



Golden Valley Primary School

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*'Sharing Kindness,
Challenging Ourselves and Others,
Achieving Excellence'*

Headteacher: Mr R Riordan BA (QTS) Hons., NPQH

9th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you all had a fantastic break and wish you all a fantastic 2026. It has been a pleasure to walk the school this week and see how quickly the children (and staff) have settled back in to routine and excitement of school. A new year offers us all that opportunity for a reset. We are the screen writers, stars and directors of our own autobiography and each day is an opportunity to create the story we wish for ourselves. Even when we can't control all of the challenges we face, how we respond to them is up to us.

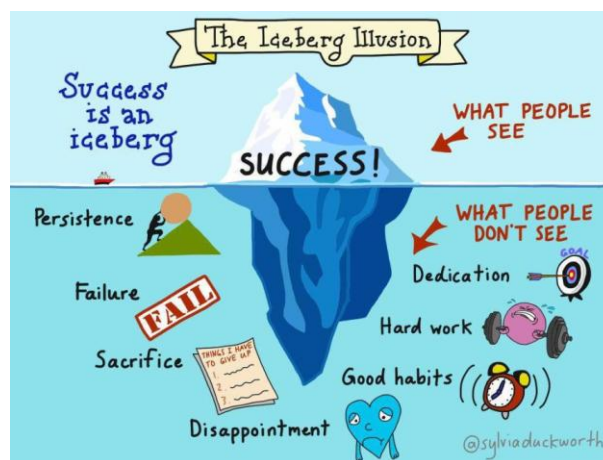
This week we have also welcomed Mrs Turner who is teaching with Miss Macadam in Nightingale Class. I am sure you will all give her a warm welcome. Mrs Bennett as I type is enjoying her first day of independence as she begins her first week of part time working. I am incredibly grateful to her for stepping up in terms 1 and 2 and covering Nightingale class after Mr Marriott left Golden Valley.

Forest School

It has been great to see our first forest school sessions up and running. Mr Underhill has done a great job developing the area and completing his training to be ready to begin this term. Our thanks also to the GVSA for funding these sessions.

Challenge - our second core value

Challenge will be the focus of our assemblies in terms 3 and 4. I shared this picture with the children in assembly on Monday. Success can look so quick and easy for so many people that it can make hard work and perseverance harder for us to stick with. We can help by modelling and supporting children with what you don't see under the water. Helping children to cope with disappointment and failure is key to building resilience.



Online Safety

It's that time of year when Santa may have delivered some electronic presents that won't have come with parental guidance or automatic child safety features. Here is a link to some great advice if this applies to your family. It is also worth checking back to the safety features you have in place on existing devices.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/video-games-age-ratings-explained/>

Aspens Burger Bar Free Meal Day

In conjunction with Aspens, our Trust-wide caterer, we would like to invite all pupils (EYFS, KS1 & KS2) to enjoy a **FREE** lunchtime meal on Thursday 15th January. For this special event Aspens will be serving up a Street Food Burger Bar! Please see the attached page on our website with the menu (standard and allergy free): [School Meals Page](#)

Additionally, there is a great opportunity to be entered into a grand prize draw across the Trust to win a brand new bike!

Please place your child's order using the Aspens Select system in the usual way. Orders must be placed by 8am on Thursday 15th January at the very latest. If you haven't yet used Aspens Select and need assistance please contact the school office.

We are grateful to Aspens and the local supply chain for partnering with us for this special event and we hope all children will take this opportunity to try the excellent hot meals served in our schools. Additionally, your child's participation in this event will assist our school with future funding.

Parking your car with the engine running

We continue to receive feedback from concerned parents and neighbours about the number of cars parked with engines running which significantly increases the build up of toxic exhaust fumes that children and parents then need to walk through and inhale.

We would like to politely request that drivers of vehicles do not leave their engines idling outside school, as some do. This is not only environmentally not a good thing, but it is also bad for everyone's health, particularly children. It's also against the law.

Source, the RAC:

The Royal College of Physicians estimate 40,000 deaths a year in the UK are linked to air pollution, with engine idling contributing to this.

Idling means leaving a vehicle's engine running while it is stationary.

While this is often because of everyday traffic, there are some instances – such as waiting for children outside schools and sitting in total gridlock – when idling is not necessary and should be avoided.

Idling increases the amount of exhaust fumes in the air.

These fumes contain a number of harmful gasses including carbon dioxide, which is bad for the environment and contributes towards climate change, as well as a range of other harmful gasses including nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons which are linked to asthma and other lung diseases.

Diesel vehicles are thought to be one of the biggest contributors to the problem.

Rule 123 of The Highway Code looks at 'The Driver and the Environment'. It states that drivers must not leave a parked vehicle unattended with the engine running or leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily while the vehicle is stationary on a public road.



Behaviour Expectations at Golden Valley – STEPS and SHAPE

Our wonderful walking and wonderful listening are really well embedded at Golden Valley and we are extremely proud of the excellent behaviour that we see around the school.

Within our behaviour policy as part of the “Golden Valley Way” we have included STEPS and SHAPE which we have recently introduced to the school and have been working on.

STEPS teaches children how to be polite and **respectful**. Someone who is polite has good manners and behaves in a way that is **kind** and **respectful** to all children and adults.

SHAPE teaches children to speak loud and proud so that everyone can hear what they are saying.

STEPS	SHAPE	Wonderful Walking	Wonderful Listening
Say the person’s name Thank you Excuse me Please Smile	Sentences in full Hand away from mouth Articulate (your words) Project (your voice) Eye contact	Face forward Stand up straight Arms by our sides Not talking Walk on the left The first person holds the door open for the class Priority of way will be given to class transition over the movement of individual adults, who are expected to model and praise Wonderful Walking This encourages children to have pride in themselves as they walk around school. It discourages running and bumping into each other and ensures everyone is safe .	Face forward Empty hands Always sit up straight, four legs of the chair on the floor Never interrupt Track the speaker This ensures that everyone can hear what is being said and shows kindness and respect to the speaker, maximising the understanding of what’s been said.

I have them all above as a reminder to you. You can help reinforce these at home and celebrate them with your children (we don’t expect you to apply the ‘wonderfuls’ at home as these are very school specific but elements of them may help you!).

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



R Riordan
Headteacher

DIARY DATES

Please be aware that this list of dates is subject to change, and additional dates will be included when other events/activities have been finalised.

You can view the school calendar online; this contains planned dates for the whole school year: [School Calendar](#)

January 2026	
Tues 13	Y5 Outdoor Learning
Thurs 15	Aspens Burger Bar Free Meal Day
Fri 16	INSET Day
Tues 20	Y4 Outdoor Learning
Weds 21	Sports trip: Y5 Multiskills (selected children)
Mon 26 – Feb 6	Y5 Bikeability (exact group dates to follow)
Tues 27	Y4 Outdoor Learning
Thurs 29	Y5+6 SARI Workshops
February 2026	
Thurs 5	YR School Nurse Visit
Fri 6	GVSA Uniform Sale
Tues 10	Internet Safety Day
Weds 11	YR & Y5 Explorer Dome (more details to follow)
Fri 13	INSET Day End of Term 3

Further details about most of the events will be given nearer the time where appropriate.