Play & Learning Newsletter

26th – 30th April 2021

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

Wonder words to use with your child:

This week we have continue to explore ‘feelings’ following on from our focus on the book The Colour Monster. The children have been listening to and talking about different books which focus on specific feelings. We have also been using the book ‘How are you feeling today?’ by Molly Potter which is a great book to support children in developing strategies to deal with different feelings, e.g. curling up tight if they are angry, asking someone for a cuddle if they are sad. The have talked about what the children in the stories could do when they felt different emotions, and how we can help our friends if they feel certain ways.

Calmness has been a feeling that we have particularly focused on this week (something we are always hoping the children can attain 😊). Yoga has been being practiced each day, both in group time sessions and during their free play in the Rock Pool area – renamed The Calm Zone this week. The addition of a wigwam (The calm cave) has also provided the children with opportunities to practice being calm (although there also has been rather a lot of fun being head in there for much of the week!).

As we all know, smells can help create certain feelings and with this in mind we had a baby bath with ‘sleepy time’ scented bubbles to wash the babies and animals. The sponges created the most interest though with children using them to transport the water from one bath to another – some great scientific exploration and thinking occurring which has been lovely to see. The playdough has taken on a ‘calming’ theme and was scented with lavender as well. The children have enjoyed using it to make some beautiful creations with wildflowers, and also working on their finger muscles in much loved ‘playdough disco’ with a feelings song.

 **Out & About sessions:** A super second week of Out & Abouts (although we were unable to get out on Monday due to staff shortages) with visits to what we call ‘The Little Woods’, at Gwel an Mor. The children searched for springtime flowers on the way to the stream and bridge, and learnt the names of bluebells, wild garlic, celandines, dandelions and pink campion. After a little splash in the stream we climbed the steep path and steps to the Lookout Area where we played ‘I spy’ as we looked down on the village.

One of the great things about our Out & About sessions is the opportunity it gives the children to develop physical skills that we can’t always provide for. This week it was climbing over stiles! There are three that they can tackle on this adventure and it was a great way of them practicing coordination and balance as they negotiated them.

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

The Flying Fish have been demonstrating some super listening skills this week in their Letters and Sounds sessions as they tuned into what the middle sound in a cvc (consonant – vowel – consonant) word could be. In a ‘game show’ activity they had to beat the teacher to decide if the middle sound was an ‘i’ or ‘a’ – a tricky undertaking! They did brilliantly and are clearly becoming very skilled in distinguishing sounds – fantastic skills which will really help support their phonic development at school.

The Starfish have been playing games where they need to listen carefully and follow instructions. Listening to the book ‘Yoga Babies’ by Fearne Cotton has also been great for developing this skill too.

Ideas to support your child at home:

Supporting your child in understanding how they can help themselves when they experience certain emotions will help them better manage their emotions as they grow and mature, thereby aiding towards good mental health.

The best way to suggest things to do when they feel a certain way is *after* they have experienced a strong emotion. Trying to talk to them whilst they are in the midst of it never works as their brains are unable to take onboard any language and reasoning. Once they have calmed down and you can talk to them about the emotion they will be more open to talking about what they could do ‘next time’. E.g. If they feel angry about something they could – runs super fast on the spot until they are worn out or curl up into an ever so little ball, frown and grit their teeth or close their eyes and take some deep breaths.