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Lighting a Spark in Every Child

September 2016

R.E Newsletter No. 1

Dear Parents and Carers,

We regularly send home newsletters about the work going on at school in relation to Collective Worship, Religious Education and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development.

What is Collective Worship?

Year 1 to 4 come together as a school each day in the hall. Reception and Nursery Classes hold short daily acts of worship in their classrooms. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we meet together at 9.20 am; on a Thursday and a Friday we meet at 2.45 pm.



On Monday and Tuesday Mrs Spencer leads a Collective Worship, with Christian teaching underpinning it, related to the school value for that period.

Wednesday is a Celebration day. We celebrate with children who have had a birthday that week. Children who have achieved a success out of school share this and receive a 'Success Shield' (Children should bring in their success and give it to their class teacher.) One child from each year group receives a gift from the 'Star Box'. They can be nominated from anyone in the school and this can be for manners, kindness, setting an example etc.

On Thursday we are fortunate to have a group from the local community called 'Open the Book' perform a story from the Bible.

Friday is a celebration of good work where two children from each class receive a Well Done postcard. On Friday the 'Behaviour Bears' are also awarded to a class in each key stage demonstrating exemplary behaviour. Headteacher Awards are given out to three children at the end of each month for excellent curriculum work.

Children are expected to come in to Collective Worship calmly and quietly. Three children from each class who are showing this behaviour are allowed to sit on benches at the back. Whilst the children enter there is music to listen to and a slide show of stimulating pictures.

During Worship there will be a variety of elements included: this could be a story, poem, play or a powerpoint presentation. Children will be encouraged to think, reflect and ask questions. There will also be a hymn and a prayer. Children are invited to pray only if they want to, those who do not wish to pray are asked to sit quietly and think. Children often support during Collective Worship and each month we focus on a different value.



Children are also involved in writing and delivering their own acts of Collective Worship. Children who choose to get involved, take it in turns to attend Hooked on Worship Club with Mrs Collins. When they present their worship their parents are invited to watch.

The values for this year are:

September	Respect
October	Justice
November	Forgiveness
December	Love
January	Hope
February	Compassion
March	Perseverance
April	Wisdom
May	Koinonia
June	Trust
July	Courage

September – Respect

Questions you may like to discuss with your child include:

- What does respect have to do with the quality of your character?
- What are the benefits of people treating each other with respect?
- How do you show respect for people, animals or the environment?
- What does the Bible teach us about respect?
- What do other faiths teach us about respect? How do you feel when someone judges you without knowing you or giving you a chance?
- How do you feel when someone you disagree with calls you a name?
- Can you name someone who has shown great respect for others?
- How do you feel when someone bumps into you and doesn't apologise?
- Agree or disagree: Courtesy and politeness are a lot of nonsense.
- Agree or disagree: When people stay out of a bully's way, they are showing respect.
- What can you do to make this a more respectful world?
- Do you think that people in our society are respectful enough of each other? Why?
- Do you consider yourself to be a respectful person? Why, or why not?
- In what ways do you show respect to others?
- How is respect related to fairness? To caring? To violence?



What is Religious Education?

We teach the RE syllabus for Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton: Identities, Meanings and Values. Year groups will be studying different key questions.



- Year 1
- How do we show we care for others?
 - What does it mean to belong?
 - Who is a Christian and what do they believe?
 - Who is Jewish and what do they believe?
- Year 2
- How and why do we celebrate special times?
 - Who is an inspiring person?
 - What can we learn from sacred books and stories?
 - Why should we care for the earth?
- Year 3
- How and why do believers show their commitments during the journey of life?
 - How and why does a Christian follow Jesus?
 - How should we live and who can inspire us?
 - What do religions teach about the natural world and why we should care about it?
- Year 4
- What are the deeper meanings of festivals?
 - What does it mean to be a Jew?
- Where, how and why do people worship?

The RE curriculum is challenging and thought provoking and uses music, art, drama, poetry to support children's learning.

What is Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development?



Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal experience which are of enduring worth.

Moral development is about the building, by pupils, of a framework of moral values which regulates their personal behaviour. It is also about the development of pupils' understanding of society's shared and agreed values.

Social development is about young people working effectively with each other and participating successfully in the community as a whole. It is about the development of the skills and personal qualities necessary for living and working together. It is about functioning effectively in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society.

Cultural development is about pupils' understanding their own culture and other cultures in their town, region and in the country as a whole. It is about understanding cultures represented in Europe and elsewhere in the world.



