

Birch Wood Area Special School
The Robins
 Spring 2025
 Curriculum Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the spring term in The Robins Class! We hope you have all enjoyed the Christmas break and that you are just as excited as us to be back at Birch Wood for a new term. This term I am very excited to announce the class have a new Senior Teaching Assistant joining us called Matt. Matt is a familiar face at Birch Wood and we are very excited to have him join the Robins team.

As we continue the academic year we will be following a combination of core subjects such as Phonics, Literacy, Maths, Humanities, Drama and starting Forest School.

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;
Spring Term 1	<p>All Creatures Great and Small</p> <p>In our Literacy topic we will be exploring the book Dear Dinosaur by Chae Strathie and Nicola O'Byrne. We will be exploring the dinosaur character through drama, crafting and mark making. In Drama, we will be exploring the characters from The Gruffalo and The Snail and the Whale by Julia Donaldson, and how the characters would feel and how they would act. We also have exciting extra-curricula events such as Burns Night and Valentines Day to celebrate.</p>
Spring Term 2	<p>Superheroes</p> <p>In this topic we will be exploring the book series 'Little People, Big dreams' by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara. Exploring the superheroes of every day. We will also be revisiting a firm favourite in the Robins class, the book – Supertato by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet. In Drama we will be re-enacting Supertato and exploring the thoughts and feelings of each character. We also have exciting extra-curricula events such as Pancake Day, St Patricks Day and Mother's Day to celebrate.</p>



My Communication – Reading, Literacy and Phonics

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: This term in Literacy we will be looking at the story 'Dear Dinosaur' by Chae Strathie and Nicola O'Byrne. A wonderful book about a young boy who makes a remarkable friendship with a dinosaur! They send letters back and forth about how different their lives are.

My Thinking - Maths

Fractions and Time: We will be looking at fractions and telling the time. We will be using concepts such as now and next, progressing to today and tomorrow, days of the week and months of the year. Something we have introduced daily into our 'good morning' routine.

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: For Spring 1, pupils will be focussing on invasion games, learning what they are, and how they may look. Pupils will take part in invasion games such as hungry hippo's, freeze tag, and sharks & fishes as well as experience games & skills from more traditional games such as football & basketball

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

Soft play: This term our learners will continue to benefit from the weekly soft play slot. They are given the opportunity to relax and regulate in a safe and fun environment.

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Myself – RSE

Daily Provision: We focus on tools for regulation every day in Robins. 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. Every morning and afternoon we encourage the learners to express how they are feeling using the Zones of Regulation boards in class.

PSHE/RSE: In PSHE we will be exploring how to identify and express our feelings. We will be learning through a variety of sensory stories, visuals and exploring the book 'The Colour Monster' by Anna Llenas.

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.

Drama: In Drama, we will be exploring all creatures great and small through the Julia Donaldson books – The Snail and the Whale and The Gruffalo. We will be looking how the characters act and may feel in different parts of the story.

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 sharing at home to help teaching fractions. Sharing a pizza between two children? Oh, we have half! Sharing a birthday cake between a family of four? Oh, we have a quarter! Any vocabulary that will help teach fractions. I'm sure we will be using cake in class too.

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 Wright (Class Teacher)