



January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to Spring term in The Hummingbirds! We hope that all our students feel refreshed and full of energy to enjoy and learn during our first term in Key Stage 1. We are excited to share with you the topics we will be exploring this term. We will continue to use Kinteract as our method of recording observations of your child as they work towards their EHCP outcomes and other curriculum opportunities. It is a great opportunity to observe your child's progress and comment on it.

Our class will be following Independence Curriculum or the Engagement Curriculum, with our students placed on either pathway, whilst still benefiting from the overlaps of both. Students will work on subject specific learning or broader learning intentions depending on the pathways they are focusing on. We will have access to therapies and specialist areas such as Library, Immersive room, Dark room or newly build Soft Play area (to be completed soon). Students will take part in specialist programmes such as story massage, Tac Pac, dance massage, music therapy and hydrotherapy according to their needs. Communication, Literacy and Maths are taught as distinct subjects in the morning alongside personalised learning goals related to EHCP's under the headings My Communication and My Thinking.

Our themes this term will be:

	During these themes pupils will;
Spring Term 1	<p>Somewhere Over The Rainbow Get ready for an explosion of colour! We will be exploring colour sensory bags, choosing our favourite colours, linking colours to feeling and mixing colours! This will be tactile based for all children, and some children will name colours and experiment with mixing – as well as exploring work by artists like Kandinsky. As we celebrate festivals in the calendar we will also focus on the use of colour within these traditions, such as red for Chinese New Year and Valentine's day. We will engage the senses with different colour lights, playdough and link smells to colour.</p>
Spring Term 2	<p>Back To The Future We will take an imaginative journey into the past as well as the future where we will meet dinosaurs and space travellers! This topic will give opportunities for children to engage imaginatively with different sensory spaces and environments. Where possible we will use the immersive room and a range of sensory and tactile resource in class to create these environments. Pupils will have opportunities to learn about dinosaurs, the Earth, and space. The theme will lend itself to working scientifically exploring natural and futuristic like materials and imaginatively through small world and role play.</p>

My Communication – Reading, Literacy and Phonics

Communication We encourage students to communicate through their preferred means, which could include pictures, communication devices, spoken sounds and words and Makaton. We use a 'Total Communication' approach, which means that all communication attempts are valued and recognised. Students are given opportunities to make choices and express preferences frequently. All students will take part in small group or individual communication sessions as indicated in their health care plans.

Early Reading and Phonics All students engage with phonics at the appropriate phase. Activities include listening to sounds, making sounds, differentiating sounds, learning phase one letter sounds and some students are beginning to blend and segment, whilst reading books with specific sounds linked to their phase. When ready students will begin to read and write CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words with sounds learnt previously.

Reading is incorporated in to lots of sessions including, cooking, sensory story and theme through the use of symbols and objects to support pupils to read their environment as well as words.

This term our theme based book include; *The Rainbow Fish, Elmer, The Day The Crayons Quit, Beegu, The Dinosaur That Pooped a Planet, Meg on the Moon*

Mark Making and Writing We will be exploring mark making and early writing in response to pictures, songs and stories. Students will have opportunities to develop the motor skills needed to make marks and to write. Once students have mastered mark making we will support children to give meaning to their marks. Weekly, we will do Write Dance, which includes large gross motor movements to music. Some students will work on letter formation, spelling and grammar in 1:1 or paired sessions.

My Thinking - Maths and Science

The KS1 environment provides opportunities for students to problem solve, compare, sort and explore mathematical skills such as number, shape, space and measure. These are facilitated throughout the week through a combination of pupil led play, small groups and 1:1 sessions led by an adult..

Number includes counting and early calculations. We'll work on recognition of numbers up to 10 but extending where we need to, as well as experiencing quantity and the concepts of 'more' and 'less' in a tactile way.

Geometry: Students will explore position and direction. We will use toys to follow simple instructions related to positional language (on, under, in and next to) as well as using our whole bodies to experience traveling in different directions and positions. Bee Bots and remote control toys will help children to follow as well as give instructions and to learn more about directions.

Science: We will focus on Materials and Their Properties. Within our themes, we will explore different materials (including colour and texture related to nature and Space), express preferences, sort and identify qualities of contrasting materials.

My Movement - PE

Daily Provision: By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, we support students to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility.

Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. In our daily set up, we offer repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools.

PE Students will begin the term using a variety of different learning activities, some sport specific to develop their teamwork and communication skills. Students will then continue to develop on these areas together with improving their competence in Sport Specific skills into the Autumn 2 term where they will specifically focus on the sport of Gymnastics and also complete a unit on a chosen invasion games. Students will be aiming to develop their sense of challenge, physical competence, communication and creativity within these units.

Swimming: All students in KS1 have opportunities to swim in the Hydro pool here either at Birch Wood or at Water field Leisure Centre in Melton where students work towards their Otter swimming badges.

Myself –RSE

Daily Provision: Self -regulation is an ongoing focus. We facilitate this through daily interactions and building positive relationship, using co-regulation strategies that suit pupil's needs, providing sensory diets for pupils based on their initial sensory assessment and encouraging pupils to engage with sensory or chosen activities that help them to self-regulate. We encourage emotional literacy through emotion cards and Chirpy Board.

RSE: Some students will take part in small group or paired activities looking at the areas of Self Awareness. We will identify the things that make us special, what we are good at and celebrate ourselves and others.



My Enrichment

Throughout the curriculum, we want to promote resilience, kindness and creativity. This could be through stories and themes, assembly, engagement with community groups as well as taking part in larger fundraising and charity events. Pupils develop a sense of belonging through visits and events within the wider school as well as community trips and visits linked to themes or for weekly swimming. Where possible, we arrange for community members to visit school and talk to us about theme related topics. We use arts to encourage self-expression and appreciation of the world around us.

Cookery: Students will begin to take part in cookery lessons that will be making a snack and simple meals to eat. The lessons will introduce life skills, creating snacks and straight forward meals which can be easy and accessible for all students to create. We will be following recipes and instructions, identifying different ingredients, learning new cooking methods.

Things you could do at home

My Communication: Ask questions using prompts; why, where, which, who, when how? Play games such as I spy to help build vocabulary. Engage students in songs and rhymes and establish shared attention. Read regularly with your child to support their understanding of speaking, listening and phonics.

My Thinking: Encourage problem solving through everyday activities, count everyday objects while playing, look for shapes around the house, compare big and small objects

Independence: wherever possible allow students time to put on clothes, coats and shoes. Help to prepare food, make choices and engage with own care routines such as brushing teeth and washing.

If you are unsure about anything, please email me at palmerd@birchwoodschoo.co.uk
I am always happy to help you with any questions you may have about your child.

Myself and the Hummingbirds Team are very much looking forward to working with you this term and look forward to seeing the progress all of our students make.

Kind regards,