



October

MONTHLY REPORT

For supporters

2022

Contents

Service Impact	1
Activities	1
• Autumn	2
• Music	4
• Bugs	6
• Circle	8
• Free Play	9
Updates	10

Service Impact

This month Project Play ran 30 sessions, with a total of 62 hours of play.

We aim to run sessions 6 days a week in the informal camps at Grand-Synthe. We also run 1-2 sessions each week at Secours Catholique's Accueil Social, Calais. This month, we also ran a session at BMX in Calais.

This month we know that we worked with at least 142 children.



Autumn Painting

Activities

We want to ensure that every child has the opportunity to engage in something that they enjoy. We therefore provide a variety of activities that allow children to exercise agency and make choices, and try to ensure we are able to offer something for all children, from babies to teenagers.

Each session, we begin with a main activity based on our weekly theme. Then we move onto collaborative circle songs and games, before offering a range of free play activities to choose from.

This month our weekly themes were **AUTUMN**, **MUSIC** and **BUGS!**



Autumn

Inspired by the colourful changes in nature at this time of year, we swapped pom poms and stickers for conkers and flower petals to facilitate creative activities around the theme of Autumn.

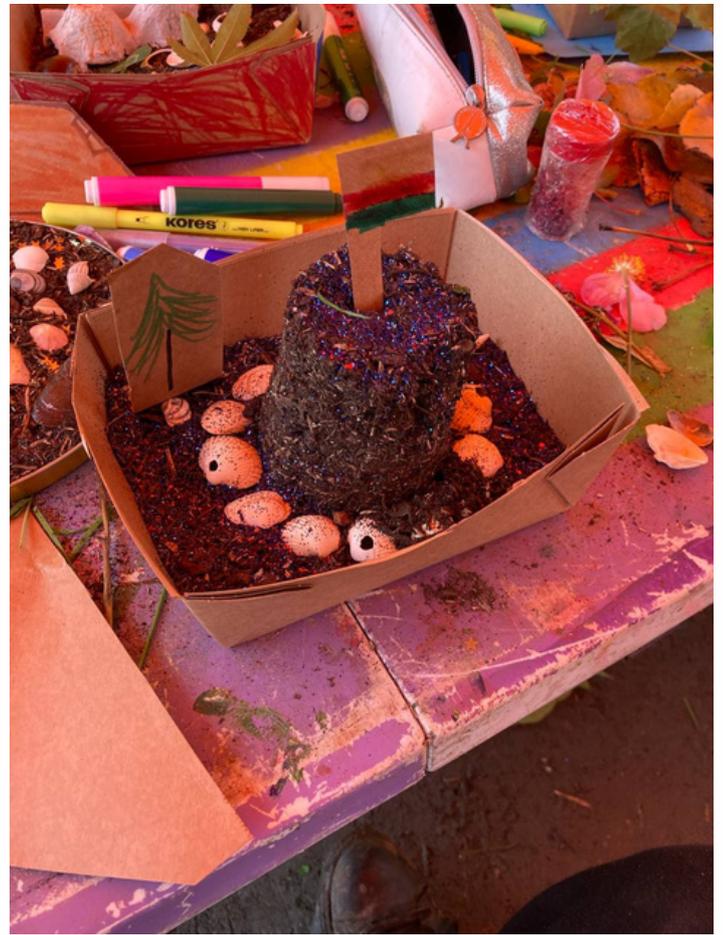
Using orange, brown and yellow paint and photographs as stimulus, we painted and painting beautiful autumnal landscapes and used leaves to make colourful negative space paintings. Inspired by the beautiful sunset above the trees we made silhouette suncatchers using baking paper, black sugar paper and colourful tissue paper; this was a great activity for practising fine motor skills, and the finished suncatchers looked beautiful!

As part of our free play offering, we got messy with a mud kitchen, and children cooked up all kinds of flower soups and yummy leaf potions for the volunteers!

At the end of the week children became miniature landscape gardeners and built their own gardens in a shoebox, before we all worked together to make a giant collaborative tree. By each designing our own leaf to form part of the tree, we celebrated our individuality whilst exploring the beautiful results we can achieve when we all come together.



Suncatchers



Miniature Gardens

Our Collaborative Tree



Mud Kitchens

Music

This month we were joined by the amazing @winduppenguin who inspired us with a spectacular interactive musical performance, 'The Enchanted Campfire.'

Children, families and volunteers were spellbound by the array of musical instruments, dancing and beautiful harmonies. Wind Up Penguin also shared their expertise with children as they explored making sounds on a harp, pressing keys on a clarinet and exploring rhythm, singing and harmony through a range of musical games and workshops.

