

Looking Under

Hazeldene Family Centre
Learning and Growing
Together





This week we started our inquiry with a discussion about mini beasts, we looked at some minibeasts painted on pebbles. We began wondering where a good place to look for some would be. Some of the children from this bubble decided to look under the mud to see if they could find any real mini beasts.



The children were delighted to find some bugs in the garden and placed their discoveries into some bug magnifier pots so they could look at them closely.



Child J "We need to look under the stones and behind the bunker, bugs like to live in dark places". Look I have found a woodlouse it's wriggling it looks as if it is stuck it has rolled onto his back, I have turned him the right way".



Child S " you need to be gentle with the bug as he's just so little".



Child R " I found a snail, oh no the snail has gone, it isn't in the shell, maybe the snail has just gone out his house to get something".

Child J " Ive found a little worm thing, I'll put it in the bug box. I saw a water skater and a water boatman at Greenbank gardens in the water, they skite on the water as if they are floating, they can hover. I know lots about bugs my Grandpa teaches me things about them and my aunt does too".

Child J " we have put the bugs back in their homes as they won't like being in our bug boxes for a long time".



Child J – " I've looked everywhere and I can.t find a caterpillar, I like caterpillars. I'd be really happy if I found one. I didn.t find any at Greenbank either".

Child H " The bugs will be sad they will miss their family".

28/04/2021



After releasing the bugs, the children decided they would like to record their learning on paper sharing everything they know about minibeasts.

Child H " I'm drawing a wiggly worm he has lots and lots of lines, he looks stripey".

Child L " my bug has legs, hundreds and hundreds of legs, he needs some eyes so he can see in the dark".



Child A " This is my spider it is a spotty spider".



Child H " my snail is eating strawberry icecream".



The children were very interested with the mini beasts, so we continued throughout the following week too with a variety of provocations to help the children to lead their own learning.

A group of girls were interested in making a Mini Beast book with different pictures of the insects and some children were writing the names of them.

Child H “ we can put all our drawings in a book. We can write words and be the author and if you draw a picture for it, you are the illustrator”.

The book consisted of slugs, worms, ladybirds, centipedes, bees, butterflies and dragonflies. The girls were discussing the different mini beasts between themselves.

Child A “I’m drawing the snail because of the pattern in the shell”

Child B “Yea me too I’m going to do different colours”

I discussed with the girls the pattern spiraling around the shell.

Another child was interested with the number of legs on the ladybird and centipede, and we started counting the different number of legs on each of the animals.

Child C “The ladybird has six legs, but the butterfly has two wings”

We discussed how different mini beasts had different ways of transporting themselves about and grouped together the mini beasts with legs and ones with wings.



The mini beast topic is a very interesting topic for the children as there is several ways in which their learning can take them. Many parts of the curriculum can be covered within the insect investigation. We will continue to further developing their knowledge on mini beasts throughout the term as it has proven a big interest with the children and there is lots of scope for progression and depth in their learning.

The children were a little disappointed they hadn't been able to find any caterpillars in our nursery grounds and local environment, but we have been lucky enough to be able to buy our very own caterpillars to continue this line of inquiry allowing the children to view the lifecycle of the caterpillars before releasing them as butterflies.





