

Birch Wood Area Special School
The Hummingbirds
 Autumn 2024
 Curriculum Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the autumn term in The Hummingbirds Class! We hope that you all had a lovely summer break and are just as excited as us to start another school year at Birch Wood School.

As part of our learning journey, moving into KS1, The Hummingbirds class will be following The Independence Pathway. This pathway aims to maximise opportunities to build on student independence through a semi-formal and highly personalised curriculum. All learning opportunities will still be closely linked towards EHCP outcomes to cultivate independent, happy and safe young learners. The Independence Curriculum offers discrete subject specific learning in key areas such as literacy/communication and numeracy that is personalised to student's strengths and needs.

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;
Autumn Term 1	<p>Food Glorious Food</p> <p>We will be exploring all different kinds of food with our new topic Food Glorious Food! Students will be given the opportunity to explore where different foods come from and even what they taste like! We will be enjoying the story 'Supertato' where we will have a closer look at all the different fruits and vegetables that are at risk of crimes committed by the evil pea! This topic will allow students to engage with many different forms of learning, including sensory tuff trays and tactile resources so that we can fully immerse ourselves in a world of Food Glorious Food.</p>
Autumn Term 2	<p>Ch Ch Changes</p> <p>During the second autumn term we will be ready to delve deep into the idea of Ch Ch Changes and what this means for different subject areas. In the lead up to Christmas students will have the opportunity to explore the different changes they experience as they grow older, as well as the historic changes that have impacted the world that we live in today. Through immersing ourselves in different periods in time, pupils will investigate how our world has changed.</p>



Language and Communication, Reading and Phonics

Communication: At every opportunity students are encouraged to communicate through their preferred means, which often includes pictures, communication devices, spoken sounds and words and Makaton. A 'total communication' approach ensures that all communication attempts are both valued and recognised so that students are consistently given opportunities to express their preferences and to make independent choices. All students will have access to small group and individual communication sessions as indicated in their health care plans. Students are always encouraged to take part in our 'good morning' and 'good afternoon' sessions where staff model and encourage students to communicate with both staff and peers. Communication is also strongly encouraged during snack time where pupils are given the opportunity to express their preferences through the use of snack boards.

Reading and Phonics: All students are given the opportunity to engage with phonics at the appropriate phase. The Hummingbirds currently explore both pre phonics and formal phonics to build on their phonetic knowledge. Within phonics we explore listening to sounds, making sounds, differentiating sounds, learning phase one letter sounds and some students are beginning to blend and segment sounds linked to their phase. When ready, students will begin to read and write CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words with sounds learnt previously. Both reading and phonics are consistently incorporated into lots of different sessions across The Independence Curriculum. Symbols and objects are often used to support pupils with reading their environment and to add meaning to words. This term our theme-based books include 'Supertato' and 'The Kindest Red'.

Literacy: During term 1 in literacy, we will be exploring the story 'Supertato' by Sue Hendra and linking this to our topic, Food Glorious Food. We will be immersing ourselves into this fictional story as we follow the adventures of 'Supertato' and his efforts to rescue his fellow fruit and vegetables that are at risk of danger caused by the evil pea.

Numeracy

Number: We will be looking at counting, recognising amounts and reading and writing numbers through engaging counting songs, sensory tuff tray activities such as number printing and tactile objects to support different ways of learning. Towards term 2 we will be building on our number knowledge by beginning to look at operations such as addition and subtraction.

PE

PE: Pupils are working on developing their overall fundamental movement skills, such as running, jumping and throwing. As well as embedding rules, routines, and expectations for PE at Grange Drive. Pupils are also developing their skills in team games, such as rules of the game, working/turn-taking with others, and applying physical skills learnt in PE to differing activities.

PSHE and My Community



PSHE: We will be looking at kind and unkind behaviours and understanding how these might make us feel and how we can deal with these emotions. Pupils are continuously encouraged to explore how they're feeling and ways in which we can begin to regulate our own emotions. Moving into term 2 we will be exploring how we can keep ourselves safe in different environments and the different people that are there to help keep us safe.

My Community: We are exploring how we might travel around both in and outside of school safely. Pupils will have the opportunity to role play different environments where we can practice transitioning in a safe way.

The World Around Me

Within The World Around Me students will have the opportunity to engage with science and different foundation subjects such as history, geography and RE.

Science: We will be looking at where our food comes from and how it gets onto our plates! We will also be exploring healthy eating and what we can do to keep healthy.

History: We will be exploring how food has changed and evolved over the years. Pupils will be investigating the food that people used to eat in the Victorian era and how it is different to the food we eat now.

Geography: Pupils will be looking at the food that people eat in different countries and how it's different from the food that we eat in the UK.

RE: We will be exploring different foods that people eat around different religious festivals.

Art and Music

Art: We will be exploring simple mark making with a variety of materials to create expressive art pieces of our favourite foods. We will be exploring different media, materials and methods such as papier-mâché to create 3D artworks of pupil's favourite foods.

Music: Students will be engaging with how they can move rhythmically to expressive pieces of music; as well as responding to and identifying key sounds and key pieces of music.

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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.

Number: Model counting at home, sing counting songs (Jack Haartman on Youtube is a fantastic one!) Encourage children to count at every opportunity, such as how many sausages they're having for dinner!

Reading: Spread a love of reading for pleasure by modelling turning the page, pointing towards words as you read them and describing the pictures within the stories. Your children will pick up on this and hopefully start displaying these actions too!

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

I am so excited to be joining the Hummingbirds class and both I and the team are very much looking forward to working with you this term. I also look forward to seeing all the amazing progress your children will make in their learning.

Kind regards,
Eve Roberts (Class Teacher)