of pom poms and shells and following instructions about capacity.

The Starfish have LOVED our new food resources (purchased with some of our fundraising money) and used them all week in their kitchen role play area. Although we believe in the power of ‘loose parts’ to support the children’s imaginative play, the very young children sometimes need items which look like the thing they are pretending them to be in order to begin the concept of imaginative role play. We had found that the Starfish kitchen area wasn’t being used very much by these younger children, but the addition of these new resources has completely changed that! One of the great things about imaginative role play is that it always fosters connection with others so lots of lovely social skills and language has also been observed in their play this week.

**Out & About sessions:** The weather and the time needed for the creation of Christmas arts and crafts has meant no proper Out & Abouts this week. We have managed visiting St Mary’s Church however to practice our Christmas song session.

**Sounds and Letters/language focus:** This week has been all about the singing! The adults have been singing the Christmas songs and leaving the words off the ends of lines and the children have been filling them in. This encourages listening skills plus supports rhyming awareness.



The Starfish have also been talking about different Christmas items, developing their vocabulary and understanding about what different objects are used for.

**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.