

Plans and learning objectives for the topics **Autumn & Autumn Festivals, Superheroes and Christmas**

**Diwali 4th November; Firework Night 5th November; Thanksgiving Thursday 25th November; Hanukkah 6th December and Christmas**

*Personnal, Social and Emotional Development*

Continuing from the work initiated in the All About Me topic we will look at the differences and the similarities in people focusing on these celebrations. We will also continue to look at the way that we celebrate achievements and consider things that we are proud of, hoping to build a sense of self and develop self esteem and for Thanksgiving we will consider things and people that we are 'thankful' for. Superheroes will provide a basis to continue to look at likes and interests. The children helped create rules for Playgroup so that they take ownership of them. We will refer to these and share them so that there can be continuity at home.

*Communication and Language*

We will learn new vocabulary from the artefacts and objects around the festivals and from Autumn itself. The children will be encouraged to describe different areas such as the sights and sounds of fireworks and the Autumn environment to create 'poems'. As well as this language development there will continue to be many adult led games to encourage listening skills and help develop concentration.

*Physical Development*

There will be physical activities every day. If we can't get outside because of the weather we will introduce adult led play such as the parachute, yoga, assault courses, music and movement etc indoors. There will be large scale play activities including climbing and running based around Superheroes and games around American sports for Thanksgiving. We will have large scale creative activities such as splatter painting for fireworks that also develop gross motor skills. We will look at healthy eating at the start of half term when we make pumpkin soup and will look at other healthy lifestyles such as exercising, sleeping well, cleaning teeth, all of which we have good DVDs to support. There are also ones to support safety around fireworks and road safety, especially during the darker nights.

*Literacy*

We will look at non fiction books about the different festivals and their countries of origin where appropriate. There will be mark making opportunities making and writing in cards. For Thanksgiving we make a totem/story telling pole which we sit round and make up stories, some of which we will write out and illustrate in our own books. We will also

continue to narrate and act out Helicopter stories and will make up our own Superhero stories.

### *Understanding the World*

We have a very good series of DVDs *A Child's Eye View of Festivals* which present them in a very accessible way. We will follow up by using the computer game *Become a World Explorer*. We tend to concentrate on food and costume which provides a basis for comparisons between different celebrations. As these celebrations come under the umbrella term *Festivals of Light* we will also extend the topic to look at torches, shining them on reflective materials in a dark den which we will relate to road safety. We use the Unicef book *'A Life Like Mine'* as a basis to learn about Native Americans for Thanksgiving. Please bring in any colourful leaves, conkers, cones, feathers etc that the children find interesting and we'll create an Autumn interest table. We hope to go over to school to watch their Nativity Play, circumstances allowing.

### *Mathematics*

As part of Diwali we will look at Rangoli patterns considering shapes, sequences and symmetry and create our own. For Thanksgiving we cut out hand shapes so we will look at the number 5, supported by number songs and finger rhymes. We will count the number of candles on the Hanukkah menorah, making numbered pictures.

### *Expressive Art and Design*

We will look at Autumn colours and focus on colour mixing. There will be large scale projects such as splatter painting for fireworks and smaller individual ones such as making cards for each celebration. We will print and paint using natural objects associated with Autumn such as leaves and conkers. We will make 2d and 3d Christmas decorations. There will be plenty of opportunity to experiment with musical instruments, especially drums and for dance as we look at Native American and Indian music. There will be a small world superhero playset for imaginary play and we hope to be able to get the superhero dressing up out for the first time for a long time.

We hope to be able to hold a Christmas party with a small performance by the children on the last day of term but this will need to be confirmed nearer the time.

Please do bring in any interesting artefacts that you think may help us celebrate these festivals

