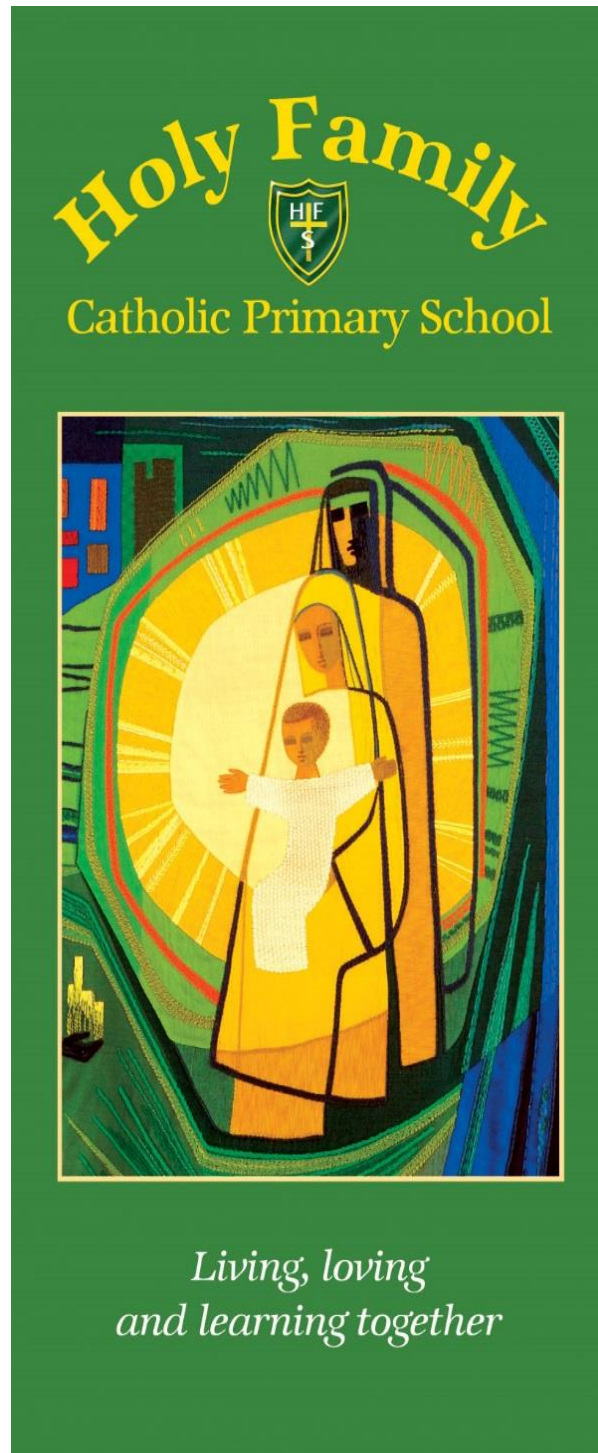


Holy Family Catholic Primary School



**Governor Open Day
14 FEBRUARY 2020**

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this year's governor open day was mainly for governors to see "Around the World Day" at the school and this term's theme was India. We were able to see how the diverse curriculum was translated into different aspects pertaining to India and there was also an opportunity to talk to any pupil to understand what they knew and had been taught about this large continent.



Around the World Days not only cover the general curriculum but have a strong impact on geography and the culture of the country in focus e.g. the sounds, sights and smells pertaining to it.

A governor's role is to be part of the school day, not to make judgments or observations, but to increase collective knowledge and understanding of what goes on in a typical school day. These governor days are extremely beneficial in building positive relationships between governors, staff and the children themselves.

There was no itinerary and governors were free to walk around the school and sit in on any lesson.

Governors participating in the day were:

Anne Wright
Tricia Nicholls
Bob Wright

ANNE WRIGHT – CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

On arrival I went to join Mrs Rockall and her pupils in Year 5 who were having a geography lesson. The Oddizzi programme they use is an excellent resource and is a BETT finalist enhancing history and geography through digital technology.



