



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. 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>Spring Term 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">All Creatures Great and Small</p> <p>We will be looking at features of animals and their habitats. We will also be exploring animals through cooking by creating a variety of animal-based dishes. In art and design we will explore how to draw creatures with a focus on insects.</p>
<p>Spring Term 2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Superheroes</p> <p>Within this topic we will be exploring 'real life Superheroes' such as Inventors, Scientists or the NHS. We will learn about key people and create articles about them. We will use this information to explore their inventions, creations or how they impacted the world we live in today.</p>

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 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.

Spring 1: In Literacy, the Goldfinches will be reading *The Faraway Tree* and focusing on its setting and characters. They will take part in activities to analyse the scenes and understand the key elements of the story. Through group discussions and individual tasks, the children will practise identifying details about the setting and how it is presented. Later in the topic, they will create their own tree scenes or write a description of the original setting. This will help them develop their understanding of descriptive writing and story structure. The activities will build their ability to communicate ideas clearly and expand their writing skills

Spring 2: In Spring 2, the Goldfinches will be creating articles about 'real-life superheroes'. They will research key figures such as inventors, creators, and NHS workers, learning about their contributions and significance. The children will compile their findings into fact files, focusing on the key details of each individual's achievements. Using these fact files as a foundation, they will write an article explaining who these people are and why they are important. This will help them develop research, organisation, and writing skills while learning about inspiring individuals.

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. Each Sensory Story will link to the Literacy topic and be explored throughout the lessons.

My Thinking - Maths and The World Around Me

Spring 1: In Maths, the Goldfinches will be focusing on fractions and time. They will begin by learning about halving through practical activities, using food, play dough, and shapes to explore the concept. The children will then sequence the steps they took, using key language such as 'first', 'next', and 'then' to describe the process. Building on this, they will move on to sequencing their own morning and evening routines, reinforcing their understanding of time and order. These activities will help them develop both practical and language skills while exploring key mathematical concepts.

Spring 2: In Maths, the Goldfinches will be learning about money. They will build on their understanding of coins from last year and apply this knowledge to real-world scenarios by creating shops in class. The children will practise recognising and using different coins to make various amounts. This will help them develop their understanding of value and improve their problem-solving skills in practical settings.

The World Around Me will allow the Goldfinches to learn about Science, History, Geography and RE through practical, thematic learning.

Spring 1: In The World Around Me, the Goldfinches will be exploring animals and their habitats. They will begin by categorising animals based on key features, identifying similarities and differences between them. The class will also learn about different habitats and where various animals live. These activities will help them develop their understanding of the natural world and the relationships between animals and their environments.

Spring 2: In this topic, the Goldfinches will explore everyday objects and identify the scientists or inventors responsible for them, such as suspension bridges, trains, penicillin, or computers. They will focus on one significant individual, researching their work and the impact it has on our lives today. The class will learn to name the scientist or inventor and explain what makes them significant. They will also describe the lasting impact that the individual's contributions have had on society. This will help develop their research skills and understanding of the role inventors and scientists play in shaping the world.

My Movement - PE

We will continue to have weekly PE sessions with James Collington to focus on PE targets and a variety of movement. The Goldfinches will be developing their functional movement skills through gymnastics this term. They will focus on improving core strength, balance, and coordination, exploring how to piece together different movements to create a routine. In addition, the children will be attending swimming lessons at Waterfield Leisure Centre, where they will work on building their skills, confidence, and independence in the water. These activities will not only help improve their physical abilities but also encourage their growth in the community and everyday settings.

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

Myself - PSHE

Spring 1: the Goldfinches will focus on managing strong feelings. They will begin by identifying different emotions and recognising how their bodies react to them. The children will then explore ways they can help their peers with their emotions, learning how to offer support and understanding. Additionally, they will look at Emotion Toolboxes, which provide strategies to help them respond to their own feelings in a healthy and constructive way. This will help the children develop emotional awareness and improve their social and emotional skills.

Spring 2: the Goldfinches will be learning how to respond to touch, with a focus on consent. They will explore the importance of asking permission before touching a peer, using role-play to practise how to ask if it is okay to touch someone. The children will also learn how to respond appropriately if someone touches them without their consent, discussing ways to communicate boundaries clearly. These lessons will help them understand the importance of personal space and respectful interactions with others.

Birch Wood Area Special school
Class The Goldfinches
Spring 2025
Curriculum Newsletter



My Enrichment

This area encompasses lots of different motivating therapies, for example rebound therapy, music therapy, hydrotherapy and activities. We will take part in enrichment activities including rehearsing for assemblies, cooking and themed days.

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: Go on walks with your child to find insects and different animals. Identify their features and where they might live.

My Movement: Discuss water safety and being at the swimming pool. Remind your child of walking around the pool and staying safe within the water.

If you are unsure about anything, please email me on palmerda@birchwoodschoo.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