**Pre-school Play and Learning Newsletter for 1st – 5th April 2019**

\*Our wonder words this week have been: **Springtime, blossom, buds, stems, petals, tadpoles, frogspawn\***

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

We continued to focus on Springtime this week and have shared stories and information books about the changes this season brings. The children have also enjoyed learning a new song about eggs and chicks, which has practised their counting skills and provided opportunities for simple problem solving (e.g. How many chicks are there? How many eggs? How many altogether? How many chicks are left to hatch? How many will there be when they all hatch?).

Thank you very much to all the parents who brought in flowers for their children to use in our Japanese printing project. The concentration that was used to hammer the flowers with a proper hammer was amazing. They had to really focus on hammering in the right place and making sure they didn’t bump the adult’s fingers. Pulling off the squished flower used fine motor skills and the joy in seeing the result of their efforts was very evident. The material is up on display if you would like to come in and see what we created.

We have also been giving the children opportunities to practice their ability to ‘self- regulate’ – a very tricky skill for most young children. Self-regulation refers to processes that affect the ability to control responses and has huge effects on a child’s (or adult’s!) ability to tolerate unmet wants or needs, handle disappointments and failures and work towards success. We have been playing games which enable to children to practice the skills needed to calm those impulsive behaviours, control emotions and begin to learn the concept of ‘self-control’. We’ve had particular fun playing one involving working as a team with a partner to get a bean bag to a set place using only their tummies/shoulders/backs. A lovely way to encourage team work and cooperation, both areas that require lots of self-control!

**Out & About sessions:** We were only able to get Out & About on Friday this week due to weather and staffing restrictions. The children made a great mud slide which they used to slide into a very shallow part of the stream – it was lots of fun! We have sent home a nature trail with all the children for you to do in the Easter hols. It would be lovely if every family could go for their own ‘Out & About’ adventure to hunt for the signs of spring – and also complete our Easter Egg Hunt for a chance to win Easter goodies (maps available from The Hub, HQ Surf Shop, Base Camp at Gwel an Mor and the post office in Portreath). 

 **Sounds and Letters/language focus:** Flying Fish children have played a fun bingo game with Metal Mike the robot, which has practiced their blending and segmenting of CVC words. Their listening skills have developed so well with regards to hearing what the word is and this will greatly aid them when they get to school and begin the process of learning to read.

The Starfish have enjoyed using different songs to tune into specific words. Our ‘5 Shiny Eggs’ song has practiced their ability to wait for certain words to use wood blocs to tap out little chicks tapping their eggs. Activities such as this are supporting the skills they will need to develop their phonic awareness.

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

* Use everyday situations to provide opportunities for your children to use their counting skills to solve simple problems.

E.g. Laying the table for tea – we all need a fork each so how many forks will we need to put on the table?

How many socks do I need to get out the drawer to put on your toes?

You’ve got 8 grapes on your plate. If you eat 2 of them how many will you have left?

Who has got the most strawberries in their bowl?

We need to put socks on you and your brother/sister/me. How many will I have to get out of the drawer?

How many stairs do we have to climb up to get to the top?

*Involving counting in simple every day, practical problem solving will give your child a much better grasp of number and the foundation of addition and subtraction skills.*

* We hope you have wonderful Easter holidays and that the weather is good enough for you to be Out & About in the great outdoors! Please do support our Easter Egg Hunt fundraiser by purchasing a map from The Hub, HQ Surf Shop (by the beach carpark), Base Camp at Gwel an Mor or the Post Office in Portreath. We hope you have fun doing it!