Play & Learning Newsletter

19th – 23rd April 2021

Happiness, sadness, fear, calm, peaceful, angry, scared, confused, loving

Wonder words to use with your child:

A fantastic first week back – made all the better by our ability to begin Out & About sessions with this year’s Flying Fish children! So enjoyable! More information about it in the ‘Out and About’ section below.

Over the next few weeks, we are going to be focusing on ‘feelings’ through the book The Colour Monster by Anna Llenas. This is a great book for supporting children in understanding and identifying different emotions and we will be using it as a starting point to talk about feelings. Research shows that children are more able to regulate their emotions if they are able to identify what they are feeling – this is an important first step in self-regulation and also in paving the pathway to a healthy mind in future life. Our pre-school children have demonstrated the beginnings of ‘reflection’ and great language skills as they have talked about times that they have felt these feelings – helping fill up our colour feelings jars with their memories and reflections.

Other highlights this week have included exploring capacity and making potions with coloured water and flowers in the builders trays, creating colour creations with lots of loose parts in the playdough, mixing and creating colours with dry powder paint and water in the creating area (you can imagine the mess but worth it for the concentration and involvement that it has prompted), and lots of lovely collaborative play with the soft blocks in the Rock Pool Area – they have been used in some very imaginative ways.

As the year has progressed we have noticed how the children’s block and construction play has developed. We are now seeing the most amazing creations being constructed, especially by groups of children working together. So interesting to observe and a great example of the power of simple block play. Research (we do love a bit of research!) indicates that children who are skilled constructors with blocks often go on to become skilled mathematicians. The skills that block play requires fires up neurons in the mathematical parts of the brain – a simple way to support your child’s future success in this area.

And finally – the delivery of a HUGE empty box has sparked some super play among the children – encouraging play in groups and pairs with lots of lovely conversations. Just what we love to see our pre-school crew doing 😊.

 **Out & About sessions:** It has been sooo good toget back out there and do what we know the children love (and we rather enjoy too!). This week all of the Flying Fish children (bar one little one who unfortunately missed her session) have visited Greenfield Gardens or Greenslade Park for a session of physical exercise and self-control games. We have used this first session to see how sensible the children are with regards to road safety, listening etc and have taught them the rules of being Out and About with pre-school. The sessions have been absolutely lovely and the children have been stars. We can’t wait to go further afield as the summer progresses!

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

The Flying Fish have been introduced to the letter sound ‘n’ and have been listening out for it both as the initial sound of a word and for when it is within or at the end of a word.

The Starfish have been singing the song ‘If you are happy and you know it’, thinking about how we can show other feelings.

Ideas to support your child at home:

Talk about feelings with your child – support them in understanding that no emotion is a ‘bad’ one. Children need to understand that they are not wrong for feeling a certain emotion, e.g. anger, and that all of us experience that emotion at times. Our role as adults is to model and teach them what is the best thing to do when they feel that emotion, whilst being realistic of their age and personality.

Being open and talking about feelings now (even ones like anger, jealousy) with your little one will pay dividends later when they are teenagers as they will be use to being able to open up about how they feel with you and knowing that they will not be judged – essential for good mental health.