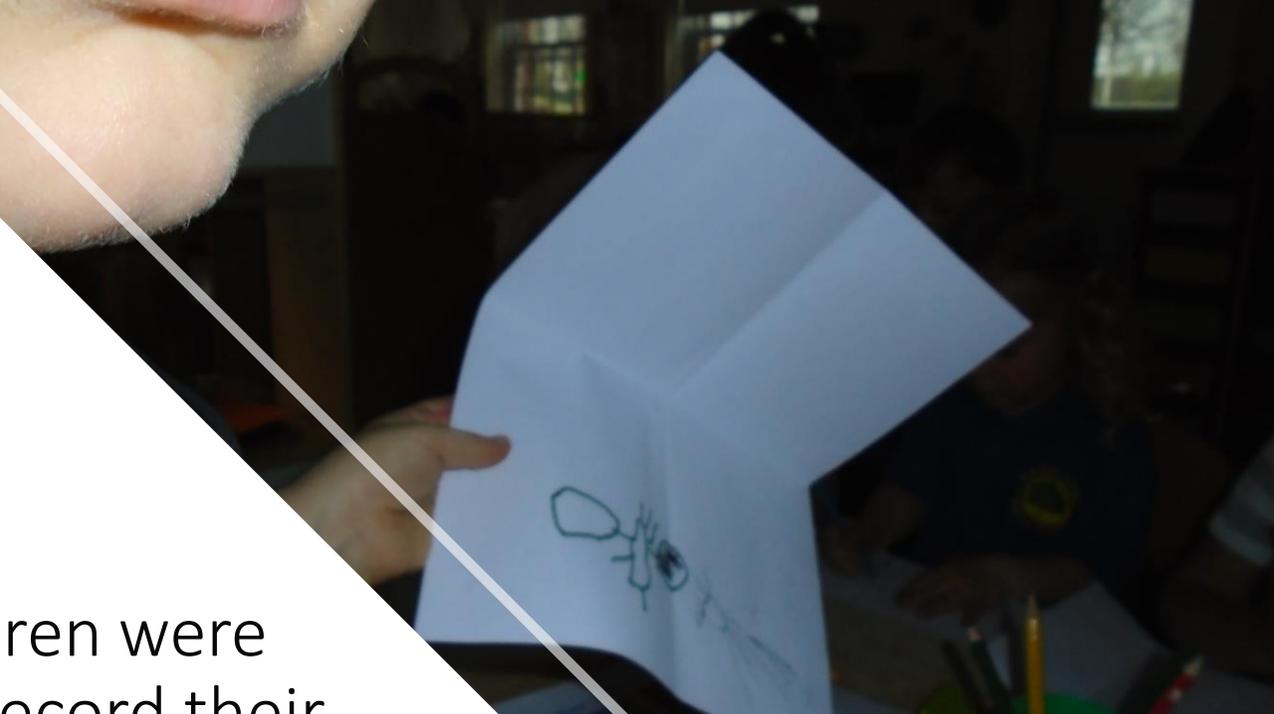
In our second bubble as part of this week's learning experience, the children here were invited to look under things such as rocks, stones, leaves etc. The children were given the opportunity to explore the