



Dear parents and carers,

I would like to welcome you to the Goldfinches Autumn Term Newsletter. During this term we have a range of activities for students to learn about, explore and participate in before Christmas. We are hoping to develop our communication and independence skills by taking weekly trips in to the community, beginning with the park.

This year we will primarily be following the Independence Curriculum pathway which covers five areas of learning which are listed below. All students will take part in sessions such as Story Massage, Attention Autism and Sensory Story.

Our themes this term will be:

<p><b>Autumn Term 1</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Great Britain</b></p> <p>We will be looking at what Great Britain means and going through each country individually. Within each country we will explore the food, landmarks and festivals. In Literacy, we will be using our knowledge of Great Britain to influence our poems.</p>
<p><b>Autumn Term 2</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Christmas</b></p> <p>We will be looking at what Christmas is and how religious people prepare themselves for Christmas. In literacy we are going to be looking at A Christmas Carol and the themes within the story. We will also be listening to a sensory story all about Christmas Eve and some of the ____ people may have.</p>

Our class are following a combination of Engagement and Independence Curricula. The overlap in pathways enables us to personalise the learning for the pupils in our class. 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 teaching in areas such as literacy, maths and science.

<p><b>My Communication – Reading, Literacy and Phonics</b></p>
<p>The Goldfinches will continue to follow the Ruth Miskin phonics programme over the Autumn Term. We will be following the order of sounds that are recommended and we will be completing a variety of activities linking to the focused individual sound. There will be opportunities to explore items that begin with each phoneme as well as practice letter formation and blending. For students within the Goldfinches that have progressed within phonics we will continue to recap gaps in phonics knowledge and extend to reading comprehension.</p>

Autumn 1: During literacy the Goldfinches will be completing a poetry topic. We will be looking at a variety of poetry styles and creating our own poem about the Seasons and Weather. The Goldfinches will also have a different poem of the week to read on a Monday to give them opportunities to develop their understanding of styles and techniques in poetry.

Autumn 2: During literacy the Goldfinches will be reading A Christmas Carol. We will be creating character profiles and dissecting sections of the book to further understand why an author may use different writing techniques. The Goldfinches will finish the term with a book review about A Christmas Carol and what they liked or disliked in the story.

There are opportunities throughout Autumn 1 and 2 to access sensory stories that link to the terms theme. These will focus on exploring each of the five senses with a variety of objects. Autumn 1 will be a trip round Great Britain and Autumn 2 will focus on Christmas Eve.

### **My Thinking - Maths and Science**

The Goldfinches will be looking at number across Autumn 1 and 2. They will start by learning how to count different amounts of objects up to 30 and compare numbers with each other. By the end of Autumn 1 the Goldfinches will be able to recognise the greater than and less than symbols and use them in context to describe numbers. The Goldfinches will then look at addition and subtraction by starting with more or less. The Goldfinches will be able to say one more of a number and one less before recognising the addition and subtraction symbols.

Autumn 1: In science the Goldfinches are learning about Cells and Movements. There will be opportunities to use a microscope to analyse items up close and then begin to understand parts of a cell. The Goldfinches will learn about the differences between plant and animal cells, along with a variety of specialised cells such as bacteria. The Goldfinches will then move on to areas of the body and how they help us move. The Goldfinches will learn and create a skeleton before finishing the term by dissecting a chicken thigh to identify key parts of a muscle.

Autumn 2: In science the Goldfinches will be learning about Human and Plant reproduction. The Goldfinches will look at the different ways plants reproduce and how this helps them to grow. The Goldfinches will then move on to how humans reproduce and the way the specialised cells discussed last term help create a human.

### **My Movement - PE**

We will continue to have weekly PE sessions with James Collington to focus on PE targets and a variety of movement. James is also introducing a range of sports like Bocce within these lessons. Along with this, we hope to implement more physical learning into the other key areas by creating on experience opportunities in Literacy and Drama.

We will be having weekly swimming opportunities at Waterfields Leisure Centre this term to encourage movement and being in the community. Along with this, there are chances to visit the park and complete some outdoor exercise.

There will be opportunities to attend rebound therapy and other therapies, in line with students EHCPs.

### **Myself - PSHE**

Autumn 1: In PSHE the Goldfinches will be looking at Rules and Responsibilities. The Goldfinches will identify key rules and responsibilities within school, home and the community. The Goldfinches will extend this knowledge to recognise what would happen if no one followed these rules and why it is

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important to have them. We will be using this time to recap the ENABLES ethos within school and how we use our student council.

Autumn 2: In PSHE the Goldfinches will be exploring what a bullying is and how it can make people feel. They will be identifying different types of bullying (including online), and how to respond to incidents of bullying. We will use this time to identify what to do if they witness Bullying. Along with, who they can talk to if they are worried about it.

### **My Enrichment**

This area encompasses lots of different motivating therapies, for example rebound therapy, music therapy, hydrotherapy (EHCP dependent) and activities. We will take part in enrichment activities including rehearsing for assemblies, cooking, swimming and themed days. We plan to make weekly trips to the park to help build confidence in the community and work towards independence. Along with this, there are planned opportunities to go Horse Riding throughout the term on a 2-week rotation. When students are not Horse Riding they will participating in the AIM awards.

### **Things you could do at home**

**My Communication:** Continue to give opportunities to read and look at words within context such as cooking recipes or letters.

**My Movement:** Remind students of how to be safe at the swimming pool and practice confidence in water such as taking baths or using water.

**Myself:** Look at what rules they may have in the house, such as routines or jobs, and the community. Practice road safety and what we must do to stay safe on the roads.

If you are unsure about anything, please email me on [palmerda@birchwoodschool.co.uk](mailto:palmerda@birchwoodschool.co.uk) I am always happy to help you with any questions you may have about your child.

I am very much looking forward to working with you this term and look forward to seeing the progress the Goldfinches can make.

Daisy Palmer  
Class Teacher