Play & Learning Newsletter

11th– 15th October 2021

Straw, sticks, bricks, hay bale, secure, stable, first, second, third.

Wonder words to use with your child:

We have continued our focus on the story of The Three Little Pigs this week, and next. This will give the children time and opportunities for the language and structure of the story to become more firmly embedded in their vocabulary banks and minds so that they can use it in different ways in the future. They have had opportunities to use it in the sand tray where they have built the houses from bricks, hay and sticks and then re-enacted the story and have also taken this play outside where we have seen lots of child-initiated play around the story (which variations on what happens to the wolf!).

This week we have also begun focusing on a new concept in developing the children’s mathematical understanding – that of ‘subitising’. This is where children instantly recognise small groups of items/objects without having to count them and is a skill which they are actually born with but, with well meaning input, they lose due to adult’s obsession with them having to count everything! It ensures that children have an image of, for example ‘the three-ness of three’ in their minds and enables them to see numbers within numbers which supports all mathematical operations. Rebekah and Jannah have been undertaking some training in it as it is a new part of the revised curriculum that the government advises us to follow. It is fascinating to see in it in action and also to see how it plays a huge part in children becoming confident and competent future mathematicians, from now and into adulthood. At the moment we are focusing on getting the children to become confident in instantly recognising 1, 2 and 3 quantities, and seeing pictures of objects and knowing instantly if it is, for example, 3 or not 3. We have spent a lot of time saying “What do you see?” when we are looking at things, instead of “How many are there?” - you may hear your children saying this at home 😊. If you would like any further info about this concept please speak to either Rebekah or Jannah who can explain it a little more.

Other highlights this week have included:

* Slimy paint to explore and experiment with,
* A piggy tea party to make playdough cakes and buns for,
* Working out which animals live in which houses, thinking about size and providing opportunities for reasoning,
* Roof building in the construction area,
* Creating houses that can’t be blown down by the wolf hairdryer,
* Lots and lots of fun outside in the beautiful autumnal sunshine!

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** This week the Flying Fish have been practising their awareness of the syllables within words, plus increasing their vocabulary bank by playing word games with different types of homes, e.g. ca-stle, ig-loo, ca-ra-van, ter-race. This helps them become aware of sounds within words, a really important building block of their phonic skills. They have also played some fun ‘knocking’ games to encourage careful listening.

The Starfish have continued to develop their awareness of the language of the story of The Three Little Pigs.

 **Out & About sessions:** What a lovely week of weather for our Out & Abouts to Feadon Woods (the ones on the way to Gwel an Mor) as we searched for signs of autumn. The children were very enthusiastic and observant spotters of berries, seeds and autumn leaves. They were even keener explorers of a ‘leaf slide’ that we found on the bank of the stream – lots of rather muddy all in one bottoms but so much fun!

Ideas to support your child at home:

If you have the story of The Three Little Pigs at home, share it with your child, pausing at the parts where the animals speak, e.g. ‘Little pig, little pig, let me come in’ and letting your child have a go at saying the phrases. You could take it in turns to be the different characters, e.g. first read the story with you being the piggies and your child being the wolf, and then swap. This is great for not only developing their language skills but also their listening and memory skills too as they have to retain and recall what they say at different parts of the story – all great for support the developing functions of their brains.