



Dear parents and carers,

Welcome back, I hope you have all had a lovely holiday! I am really looking forward to be working alongside your amazing children this year. I would like to share the topics we will be exploring in The Owls this Autumn term. I will continue to use Kinteract as the method of recording observations of your child as they work towards their learning intentions. Our topic this term will be: "Harvest for the world" and "The Show Must Go On!"

<p>Autumn Term 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">'Harvest For the World'</p> <p>This first half term of our topic will be all about being on the farm! We will be incorporating all things farms through many of our sessions. Our Sensory Story- 'A squash and a squeeze' will give our pupils the opportunity to explore many different stimulants related to farms and have lots of fun along the way. Each week we will be exploring different sensory tuff trays related to different aspects of farms. Our pupils will get the opportunity to go on a bare foot trail during Outdoor education to explore different textures on a farm! In Write Dance we will be making different farm yard animals with different sensory paints. We will also be joining in with lots of farm themed activities in our Attention Autism sessions. In our dance massage we will listening to different calming and alerting farm themed songs. The Owls will then celebrate the end of the half term by going to the farm on our community visit!</p>
<p>Autumn Term 2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">'The Show Must Go On!'</p> <p>During the second half term, our topic will be all about musical theatre! We will be going on a journey through theatre land in our sensory story. We will be exploring all things musical theatre through our daily sessions: Attention Autism, music and movement, Write Dance and outdoor education sessions. Your child will be able to explore different textures, smells and tastes linked to different musical theatre through our sensory tuff trays. At the end of the term will be celebrating with a theatre themed day and Christmas party. To celebrate the end of term we will be taking a trip to The north Pole to visit Santa.</p>

Our class will be following the Engagement Curriculum. This is an extremely pupil centred and individualised curriculum focusing on five key areas, incorporating essential therapies. The five key areas of the Engagement Curriculum are "My Communication", "My Thinking", "My Movement", "Myself" and "My Enrichment". See the table below for more details on each area.

My Communication
<p>This area of the curriculum focuses on developing the ability of our pupils to be able to communicate, interact and to make their needs known. Whilst everything we do on a daily basis feeds into this, there are specific therapies and sessions which help us to develop these key communication skills. Our classroom is a total communication environment where we use Makaton signing, body signing, personalised objects or reference, communication switches and photos/symbols to help make choices. We carry out communication sessions on a daily basis such as intensive interaction, story massage, sensory stories, sensory drama, Tac-Pac, Dance Massage, Write Dance and communication games.</p>
My Thinking
<p>This area of the curriculum focuses on developing our pupils' attention and anticipation skills and awareness of cause and effect in their environment. It also promotes problem solving skills and making choices. Daily sessions within class include Sensology (Hello Senses), switch toy work, cause and effect games on the interactive whiteboard and in our immersive room.</p>

My Movement

Movement is a huge part of the curriculum in The Owls. On a daily basis we follow our pupil's physiotherapy and positioning programmes, incorporating these into daily activities. Each child has a hydrotherapy programme and will access the hydro pool. We also have weekly Rebound Therapy sessions for each child on our trampoline with our trained therapist Laura. Every Friday Morning we have a session in the hall with our PE teacher James, where we will work on pupil's MATP (motor activity training programme) targets. These targets focus on developing pupil's movement needs.

Myself

This area of the curriculum focuses on empowering our pupils, giving them every opportunity to make progress towards fulfilment and independence. We incorporate opportunities to work on independence skills throughout the school day in areas such as eating and drinking, dressing and personal care needs e.g. toileting and washing. This will look different for each pupil, but we want to increase opportunities for independence and to make choices about their daily routines. Part of this curriculum also focuses on pupils exploring their own preferences and having a greater awareness of their own bodies and the space around them.

As a part of our PSHE curriculum, we will be creating sensory sessions based on the themes of 'I'm proud to be me' and 'Making new friends. We will also have an overarching focus on consent, ensuring that each pupil understands that they always have a choice to opt in or out of touch-based activities. We also seek to give pupils greater independence with their personal care and beginning to use the toilet more independently. We are also focusing on gaining more independence whilst dressing and putting on shoes and using a knife, fork and spoon during lunch time.

My Enrichment

This area encompasses lots of different motivating therapies and activities, many carried out by therapist, which help our pupils to develop in all of the other areas of the Engagement curriculum. Some pupils will have access to Music Therapy, Pet Therapy and Horse Riding in accordance with their EHCPs. In class, we will have outdoor education and art activities as well as music and movement sessions. Throughout the year we have opportunities to visit our local community – this term we will be visiting Sainsburys on a Monday to buy our snack for the week and the town park on a Thursday. This will give the pupils the opportunity to build their independence, social and life skills whilst exploring the local area.

Things you could do at home

My Communication: At home you could support your child's learning by encouraging to communicate using Makaton signs "Hello", "More", "Finished" and "Please". 'Singing hands' is a fun, engaging and interactive, singing YouTube channel that will help develop these signs. If you are unsure of any of the signs please visit:

<https://makaton.org/> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSgfkristwvJft3BNN-NYQ>

My Thinking: We are loving our weekly number session so encouraging your child to count to 5 (or more if they can!) and involve themselves in number activities and songs will help them to explore number in a fun and engaging way! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_lgJgBbqWE

My Movement: To help your child to develop their gross motor skills by encouraging them to participate in balancing games.

Myself: Encourage your child to help with getting dressed and putting their shoes on. Some songs that we love in the Owls really helps with this skill!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDE6i_ZZkFU https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jBfb33_KHU

My Enrichment: Exploring musical instruments, singing favourite songs, listening to different genres of music and noting preferences, exploring paints and other mark making or messy play stimulus together.

If you are unsure about anything in the Engagement Curriculum, please email me on marriottp@birchwoodschool.co.uk. I am always happy to help you with any questions you may have about your child.

I am really looking forward to a fantastic term,

Poppy Marriott and The Owls Team