

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Encouraging understanding and celebration of different cultures

How St Botolph's C of E Primary School created a range of activities to focus on the similarities between cultures and to celebrate the differences

Context of our anti-bullying work

Our school is set within a very diverse and deprived community.

- Our pupils come mostly from Christian or families who have a faith. 81% of our pupils have a faith: 56% are Christian, 16% Sikh and 3% Muslim and 5% are other faiths.
- Our percentage of non-white British children is now above NA currently 54% (NA 34.8%) with a high percentage of Black African pupils 16.1% (NA 3.9%) and Indian pupils 15.9% (NA 3.3%).
- We are ranked 119 out of 462 for our IMD rank and 32 out of 902 on Kent Lower Super Output Areas (source: The Index of Multiple deprivation for Kent), where 1 is the most deprived.

We have completed a range of activities throughout the year to support children in celebrating difference and diversity.

What we hoped to achieve

The aim of the project was to:

- Raise awareness of the different cultures within our community
- For children to understand and appreciate the beliefs and practices of religions different to their own.
- To draw comparisons and focus on the similarities between our beliefs and practices.
- Celebrate other faiths (non-Christian) throughout the year to develop awareness and understanding of our cultures

The action we took

At the start of the year, we collaborated with the RE lead to identify a significant festival celebrated by each of the 6 major religions. We ensured these were spread out across the year.

For each festival, we have held a special worship for the whole school to engage them in the learning for the day. Children have also completed activities in their classes to help them learn about the religion and their practices and how it is similar to their religion. We have involved the community by asking visitors to present to the pupils and also having pupils share with others their own religion and the experiences for a child when following that religion.

Some of the activities we have taken part in include;

- Learning a song in Hindi about Diwali and tasted traditional Indian sweets
- For Ramadan, we learnt about the five pillars of Islam and, like Muslims, spent time thinking about others and being grateful for what we have. We created a 'Good Deeds Tree' to record this.
- Created Vaisakhi cards as classes to give to families in our community who celebrate Vaisakhi
- Tu Bishvat is the Jewish new year for trees so we choose fruit trees to be planted on the school grounds.
- For Harvest this year, we created a wonderful display of food and goodies to support people in our community. A small group of children then took the food to our local food bank and volunteered for the day.
- In October we celebrated Sukkot. Jewish people spend as much time as possible in a sukkah (an outdoor shelter) for the whole week of Sukkot. Throughout the week, each class had the opportunity to build a sukkah in our Forest School.

We also held an Anti-racism Day where we supported Show Racism the Red Card through a range of activities according to age group. The children also had the opportunity to design a baseball cap that promoted Anti-racism and the winners made their designs into a real cap. As a result of this day, we now have Anti-racism displays around our school to act as a permanent reminder of the need to be anti-racist and that we are all equal. Later in the year, the whole school took part in the Show Racism the Red Card national competition and one of our Year 2 groups won their category. They were awarded certificates and prizes in our celebration worship as we couldn't attend the prize winners ceremony due to distance. This served as another reminder to the whole school of the learning that we have done over the year and helped us to celebrate how we are all equal.

Show Racism the Red Card Winners:



Impact and outcomes of the work

The positive outcomes from these activities are that the children are now more aware of the diversity of our school. They appreciate that everyone may have different beliefs, however this is not a barrier and that we are, and all treat, one another as equals. Pupils have also had the opportunity to be proud of their religion and receive respect from their peers. Our Behaviour records suggest that the number of incidences relating to racism has diminished over the year and pupil voice suggests that they have a deeper understanding of other faiths, races and cultures.

What we have learned

Our next steps are to disseminate this learning into the wider community in order to eradicate racial incidences. We would like to share this learning with parents and carers, of all generations, in order to ensure the children are receiving the same messages from home as they do in school. In addition, we will share our practices with other schools within our ever-growing Trust.