Play & Learning Newsletter

7th – 11th May 2021

**Pitch, rucksack, tent pegs, mallet, campfire, sleeping bags**

Wonder words to use with your child:

We began the last half term of the year with a camping theme – following on from some of the children’s experiences during the holiday week. The story ‘Maisy Goes Camping’ (simple but great for inspiring talk about number problems) set the tone for the week and we have had a tent, campfire and sleeping bags available for the children to use in their imaginative play which inspired lots of camping games with groups of children.

Some great construction skills were used by the children whilst creating tents for little sorting people from sticks, material and playdough with lots of problem solving seen too as they worked to get the sticks to stay up and the material not to fall off!

Mark making skills have been practiced through the children using the campsite booking forms and with the introduction of a lovely set of oil pastels brought by in by Louise. Many of the children have been inspired to draw and create using the oil pastels and there have been some truly beautiful pictures produced plus lots of exploration of this new medium.

Another new medium that the children have explored this week has been clay – a rather messy but utterly delightful experience of squishing, sliding and squeezing this wet, malleable resource. Not everyone was keen to have a go but those that did spent long periods of time exploring it – very calming and great for strengthening finger and hand muscles.

Lots of mathematical work in group time sessions too with camping number songs, happy campers ‘popping’ out of tents (you have to read the story!) and tally charts to do with the children’s experiences of camping.

And finally some fun campfire songs have been learnt – our favourite being one about a ’bay where the watermelons grow’! See if your child can remember it!

 **Out & About sessions:** A super first week back of Out & Abouts – pitching a tent at the little beach! Lots of excitement as the children helped with the tent poles, hammered in the tent pegs and then checked to see if we would all fit in (no popping out like in Maisy Goes Camping). Teamwork was needed to put the tent up and then create a campfire where we sang songs around it whilst pretending to toast marshmallows. The most favourite part of it all was using the mallet to hammer in the tent pegs – great concentration observed!

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

The Starfish have been continuing to develop their rhyming skills whilst playing a Nonsense name game using the photos cards of the adults and children – a fun game you can do in the car, say a name and then think of a nonsense word that rhymes with it, e.g. mummy lummy, daddy waddy.

The Flying Fish have been learning about the letters c/k and the sound they make, plus playing an ‘Island Hopping’ game using their listening skills to identify initial letter sounds.

Ideas to support your child at home:

Go camping 😊 . . . . joking! Children LOVE camping, adults not always so much so. However, you can give your children a little taste of what camping is like by setting up a beach tent, or making a den, or pitching a small tent, in the garden – or if the garden won’t fit one in then the living room is a good space too. Put one up for the day and let the children eat all of their meals in there, create beds in there and have it be their base for the day. You will find it keeps them very busy and occupied!

Tents, dens and small enclosed spaces are what we call ‘Communication Friendly Environments’ – great spaces for encouraging and promoting language skills.