Play & Learning Newsletter

6th – 10th Dec 2021

Pine tree, baubles, tinsel, pine needles, spiky, advent calendar, decorate

Wonder words to use with your child:

Christmas truly arrived at pre-school this week! We have focused on the hot topic of Christmas trees as we knew that many of the children had got theirs up at home already and so had lots to say on the subject 😊. We have used the book ‘Pick a Pine Tree’ by Patricia Toht; a lovely book which goes through the process of how a pine tree turns into a Christmas tree. It has prompted lots of talk and conversations between the children about their own trees, where they got them from, if they are artificial or real and all the wonderful things they have decorated them with – great for providing opportunities for the children to think about similarities and differences between themselves and their friends.

The story inspired some wonderful small world play and many of the children used wooden blocks, mug and threading trees, wooden trucks and little people to re-enact their own experiences of tree buying/decorating and also that of the events of the book. Laces were used as tinsel and some imaginative use of other resources to make baubles. Wonderful play to watch!

Our cheeky elf, Elvis, has continued to set us challenges all week which have given the children a focus on how to use certain resources. One of the challenges was to create antlers for his pet reindeer who had lost his! There were some very inventive ideas and imaginative use of the playdough resources to solve the problem.

Other highlights this week have included lots of elf and Santa play with costumes, wrapping paper and lots (and lots!) of tape (great practice for those fine motor skills, although we have lost many things this week only to discover them ‘wrapped up’ in oodles of paper and tape 😊!), creating decorations for the outside tree and lots of busy hands creating little Christmas surprises for Mummies and Daddies.

Finally, but by no mean least – Snuggledown! Such a lovely event to hold and one that the children really enjoyed (and were so excited by!). From getting into their pjs (and organising themselves so that their clothes went into the correct bag) to consuming the hot choc and biscuit, plus the wonder of seeing a wall in preschool turn into a gigantic tv and finding out how a projector worked – the experience was a learning experience from beginning to end plus lots of fun. On Tuesday we watched Stickman and on Thursday it was The Gruffalo’s Child. Thank you to everyone who donated money for this , it will go into the Christmas Fundraising pot which will be helping us buy soil and willow for something exciting that is happening in the spring term.

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** The Flying Fish have continued with their focus on hearing and matching words beginning with the same sounds, playing Christmas themed games to provide opportunities for practising this skill.

The Starfish have spent time exploring the contents of a Christmas bag which is full of decorations and other Christmas related goodies. The children have been learning the names for these objects whilst also investigating how they feel and smell, all the time developing their growing vocabulary banks.

 **Out & About sessions:** Christmas trees have been the name of the game this week with a walk to the little beach, counting Christmas trees as we went. When we got to the beach we decorated another Christmas tree – this time a sand one. The children used the natural resources on the beach to decorate it, explaining why they had chosen each one and where they were going to put it.

On Thursday the children went storm hunting and watched the huge waves break over the harbour wall – something we very rarely see as the tide always seems to be out when we visit the little beach. The children were completely fascinated by them and returned to preschool full of talk about what they had witnessed – a super opportunity for using their language skills.

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| Ideas to support your child at home: If you have any spare wrapping paper at home let your child use it for pretend wrapping of presents, maybe using a large sock as a stocking, to inspire Santa role play. If your child is one of the younger members of pre-school, encourage them to say what each present is and who it is for. The older children could pretend to write labels on the present – they will usually make a few marks (lines and squiggles – don’t expect any readable letters at this stage). Encourage them to say what they have written, so they feel that the marks they have made have a purpose – a really important concept for young children to grasp.  |