

Birch Wood Area Special School
2DO Curriculum Information –
Spring term



Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope that you have had a wonderful Christmas break! We are so happy to welcome everyone back and to share with you the topics and curriculum areas we will be following. We are looking forward to an exciting and busy term and we hope that the children will enjoy everything we have planned for them.

My Communication

Within this curriculum areas we look at all aspects of receptive and expressive language, specifically your child's ability to communicate their needs and to interact with others.

We encourage a total communication environment throughout the school day, using the methods most appropriate to the pupils. The include speech, Makaton, body signing PECs, singing, Objects of Reference, smells of the day and verbal ques.

Our communication targets centre around a story which links to our term's topic. This is explored as a sensory story with props, smells and music to engage the children. Throughout the day we will carry out other activities linked to the text e.g. art, role play, singing, small world play etc.

For our sensory learners we specifically use various programmes and games to further encourage communication, for example Story Massage, Intensive Interaction, Tac- Pac and Write Dance.

Some of our other pupils work in small groups on their communication targets, focusing on speech and signing, reading, following instructions, mark making and writing.

My Thinking

This curriculum area focuses on your child's cognition targets, taken directly from their EHCP. These sessions are delivered through the use of programmes that help to develop your child's engagement and thinking skills.

For our sensory learners these activities include Sensology, multi-sensory sessions (using equipment such as the interactive floor mat), resonance board work, messy food play, Eye Gaze, switch toy work, cause and effect games on the interactive whiteboard and cognition target boxes.

Some of our other pupils will work in small groups to carry out number, space, shape and measure and problem solving activities too. All of these activities are carried out as fun games to get your child engaged and motivated.

My Movement

All of our pupils have a weekly PE session on a Friday morning, delivered by our PE teacher Emerald. In addition to this we have weekly MATP (Motor Activity Training Programme) sessions which work on very specific targets, building on your child's individual physical development skills. Later this term there will be another MATP event in Loughborough, so we will be practising hard!

Pupils who have a physiotherapy programme will work on these targets every day. We will follow the physio therapy activities, pupil's postural management and positioning programmes in close relationship with physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

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All pupils swim every week. Our ambulant pupils swim on a Tuesday morning at Waterfield Leisure Centre and our PMLD pupils have hydrotherapy sessions in our hydro pool where they will work on the targets in their physiotherapy programmes.

Every week we also have a music and movement session where our children join in with action songs, rhymes and move and dance to their favourite party music with lots of sensory resources.

Myself

We use any available opportunity to encourage independence skills according to each child's ability. This may be at snack time when we encourage the pupils to make their own choices as to what they eat, encourage them to hold their own spoon at lunchtime or to put their dirty plates and cutlery in the sink. It may involve showing awareness of having their pad (nappy) changed or indicating to us when they need to go to the toilet. It may involve showing awareness when putting on / taking off their coat, relaxing their limbs when getting changed or hanging up their coat after taking it off. On a daily basis we look at different personal care activities such as teeth brushing, getting dressed, brushing our hair or washing our hands.

Under the Sea

During this topic we will be thinking about the world under the sea, centring around the story of 'The Rainbow Fish' and the poetry of 'Commotion in the Ocean'. These books will be shared in a very sensory way, exploring all the colours, textures, smells and sounds relating to life under the sea. We will also be creating an ocean themed sensory area within the classroom for our pupils to explore. These stories will feed into our afternoon's topic sessions, where we provide our pupils with different activities based around expressive arts and design, understanding of the world, physical development and personal, social, emotional development. The activities will take place both inside and within our play area.

After the half term break we will continue to share sensory stories about the under the sea environment and the creatures that life within it, such as 'Tickly Octopus' and 'Clumsy Crab'. We are also busy organising a trip for our pupils to explore these creatures up close, so look out for a letter coming home soon with details about this!

Things that you could do at home:

Encourage signing 'hello', 'goodbye', 'please', 'more' and 'thank you'. If you are unsure of any signs please visit the Makaton website address below. Use cause and effect games on an iPad or tablet such as Switcher (see below).

Play games and sing songs, encouraging children to interact, anticipate and share attention with you. Use a wide variety of materials to make marks with hands or tools, e.g. cookie cutter or marks in flour. Listen for sounds in the environment and encourage your child to tune into the different sounds around the house.

Here are a few website that may help to support your child's learning:

www.makaton.org Switcher programme - www.ianbean.co.uk
www.helpkidzlearn.com, www.cbeebies.co.uk, www.bbc.co.uk/schools, www.senictsoftware.com.
www.priorywoods.middlesbrough.sch.uk/page/?title=resources&pid=3