**Pre-school Play and Learning Newsletter for 30th Sept – 4th October 2019**

\*Our wonder words this week have been: apple press, crush, mash, smash

**Play and Learning Highlights:**

 Another highly enjoyable Apple Week has come to an end – but what a huge amount of learning and fun was had during it! A big thank you to all those people who donated apples for juicing and crumbling.

On Monday Jannah brought in a variety of different Cornish apples, all grown in an orchard at Troon. The children had a slice of each variety and then decided which their favourite was. The names of the apples caused lots of amusement – Pitmason Pineapple and Pigs Nose being the ones that caused the most giggles!

 Sara Clasper came with her apple press on Tuesday morning and we washed, bashed, mashed, twisted and pressed the apples to create the most delicious juice (according to the children!). There was a great feeling of achievement in the air as we sat drinking our juice, plus super language development as the children talked about what we did and how. Sara kindly left the press for us to use ourselves and it was amazing how many children could explain exactly how to use it to make the juice. The children also used the apples to make crumbles. This required listening to instructions, using their fine motor skills to chop apples and make the crumble mixture. They also used the scales to weigh out the ingredients, beginning to understand about measuring. Other maths skills were also practiced and developed through sorting the apples for pressing or selling, with counting, size comparison and some fantastic detailed observations of insect holes (worms and caterpillars according to the children but we later found out they were also caused by Codling Moths).

We had such great fun during the apple juicing process that it provided the perfect inspiration to create a poem, to coincide with National Poetry Day, on Thursday. The children came up with some great sound, action and describing words to create the poem and have enjoyed reciting it together using photos to aid them. Next week we will be making a book about all the learning we covered during this week so keep an eye out for it in our book corner.

**Out & About sessions:**  Apple pressing and crumble making, along with continuing awful weather, has meant we have had another week of not many Out & Abouts! Please be assured that we are desperate to resume these sessions as much as the children are to get out there. We did manage to get out on Friday with a few of the Flying Fish children for a wind exploration session at Greenfield Gardens.

 **Sounds and Letters/language focus:**

This week the Flying Fish children have played a listening game on the computer which motivated the children to really tune into what they were hearing and distinguish the sound, (youtube – Listening and Attention, Phase 1, Mister teach ). They have also been clapping out the syllables of words in our ‘What’s in the Bag? Game. This is a great game for encouraging children to articulate the separate parts of a longer word, an essential skill which will help them with spelling when they are at school.

The Starfish have played an Apple Tree game where they focused on the skill of taking turns, counting to 5 and beginning to understand that numerals represent a specific number. They have also spent time talking about different emotions and recognising that our faces change according to how we feel.

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

* Get cooking! All of your children have expressed an interest in cooking at preschool and were very keen to be involved in the making process of both the juice and the crumble. As mentioned last week, cooking together provides them with a great opportunity to practice and develop many skills. These include:
* maths skills (counting how many times they stir the mixture, understanding how scales work, counting the number of buns created etc),
* physical skills (chopping, spreading, pouring, stirring, rubbing mixtures together),
* early science skills (observing and understanding that change will occur to the mixture, cause and effect),
* language skills (the language of cooking, hearing recipe instructions, talking about what they can see happening)
* **PLUS** the sense of achievement and satisfaction in eating what they’ve made!