Mrs Sindhu Rajeer, the LSA for the class, had made and brought in some Indian sweets called Gulab Jamun, made with flour and syrup. All the children were given a chance to try and the consensus was that they were very “yummy” although some were reluctant to try!

Each child was given a map of India and asked to label various States, mountain ranges and rivers.

Three years ago in 2017 each child was given a “passport” in which they have put in all of the other countries when they had a special day at HFS. I asked a delightful young lady which countries she had in her “passport” and she told me so far there were China, Russia, South America, Australia, Kenya, Japan and Africa. I asked her which was her favourite and she told me that she had liked learning about Kenya because some of Mrs Rockall’s family came from there. She also told me about the equator.

My Around the World trip at HFS then took me briefly through the hall where Year 2 children were learning Bhangra Dancing with the aid of watching a video on the large white screen. They were learning the structure of the dance which consisted of beats of four. Each group of six children had a leader who helped choreograph the dance. Everyone was allowed the opportunity to show the others in their group what they wanted to do.

This dancing follows the “I Moves” programme which had been purchased with Sports Premium money. Dancing is an enjoyable way of getting children to move around and exercise and is therefore a great way to spend this funding stream.

Year 3 were having a recorder lesson given by an external tutor. This was their sixth lesson and they were now learning the note “G”. Using the three notes, B, A and G they were asked to write them in different patterns for their partner to play.

The recorders are purchased by the Friends of Holy Family School from their fundraising for Year 3 pupils. Mrs Kelliher shared with me her vision of getting a tutor in to carry on with music lessons after school as the pupils responded well to learning how to make music. She also anticipated having a “Singing Club” after school if the response was good. “KiddyCook”, which was a newly introduced club, had attracted so many pupils wanting to do it that it is due to start after Half Term.

I was informed that the current After School Clubs are:

- 11+ Tuition
- Drama (on 2 evenings)
- Football
- Irish Dancing
- Marshall Arts / Kick boxing
- TBA Singing
- TBA 1:1 tuition on an instrument (to take place during the school day)

After Break, Year 5 were having a keyboard lesson. Using the well known (to people of a certain age!) song, Lean on Me by Bill Withers, they played together the simple recurring notes that form the song. They were encouraged to play alone to the class if they felt confident enough.

Year 6 were creating a Rangoli Pattern leaflet relating to Hinduism. Each leaflet was unique and demonstrated the child's own fabulous interpretation of the design.

I asked a pupil what she had been learning and she said that the Hindu religion had four main beliefs:

Truth is eternal

Dharma (the right and wrong ways to live)

Reincarnation

Moksha (the release of the soul from the cycle of rebirth and death).

Mrs Rackliff gave the class instructions on what she wanted them to do. It contained three elements and she asked them to discuss it amongst themselves. Then she asked them to repeat the questions back to Mrs Stanford who had just come into the room. This was a way of improving listening and verbalization skills. When a pupil made a statement the class was asked whether they wanted to challenge this. This was a way of correcting a person in a mature way.

I then visited Mrs Eardley and her pupils in Year 1. Every person in that class greeted me like I was a celebrity. One delightful child said to me "Hello, my name is XXX and I hope you have a lovely time with us". With a greeting like that, I just knew I was in for a great time.

The class were making Rahki bracelets and they told me this was done with straws, buttons and string. Others were colouring in flags, or cutting out tigers. Once the outline of the tiger was done, they then put shaving foam on it and added food colouring before rubbing it all off. This gave the tiger its distinctive stripes. One little girl told me she was making the bracelet for her mum. One of the boys proudly told me the colours of the flag but to be fair, every single one of Class 1 wanted to talk and engage with me over what they were doing. I came away from that Class with a big smile on my face.

We then went for lunch. What a treat! The delicious smells that had been emanating from the kitchen were now on offer by way of different vegetarian curries and other Indian foods. These had been lovingly made by Mrs Kelliher, Mrs Rajeev and Mrs Buet as an addition to the usual menu and were there for the children to try if they so wished. It was amazing at the amount of children who chose to try the spicy food and seemed to really enjoy it. We thoroughly enjoyed potato and cauliflower curry, with rice, naan bread, poppadoms, raita and salad.



