Shoots Newsletter – Autumn 2

As we start a new half term, it has been so lovely to welcome the children back and see them return with such enthusiasm and energy. They have settled back into school life really well, enjoying lots of different play opportunities and becoming more confident with our daily routines and expectations.
It has been especially wonderful to see new friendships developing, as well as the children continuing to build positive relationships with the staff around them.

Our new topic this half term is *'Let's Celebrate!'*

We'll be exploring a range of celebrations and traditions, providing the children with exciting opportunities to build on their language skills. Our focus will continue to be on developing new vocabulary and encouraging the children to use longer sentences when communicating.

We'll be sharing a variety of poems and stories, including '*Kipper's Birthday*' and '*Elmer in the Snow*', to support their understanding and enjoyment of language.

In our mark-making activities, the children will be encouraged to use a range of media such as paintbrushes, chalk, and shaving foam to express their ideas creatively. We'll also be supporting them in giving meaning to the marks they make, for example, "That's Mummy and me at the park."

In maths, we'll be exploring patterns creating and continuing them as well as working on subitising (recognising small quantities without counting) and counting with increasing accuracy.

Our Goals This Half Term

As part of our continued development across the Early Years curriculum, we have three key goals we'll be focusing on with the children this half term:

1. Celebrate Differences
We will be helping children to notice and understand differences between themselves and others — such as hair colour, skin colour, personal likes and dislikes — and to show respect and kindness towards those differences.

2. Develop Emotional Confidence and Self-Regulation
Children will be encouraged to confidently identify their own emotions and begin to use strategies to manage them. This might include choosing a different area to play in or speaking to a trusted adult when they need support.

3. Explore How Things Work
Through hands-on activities, children will be supported to test out their own ideas and theories. They'll be encouraged to use trial and error, share their thinking with friends, and develop early problem-solving skills



Below are some autumn and winter-themed ideas to enjoy as a family. These activities support early language and maths development, while also encouraging imagination, curiosity, and conversation.

Nature Walk & Collecting Treasures
Go on a nature walk and collect autumn or winter treasures like leaves, pinecones, and sticks. Talk about what you see using descriptive words like *crunchy*, *smooth*, or *spiky*. Count the items together and sort them by size, colour, or type to practise early maths and vocabulary.

Hot Chocolate Role Play
Pretend to make hot chocolate using cups and marshmallows (real or pretend). Count how many marshmallows go into each cup and compare which has more or less. Use sequencing words like *first*, *next*, and *last*, and encourage your child to explain what they are doing as they play.

Mark-Making with a Seasonal Twist
Use shaving foam, sand, or paint to create pictures of autumn or winter scenes, like snowy trees, snowmen, or falling leaves. Encourage your child to describe their marks or tell a story about their picture, helping them to build sentences and use imaginative language.

Sock Sorting & Pattern Fun
Gather some colourful socks and let your child match them into pairs, sort them by size, or make repeating patterns. Talk about what they notice, using words like *same*, *different*, *bigger*, and *smaller*, and encourage them to explain their choices.

Cosy Up with Seasonal Stories
Snuggle up and enjoy some seasonal stories together, such as *Elmer in the Snow*, *Owl Babies*, or *Stick Man*. Talk about the characters and events, ask open-ended questions, and encourage your child to retell the story in their own words to build confidence in speaking

