

## **FESTIVALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

October 2024

Welcome to another publication of our company magazine that contains a wealth of information regarding communication and helpful tips, ideas for home learning as well as news across the 10 South Hills sites. The time seems to be flying already for the new academic year and I know from my visits to the nurseries that your children and the staff are engaging in activities celebrating the awe and wonder of the changes in the season in the most creative ways possible. Enjoy!



Sukkot is a Jewish festival that is a time to give thanks for the harvest and remember the Israelites' experience in the desert. This involves building a sukkah from wooden poles and branches and decorating them with paper chains. Fresh fruit, stuffed vegetables and challah (a type of bread) are enjoyed. The children learn the importance of gratitude and community celebrations.



Diwali, the Hindu festival of light, is celebrated as a five-day New Year festival. It symbolises the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness and new beginnings. Houses are lit by Divas – small clay pots containing a little oil and a wick (a tea light can replace the oil) and rangoli patterns are made outside front doors, together with footprints to welcome Lakshmi, the goddess of good fortune and wealth, into every home. Buildings and streets are decorated with lights, and there are firework displays. Homes are cleaned, new clothes worn and cards and gifts, such as sweets and dried fruit, are exchanged.

Bonfire Night, also known as Guy Fawkes Night, is celebrated annually in the UK on the 5th of November. It marks the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605, in which Guy Fawkes and his co-conspirators attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament. The night is traditionally marked by bonfires and fireworks displays.



Remembrance Day is marked in many countries around the world. It began as a day to mark the armistice signed between the Allied Forces and Germany, which brought about the formal end of the First World War on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.

Since then, we wear poppies in November as a reminder of the soldiers who fought during the First World War. Poppies have become an important symbol of those soldiers because the flower grew in Flanders, Belgium, where battles were fought and lots of soldiers died. They also feature in the famous war poem 'In Flanders Fields' by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae.



All Hallows' Eve is where the name Halloween comes from. For Christians, it is a day to remember and pray for the dead and is the day before All Saints' Day. It is celebrated in many different ways around the world but we tend to dress up, decorate or carve pumpkins and some children enjoy trick or treating with their parents or friends. In Spain and Mexico, it is known as the 'Day of the Dead', celebrating the lives of relatives who are no longer here. Some Eastern European countries place a chair by the fireside, each chair representing a different family member, including those who are no longer here. In Austria and Belgium, some people leave out a glass of water and some bread with a lamp being left on. Halloween associates magic and the bread, water and light are meant to welcome friendly spirits. In South Korea, it celebrates the beginning of Autumn with fruit and rice cakes being given to relatives as thanks for their hard work.

## Interactions



Research shows that good interactions between adults and children make a big difference to how well communication and language skills develop.

Children benefit from being with responsive and enthusiastic adults who show interest in talking with them. Being with others helps children to build social relationships which provide opportunities for friendship, empathy and sharing emotions. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and mental development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and other children throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are doing or interested in and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, our staff build children's language effectively.

Good interactions use words, body language, facial expressions, actions, songs. To support children who are non-verbal we use objects, pictures, or visual cues, such as showing a coat to indicate going outside. Taking turns and waiting for a child to respond builds confidence and independence. Staff are warm and attentive and adapting their language to meet the needs of each child. By repeating back, wondering aloud and adding new words extends their language.

As part of the curriculum Development Matters that the staff follow every day, a Prime Area within it is **Communication and Language** But what does this look like in our settings and how does it impact on your child's learning and development?

### Language in the settings

Children develop strong language skills when they are involved in playful, language-rich environments with opportunities to learn new words. Hands-on experiences encourage learning and provide a context for new words to be explored. For example, it's easier for children to learn vegetable names when they are touching or tasting them. Songs and rhymes offer fun ways to explore the sounds and patterns of words. Poems with actions and repetition help children listen to the structure of spoken language and explore new words. Reading stories aloud and sharing books supports children to develop language and understand new concepts. Encouraging children to notice pictures and understand words strengthens their language skills and widens their vocabulary. Non-fiction and high-quality texts such as story books, encourage children to make sense of the world around them using language.