garden to see what they could find in the way of Mini Beasts and see if they recognised what they found.

Child A "A caterpillar becomes a butterfly. I find worms in dirt."

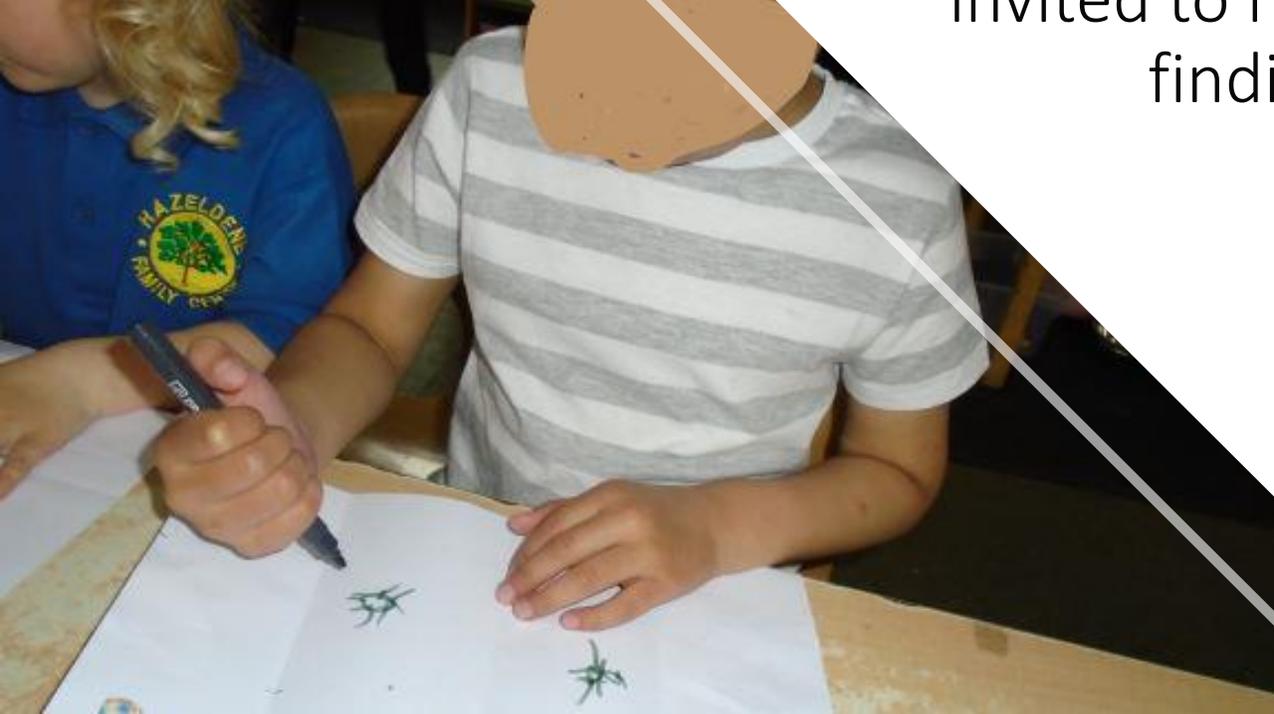
Child B "You find worms in the dirt."

