



Dear parents and carers,

I would like to welcome you to the Goldfinches Spring Term Newsletter. During this term we have a range of activities for students to learn about, explore and participate in before Easter. We are hoping to develop our communication and independence skills by taking weekly trips in to the community, this term we will be going to Hilltop Farm.

This academic year we have been primarily following the Independence Curriculum pathway which covers five areas of learning - these 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:

Spring Term 1	Into the Woods Our theme comes from our English topic which is all about The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe. We will be completing a variety of woods themed art activities and completing a TV News Report about an Aslan spotting in the White Woods of Narnia.
Spring Term 2	Spoonful of Sugar We will be looking at Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and designing a character that might visit the factory. We will also be completing a variety of fun cooking ideas linked to our theme.

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.

My Communication – Reading, Literacy and Phonics

The Goldfinches will continue to follow the Ruth Miskin phonics programme over the spring 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 blending sounds together this term and making words from the sounds we already know. For students within the Goldfinches that have progressed within phonics we will continue to recap gaps in phonics knowledge and extend to reading comprehension. For students within the Goldfinches that are at the beginning of their phonics journey, we will be focusing on differentiation and recognising same but different such as a picture of a dog and a symbol.

Spring 1: During literacy the Goldfinches will be creating a TV News Report. We will be focusing on the book; The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe and one of the key characters, Aslan. We will be recording our reports as News Presenters that have seen Aslan in the Forest.

Spring 2: During literacy the Goldfinches will be reading Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. We will be designing another visitor of the chocolate factory. This will include their background, how they won their ticket and what happens to them in the factory. There will be many opportunities throughout the term for sensory activities such as designing the chocolate that their character eats.

There are opportunities throughout spring 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. Spring 1 will be Narnia and Spring 2 will be Visiting a Chocolate Factory.

My Thinking - Maths and Science

Spring 1: In Maths the Goldfinches are looking at Time and Fractions. The Goldfinches will begin by looking at clocks and how they work. The Goldfinches will progress to recognising quarters by using time such as quarter past 2. They will finish by using their understanding of quarters and thirds to find amounts of numbers.

In Science, The Goldfinches will be looking at Light and Sound. There are chances to create instruments and recognise what happens to shadows when they are closer or further away from their light source.

Spring 2: In Maths, the Goldfinches are looking at Money. This will progress from the coin recognition they will have learnt about in their shopping unit in PSHE. We will be recognising what money is and how to use it. We will also have chances to purchase our snacks at the Hill Top Farm café.

In Science, the Goldfinches will be looking at Metals & non-metals, Acids & alkalis. We will be sorting materials into their properties and complete some interesting experiments about acids and alkalis including, what happens when they are put together.

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 Gymnastics 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 chances to visit a Farm and access the play equipment there. There will be opportunities to attend rebound therapy and other therapies, in line with students EHCPs.

Myself - PSHE

Spring 1: In PSHE the Goldfinches will be looking at The World of Work. The Goldfinches have the opportunity to work with another class in the school to create their own shops. We will be looking at what money may be spent and how we can use our skills to make a successful shop. We will also have the chance to visit our peers in the Eagles, who will be making their own shop.

Spring 2: In PSHE the Goldfinches will be looking at healthy food choices. We will categorise food into their food groups and learn about what a healthy plate looks like. We hope to continue to look at making choices in snack times. We will also have the chance to create a food diary.

Birch Wood Area Special school
Class The Goldfinches
Spring 2024
Curriculum Newsletter



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 and themed days. We plan to make weekly trips to the farm to help build confidence in the community and work towards independence.

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 Thinking: Where possible, give chances to use change to purchase items such as visiting the shop with you and recognise what coins they are using.

Myself: Remind students of what a healthy choice is and the importance of eating their fruit and vegetables. Show them the labels of some of their favourite foods.

If you are unsure about anything, please email me on 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