

Birch Wood Area Special School
The Hummingbirds
 Summer 2024
 Curriculum Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the summer term in The Hummingbirds Class! We hope you have all enjoyed the Easter break and that you are just as excited as us to be back at Birch Wood for a new term.

As we continue the academic year we will be following a combination of the Engagement and Independence pathways. The Engagement pathway 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”. The Independence Curriculum offers a similar level of personalisation but includes more discrete subject specific teaching in areas such as literacy, maths and science.

We will continue to use Kinteract as our primary method of observations of your child’s progress as they work towards their EHCP outcomes and other curriculum opportunities.

Our themes this term will be:

	During these themes’ pupils will;
Summer Term 1	<p>Enchanted Woodland</p> <p>During the first summer term we will be exploring books such as The Oak Tree by Julia Donaldson and looking at maps. We will be enjoying stories such as Hansel and Gretel, The Gruffalo and The Enchanted Wood. We will be making woodland inspired Art such as rainbow leaf collages and nature faces from woodlands. We will be exploring woodland themed sensory cooking such as owl toast, crunchy caterpillar salad and magical fruit kebab wands.</p>
Summer Term 2	<p>All Creatures Great and Small</p> <p>During the second summer term we will be exploring books such as The Snail and The Whale. We will be exploring all of our favourite animals, big to small! We will make this a reality by experiencing our own animal project by watching eggs grow from a tiny caterpillar to great and magnificent butterflies. We will be making animal inspired Art such as animal print collages, bug hotels and butterfly symmetry painting.</p>

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Communication: At every opportunity we encourage our 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. We encourage students to partake in our 'good morning' and 'good afternoon' sessions where we model and encourage students to communicate with both staff and peers. We also encourage communication at snack time, where the students are encouraged to use their snack boards to choose their snack.

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.

Literacy: In Literacy we will be sequencing the plot of a non-fiction story and discovering maps in our new book *The Oak Tree* by Julia Donaldson. We will be exploring our new exciting book by making our own map to find our magnificent oak tree.

My Thinking - Maths

Geometry: This term in Maths we will be looking at Geometry by discovering shape and measure. We will be revisiting 2D shapes and their properties, then moving on to measurement in the form of lengths, capacity and weight. We will enjoy going on a shapes hunt, measuring magic potions in capacity and using blocks to introduce measurement.

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.

PE: Summer 1's focus will be around striking & fielding games, so pupils will experience activities that focus on the developing of striking actions, and hopefully some rules/routines to these. Summer 1's focus will be on athletics, developing their overall abilities across the running, jumping and throwing disciplines, and getting them Sports Day ready.

Swimming: Most students have the opportunities to have therapeutic hydrotherapy sessions in the Hydrotherapy pool here at school.

Rebound Therapy: This term some of our learners will be continuing rebound therapy with a trained rebound therapist. They will be given the opportunity weekly and will work towards the Winstrada trampolining scheme of work.

Myself –RSE

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Daily Provision: We focus on tools for regulation every day in Hummingbird's. We facilitate this through daily interactions and through building positive relationships, 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. We encourage the students to engage in Tac-Pac or yoga after lunch to regulate and prepare themselves for learning.

RSE: This term in RSE we will be exploring friendships and the special people in our lives. We will be exploring how we can make friends and how playing with friends can make us feel using the Zones of Regulation. As well as exploring any problems that may arise between friends, how this can make us feel and who can help us resolve these problems.

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.

Art and Design: In Art we will be exploring thematic linked projects our new topic 'Enchanted Woodland'.

Things you could do at home

My Communication: Give choices at every opportunity to encourage communication, particularly during a motivating activity such as snack time or leisure activities.

Geometry: Identifying 2D shapes around the home, what household object can you find and what shape are they? Exploring measurement around the home, measuring lengths of household items, using weighing scales for cooking and using terms of capacity such as full, empty, half full during water play or bath times.

Reading: Display behaviours for reading, model turning the page, pointing to the words, describing the pictures and encourage your children to do it too. Spread a love of reading and reading for pleasure in your home.

If you are unsure about anything, please email me at wright@birchwoodschool.co.uk
I will happily answer any question that you may have, so please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,
Holly