Encouraging talk when sharing books supports communication and language. Children extend language with pretend play and acting out stories. Staff offer props and ideas that deepen the learning. This may include imaginative play with small world resources such as dolls houses, farms or garages, open ended materials (those which can be used in more than one way) such as blocks or



loose parts. Language development is also used through creativity and problem solving during activities like:

Painting   Exploring  
Observing nature   Music

## Listening and Understanding



To support early listening and understanding, we consider the physical and emotional environment. Children are able to practise listening closely, and encouraged to focus their attention. They benefit from quiet periods when they are learning to listen and understand. There are different attention stages: Generally between 0 and 1 year, children are easily distracted. These children have our full attention through focus when playing with and responding to them. Generally between 1 and 2 years, children can keep focus but cannot shift it alone. To encourage early understanding, staff give instructions, gestures and prompts, for example showing a child their nappy before changing it. Generally between 2 and 3 years, children can shift focus between tasks more easily. However, they will need our support. This is done through light touch and using their name. Generally between 3 and 4 years, children pay attention to different things at the same time. However they may still find this difficult and need support. Clear prompts help them switch their attention between tasks and listen to instructions. For example, calling their name, followed by a simple sentence like 'please stop and listen'. This prepares them for the more structured learning once they go to School.

## Supporting communication at home

Parents play a critical role in a child's language development. Studies have shown that children who are read to and spoken with a great deal during early childhood will have larger vocabularies and better grammar than those who aren't. Here are some simple ways to nurture your baby's language development.

- **Talk!** - Narrate the day as it evolves. Tell your child, for instance, "Now we're going to take a bath. Can you feel the warm water on your tummy? When we dry off, we'll get our pyjamas on and go to bed"
- **Read**—It's never too early to read to your child. One good predictor of future reading success is the amount of time parents spend reading with their child. Parents can start with simple board books and graduate to picture books and longer stories as their child gets older. Find your local library to find out if they do any free story sessions to enhance your child's social skills and language development through a love of stories.
- **Sing and dance**—Children love music and movement. When they listen to lively songs, like "Old McDonald Had a Farm," they learn about the world around them and the rhythm of language.
- **Tell stories**—Make up stories with characters, conflict, adventure, and a happy ending. Try to base them on your child's interests and if they are able to, ask them what might happen next in the story.
- **Share in their enthusiasm**—If your child seems interested in a particular picture in a book, keep talking about it. If they seem intrigued by a boat, show them more boats and talk about them too. Repeat their babbles back to them, ask questions, and interact with them. Use other reference points such as a day out and technology to gain more of an insight.
- **Never criticise your child's articulation or speech patterns**—Instead, repeat their statements back to him with the correct pronunciation or word usage. Give your child lots of praise for their efforts.
- **Use television and computers sparingly**—While some educational programs can be beneficial, TV shows don't interact with or respond to children, which are the two catalysts children need to learn language. Computer games are interactive, but they aren't responsive to a child's ideas.
- **Take ear infections seriously**—When joining a nursery it is inevitable that your child will get various bugs that get passed around. Ear infections is one and if not treated, can put your child at risk of loss of hearing and subsequently this can lead to language delays. We would recommend you taking a trip to the doctors and follow their advise.
- **Go on days out**—Imagine the language that will used between yourself and your child when they feel sand between their toes at the seaside. When they realise how enormous an elephant actually is in real life at the zoo, or strengthen their mouth muscles by copying the shapes a fish makes with their mouth at the aquarium. Learning new words and concepts will be an added bonus!

You may find these websites helpful to support your child's language and communication;

- <https://literacytrust.org.uk/resources/tips-talking-your-baby-and-young-child/>
- <https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/educators-and-professionals/what-works-database/register/>
- <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/blog/using-technology-to-help-childrens-communication-skills/>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/leaflets/look-say-sing-play-early-years-resources-parents>



## Makaton in the Early Years

Being able to communicate is one of the most important skills we need in life. And therefore for the children in our care, Makaton is used by the staff to support each child's individual needs.

