

UNDER THE CANOPY

Welcome to Newsletter No:3



This half term we will be continuing on with the theme of exploration

Exploration:

***"noun: the act of traveling to a place or searching a place in order to learn about it:
(Cambridge Dictionary)***

We would like to start by wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Thank you so much for all of the support and encouragement that we have received during our first term of running **Canopy Forest School**. We have had such an exciting learning journey where we have discovered so much more about each other, ourselves and the wonders of nature.

During Autumn 2 the children have taken us on another amazing journey. We have explored native nocturnal and hibernating animals and found out what our school grounds are like during the magical soft glowing light of twilight. Together we have enjoyed the moment that the tree lights have suddenly turned on and have had fun embracing the darkness that has gently enshrouded us. One of my favourite moments has been lying back and breathing in the beauty of the moon and stars and then sitting together in our fire circle and reflecting on what we have learnt and will take away with us from the session.



***"What the New Year
brings to you will
depend a great deal on
what you bring to the
new year"***
Vern McLellan

Hazel catkins flowering in Mid-February



The children have once again had so many amazing ideas and suggestions. They have played a key role in planning and designing each session and this half term we have made magic wands, created potions, cooked and created a wide variety of culinary delights in our mud kitchen. They have also made conker spiders, wooden hedgehogs, spider webs, sleeping dormice and Christmas decorations. During these crafting activities they have learnt to use a variety of simple tools such as palm drills, potato peelers, hammers and nails and learnt a number of simple knots.

They have also played a key role in our three year sustainable woodland plan and helped to plant new tree seedlings, made bird feeders, watched our night camera footage and placed dormouse nests in and among our hazel trees.

They should be very proud of all of their achievements and I am excited once again about where our learning will go next in the Spring term.

January and February can be the coldest months of the year so it is really important that all children continue to come prepared and dressed for the cold. The dark nights will continue but after the 21st December (which is the shortest day) the nights will gradually recede but until we hit the month of March spring will still seem a long way off.

As always the seasons and the natural patterns of the earth will influence and guide our learning. Our theme will continue to be exploration and activities such as tracking games, looking at animal footprints, taking casts, and making bird feeders may capture our imagination in Spring 1 half term.

Again, we have included in this newsletter an activity that you might like to do with your child at home which draws upon and celebrates the marvels of winter. Ice art opens up a world of sparkling creativity and this activity suspends "found natural objects" in frozen blocks of water which can be hung from branches or twigs in your garden.

Thank you all again so much for your support it has really meant a lot and helped this new venture to get started. We look forward to sharing the learning journey that the children take us on in the New Year. Have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in 2022.





Ice Mobiles

Glistening and shining ice art-is a source of awe. Transform liquid water into solid ice and back again. This natural alchemy is a joy to see.

This in an ideal activity to do in the winter- and allows you to explore and connect to this magical season.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A collection of objects to suspend in the ice from any natural environment.
- If it is cold enough you can freeze outside otherwise you will need a freezer
- Containers of various sizes or cookie cutters
- Water
- String
- Scissors



Directions:

1. Fill the selection of containers with water leaving space at the top for the water to expand into as it freezes
2. Drop in a selection of natural items into each container
3. Cut a piece of string that is long enough to tie onto a branch and leave both ends of the string dangling out of the water, with the middle loop section held in place once it has frozen.
4. If you wish drop some food dye into each container
5. Put your containers outside or in the freezer over night. The following day pop the frozen mobiles out of their containers.
6. Hang up your beautiful ice creations outside and watch them glisten and sparkle as they catch the light