 Playgroup News – Friday 22nd January 2021

*Hello Everyone,*

*Great news! Late last Friday afternoon Gloucestershire local authority confirmed that, following the Department for Education’s U-turn on the payment of funding for children who are temporarily absent from their nursery setting, they WILL be paying us this funding. A letter was sent out on Monday from Marie to all parents/carers who are currently home-schooling their children confirming this and explaining how we plan to support you and your children during this time (please see more information below). We are delighted by this news as we recognise how important it is for us to be available to support your child’s learning and development at this challenging time and hope that what we put in place will be welcomed!*

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| **This week in playgroup**  See the source imageIn playgroup this week one of our children, Jesse, shared his interest with the staff in planets and our solar system. We followed this interest and talked to the children about this theme and set up some activities linked to this, including a solar system themed art activity and also exploring a planets model brought in by Louise. The children have also enjoyed continuing to recall and act out the Three Little Pigs story using puppets and props, and we set up a themed small world activity in the tuff tray with real straw, sticks and wooden bricks. Observing the children playing with this activity demonstrated that many have learned the story by heart already, can sequence events correctly and repeat the repetitive narrative such as ‘I will huff and I will puff and blow your house down!’. Later in the week, we made ‘pig face biscuits’ for snacks! We also took delivery of a big mirror insert for our tuff tray and the children enjoyed using this with shaving foam for an unusual and sensory mark-making experience. Also, we visited the Nature Area to put up our new bird feeding station and bird feeders.  **Don’t forget to check-out Tapestry for pictures and observations of our activities in playgroup!***The* |
| **Home-schooling**  See the source imageAs mentioned above, from next week your child’s key person will be adding some bespoke learning ideas for you to your child’s learning journal on Tapestry, and may also contact some of you via email and/or telephone. We would like this weekly contact to be a ‘two-way’ experience and would therefore be grateful for your responses and feedback either via Tapestry or email. Before Christmas, we carried out summative assessments on every child in order to assess their current stage of development and to inform us of their next steps in learning (assessments are available for you to view on Tapestry). Your child’s key person will use this information to give you some learning ideas you can try at home, linked to our Early Years curriculum. Your feedback will help your child’s key person to track your child’s development so that we can more accurately assess this when we come to complete our next summative assessments at the end of the Spring term. We hope that you will find this to be helpful and useful at this difficult time.  **Thank-you so much to all those of you who have been sharing your activities from home on Tapestry!** |
| **Family Support**  See the source imageIn these current challenging times we appreciate that there may be things you need help, support and advice with. This might include anxiety and stress, financial worries, routines for the children, practical help and advice. We are here to help if we can with advice and sign-posting to other services so please do not hesitate to email or call if you need us. We have also attached with this newsletter an advice sheet from ‘Forest of Dean Early Help’ with useful information and contact details for organisations. |

**Diary dates:**

* End of term – Friday 12th February
* Start of Spring term B – Monday 22nd February