



Autumn Term in Reception

Reception have completed their first term at Connor Downs Academy! Reflecting on how much progress our youngest children have made since joining Connor Downs Academy in September fills me with so much pride. Since beginning their journey at school, Reception have truly established themselves as kind, happy and conscientious members of the Connor Downs Academy community.

On behalf of the entire Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) team, I would like to express my sincere thanks to our wonderful Reception families for their continued support. Please know that your support is integral to our children's continued success.

Prime Areas of Learning:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED):

This term, our primary aim has been to support our children during their transition to school, ensuring that they are happy and settled in their new setting. Our staggered transition process in September, along with our child-centred approach to teaching and learning in the Early Years, has supported our youngest children in settling into school life.



Together, we have established our own classroom rules and routines, developing a nurturing learning environment in which all children understand and celebrate the importance of individuality, kindness and friendship. In Reception, we are kind and

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we are helpful. We recognise that if we try our best to always be kind and helpful, we can grow as happy learners.

Linking to their PSED learning, as part of our whole school approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, Reception have enjoyed diving into Coram Life Education's SCARF programme this term. During these weekly sessions, the children have been enthusiastically learning about relationships and valuing differences alongside Harold, a fun and friendly giraffe.



Through their engagement with the SCARF programme, the children have had lots of fun participating in a range of activities. Particular highlights of our learning have included the children observing their own reflections and learning how to describe their own special characteristics using positive vocabulary. They have also worked hard to illustrate beautiful family portraits, exploring the ways in which different families are unique and why the diversity of all family units should be celebrated.

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Physical Development:

During their playful learning time this term, Reception have enjoyed exploring and adventuring in our fantastic outdoor provision. Every day, in all weathers, our classroom garden is a hive of activity. Our youngest children have been learning to develop their gross and fine motor skills; running, balancing, building, climbing, throwing, catching experimenting and creating in a range of exciting contexts.



Each week, the children learn alongside Mr Costello, as Outdoor Learning Lead, during their Muddy Monday, Welly Wednesday and Muddy Thursday sessions. These sessions have afforded our children opportunities to explore animal husbandry, care for the natural environment and build upon their classroom learning in our bespoke learning environment, Cultivating Futures.

This term, the children were also excited to visit Tehidy Country Park for their first school trip, a sponsored welly walk. The funds raised during our during this sponsored welly walk will be spent further enhancing our Early Years provision, both inside the classroom and outdoors.

Our visit to the woods supported our children's learning about exercise and the importance of maintaining a healthy



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life style. The children now recognise that keeping fit and eating healthy foods (with treats in moderation!) helps our bodies and minds to feel good. Next term, we are extremely excited to begin a structured unit of PE lessons!



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Communication and Language:

Since joining Connor Downs Academy, Reception have enjoyed developing their communication and language skills during their daily learning. During adult-led teaching, including daily story times, new vocabulary is introduced and contextualised in relation to the children's own experiences and interests. The children are regularly exposed to new vocabulary through their engagement with our immersive, literacy rich provision.



Role play opportunities, both in the permanent home corner and the enhanced role play areas, have encouraged the children to both utilise newly learned vocabulary and effectively communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings with those around them. Through their playful experiences, they are beginning to develop fantastic interpersonal skills and are learning to navigate social situations with confidence and skill.

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In November, the children particularly enjoyed discovering how and why people celebrate Diwali, the festival of light. In the home corner, the children learned and used new vocabulary in context whilst sampling traditional foods (typically enjoyed at home during Diwali), including farsi puri and makai powa chevdo. The children spoke about their learning with great enthusiasm! Thank you again to the Mattu family for their support and generosity.



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Specific Areas:

Literacy:

This term, during their daily phonics sessions, Reception have successfully completed Phases 1 and 2 of our phonics programme, Letters and Sounds. The children's learning has supported them in developing their reading and writing skills, enabling them to recognise and read and write a range of sounds, words and simple sentences.



Reading is at the forefront of our classroom learning; the children love to practise and apply their reading skills throughout each school day. Throughout our classroom, resources and areas of learning are labelled to encourage the children

to 'sound out' taught words and 'blend' them back together to read independently.



During their playful learning time, the children also enjoy accessing exciting reading and writing opportunities led by their own interests. The message centre (including our very own post box!) is regularly enhanced with exciting new mark making resources, which the children are taught to use effectively as they play.