Wind Up Penguin



Throughout the week we facilitated music-themed activities in keeping with this exciting visit, including making abstract, collaged guitars inspired by Picasso. We also practised responding to happy, sad and crazy music through watercolour painting.

We particularly loved seeing children get creative with ping pong balls in response to our 'crazy' playlist, bouncing them on the paper to make colourful paint splashes!





Picasso guitars

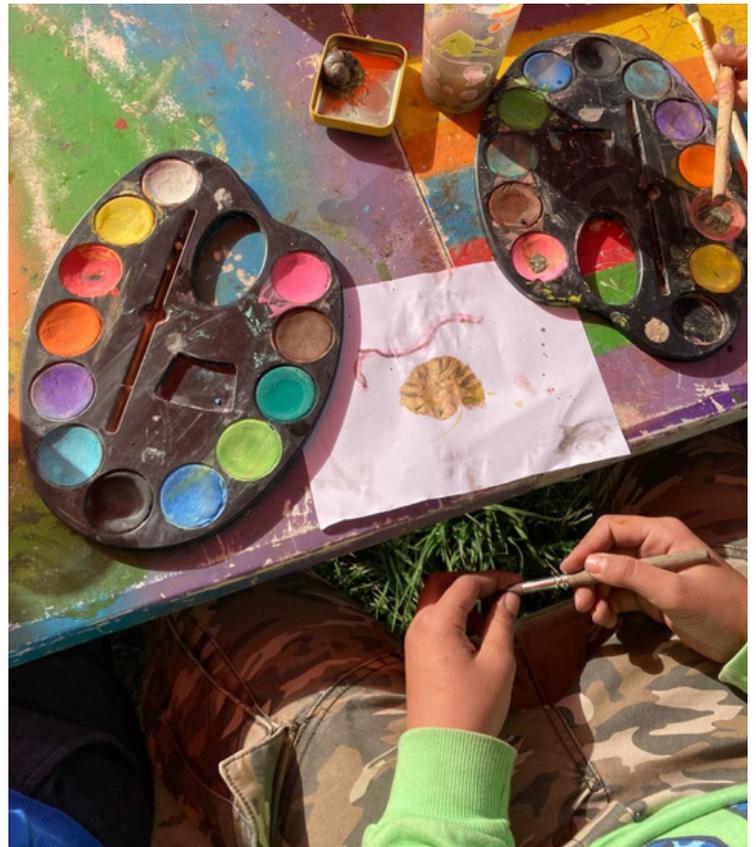


Paint the music

Bugs

This week, we explored the wonderful world of minibeasts through observation, art and books!

At the start of the week we brought in some real life bugs for the children to observe closely with our colourful magnifying glasses, and paint! We were so impressed with the amazing detail the children were able to observe and recreate in their beautiful paintings.



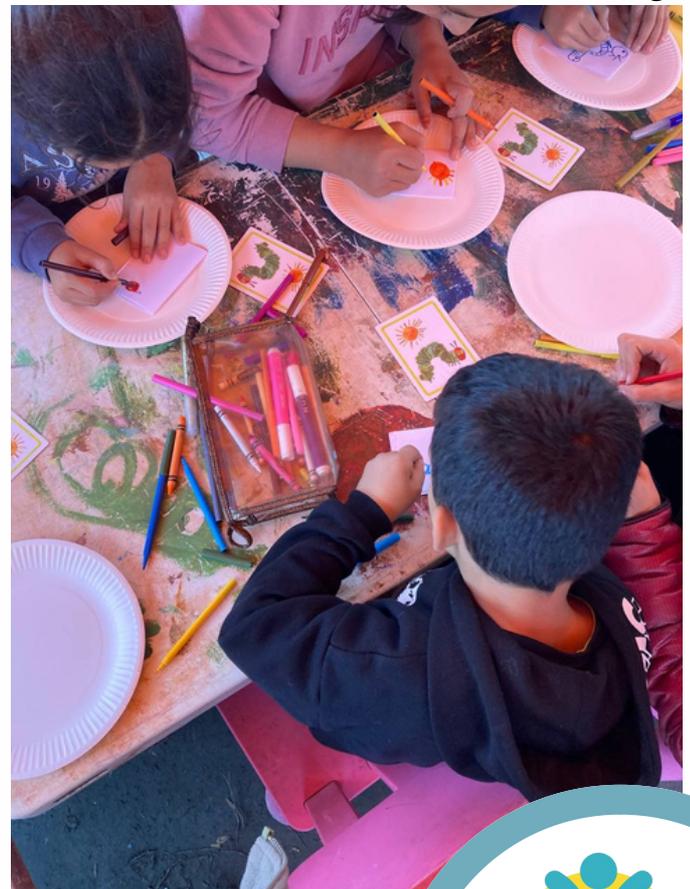
Observational bug painting!