Makaton is a unique way of communicating that is not only for those who have delayed speech and language or other communication struggles, but it is inclusive and accessible for all. It is a communication tool that incorporates signs, symbols, and speech. Signs are used alongside speech rather than instead of. The symbols tend to be used as an additional prompt and are particularly for those with limited speech or those who are unable to sign. In our settings, it may be used to;

Ask for food or drink    Sort out a problem    Make friends  
Know what activity is coming next.



### Here are some of the ways that Makaton can help children:

Improves communication: Makaton can help children to develop their communication skills by providing them with a way to express themselves that is clear and easy to understand. This can help them to feel more confident and independent.

Reduces frustration: When children are unable to communicate effectively, it can lead to frustration and anxiety. Makaton can help to reduce this frustration by giving them a way to express themselves.

Promotes social interaction: Makaton can help children to interact with others more easily. This is because it allows them to communicate with people who do not know sign language.

Encourages early learning: Makaton can be used to teach children new words and concepts. This can help them to learn at a faster pace and to achieve their full potential.

Supports development: Makaton can support the development of children's cognitive, social, and emotional skills. This is because it requires them to think about what they want to say, how to say it, and how to use the signs and symbols.

Something  
Special

This website offers a wealth of songs and rhymes for you and your child to watch and learn how Makaton works. Try practising the signs at home—they soon become routine.

Something Special uses Makaton signs, speech and symbols to help children learn how to communicate and develop their language skills in a fun and exciting way. Join Mr Tumble and friends as they sing, play and learn together.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/something-special>



Mr  
Tumble

## Bemerton

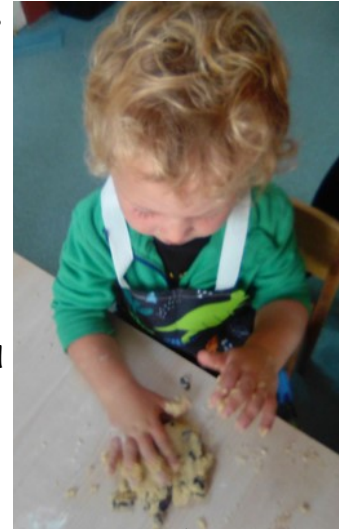
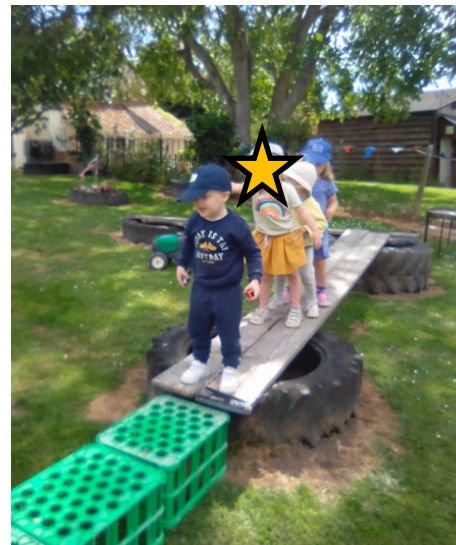
At Bemerton this term the children have been exploring their senses, indoors and out. Despite the rainy weather, the Rabbit class children have continued to investigate their new surroundings and resources in the garden. Owl class have extended these explorations by going into the woods to collect natural resources for their Autumn displays and recreated the den that they found in the woods back in the classroom. And children in Squirrel class have been discovering new textures in their sensory trays.



## Great Cheverell

Here at Old School Nursery we have had a busy few months both indoors and outdoors. We have learnt about life cycles by incubating chicken and duck eggs and watching them grow as well as caterpillars that turned in to beautiful butterflies which we released in our garden. The children have been nurturing the fruit and vegetable plants that we have been growing in our garden including potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, cucumber, raspberries and strawberries which were then used in their weekly baking activities. This provided them with many learning opportunities such as how to handle equipment safely, measuring quantities, expanding on their vocabulary by learning new words such as “marinade” and “combine” as well as working on their turn taking. We have made the most of all weathers by digging “muddy puddles” in the rain, exploring the Autumn leaves by looking at the different shapes and colours, practicing great team work through creating obstacle courses with the wooden planks and crates and working on our climbing skills on our new climbing wall. Frank, a Royal Python visited the nursery and the children were very eager and brave as they stroked him. They learnt

about how he can only see colours in heat- red and blue, how he only eats once a month and that he uses his tongue to smell. We are currently preparing a piece of art work for their pen pals at Holy Trinity Primary school. The children are looking forward to seeing their friends who moved up to primary school in September and supports their transitions and building relationships in the local community. Over the next few months we will be preparing a ‘reverse advent’ which involves donating an item of food a day during the advent period which we will then deliver to the Devizes foodbank.



