

Birch Wood Area Special school  
**Class The Lodge**  
 SPRING 2023  
 Curriculum Newsletter



Dear parents and carers,

Welcome back and Happy New Year to you all! I hope you all got some well needed rest and you have been able to recharge your batteries over the holiday period.

This term we will continue working on a mixture of Independence and Preparation for Adulthood skills. We will do this though our links with the local community, with our weekly trips out, cooking for life skills and our careers links. We aim to support our young people to make the choices about their next steps in their learning journey though visits to Colleges and making links in AIM sessions in our lessons times.

We will continue cooking on a weekly basis, going into the local community buying our ingredients and cooking our entire meal, each Wednesday. The recipes will be sent home on a termly basis to practice at home. We will also be accessing the local community, going to the local Library and accessing the café.

I have put this curriculum newsletter together, to share with you the topics and units of work that are being covered by The Lodge this term. This will give you the additional information needed to talk to your young person about their lessons. We are looking forward to an exciting and busy term and we hope that the students will enjoy it.

Our topics and themes this term will be:

<p><b>Spring Term 1</b>  <b>Celebrating Cultures in the UK</b></p>	<p>Exploring Poetry- we will be learning about Haiku Poems, Calligram poems, Limerick poems, Narrative poems, Kenning poetry, Free verse and Sonnet poetry.</p>
<p><b>Spring Term 2</b>  <b>Celebrating difference</b></p>	<p>Traditional Tales- we will be exploring the following traditional tales and fables. Cinderella, Snow white and the seven dwarfs, Billy goats gruff, 3 little pigs and Hansel and Gretel.</p>

Your young person is following the Independence curriculum. The Independence Curriculum offers a level of personalisation but includes more discrete subject teaching in areas such as Literacy, Maths and AIM awards. Your young person is baselined using the Bridge method of assessment. This method breaks down the Mastery tasks further, allowing me to set targets based on each individual young person's EHCP, along with Maths, English and Enrichment opportunities. If you would like further information about Bridge assessment in school, please drop me an email. You can find this at the end of my newsletter.

**Reading and Literacy**

Our young people this term will continue to come into school and start their reading and practise writing their home address, or do some handwriting practice as a beginning morning transition activity. The students are really good at getting out their own belongings and equipment, many are needing less prompts in the morning. We will have a focus book this term and that will be 'Noughts and Crosses' by Malorie Blackman. The story chronicles the coming-of-age of best friends Sephy Hadley and Callum McGregor. A work of speculative fiction, Noughts and Crosses imagines an alternative history that places native African people in a position of power over those of European descent. Published in 2001, Blackman's novel employs the alternating perspectives of Sephy and Callum to offer a nuanced glimpse into their journeys into adulthood. We will be using a range of methods to support our

young people learn the story, such as role play, class discussions, listening to the story and answering who, what, where, when questions.

In Spring 1 we will be exploring Poetry and have a go at writing our own poems for others to enjoy, celebrating each other's achievements. In Spring 2 we will be looking at Traditional tales and understand the structure and features of a good story.

We will also continue Story sharing activities, where the students can tell their stories from their memory with staff supporting them. Story sharing enables children and adults with communication difficulties to remember and share their own stories of everyday life. It enables our young people to have a voice, say how they are, make sense of things that happen to them and focus on what they can do. We use various mediums to re-tell our stories to support us, such as: Painting, drawing and at times writing them down.

### Maths

In Maths this term we will be focussing on:

Spring 1

- Using calculators
- Time
- Number
- Compare, add/subtract and measure
- mass using apparatus (kg/g)
- Compare, add/subtract and measure
- volume/capacity using apparatus (Litres/ml)
- Add and subtract and measure volume/capacity using apparatus, L/ML
- Statistics -Interpret and present data using information from Pictograms.

