Play & Learning Newsletter

28th March – 1st April 2022

**Pet, feeding, vets, grooming, lead, collar, name tag**

Wonder words to use with your child:

This week we have been using the children’s interest in each other’s pets to inspire the play and learning experiences. Pets is always a hot topic of conversation with children relaying the antics of their pets or talking about pets that they would like. We have created tally charts (developing mathematical skills and understanding) of favourite pets, shared some great ‘pet’ stories and talked about what sort of pet we would all like if we could ANY pet, and why (developing explaining skills and early comprehension) and created homes for the pre-school pets. The role play area has been a vets and the children have enjoyed taking care of the pre-school pets, demonstrating kindness and concern for the animals and their injuries. It has been very interesting to hear what sort of pets the children would like when they are older and can have free choice over the animals they live with! Their tastes are very far ranging! 😊

Fine motor skill practice has also been something that there has been lots of opportunities for this week, so important in helping the children develop the dexterity and strength that they need in their finger joints inorder to be able to hold a pen/pencil effectively. This is something that doesn’t always happen naturally and often needs specific input to ensure that they don’t get into bad habits, plus specific activities to strengthen specific muscles. This week we have had lots of tweezer activities, mark making in long paint trays and sticking wooden blocks together with playdough – all great things for finger muscles.

The most fun part of the week has been the visits from some of our pets! On Tuesday Rachel brought her dog, Koa, in and the children had a chance to pet her and play ball with her. On Thursday we had Isambard’s Tonoto the pony visit the playground – which was very exciting! We learnt all about how to care for him and the things that he was wearing and what they were for – also how to clear up the poo!! We are hoping that we will get to meet Mel’s tortoise Rosie either today or Monday – another exciting pet to greet!

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** *This week the Flying Fish have been developing their ability to ‘blend’ letter sounds together to be able to hear a word. This is very tricky and can take while for children to develop but it is an essential skill and so important to acquire as it makes huge difference in their reading development once they get to school. We spend lots of time playing games which support the children’s ability to do this and this week it was with Metal Mike, the talking robot.*

*The Starfish have been developing their vocabulary around pets and animal habitats, plus talking about the size of pets using a range of words.*

 **Out & About sessions:**

We had two lovely Out & Abouts on Monday and Tuesday this week – both times to Feadon Woods and the Look out area. On the way we looked for things that were a cylinder shape (we saw a surprisingly large number of them!) and played ‘I spy’ at the Look Out area too. As the stream was so shallow the children were able to climb under and over the bridge – and we also discovered a ‘secret path’ that took us on a short cut. Very exciting!

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| Ideas to support your child at home:  You can practice the skill of blending in a very relaxed, informal way with all the children by pretending to talk as a robot occasionally. Giving your child an instruction and saying the last word in a robot voice where you break the word into individual or groups of sounds (depending on the complexity of the word), e.g. “Go and get your w -e – l – ees on” or “Quick, let’s r – u – n”. easy to do and it will make such a difference to your child’s ability to blend when learning to read at school!  |