Festivals in September

1st September Christian Harvest Festival (Dates vary)



Special services are held around this time of year to give thanks for the goodness of God's gifts in providing a harvest of crops along with all the other fruits of society. Displays of produce are often made, usually distributed afterwards to those in need. Increasingly the emphasis is on a wider interpretation than just the harvests of the fields and seas.

1st September- Sikh: Guru Granth Sahib



On 1 September Sikhs celebrate the installation of the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh Scripture) in the Golden Temple in Amritsar in 1604. The Guru Granth Sahib is the focus of Sikh worship and devotion at the Golden Temple. In the early morning it's placed on the Singhasan (throne) in the centre of the Temple's sanctum, and at night it's ceremoniously returned to the Akal Takhat (another building in the Amritsar complex). During the day passages are read from the Granth and people pay their respects.

3 – 13 September Muslim Dhul Hijjah



For Muslims the first 10 days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah are held to be especially holy when good deeds are particularly rewarded by God. These days encompass the allotted days for the performance of the Hajj (pilgrimage) and the first day of Eid-ul-Adha (the feast of sacrifice).

5th September Hindu Ganesh Chaturthi (Birthday of Ganesha)



Ganesh Chaturthi / Vinayaka Chaturthi is a Hindu festival in honour of Ganesh/Ganesha, (also known as Ganapati and Vinayaka), the god of good fortune and new beginnings. A popular story explains why Ganesha, the son of Parvati and Shiva, has the head of an elephant. Celebrations can last one, five or ten days, and will conclude with the immersion in water of the image of Ganesh.

11-15th September Muslim Hajj/ Pilgrimage to Makkah



All Muslims who can afford to do so, and are not prevented through ill-health, are required to make this pilgrimage once in their lifetime (although there is no prohibition on making the pilgrimage more than once). A series of ritual acts are performed by the pilgrims during the first two days of Hajj, prior to the three day festival of Eid-al-Adha which is celebrated in Makkah by the pilgrims.

12th September Muslim Yaum-Arafah / The day of Arafat



This day marks the culminating event of the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Makkah. Muslims who are on *Hajj* spend the day in prayer on Mount Arafat to commemorate the end of the revelation of the *Qur'an* to the Prophet. Those not on *Hajj* are also expected to pray and fast.

13th September Muslim Eid-ul-Adha/ The Festival of Scarifice



This major festival (*al-Eid al-Kabir*) marks the end of the *Hajj* (Pilgrimage to Makkah) on the tenth day of the twelfth month of *Dhul-Hijja*. The *Hajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam. Pilgrims sacrifice animals at the village of Mina on their way back to Makkah from Mount Arafat (where they have spent the first day of the festival) in commemoration of Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail. Muslims all over the world sacrifice an animal if they can afford it. Much of the meat is distributed to the poor, and some is shared with relatives and friends.

17th September Jewish: Sukkot



At Sukkot, Jews remember the Israelites' 40 years of exile in the desert, living in makeshift dwellings, before they reached the promised land. For the duration of the festival Jewish families live in temporary huts called *sukkot* (singular: *sukkah*) which they build out of branches and leaves. Each day they hold celebrations with four types of symbolic plants: palm, myrtle, willow and a special citrus fruit called an *etrog*. Sukkot is intended to be a joyful festival that lets Jews live close to nature and know that God is taking care of them

21st September Muslim Eid Ul Ghadeer/ The Festival of the Pool



This is a festival observed by Shi'a Muslims, for whom it is an extremely important day. It commemorates an event shortly before the death of the Prophet. When returning from Makkah to Medina after his final pilgrimage, the Prophet, who was travelling with many thousands of his followers, stopped at an oasis (the pool of Khumm) to deliver a sermon. While preaching he is believed by Shi'a Muslims to have raised the hand of Ali, his cousin and son-in-law, and proclaimed, 'For whoever I am his leader, Ali is his leader. O God, love those who love him, and be hostile to those who are hostile to him'.

Immediately after this statement the Prophet revealed an *ayah* (verse) of the *Qur'an*: 'Today I have perfected your religion and completed my favour upon you, and I was satisfied that Islam be your religion' (*Qur'an* 5, 3.) For Shi'a Muslims the 'perfecting' of the religion of Islam was the announcement concerning Ali, which they understand to be his clear appointment to be successor to the prophet as the spiritual and temporal leader of Islam.

If you have any further comments or suggestions please speak or write to Mrs Collins.

Thank you

