Play & Learning Newsletter

**St Patrick’s Day, Sign language, deaf, hearing, loud, quiet, silent, hearing aids**

11th – 15th March 2024

Wonder words to use with your child:

Next week is National British Sign Language week – aimed to highlight the importance of sign language and raise people’s awareness of it. Myself and Lorraine have trained in British sign language and regularly used it with the children, for example in our ‘hello’ song during Flying Fish group times and during song sessions – and it’s been amazing what the children have picked up just by copying and absorbing the signs that the staff use. This week we decide to focus on using it further and also in exploring why it is used. The British Sign Language society set a challenge for pre-schoolers to learn 10 signs within the space of a week which the Flying Fish children, in particular, have been working hard on learning. We have watched a video of two people having a conversation using just sign language which the children found fascinating. The children have used ear defenders to experience what it is like when you can’t hear things clearly and we have also been reading and discussing the story ‘Freddie and the Fairy’ by Julia Donaldson to learn about the rules for how we can be good communicators for people who may not be able to hear clearly (no mumbling, look at people’s faces and don’t put your hand over your mouth when you are speaking – the pre-school crew came up with another rule too – use sign language!). We have also shared the story Bear can ski where a teddy finds out he needs hearing aids. It’s a really lovely story and you can find it signed on cbeebies.

Obviously the very youngest children have enjoyed joining with the experiences but may not have absorbed the significance of it. For them we have been focusing on them distinguishing loud, quiet and silent The older ones have really taken on board the fact that sign language is another way of communicating with others and what the world might be like for people who are deaf – big concepts to understand for little ones but our crew have been so interested in talking about these ideas and so important that they begin to appreciate and understanding the different experiences of people from a young age.

Our week ended by celebrating St Patrick’s Day ( which is actually on Sunday 17th ) We used the Let’s Celebrate Cbeebies programme to help the children understand what occurs during this festival. We had a go at Irish dancing and created St Patrick’s Day hats.

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** *This week the Starfish have been exploring loud/quiet sounds and how we can make them with instruments. They have been identifying whether sounds are loud or quiet and working out what could be making these sounds. We also had pots filled with a different items and they had to sort them into whether they thought they were quiet or loud noises when shaken. ( sand, cotton wool, nuts and bolts, shells, pegs etc)*

*The Flying Fish have explored rhyming using the story of ‘Freddie and the Fairy’ which has some lovely rhyming pet words in it. The children have guessed what the fairy might bring to Freddie based on the rhyme and even thought of other things that she could bring that also rhyme. We have also played lots of syllable sorting/ blending and clapping games for our group times.*

 **Out & About sessions:**

What a difference a week of nice weather makes! We have had some super Out & About sessions this week – We have had two visits to the little beach where each child chose an insect or sea creature to build a home for using natural materials. The children were very resourceful and used seaweed, rocks, sand and shells. They extended their homes with pools, waterslides and gardens! We also really enjoyed looking at the winkles, limpets and barnacles on the wall. Finding lots of mermaid’s purses sparked interest in what they were. We researched further back at pre-school and the children were fascinated to see what might have hatched out of them and we discovered a variety of different kinds and species.

|  |
| --- |
| Ideas to support your child at home:  If we want our children to grow up with an understanding and tolerance for the different ways of life in this world we need to draw their awareness to the experiences of people. This can be done in a very gentle way and stories are often the best way to do it – another great reason to be regularly sharing them with your child! Some good ones that we use at pre-school are ‘Freddie and the Fairy’ by Julia Donaldson, ‘Best Friends’ by Mark Chambers, and ‘We are Family’ by Patricia Hegarty. If there are any specific things that you would like to talk to your child about through a book please let us know as we can order a wide variety of books from the library service which cover all sorts of different issues and topics.  |