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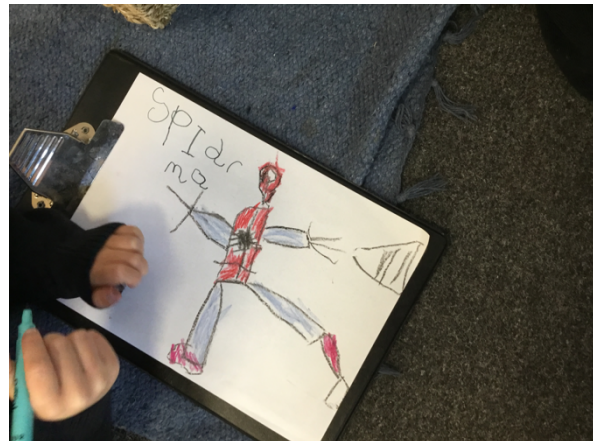
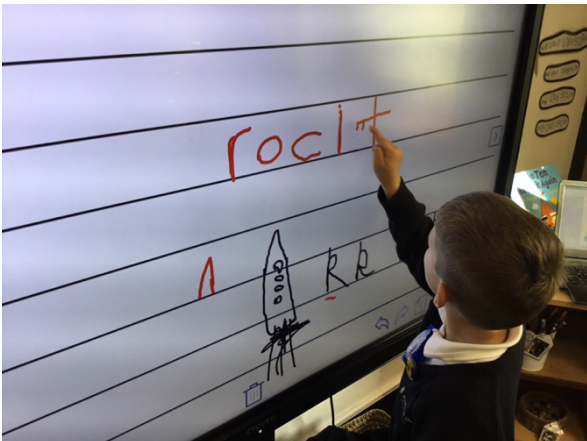
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In addition to this, our wider continuous provision is also enhanced regularly, ensuring that our children are afforded engaging opportunities to explore both fiction and non-fiction texts, as well as write for pleasure.

This term, our learning highlights have included learning to read and sort real and nonsense words with 'Obb' and 'Bob', the Phonics Aliens. The children have also worked hard to write beautiful Christmas cards for our Christmas Fayre.



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Mathematics:

In Reception, we recognise that maths is all around us! This term, through our engagement with White Rose Maths and during their playful learning, our children have enjoyed developing and consolidating their understanding of basic number principles and numerical patterns. Our play-based approach to the teaching and learning of maths has enabled our children to begin flourishing into confident and enthusiastic mathematicians.

Since joining Connor Downs Academy in September, our children have considered the multitude of ways in which numbers to 5 can be represented. We have explored physical manipulatives, currency, time, oral counting, recording numbers as numerals and quantifying sets of objects and actions.



Linking to their broader learning, after reading 'Pumpkin Soup' by Helen Cooper, the children enjoyed creating their own pumpkin soup from scratch. The children measured quantities, discussed volume and capacity and gave real meaning to their mathematical learning.

Through their daily routines, the children have also worked hard to establish a clear understanding of time language and key vocabulary linked to this aspect of maths. Each morning, the children sing about the

days of the week and the months of the year; they use a visual timetable, featuring real photos of their daily routine, to sequence events and apply time language.