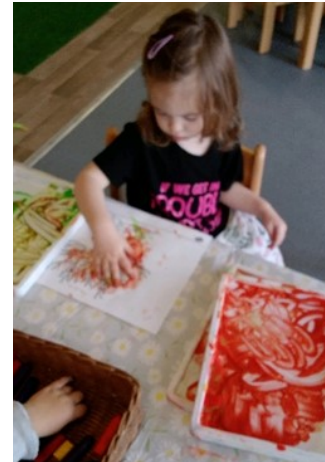
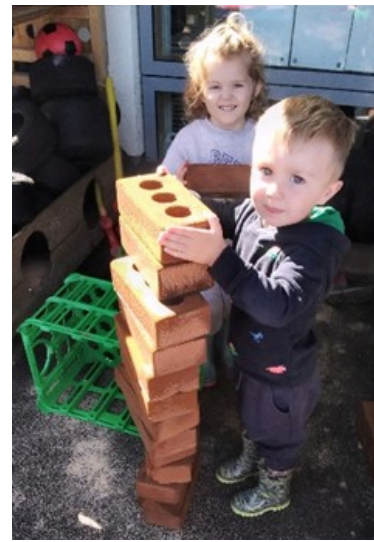
## Wilton

We have had a very busy term here at South Hills Wilton. We had a successful cake sale early on in the term for McMillan, with each class making some delicious cakes and cheese straws and parents contributing with tasty treats as well. We raised an amazing £85.78 The children in our dairy unit have enjoyed going on some lovely walks to the woods, exploring the change in season, making some beautiful hedgehogs from clay. Baby unit have also had some walks to the woods with some puddle jumping fun and collecting various coloured leaves. There are some fabulous autumn tough trays in the classrooms for the children to explore. Barn have been exploring how they look using mirrors to study their faces and creating some fantastic self-portraits. There have also been some great singing and dance routines being created by barn class children. We had a very successful harvest festival, with parents, grandparents and other family members enjoying the songs and actions that went with them, with a lovely little squirrel dance to end with. We have had many contributions of various foods and the barn children will be going to the Trussell Trust to make a donation.



## Trinity

Here at Trinity we have all settled very well back into nursery life after a good summer break. We have welcomed new children and their parents who are already part of our setting and are doing very well. Over the summer we revamped our garden area, upgrading our mud kitchen, which has always been a firm favourite with the children. They now have a covered den that they can utilise as a quiet place looking at books or have small huddle times. Our new outside classroom is well equipped for letters and sounds phonic groups for the older children and the younger ones as they are keen to join in. We have introduced small tyres to our loose parts area and the children rise to the challenge of building obstacle course. The children have been involved in autumn craft, colour exploring all the lovely autumn colours In our lead up to Christmas. We have plenty of events happening such as the photographer, cake sale, Children in need dress up day, Christmas craft afternoon with parents and of course Christmas lunch and the end of term Christmas party with an entertainer.





## Burcombe

At Burcombe we have welcomed in Autumn with each child making their own clay pumpkins. The children did really well at making them using their hands and tools. They were all pleased with the outcome and cannot wait to take them home at the end of term. Humpty Dumpty made an appearance as it became a popular song to sing. We took this interest and allowed the children to build a wall and act out Humpty Dumpty with eggs. The children enjoyed watching the eggs fall off the wall and crack. During painting a few children noticed that when you mix colours together they make new colours. this offered lots of chances to explore the colours that could be made. As we have recently had lots of boxes in nursery the children were keen to play with them and imagined our boxes to be a rocket and a pirate ship. They got busy decorating them and then had hours of fun with imaginative play. The children are thoroughly enjoying the newly created cosy area which has created a love of books, where they can be found snuggling with their friends and having some quiet relaxing time.



