Play & Learning Newsletter

**Sign language, deaf, hearing, loud, quiet, silent, hearing aids**

24th – 28th March 2025

Wonder words to use with your child:

This 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 5-10 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.

***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.*

*They have also focused on blending cvc words with lots of different games this week I.e. You can cross the river if you have the picture of a c - a - t*

 **Out & About sessions:** We had a lovely visit to harbour house on Monday and played a target number game with bean bags. It’s great to hear everyone cheering each other on. The children are so confident now that they will stand up and share special experience/interests freely with the residents such as a new baby, moving house or a trip that they have been on. Next week will be the last session for some of the children and after Easter some new children will get a chance to go along weekly. All the children who have attended over the last year will come together at Harbour house near the end of the summer for a special celebration together.

We took a small group of 8 children to the astro turf on Wednesday including some of our star fish as we had a very quiet day. Everyone had a great time and the Flying fish showed them how sensible they are when out and about.

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| 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 and we will try and source it.  Please see below for the BSL alphabet and some of the animal signs we have been learning. Maybe you or a big brother or sister can have a go at signing your own names too. |

