

Foundation

Our topic of 'Ideas to change the World' continued as we learnt about Malala Yousafzai whose idea that everybody should have the right to go to school prompted some interesting discussions in class about the importance of education. Examples of the children's ideas can be seen on the Foundation Gallery area (<https://stfaiths.fireflycloud.net/foundation-1/foundation-gallery>). This week in Maths we have been thinking about conservation of number and number bonds to 10. We started by counting objects to 10 and then looked at how we could split them using whole-part-part models. To support this learning at home, you might like to play save the whale and the ten frame game accessed via the VLE: <https://i.stfaiths.co.uk/foundation-1/foundation-maths>.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL) underpin all areas we teach. These form an essential part of the EYFS curriculum and will be reported on in your child's summer report at the end of next term. These CoEL help construct the learning habits we wrote about in the newsletters last half term as they focus on how your child is learning to learn, rather than concentrating on what they are learning. Unlike the other aspects of the Early Years Curriculum, the CoEL are not divided into age bands but are split into three areas which although interconnected have distinct features. These 3 areas, which you might remember from our talk at the beginning of the academic year, are:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things and are willing to have a go.
- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying when they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, are able to make links between ideas and develop a range of strategies for doing things.

The Playing and Exploring characteristic of learning focuses on a children's engagement with the resources they use, the environment they are in, and the people around them. It emphasises the importance of children having opportunities to actively construct their own knowledge and understanding of the world through the many different experiences they have. When children are playing and exploring it acts as a catalyst for learning as it allows opportunities for creating and thinking critically. It is often through child-led play that children will choose to engage at the edge of their ability; challenging themselves and further developing their learning power. At home and at school children develop skills in this area when they are being curious about objects, people and places they come into contact with. They should be using their senses (what they see, hear, smell, touch and taste) to explore the world around them. They show special interests in things; dinosaurs remain a popular interest. Children may use one object to represent another, for example, a lego brick may become a mobile phone to talk to "mummy", and as children develop they use creative resources to make their own props for role play e.g. making a superhero tool belt. They are increasingly informed by books and stories; "I am the troll and you are baby troll...so we have to wait for him to go over the bridge." They seek out things to challenge them and are keen to (or can be encouraged to) try new experiences and food.

We have thought carefully about the activities provided for home learning to allow children time to play with their toys to develop this characteristic. Further ways to support this area at home include:

- Providing opportunities for role play to allow your child(ren) to represent their experiences in their play.
- Provide resources which can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways to become different objects to be used in their role play.

- Allow your child(ren) to move between make-believe games and reality—for example, playing house and helping you with chores.
- Ensure child(ren) have uninterrupted time to play and explore.
- Allow your child(ren) opportunities to initiate their own activities.
- Help your child(ren) make up a collection of natural things, leaves, twigs, shells, pebbles etc, to use for making patterns, building things with, or making homes for toy animals etc.
- Encourage your child(ren) to try new activities and to judge risk for themselves, for example finding how high they can safely climb at the park.
- Talk to your child(ren) as they explore novel things with their senses.
- As you read stories, encourage your child to act them out and/or offer alternative scenarios.

Next week, we explore the work of Greta Thunberg. In order to support with this, you may like to ask your child to help you decide if rubbish can go in your recycling or not.

Best Wishes,

The Foundation Team