## Froxfield

Babies and Toddlers have been joined by lots of new little ones this term. They have been using their senses to explore different materials. Lower Nursery have been exploring mud! They have been painting with mud, mixing it with different things and making pies in the mud kitchen. Upper Nursery have been looking at the meaning of 'Field to Fork'. We have been learning about where our food comes from and how the farmer

plants and cares for his crops. There has been shopping in the Farm Shop, tractor tyre printing, scarecrow making and harvesting our carrots planted back in the Summer.





## St Peters

With our pedagogy centred on Montessori and the Montessori resources which are host to various areas of learning, the room itself is permanently busy with both previous and recent new additions to our class. This is where we see the benefits from having the mixed aged groups; the older children being the most incredible role models who demonstrate qualities such as patience, concentration, perseverance and resilience when being met with a challenge. We have also started to explore the autumn season and the children are enjoying making new discoveries through arts and crafts.



## Corsham

The children at South Hills have been learning about Harvest, They have been introduced to how and where certain foods grow, this has been achieved by watching the local tractors in the fields and through various activities and resources in the nursery. Children have also been learning what happens to various vegetables once they have been harvested. Ultimately the children prepared the vegetables by scraping, peeling and cutting, ready for cooking.





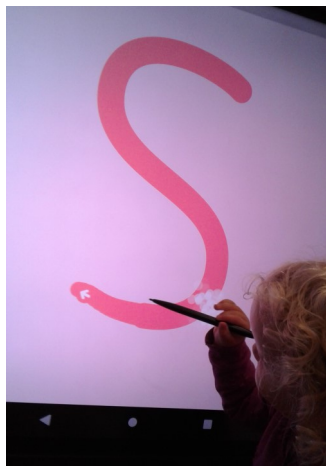
City

The nursery as a whole have been changing their environments to follow the style of the Curiosity Approach. The children have been getting curious and showing independence in their play with more natural resources, this encourages their imagination to run wild. We've enjoyed more baking sessions where together they've worked as a team and learnt new skills to make their delicious treats. This term we have welcomed new children who have all settled in well. We love Autumn-collecting leaves, sticks and conkers for use in our play. We have added pumpkins to our autumn tray noticing the different colours, shapes and textures We have been looking at natural resources such as leaves, sticks, pine cones and pumpkins. We have explored the different textures and how to paint with them. We have loved spending time in the garden and getting messy .



## Calne

At South Hills Nursery Calne a huge welcome to all our families and a huge welcome back to our existing families. This term the children have been really busy developing their independent skills through their PE sessions, snack preparation and role play. We have focused on changes and ice exploration; has been a big hit. The children have been learning lots of new vocabulary, developing their gross and fine motor movements and social interaction. The children have been fascinated by stories and mark making opportunities, these have developed imagination and critical thinking skills. The new Smart board has been an exciting addition and has developed communication and language skills, literacy and turn taking. The children have developed their mathematical concepts through building. This has been a term of discovery and we can't wait for next term where we will be developing our well-being and having lots of fun with glitter!





### Falling leaves (to the tune of Jingle Bells)

Falling leaves, falling leaves, falling to the ground.

Falling leaves, falling leaves, blowing round and round.

Way up high, way down low, drifting fast and slow.

Falling leaves, falling leaves, Oh how the wind  
does blow.



### Scarecrow, Scarecrow

Scarecrow, scarecrow turn around,

Scarecrow, Scarecrow touch the ground.

Scarecrow, Scarecrow reach up high,

Scarecrow, Scarecrow touch the sky.

Scarecrow, Scarecrow bend down low,

Scarecrow, Scarecrow touch your toes.