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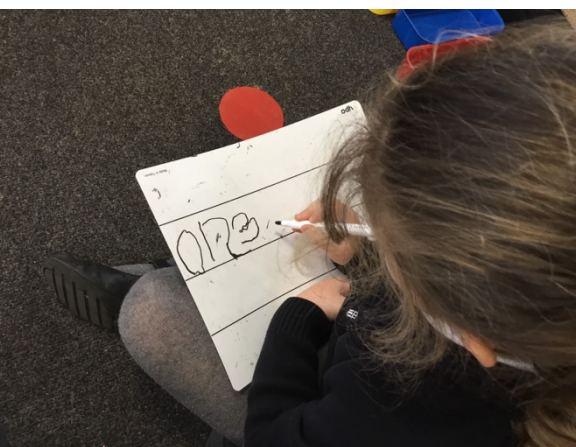
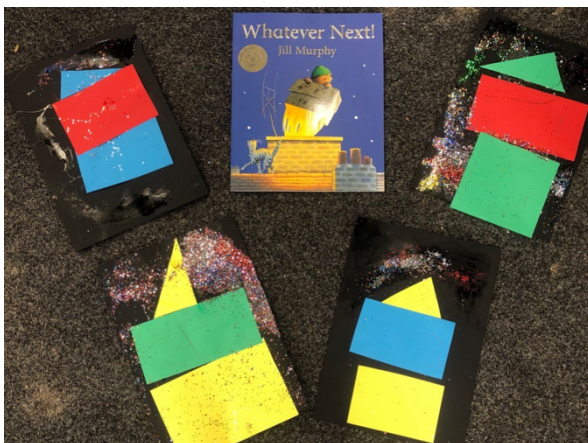
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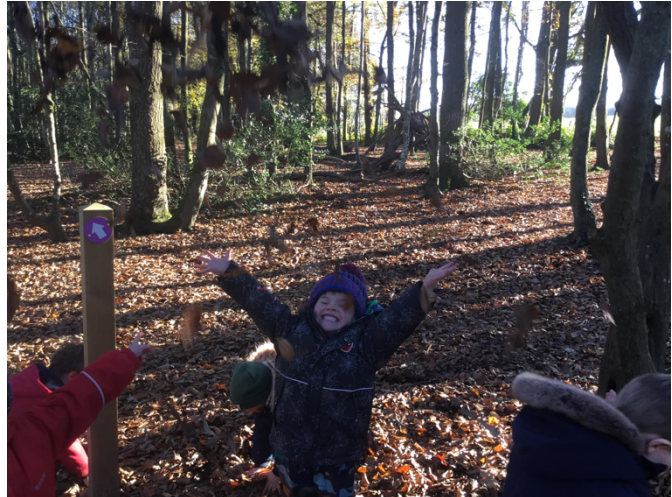




Understanding the World:

This term, Reception have enjoyed developing their understanding of the world around them. They have learned to care for Toffee and Milkshake (our class guinea pigs!), explored seasonal changes with Mr Costello during their outdoor learning sessions and investigated different aspects of physical and human geography.

Earlier this term, the children particularly enjoyed learning about Earth's seven continents. Together, they enthusiastically learned and performed 'The Continents Song' in class.



In November, as previously highlighted, Reception enjoyed visiting Tehidy Country Park for their first school trip, a sponsored welly walk. During this autumnal adventure, the children explored the woodland environment, shared some of their favourite stories (including 'The Squirrels Who Squabbled' by Rachel Bright!) and splashed through lots of muddy puddles!

They encountered a range of wildlife including squirrels, ducks and geese and, as a result of their hard work, the children raised

over £500 in funds. This money will be spent on further enhancing the provision in our Reception classroom, both indoors and outdoors, during the spring term.

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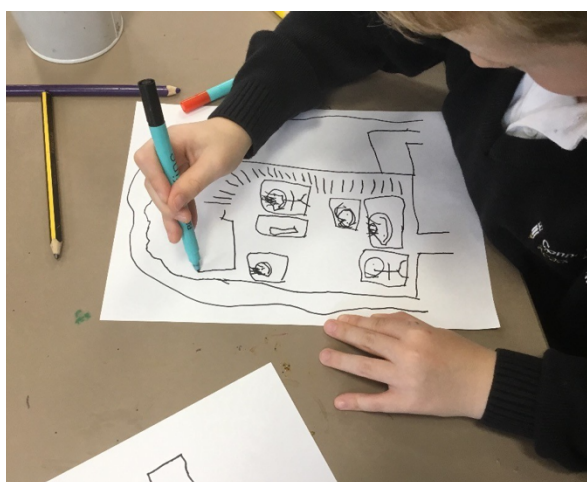
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Expressive Arts and Design:



Since joining Connor Downs Academy, our children have been encouraged to explore and express their own creative ideas. This term, our continuous and enhanced provision has facilitated our children's freedom to think creatively, utilising a range of tools, media and materials to create inspiring art work and establish imaginative role play narratives.

Music is an integral part of our daily learning; our children enjoy singing, dancing and listening to nursery rhymes, popular music and even classical compositions during their day-to-day play.



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In addition to this, at the beginning of December, our children took to the stage to perform their Christmas Nativity, Out of the Ark's: 'I'm Gonna Shine!' During each performance, the children's excitement and enthusiasm for this special Christmas celebration truly shone. With beaming smiles, the children performed a variety of songs and dances with confidence and skill. Each child played a vital role in making our show a huge success. Reception and their friends in KS1 truly brought the Christmas spirit to Connor Downs Academy!



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