Child C "I find spiders in plants and sometimes they come inside. You find bugs in trees."

Child D "I saw a snail."

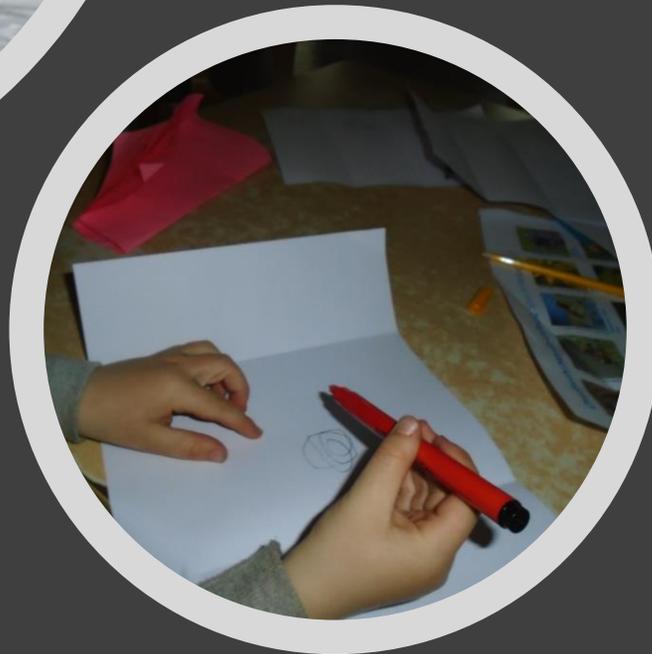


The children were invited to record their findings.





Child A “This is me and my dog and a little caterpillar. My unicorn has a slug with it and a love heart.”



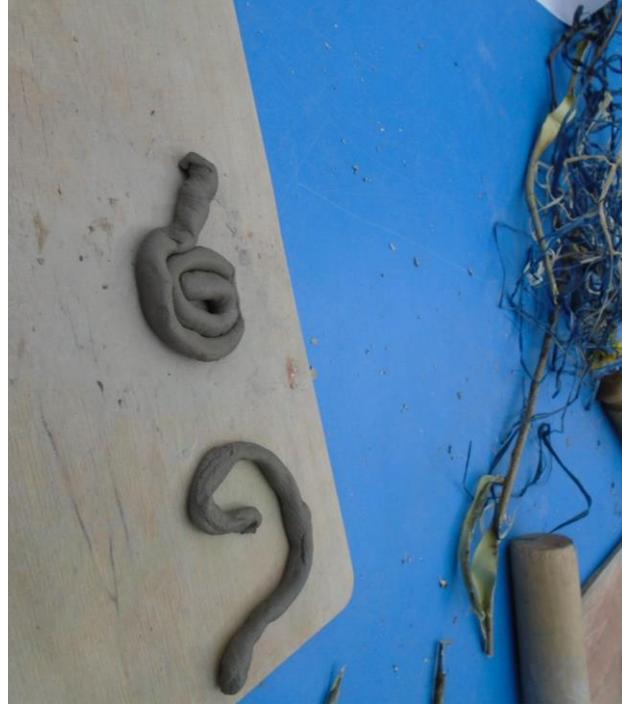
Child B I’m drawing a spider. They have big webs like spiderman. Pew! Pew!” I’ve done a snail.” My favourite is T-Rex because he is a mini beast. I’d seed a moth in my grandma’s house.”