(You can also watch Mr Tumble sing "I'm  
a dingle dangle scarecrow" on YouTube  
here - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=9SpuEP3ZZRI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SpuEP3ZZRI))

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=9SpuEP3ZZRI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SpuEP3ZZRI)



## Autumn songs and rhymes



### 5 little pumpkins

5 little pumpkins sitting on a gate (hold up 5 fingers)

The first one said "Oh my, its getting late" (hands on cheeks). The second one said "There's a chill in the air" (Arms around self). The third one said "But we don't care" (swing pointer finger). The fourth one said "We are ready for some fun" (hands in air). The fifth one said "Lets run and run and run"

So whoooooo went the wind (make the sound)

And out went the lights (cap hands once loudly)

And 5 little pumpkins rolled out of sight (roll hands)

### Did you ever see a hedgehog?

(to the tune of Did you ever see a Lassie?)

Did you ever see a hedgehog, a hedgehog, a  
hedgehog? Did you ever see a hedgehog munching  
his lunch?

He munches and crunches and crunches and munches.

Did you ever see a hedgehog  
munching his lunch?

( Listen to a hedgehog poem on  
YouTube—[https://www.bbc.co.uk/  
cbeebies/watch/down-on-the-farm-  
hedgehog-poem](https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/down-on-the-farm-hedgehog-poem) )



## Autumn Bakes

### Campfire cupcakes

**Ingredients:** 140g light muscovado sugar, 100g self-raising flour, 50g cocoa powder, 1 tsp baking powder, 3 eggs, 125ml vegetable oil, 3 tbsp milk, 50g milk chocolate chip, 30g pack mini marshmallows. **Method:** Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Tip the sugar, flour, cocoa and baking powder into a large bowl. Whisk together the eggs, vegetable oil and milk, then stir together with the dry ingredients until well combined. Add the milk chocolate chips. Place cupcake cases into a 12-hole bun tin. Divide the mixture between the cases, then bake for 20 mins until risen and cooked through. Store for up to 2 days in an airtight container. Just before serving arrange marshmallows over the tops of the cakes. Heat grill to medium and pop the cakes under it for 30 secs, watching all the time, just until the marshmallows are lightly browned.



**Ingredients:** 500g pack brown bread mix, 25g butter, plain flour, for dusting, 12 raisins, 6 flaked almonds. **Method:** Make the bread mixture following pack instructions. Leave the dough to rest for 5 mins, then knead for 5 mins. Cut the dough into six pieces. Dust the surface with a little flour and shape each piece into a ball. Make it hedgehog-shaped by pulling one side out a little and squeezing it gently into a snout. Be quite firm or it will bounce back. Put the



hedgehogs on a baking sheet, cover with a damp tea towel and leave to rise for 1 hr. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Using kitchen scissors carefully snip into the dough to make the spikes on the backs of the hedgehogs. Press raisins in for the eyes and push a flaked almond into the end of each snout. Bake for 15 mins or until the rolls are risen and golden.

### Halloween pies

**Ingredients:** Ready rolled shortcrust pastry, 50g dried sage and onion stuffing mix, mincemeat, 180g tomato chutney, 750g plain flour. **Method:** Grease a 12-hole muffin tin and line each hole with a strip of baking paper. On a floured surface, roll the pastry to about 5mm thick. Using a cutter, stamp out 12 circles, about 11cm in diameter. Line each hole of the tin with the circles, leaving a slight overhang. Heat oven to gas 4, 180°C, fan 160°C. Put a baking tray in the oven to warm. Divide the stuffing mix between each case, add the sausage meat and add about 1 tsp of chutney to each pie, spreading out. Roll out the pastry again and stamp out 12 8cm circles. Cut out pumpkin shapes in each one. Brush the edges of the filled cases with egg, then put lids on top. Pinch edges with your fingers, then crimp with a fork. Brush with a little of the beaten egg. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove from tin, brush with egg on top/sides and place on preheated baking tray for another 20-25 mins



### Apple pie bars

**Ingredients:** 250g cold butter, cut into cubes, 350g plain flour, 150g light brown soft sugar, plus 3 tbsp, 1 tsp vanilla extract, 4 medium Bramley apples, peeled, cored and cut into chunks, 1¼ tsp ground cinnamon, 1½ lemon, juiced, 75g icing sugar. **Method:** Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Line a 18 x 28cm baking tin with baking parchment. Put the butter, flour, brown sugar and vanilla extract and blitz until the mixture comes together. Press two-thirds of the dough into the tin and bake for 12-15 mins until golden. Tip the apples into a pan with 3 tbsp of the brown sugar, 1 tsp of the cinnamon and the lemon juice. Cook for 15-20 mins until the apples have softened but not broken down. Tip over the pastry base, and cover with remaining dough. Bake for 15-20 mins until the topping is cooked and golden. Remove from the oven and leave to cool. Combine the icing sugar, ¼ tsp cinnamon and water and drizzle over bars.







