**Pre-school Play and Learning Newsletter for 23rd – 27th September 2019**

\*Our wonder words this week have been: chef, favourite, waitress, waiter, prefer

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

This week has been all about food – and in particular our likes, dislikes and favourites. The children have all enjoyed using tally charts to ask their friends and the adults about which particular foods they like the best. This has been a very popular activity and there have been many moments during the week where six or so children have been observed walking around the playroom with clipboards and pens in hand, in conversation with others whilst busy mark making on their very important pieces of paper – lovely to see! The tally charts have been great for practising their counting skills and encouraging them to realise that the amount counted tells us about which is the most favourite food of that day’s children.

Mark making has also been a focus in our Café role play area, with the children enjoying taking orders, deciding whether to be a chef, waiter/waitress or customer, selecting food and drink from the menus and counting out plates, cups and pennies to pay for their bills. Lots of great role play language and listening skills observed.

Last week the children decided that they wanted to use the tomatoes we had grown in the pre-school garden to make tomato sauce for pasta. They have been busy picking ripe tomatoes and pulling up carrots all last week so that we had enough to make sauce for everyone. Every child has contributed to the sauce making, from washing the vegetables to peeling the onions and garlic (and discovering that onions make you cry!), snipping the basil with scissors or chopping the tomatoes in half – a real team effort! We hope they enjoyed tasting the end result at home. The recipe (a very rough one!) is at the end of the newsletter should you wish to make it at home too.

**Out & About sessions:**  The weather has not helped us in the bid to get Out & About this week. Although we aim to get out whatever the weather the children are not so keen when it’s wet and windy. We are hoping the weather may be kinder to us next week.

 **Sounds and Letters/language focus:**

This week the Flying Fish children have taken part in games which continue to focus on developing the fine tuning of their listening skills. The ‘Shake It’ game has 4 see through bottles each containing something different - water, sand, pebbles and paperclips. The children take it in turns to shake a bottle from behind a divider and the others listen and then decide which bottle it was. You’d be amazed how different each one sounds – but subtly! Great for encouraging the children to really concentrate on what they can hear. Our other game has focused on listening to descriptions of food and guessing which one we are talking about, with the children also having a go at describing them too.

The Starfish have been focused on talking about the foods they love and dislike using props to stimulate and support their language skills. This has also been great for encouraging them to listen to one another (tricky when you are only two) and respond to what they hear their friends saying.

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

* Children love helping with cooking of any kind and you can support their development of so many skills through the process of cooking something together. Why not have a go at the Pre-school Pasta Sauce?

**Method for making Pre-school’s Pasta Sauce**:

Tomatoes – cut in half *(children can use a spreading knife to do this)*

Carrots – *(ours were little and had the green leafy part on them still which the children enjoyed pulling off)*

Red onion – peeled, chopped into quarters and segments *(peeling onions and garlic is great for building up finger muscle skills – essential for holding pens correctly)*

2 cloves of garlic – peeled

Place all of these in a large roasting tin with a little oil.

Roast in an oven for 45 mins.

Transfer contents of roasting tin to saucepan, add ½ tin of chopped toms and as much fresh basil as you like *(the children used scissors to snip the leaves up).*

Blitz with a blender, and then heat up when ready for the pasta. Enjoy!!