Spring 2

- Interpret data and present data using information on bar charts
- Number
- Addition
- Comparing numbers
- Multiplication
- Division
- Geometry
- Positional Language

### PE

**Term 1**

In term 1 in PE we will be working on a Health-Related Fitness Challenge, working on Fundamental movement patterns such as (Jumping, climbing, balance), these will be linked on the following areas of development- Communication; creativity and competence.

**Term 2**

In term 2 we will explore Net Games, including sitting down volleyball and Tchouck ball and playing Invasion Games.

### PSHE/ RHSE

This half term we will be focussing on conversations surrounding Consent, how we communicate in relationships along with discussing what Good or bad relationships look like. We will explore Life choices, such as Marriage, living with family or friends to understanding relationships with others. We will explore relationships with our Family, friends and people in the community. We will also explore what it looks like to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, partner or be from the LGBT Plus Q community. We will look at words relating to different relationships such as Lesbian, gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, gender neutral and discuss their definitions together. We will be working in small groups, using power point presentations and having discussions to gain further understanding.



In Spring 2 we will be carefully exploring conversations surrounding; Masturbation in Males and females, Intercourse, Conception and Parenting. We will be working as a whole group and individually at times. We use a range of teaching methods and resources from the Northern Ireland Curriculum and newly from the sex factor. If you would like to talk to me about any of the issues covered in class, I am free at the end of the teaching day. Please drop me an email and I am happy to discuss the curriculum with you.

### **My Enrichment**

We will continue working on AIM awards and this term we will be focussing on completing the Household Shopping and Household cleaning in Aim awards – students will be working on AIM awards towards a Certificate or a Diploma in Independent Living, Looking after yourself and your home. Entry Level 2. Moving Together will be continuing on a weekly basis working on weekly routines, keeping fit and working on a performance for the end of the year.

We will be continuing the local community visits as a class, accessing local interest community groups, and going shopping to the local supermarket and cooking our entire meal on a Wednesday. We will also be continuing to attend in the local community on a Thursday, with a visit to the Library a local coffee shop for a drink and a healthy snack. Within these sessions, we will be practising skills role-played in class. These skills include using money, making choices, being independent, reading and decoding text and symbols in the community, communication skills and learning about appropriate behaviour when in public. Please continue to send in a £5.00 on a Thursday morning for our community visit in a named purse/wallet. The change and receipt will remain in the purse/ wallet for you to check at home.

Art - This year we will be receiving Art lessons, delivered by myself and set by a qualified secondary Art Teacher. I will be delivering Art on a weekly basis. If there is enough interest a B-Tec in Art made be available for selected students to work towards.

Electric Umbrella- will continue on a Wednesday afternoon. This is a music and movement group for young adults with special needs, it is fully inclusive and is co-run by disabled young people. This is a group that we joined in lockdown and have so much fun connecting to special schools all around the country. I will send out a permission slip to ask if your child is allowed to be on camera. Drop me an email if you haven't already and you are happy for your young person to be on the screen. If you would like to find out more about this group – see the link <https://www.electricumbrella.co.uk>

Autism Progression Framework – we will begin to look at the 8 skills that will give us a baseline to work from. These skills are from the areas such as - Communication and Interaction, Social Understanding and Relationships, Sensory Processing, Interests routines and Processing, Independence and community participation, Healthy living, Learning and engagement, Emotional understanding and self-awareness. This will enable us to be more focussed on what specific skills sets that we need to continue to develop.

### **Things you could do at home**

When you read to your child or do any activity, encourage them to talk about what they are doing/what is happening/what they understand.

Helping with household jobs

Helping with the shopping and cooking

Making choices

Thinking about how you can help other people

In Post 16, we aim for your young person to have new and exciting opportunities, gaining readiness for their next learning journey, beyond Birch Wood School. If you are unsure about anything in the Independence curriculum on offer then please email me on [aduc@birchwoodschoo.co.uk](mailto:aduc@birchwoodschoo.co.uk).

I am always pleased to help you with any questions you may have about your child. Many thanks and we all look forward to an exciting term.

Charlotte Adu – Post 16 Class Teacher