



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have had a wonderful Christmas time and New Year, enjoying the festivities! Welcome back to a new term and to 2024. Below is an overview of the topics and themes that The Eagles class will be exploring this term. The Eagles team and I are looking forward to a fun filled term and sharing these experiences with you and your child.

Our themes this term will be:

Spring Term 1	‘Into The Woods’
	Our ‘Into the Woods’ topic will explore all things in connection to nature. Our literacy theme will focus on the story of ‘The Lion the Witch and The Wardrobe’. We will be experiencing lots of sensory stimuli with a practical approach to learning. Alongside looking at a woodland environment, we will be exploring weather and the seasons, money and shops and light and colour.
Spring Term 2	‘A Spoon Full of Sugar’
	In the second half of the term, The Eagles theme will convert to ‘A Spoon Full of Sugar’. We will be investigating the fascinating story of ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’. We will also be looking at money in Maths, food diversity in PSHE and The Romans in Humanities.

Our class are following a combination of Engagement and Independence Curricula. The overlap in pathways enables us to personalise the learning for the students in our class. The engagement pathway is an extremely student 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”. The Independence Curriculum offers a similar level of personalisation but includes more discrete subject teaching in areas such as literacy, maths and science.

My Communication – Reading, Literacy and Phonics
<p>This area of the curriculum focuses on developing the ability of our students 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, objects or reference and symbols to help make choices. We carry out communication sessions daily such as intensive interaction, story massage, sensory stories, Tac-Pac, Dance Massage and Write Dance.</p> <p>In phonics, our engagement pathway students will be continuing to work on their pre-phonics skills and our independence pathway students will continue to develop their formal phonics skills, focusing on letter recognition and formation.</p> <p>In Literacy Students will be looking at the story of ‘The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe’ during Spring term 1. We will be focusing on the setting of the story including the woodland environment and the weather (linking to our Humanities topic). In spring term 2 we will be looking at the story of ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’.</p>
My Thinking - Maths and Science
<p>This area of the curriculum focuses on developing our student’s attention and anticipation skills and awareness of cause and effect in their environment. It also promotes problem solving skills and making choices. Sessions will include sensory exploration, cause and effect games and activities as well as sensory cooking.</p>

Our science topics in spring term 1 will be focused on light and colour. In spring term 2 we will be looking at separating materials and their properties.

Our Maths topic in Spring term 1 will involve looking at time and fraction and will include ordering and sequencing events. In spring term 2 our maths topic will be centred around money.

My Movement - PE

Students in Spring 1 & 2 will focus on various activities in their weekly lessons to support the learning and development of each student's gross motor skills such as agility, balance and co-ordination. This includes small group work, and obstacle course activities towards their MATP targets. Sessions are linked to students EHCP's, particularly physical and sensory needs and will relate to their current outcomes that students are working on. In Spring 1, there is a focus on Invasion Games. Students will experience aspects of invasion games, which include learning and following rules to the game. Games such as Hungry Hippos, Domes v Dishes, and Messy Room will be played.

In Spring 2, the Eagles will follow a similar format when moving onto net games. These games will begin the development of learning, participating and developing skills for net games, this could include games that resemble tennis and sitting volleyball. We will also look to further embed routines and rules of play.

Myself - PSHE

Our PSHE topic in Spring 1 will be focusing on the act of shopping and the exchanging of money for an item. We will be incorporating role play and exploring shop settings to explore this. In Spring 2 we will be learning about the food and exercise preferences as well as sleep hygiene.

We will also have an overarching focus on consent, ensuring that our young people understand that they always have a choice to opt in or out of touch-based activities. This will be demonstrated through a PSHE sensory story based around the topic of consent.

We will also 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 student but the goal is to give every opportunity to increase independence and to make choices about their daily routines. Part of this curriculum also focuses on students exploring their own preferences and having a greater awareness of their own bodies and the space around them.

My Enrichment

This area encompasses lots of different motivating therapies and activities, many carried out by therapist, which help our students to develop in all the other areas of the Engagement Curriculum. In class, we will have sensory cooking and art activities as well as music and movement sessions. We hope to provide our students with educational trips and experiences in the Spring term.

Our Humanities topics in Spring 1 is based on patterns in weather and changes in the seasons. In Spring 2 we will be exploring the Romans and the lives they lived.

Things you could do at home

My Communication:

- Explore the woods and nature this season including sounds, smells and textures.
- Share shopping experiences.
- Sorting and matching within the home e.g. colours and shapes.

My Thinking:

- Discuss and acknowledge days of the week
- Practise the concept of halving e.g. when cutting food.
- Practise identifying colours.

If you are unsure about anything, please email me on hallm@birchwoodschool.co.uk. I am always happy to help you with any questions you may have about your child and their learning.

Mary Hall

The Eagles Class Teacher