**Pre-school Play and Learning Newsletter for 18th –21st March 2019**

\*Our wonder words this week have been: **Holi, colourful, blend, plus our house words from last week \***

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

The children have continued to enjoy the focus on homes and houses. This week there has been lots of talk about what sort of house they would have if they could build anything they liked. Swimming pools and telescopes have been many children’s dream criteria! They have continued to use our variety of blocks to create homes and buildings, with some amazing constructions and lovely team work seen. The addition of a set of photos depicting some of the famous buildings from around the world (e.g. The Eiffel Tower, The Colosseum in Rome, The Great Wall of China) have also inspired some super creations.

Wednesday was the festival of Holi, and so we introduce the children to this colourful festival through watching the cbeebies programme ‘Let’s celebrate’ and through information books. The children were very interested – particularly in the throwing powdered paint at each other element of it! Instead of throwing it at each other they got the chance to throw it on huge pieces of cardboard outside. They worked together to paint the boards with water first and then sprinkled and threw powder paint to create beautiful colourful images. Exploration, language and observation skills were used in bucketful’s plus lots of team spirit – a lovely experience for all involved.

This week’s Baking Buddies measured out the correct weights of ingredients to make cheese straws. They talked about how to make them into rectangular shapes and how we’d know they were rectangles. It was a very easy recipe which the children could do almost completely unaided. The recipe is included on this email or can be found on our website under our ‘Healthy Under 5’s section.

**Out & About sessions:** We have been introducing simple mindfulness activities at pre-school and the children got to practice some of these in this week’s Out & About session at the stream and viewing area in the Gwel an Mor Woods. Stopping for a moment and noticing the beauty around us is such a simple but effective calming strategy for the brain and one that children are often better at then us adults!

 **Sounds and Letters/language focus:** This week the Flying Fish children have been practising the skill of ‘blending’ and ‘segmenting’ the sounds in cvc words (consonant-vowel-consonant words, e.g. hat, pig, top). This is all to do with listening skills and they are becoming really good at tuning in and hearing the word being said.

The Starfish have continued to use the photos of their houses to talk about how they are the same/different to their friends. They have also used the wooden blocks to build their houses, talking about the shapes they need to use to create them.

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

* *Try making the cheese straw recipe included with this email. Let your child have a go at doing all the different stages of it. Use the action words of ‘measuring’, ‘weighing’, ‘rubbing in’, ‘grating’, ‘binding’, ‘rolling’, ‘cutting’ as your child has a go at the physical skill. Let them decide which shapes they would like to cut the dough into. For very young children use the words round/long to talk about the shape. With the older ones use shape names and words like straight/circular. This activity will really support the growth of your child’s vocabulary banks – plus produce some yummy treats!*