

# Flying Minpin Birds

By Eilis Hanson.

Eilis Hanson is a primary school teacher who loves to get art into the curriculum, wherever and whenever she can! She has a BA (Hons) in Fine Art from Newcastle University and studied at Universität für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna during her third year there. More recently, she has studied watercolour painting in Verona. Eilis has taught children in Indonesia, Japan and Italy and now lives and works in Cambridge. She has exhibited sculptures, prints and installations in Newcastle, Vienna and Istanbul.



*Watch the birds as they fly above your heads and, who knows,  
you might well spy a tiny creature riding  
high on the back of a swallow or a raven... And above all,  
watch with glittering eyes the whole world  
around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in  
the most unlikely places. Those who don't  
believe in magic will never find it.'*

*Roald Dahl - The Minpins*

Roald Dahl's incredible book *The Minpins* (1991) was our year 3 class reader for four weeks and linked to our Geography, English and Art lessons as we explored the idea of imaginary worlds. The story inspired us to design and make our own birds for a tiny Minpin to ride upon. Alongside this project, the class drew their own maps of imaginary worlds and imagining themselves as Minpins, wrote about their flights and adventures through them.

The children began by looking carefully at photos of British garden birds. They then designed their own bird for a Minpin to ride on, taking inspiration from the photos and illustrations in Roald Dahl's book.

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