Lunch Indian style

The afternoon finished with an assembly for the whole school where they showcased what they had been doing during the day:

Foundation – Bhangra dancing

Year 1 - showed the bracelets, mosaics and tigers that they had coloured

Year 2 – showed the different moves to a Bhangra dance including “apple in basket”, “chopping”

Year 3 – put up a map of India, showed the Mendala and Rangoli patterns they had done

Year 4 – showed the research they had done on India

Year 5 – had made biscuits

Year 6 – had created games and also Rangoli patterns on dotted paper.

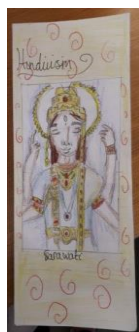
All the teachers wore beautiful colourful saris provided by Mrs Rajeev and of course this is the national dress of India.

Mrs Rajeev’s daughter, Riya, came along and did a Bhangra dance and showed the children how to do some of the moves. Everyone joined in.

What a fantastic end to a wonderful and cultural day. I learnt so much myself.



Mrs Rajeev



Hindu Pamphlet



Staff at Assembly in Saris



Mrs Cox, Mrs Rajeev & Ria

TRICIA NICHOLLS, FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

I received a warm and friendly welcome from Mrs Buet and Mrs Krikor in the office who invited me to order a school lunch. Unfortunately I had to decline as I would not be able to stay for lunch. I met with Mr and Mrs Wright, fellow governors and we decided which classes we would each visit first.



Year 4: Mrs Debono, class teacher and Mrs O’Shea, LSA

My first visit was to year 4 where the children were looking at a map of India on the interactive white board.

A child had brought in a piece of fabric to show and the children were asked questions about the design. Mrs Debono explained the term batik to them. A child was chosen to do an online search about saris and the children were reminded about safe searches.

They looked at pictures of saris and discussed the range of colours and fabrics.

The next topic for the children was Hinduism and the children were introduced to the Bhagavad Gita, a holy and important book in the Hindu faith. Children were chosen to read aloud to the class explanations from the board. They each had a research sheet with an example of Sanskrit writing. The children I spoke to were very enthusiastic about the topic and looking forward to the rest of the day's activities. It was then time for me to visit my next class but I was invited to return to Year Four later in the morning when they would be doing Bhangra dancing.

Foundation: Mrs Willsher, class teacher and Ms Walkden, LSA

The children were engaged in a wide range of activities such as: drawing, construction, copying alphabet letters and looking at story books. Mrs Willsher was working with four children who were making Naan bread and chopping mint leaves to use in a dip. The children were thoroughly engaged in their tasks and were busy making dough and rolling it out. Mrs Willsher was cooking the bread and the children would have an opportunity to sample it later. One memorable comment was from a child who told me they were making banana bread; it's easy to see how a young child would confuse the words naan and banana!

One child was proudly wearing a sari which Ms Walkden had created for her.

One lovely practice in the class was the organisation of snacks. The children are able to help themselves to snacks of fruit and vegetables but before doing so they must look at the price list displayed and select the correct coins (toy money with the correct denomination) to pay for it. What a lovely idea to help promote both independence and numeracy skills.

The children were friendly and welcoming. They told me about some of their favourite activities, such as making cards, playing pirates outside and using playdough. They were eager to show me the new class windows and told me about how a bird had banged against the glass!

Without prompting, they explained that they were not allowed to run in the classroom as you could trip or bump and get hurt.

It was then time for break and I enjoyed a cup of coffee in the staffroom where everyone was sharing information about how well the day was going. There was a lovely, warm and friendly atmosphere and it was evident that everyone was having a lovely time. Many of the staff were wearing saris and Indian dresses, courtesy of Mrs Rajeev, one of the new LSAs. They all looked wonderful.