Child C “This is my spider. This is my worm. You find worms in the dirt.” This is a spider on a flower. This is a drawing of a worm. All the mini beasts are my favourite.”

Child E “I like worms. You find them in the earth.”

Child F “I see a bee in my garden. I saw a bug in my house. My favourite bug is a that one.” (woodlouse) Bees make lots of honey. Bees chase you around.”

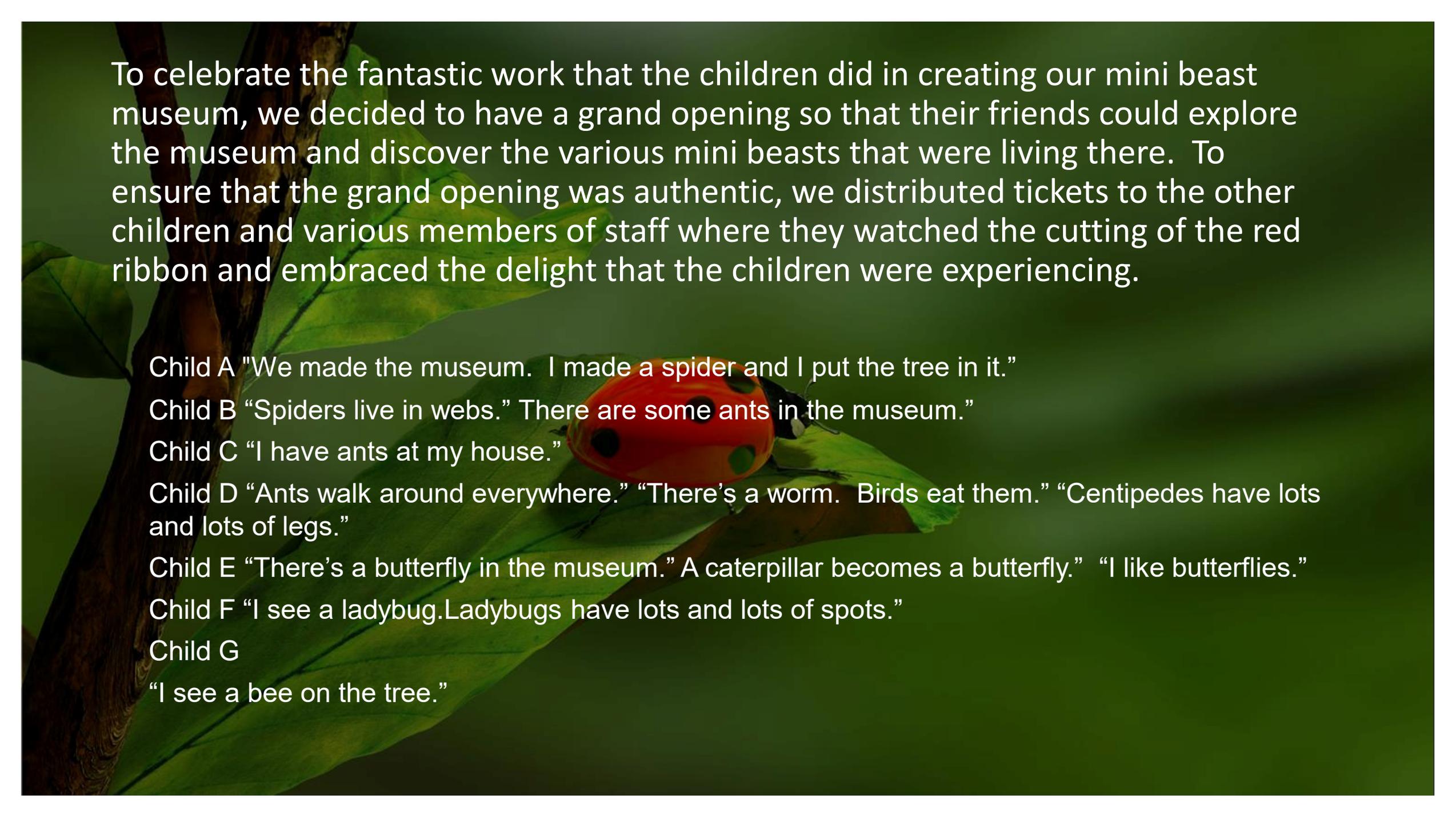


The children chose to make their very own mini beasts using clay. In terms of displaying their findings and discoveries, the children used an old cardboard box, some willow and other organic matter to set the appropriate scene for their museum



To display their findings and discoveries, the children used an old cardboard box, some willow and other organic matter to set the appropriate scene for their museum.



A ladybug with a red body and black spots is crawling on a large green leaf. In the background, a brown tree trunk is visible against a dark green background.

To celebrate the fantastic work that the children did in creating our mini beast museum, we decided to have a grand opening so that their friends could explore the museum and discover the various mini beasts that were living there. To ensure that the grand opening was authentic, we distributed tickets to the other children and various members of staff where they watched the cutting of the red ribbon and embraced the delight that the children were experiencing.

Child A "We made the museum. I made a spider and I put the tree in it."

Child B "Spiders live in webs." "There are some ants in the museum."

Child C "I have ants at my house."

Child D "Ants walk around everywhere." "There's a worm. Birds eat them." "Centipedes have lots and lots of legs."

Child E "There's a butterfly in the museum." "A caterpillar becomes a butterfly." "I like butterflies."

Child F "I see a ladybug. Ladybugs have lots and lots of spots."

Child G

"I see a bee on the tree."

During our investigations of looking down, the children were very interested with looking under rocks and the soil in our garden to discover mini beasts. The children found a worm, slug and centipede. They were carefully placed in glass containers so the children could observe them. The children were using magnifying glasses and binoculars to view the insects.

The children were very interested with the mini beasts, so we continued throughout the week with a variety of provocations for the children to participate in.

A group of girls were interested in making a Mini Beast book with different pictures of the insects and some were writing the names of them. A variety of pebbles which had pictures of different mini beasts on them were sat on the table along with an insect book. The book consisted of slugs, worms, ladybirds, centipedes, bees, butterflies and dragonflies. The girls were discussing the different mini beasts between themselves.

