

UNDER THE CANOPY

Welcome to our Second Newsletter



*Our theme
this half term
is exploration*

Exploration:

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

Hello and welcome to our Autumn 2 newsletter. We all had such an exciting learning journey in Autumn 1 and we can't wait to begin again after half term.

Next half term we have chosen the theme *Exploration* which is another of our core values. We will be exploring and learning more about the fauna and flora in our Forest School space and how we can protect and look after it. We will also explore and discover more about our own individual talents and roles within the group. As the hours of daylight reduce we will also be exploring what our Forest School space is like during the winter months.

As the nights draw in and the clocks go back many of our Forest School sessions will take place at dusk/night fall. We would therefore like to ask that all children bring with them a head torch/torch, more layers of clothing and of course waterproofs. Our activities will celebrate and embrace this season and like before the children's fascinations, ideas and questions will guide our programme.

"Winter is a season of recovery and preparation." (Paul Theroux)

Hazel branches covered in snow.



In Autumn 1 the children had so many amazing ideas and suggestions. Each week they helped us to plan what would be explored in the next session. They took us on a wonderful journey which began with animal homes and went onto explore worms, hedgehogs, Autumn leaves and then as a finale we looked at nocturnal animals and an Autumn celebration and award ceremony.

Along the way we connected as a group, built and developed friendships, learnt new rules and routines, found out about the season of autumn, developed new skills, confidence, self-esteem and self-belief.

Who knows where Autumn 2 will take us? But again I am sure that the season and weather will influence all ideas, thoughts and suggestions.

It doesn't matter how low the light levels might get on a grey winter's day, time outside dressed in the right clothing, increases serotonin in the brain, lowers stress levels and can alter levels of mood-boosting neurotransmitters. Like the Danish word "Hygge" this time of the year creates a very special atmosphere and experience.

To help us ensure that all children feel safe outside as it gets darker we will provide each of them with a high-visibility jacket, strings of solar lights will be placed in the trees, flood lights will be used if needed, hot drinks provided and of course safety checks will as always be conducted before each session. We have a canopy that we use if it is wet and there will be lots of running around games to keep us warm and engaged.

Again, we have included in this newsletter an activity that you might like to do with your child at home which draws on and celebrates the amazing shadows that we get at this time of the year.

In the winter, the northern part of Earth is tilted away from the Sun. This means that sunlight is not coming in as directly. So, shadows during the winter are longer. I have always loved playing with shadows in the winter. Especially as a vertically challenged individual, suddenly my shadow has the long legs that I have always dreamed about having.

Across the world many celebrations of "light" take place in November and December so making shadow puppets and exploring shadow art just feels like a perfect activity that I hope you will enjoy engaging in with your child at home.

Thank you all so much for your support and we look forward to sharing the learning journey that the children take us on in Autumn 2.

Emma Clode



SHADOW ART IDEAS



Capture Nature with Shadow Art

The shadows trees make with their trunks and branches can be pretty beautiful. Lay out a long piece of paper next to a tree on a sunny day and watch your kiddo create tree shapes by outlining the shadow.



Shadow Drawing Toys

The challenge with how to draw a shadow is that you need the shadow to be cast by the subject of the drawing, but then your shadow (or your child's shadow) can't obscure that during the drawing process.



Silhouette Portraits

For this shadow art project, tape a piece of paper to the wall. Then have one of your kids sit with their face in profile. Setup a flashlight to create a shadow of their profile and have another trace the shadow on the paper. Have them finish the project by colouring in the silhouette in black.



Shadow Puppets

Draw an outline of a puppet character onto some black paper or card. Attach a lolly pop stick high up on your character to make it stable. Illuminate a wall with a bright light and place your puppet in-between the light and the wall to create a shadow. Use to tell a story.