**Pre-school Play and Learning Newsletter for 27th – 31st January 2020**

**Dragon, fierce, mighty, rescued, reward, feast**

Wonder words to use with your child:

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

The children’s interest and fascination with dragons from last week has rolled into this week with us working as a team to create our very own Chinese dragon head, dragon role play in the pre-school castle, and lots of fun and language work with dragon stories.

Great collaborative work has produced a very fierce looking dragon who has been named ‘Ruby the Red Dragon’ by the children. On Friday we had a carnival dance with a rhythmic beat played by our band and a swaying, dancing dragon parading with a team of children working together to help make it move. Lots of laughter and smiles and a real sense of how a carnival might feel.

We always try to incorporate stories into the week’s learning and play experiences and this week we had two fantastic ones which have really captured the children’s imaginations around their interest of dragons. The Starfish have spent all week immersed in an alternative version of ‘We’re going on a Bear Hunt’ – a dragon hunt instead! Mel painstakingly changed each picture in the real version of the Bear Hunt so that the book became a dragon version – and the children loved it! They have used story bottles to help retell the story and have also been on a real dragon hunt using different resources. Their enthusiasm and imagination in talking about and telling the story has been lovely to observe and it has prompted some great language development.

The Flying Fish have spent the week with the book ‘George and the Dragon’ by Chris Wormell, a lovely story about a fierce and mighty dragon and a little mouse called George. The children have loved the story since first hearing it and different activities have enabled them to absorb the language and the action of the tale. Lots of the children have created their own versions of the story using the ideas of rescuing characters and receiving rewards!

And finally – our Baking Buddies project began again this week. This is where a few children every week bake goodies for the rest of the pre-school crew. We ran it during the Spring term last year and saw how the Baking Buddies each week grew in confidence and felt a huge amount of pride in creating treats for the others (who displayed lots of gratitude and appreciation) – it was lovely to observe and supported our belief in how cooking activities can benefit the children, not only in terms of maths, literacy and physical skills but more importantly personal and emotional development.

**Out & About sessions:**  On Wednesday all the Flying Fish went up to Portreath School to use the Outdoor area where they built a castle to protect themselves from the fierce dragon roaming the school grounds!

On Thursday we used the Millennium Hall for an indoor ‘Out and About’ (something we are trying to do if the weather isn’t great for being out all morning). The children loved the space that the hall offered, and it enabled us to do things we can’t usually do in the pre-school. We incorporated storytelling into physical games using ‘George and the Dragon’ as a focus. All this fun was then used later in the day when the children created their own versions of this story. A fantastic and very different session to what we usually do in these sessions but proved to have a huge impact on the children’s creativity.

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:***

This week we have introduced the letter sound ‘t’ to the Flying Fish children, playing different games to encourage the hearing and identifying of this letter sound.

The Starfish have focused on our ‘We’re going on a Dragon Hunt’ story, retelling it and developing their vocabulary banks.

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

* *We’re going on a dragon hunt! This is great fun and is a fantastic way of developing their language skills. Pretend that different parts of the garden or house are different environments to travel through on your way to the dragons cave. Use words such as ‘deep, dark forest’, ‘swirling,whirling snowstorm’ and ‘thick, oozy mud’. This will help develop your child’s vocabulary which will ultimately benefit their writing as they progress to this stage.*
* *Watch a video of a Chinese Dragon parade on youtube with your child. Describe what the dancers are doing to make the dragon move. Encourage your child to pretend to be a dragon dancing through the streets. We have been singing this song as our dragon danced:*

*(To the tune of ‘Twinkle, twinkle little star)*

Dragon, dragon dance around,

Dragon, dragon touch the ground.

Dragon, dragon tongue so red,

Dragon, dragon shake your head.

Dragon, dragon stamp your feet,

Dragon, dragon coming down the street!