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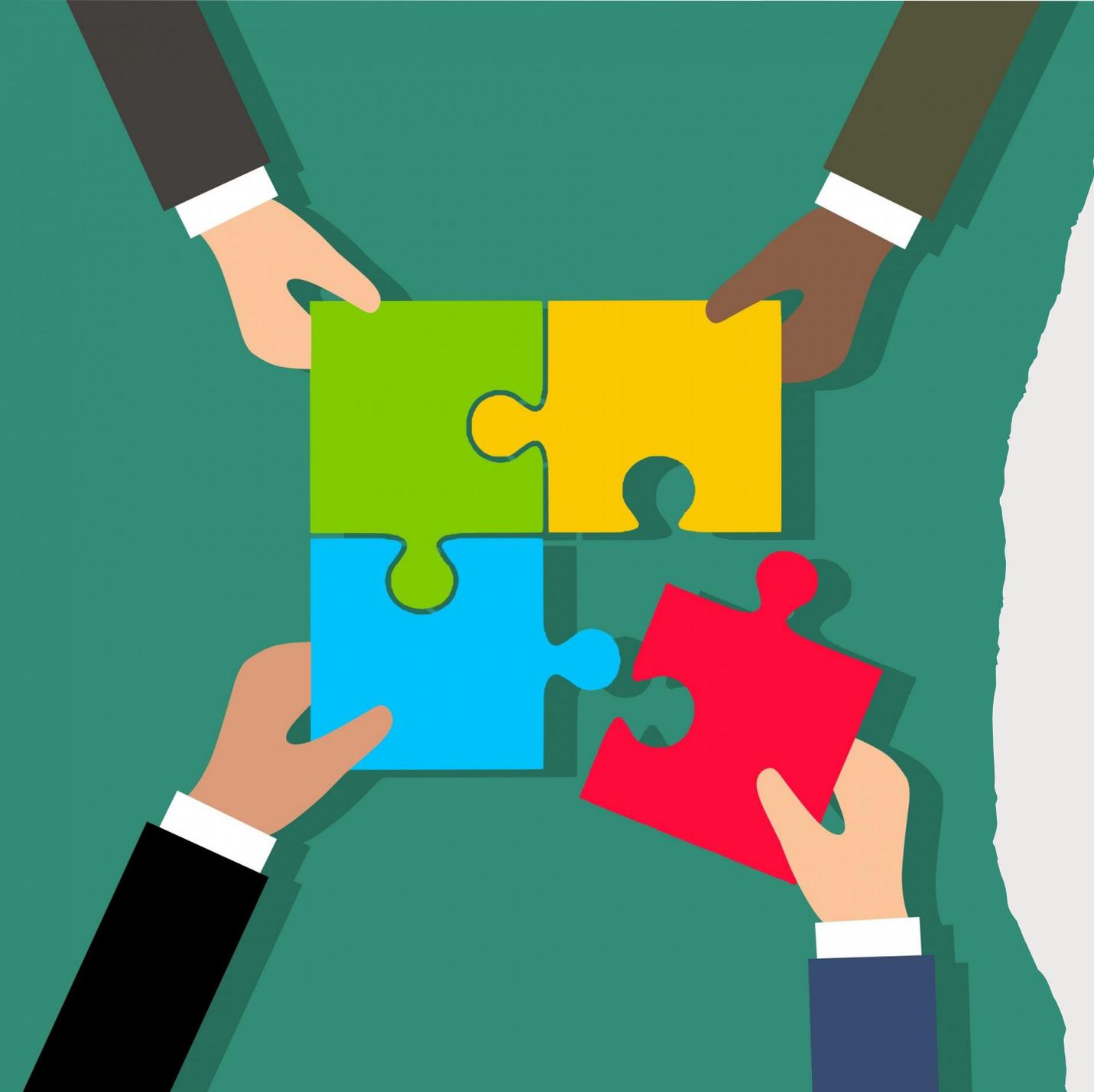
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Self Evaluation – as we now approach the end of Virtual Nature School’s Cohort 3 Winter training, we asked our colleagues to fill in a short questionnaire to help us formulate an Action Plan. Reflecting upon our practice affords us opportunities to develop and enhance our existing practice ensuring equity across our bubbles whilst working during the pandemic.



Strengths

What Are We Doing Well

Connection with nature – planting and growing;

Visits to the local environment

Use of loose parts;

Children leading their own learning; imaginative play.

Daily opportunities to free flow clearly defined with diverse opportunities

High quality passionate staff

Staff ensure a wealth of activities relating to nature and seasonal change

The learning experiences and provocations are extremely varied which involve the community

Staff who create stimulating environments and experiences that challenge the children's thinking

What are we going to do next



Let nature nurture our children

More staff training

Involve children more in planning

Ensure children are leading their own learning

Develop our child led and child initiated practice

Cascade information and share good practice with other members of staff

At Hazeldene we are well known for being out in all weathers, making the most of our beautiful gardens every day we need to ensure everyone has appropriate clothing all year round

Make more use of our woodland area and other green spaces

Be prepared –resources and opportunities to develop grab boxes

Self evaluation – look closely at our practice.

Hazeldene's Journey with Virtual Nature School

It has been a pleasure to have been part of the winter Cohort 3, we have been truly inspired and thoroughly motivated throughout this training. Both new and experienced practitioners found the training materials excellent and extremely beneficial, we have had opportunities to learn, to reflect and to inspire not only our children but our fellow colleagues too.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Claire, Bravo and everyone else on the VNS team for their hard work, dedication and support throughout this journey you have provided us with some excellent materials throughout our journey together and we look forward to being able to participate in more Virtual Nature School training in the future.