Fairy house



Conker run with cardboard tubes



Imprints in playdough



Pumpkin 'no carving' faces

**Autumn loose parts**

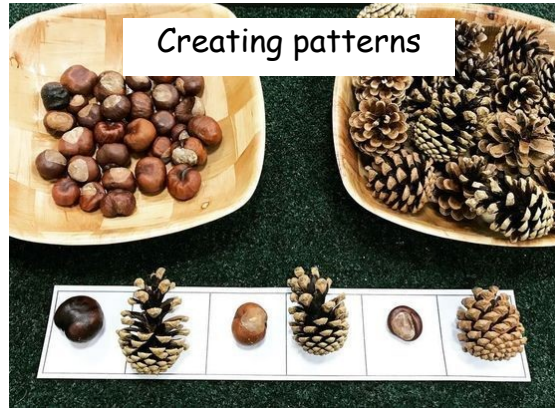
Loose parts don't have a fixed outcome and allow children to have free expression with what they want to create and how they want to achieve it. All of these ideas can be created using objects found in the local community, at parks, woodland or even in your kitchen cupboards and recycling. Fun for the whole family!



Mirror play



Funny faces



Creating patterns



Fine motor and number sorting



Leaf monsters—Lots of puppet play to be had with these little fellows. Offer your child a selection of wiggly eyes, feathers etc to stick onto leaves that you have collected beforehand.



## Autumn Crafts

Colour matching—Provide your child with a range of colours for them to paint in stripes over the paper. Take a walk in your local community and pick up a variety of fallen leaves in a range of colours. Once back home (and after warming up with a hot chocolate !) let the matching begin by gluing the leaves down.



Natural paint brushes— After you have gathered sticks, leaves, fir cones , berries or anything found on the forest floor, attach with tape or wire and allow your child to get making marks.

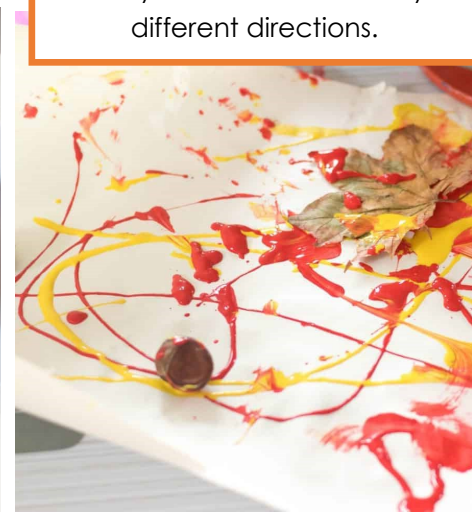
Shadow leaf drawing—There are a variety of autumn leaves that come in all shapes and sizes. Peg onto string hung between 2 chairs and place a sheet of paper below them. This will need to be in a well light room to create a shadow. Ask your child to trace the shapes.



Cotton bud autumn trees—Instead of them going in our ears, dip the cotton bud in paint and dab around pre glued sticks on the paper to create the leaves falling from a tree. Discuss what colours would be best to represent autumn leaves.



Conker painting—These are the perfect substitute for marbles.. After placing your paper in a tray, drop autumn coloured paint and place the conker on the tray. twist and lift the tray in different directions.



Pumpkin spice cloud dough—mix 4 cups of flour (bake flour first to get rid of any bacteria) and 1/2 cup of vegetable oil with 2 tbsp cinnamon, 2 tsp ginger, 1 tsp ground cloves, 1 tsp ground allspice and 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg. Add pots, spoons and any autumn extras you can find for your child to enjoy hours of fun.