Inspired by Matisse's 'Snail', the children loved practising their scissor skills to cut up colourful paper into shapes and make their own paper plate collages.



^ Matisse Snail Collage

We finished the week sharing Eric Carle's 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' with the children; inspired by the beautiful illustrations, children made their own miniature versions of the book and enjoyed tasting some of the foods the caterpillar eats in the story, from apples and oranges to cake, pickles and even a leaf!



'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'



Circle

This month we have been exploring new circle songs and games as this part of our session has proved very popular in recent weeks!

Tug of war has been a very popular source of healthy competition, and children have enjoyed working as a team to pass noisy instruments like shakers and tambourines around the circle as quietly as possible.

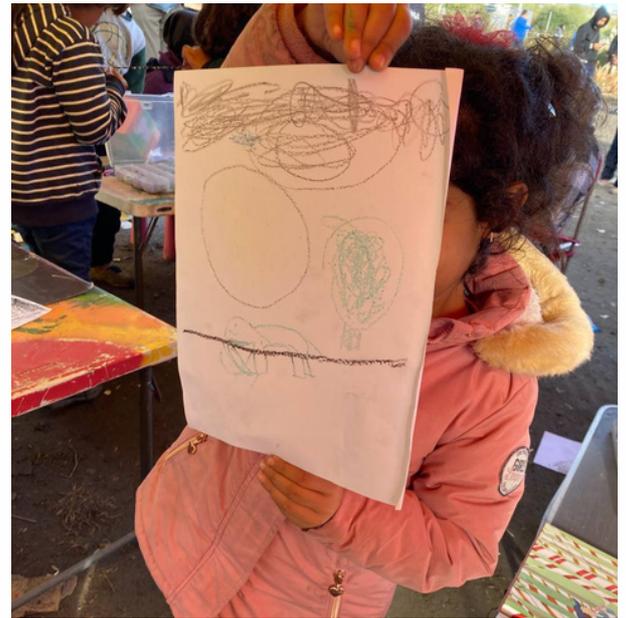
Musical statues and musical chairs are continuing to be very popular, and using a range of percussion instruments we have loved facilitating music-making activities, where children can take it in turns to 'conduct' the rest of the group, exploring dynamics, tempo, emotions, stopping and starting.



Free Play

As well as our themed activities, we also offer a wide range of free play options and set aside time at the end of each session for choice-based, child-led play. Highlights this month have included:

- UNO: Uno is always a hit with children of a huge range of ages, but particularly with older children and teenagers! Children have often returned to session throughout the week and requested to play Uno every day... We have been so impressed by their tactics!
- Swing Ball: Thanks to a kind donation from previous volunteer Emma, we now have a swingball set. This is perfect for the site at Grand-Synthe which is becoming increasingly waterlogged and thus more difficult to play traditional sports like football and tennis.
- Zine Making: We have been so impressed by children's creative responses to books recently... And particularly their making of beautiful zines telling their own visual stories or recreating favourite books!



- Playdoh: As part of Bugs week, we brought along playdough and mats inviting children to complete images of dragonflies, spiders and ants. We were so impressed by children using playdough to illustrate their understanding of life cycles and the transformation from caterpillar to butterfly!
- Construction: This month we have been bringing more construction options to form part of our free play offering, and children have loved building structures and landscapes from stickle bricks and lego.



Updates

- The first week of this month was a challenge in our hunt for a new van. Without a van we were unable to get to Grand-Synthe to run sessions - but thanks to the kind support of other organisations we were able to borrow a van by the second week of the month.
- After hours of dedicated searching and phone calls by our team of volunteers, we were finally able to find a van and resume our normal service. We now need to raise €10,000 to help us cover the cost and have launched a van appeal to help with this.
- We have also encountered challenges in Grand-Synthe due to the living site and weather conditions. Police have limited the area accessible for vehicles and associations by putting up concrete barriers; this has made finding space for our sessions challenging. Additionally, the ground has become incredibly waterlogged and muddy, which is further limiting the amount of appropriate space available for play.
- A further challenge has been a new inconsistency of evictions in Grand Synthe; often they have happened on consecutive days, meaning organisations have been forced to make difficult decisions to best respond using the limited resources available. We have been providing our session space on eviction days, facilitating a calmer session with space for children and parents to sit down and take part in an activity with some degree of shelter.
- We welcomed new team members Steph and Claire at the start of the month - Tharuni, who will be taking over as Activities Coordinator next month, also joined us for her first handover day!

Thank you for reading our updates! Project Play believes in being accountable, transparent and informative. We hope you have a greater understanding of our service and what we have achieved in October 2022!

