



# -Winter News-

December 2018



## Why we are different

Our ethos is based on the 'Forest School' ethos *and* the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Children aged two-to-five, immerse themselves in a long-term programme, where they have the freedom to learn in an *outdoor setting*. They are encouraged to use their experiences to improve and maintain their well-being. Children choose where, what and how to play and learn, learning observed, supported and progressed, by fully trained professionals. Children learn to manage their own risks and reflect on how their feelings change over time. This holistic approach results in increased self-esteem and better mental health which enables them to continue to succeed when they move on to their next learning environment.



Orange bird feeders

## This term

This term we have made clay pots (using found clay from within our grounds), stick wind spinners, orange bird feeders, leaf self-portraits, added natural items to a variety of play doughs and created colourful Autumn crowns. We discussed what animals need to survive in winter and why they might hibernate. The children have helped to build our new climbing frame and have had great fun climbing on it and pretending it might be a submarine diving to the depths of the sea. We have constructed a hide to watch animals feeding. The children have listened to and recalled stories such as 'The Three Little Pigs' and thought about the qualities of different kinds of houses. They recreated the pigs' houses using sticks, hay and bricks. Inside the yurt the children have been counting, singing, hiding inside a blanket den, used our various wooden construction kits and train track, recalled colours, completed puzzles and have made remembrance poppies.

Our wood burning stove was installed in November and our children have not only been enjoying its cosiness and warmth but also have discussed what a fire needs, how to keep safe around a fire. The children have been collecting sticks so that our staff can keep the fire burning.



Children on our new climbing frame.



Pine Cone Christmas Trees

## Festive Craft and Jumper Week

From **10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> December** please could you send your child in with either a festive hat, jumper or other festive item of clothing.

Also during the month of December we will be making pinecone Christmas trees, Christmas tree decorations from natural materials and Christmas cards. We will also have a special Christmas visitor.

## Next Term

Next term, the children will be charcoal making, creating natural paints, using them to create their own art. We will also be cooking on the camp fire and creating wind flags (like our **Facebook page** to see how we get on).

As always the children will continue to have access to the mud kitchen, outdoor painting, weaving and chalking stations, the den building area, wood chip adventure area and the various other sections of our Forest School area such the swing and digging area.

Due to our growing numbers, our weekly Stay and Play sessions will finish on Friday 22nd December. We will of course continue to provide transition sessions for new children and welcome parent visits, by appointment.

**A very warm and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, from all the children and staff at The Shepherd's Hut.**

