Play & Learning Newsletter

12th – 16th May 2025

**Beanstalk, growing, fee-fi-fo-fum, castle, gigantic, tumbled**

Wonder words to use with your child:

This week we have focused on the story of Jack and the Beanstalk and have also been sharing other versions and talking about the fact that this story has lots of different endings.

Beanstalks continued to fuel our maths development with lots of number track games being played this week, focusing on developing the understanding of stopping counting when you get to specific number. It was very interesting to observe the different levels of understanding with regards to this and it is something that we will be providing lots of opportunities for over the next half term. We’ve even devised a beanstalk song to help with this skill!

We have also been using the story as starting point for thinking about what plants need to grow and how they change and develop. The children have all planted beans and are avidly watching for signs of change, we will keep you updated on their progress! The sunflowers have started to germinate which has been exciting. This ties in perfectly with planting in our allotment and we can’t wait to go back and see how our plants are progressing.

Other highlights this week have been ball painting on the creative table, seeded playdough in the main room with scissors and chocolate playdough in the rockpool kitchen area to make cakes and treats. Various cereals in the sensory tray with water in pump bottles and runny paint in pots with pipettes to explore colour and textures and how they can change. Lots of children have absolutely love this activity and spent lots of time exploring it.

***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** *The flying Fish have been recognising some letters and practising correct formation of those letters by writing them on each other’s back. They have also been rearranging letters into the correct order to spell their names correctly. We have also used a phoneme frame to blend letter sounds together that we have learnt to make a word in a game show style. The children nearly won every time.*

*The Starfish have enjoyed singing and dancing to the ‘climbing the beanstalk’ song, as well as beating instruments to the beat of the song. Some children were introduced to the silly soup rhyming game also.*

 **Out & About sessions:** We had a lovely visit to Harbour house on Monday where the children and residents had to think together about what they would like to pack in their suitcase if they were off on a journey and then they worked together to follow a vehicle maze. We then went to look at the trees we planted a few months back to find they look fabulous and are growing well. We have had a trip to the astro turf to play with bats, balls, ropes and lots more and really made use of the wide open space to run, cartwheel, jump and lots more! The children are becoming so confident with their large motor skills and many are very skilful in the ways they move.

Ideas to support your child at home:

**Get planting!** The children are loving watching the seeds that we have planted start to come up and change – it always sparks interest in them and lots of excitement. Try planting some things at home – you don’t need to buy any seeds, just use the seeds inside fruit and vegetables. You can use empty toilet rolls for pots - just cut the bottom into three and bend them inwards.

**Board games** – Board games are not as popular as they once use to be which is shame as they are an excellent way of developing children’s understanding of moving forwards and backwards along a number line. You’d be surprised with how many children find it hard to grasp the ‘move 5 jumps along’ type of instruction, thinking that they need to land on the numeral 5.

If you don’t have any board games at home it’s really simple to make one by just drawing out a long, snake like, track and dividing it into sections with numbers in. You just need a dice and something to use for counters. Maybe your child can decide what will be at the end of the track, or what will happen when you get to the end. With very young children just go up to 5, and use a number dice with 1 and 2 spots only.