Year 1: Mrs Eardley, class teacher and Mrs Kemp, LSA

After break I visited Year One. They were engaged in a wide range of activities. One group was completing a fact sheet about tigers and were happy to read their work to me. Another group was busy colouring a map of India. Some children had designed and made a Rakhi bracelet which can be given as a symbol of love. They were wearing them proudly and had used a range of coloured beads and buttons to make them. The children were very keen to talk to me and show me their work.

Mrs Eardley was supervising a group of children who had cut out a drawing of a tiger and then had to place it face down onto a plate of shaving foam and food colourant. The end result which I later saw at assembly was amazing.

They were a very warm and friendly group of children who made me feel very welcome. They were clearly having a great day.

Return to Year Four

My final visit of the morning was to return to Year 4. The children were watching a video about Bhangra dancing and were commenting on the tempo and the actions. They looked at an example of modern Bhangra, performed to a song by Ed Sheeran. It was then time for all the children and adults present to follow the instructions on screen and have a go at Bhangra dancing! It was great fun but exhausting for the adults! The children were enjoying themselves enormously. I spoke to a few children who were happy to talk to me about the activities they had been doing during the morning. They had enjoyed copying Sanskrit and were able to explain to me what they had learnt during their session on Hinduism. They had also enjoyed dancing. They were looking forward to lunch time as curry was one of the options available. There was a very happy atmosphere in the classroom and the children were clearly having a lovely day.

Unfortunately I was unable to stay for lunch but returned at the end of the day for the school assembly. Each class shared with everyone the activities they had been engaged in during the day. There was a great deal of variety which included: dancing, art work, research, pattern making and cooking. There was a lovely range reflecting the ages of the children and progression in skills.

One lovely moment was listening to Mrs Rajeev explain about her sari and seeing so many members of staff wearing saris and Indian dresses. A Year1 pupil, wearing her own sari, also joined the adults at the front to show what they were wearing. A memorable moment was watching Mrs Rajeev's daughter dance for the whole school. Her dancing was amazing and it was lovely that she had given up her time to come into school to perform to the children.

To conclude, it had been a wonderful day and I was fortunate to be part of it. The atmosphere throughout the school was one of happiness and warmth. There was so much to see and I had only been to three classes! To sum up in one sentence my view of the day I would say it was a place of joyful learning.

Thank you to everyone at Holy Family for their hard work and for being so welcoming.

BOB WRIGHT – LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR

My day started with a visit to Year 6. They told me they were learning about Hinduism – the similarities and differences. They had learnt about the subject on Thursday and they were now designing and writing an information pamphlet. This was to promote the Hindi culture. The pamphlets were all very colourful and informative and the pupils had obviously enjoyed this task.



One pupil was having difficulties with her pencil sharpener which she brought to me to look at. I managed to sort out the problem and got it working and she was very pleased. It felt to be included in the class.

Another pupil found the Hindu symbol for peace which was used by Hitler to promote the Nazi party. They were told that the Nazi had stolen the symbol of peace for their own use. I was also able to add that the Nike symbol had been plagiarized from Ancient times and they found this interesting.

Pupils in this session worked individually on their pamphlets and teacher assistance was given either 1:1 or in groups.

I then went to Year 5 where they were seating in a more formal setting. This was to ensure the pupils were refocused on learning and this seemed to be working very well. When I arrived everyone was filling in their "Passports" with all facts and pictures relating to India.

The pupils went on to set up the class for keyboard practice for Year 4 and disappeared out off to play. The LSA for the class told me all about the set up for music lessons where children of mixed abilities all learnt to play music.

When I arrived in Year 3 they were watching a short film about monsoons. They learnt that they were very wet but at least the rain was warm – not like in England. However, the monsoons caused lots of floods in the country. But the rain was very good for the crops, especially the rice which thrived in the fields. The class teacher asked her pupils' lots of questions about what they had just watched and they enthusiastically replied to her.

The pupils were then given a simple map of India and surrounding countries and were tasked with searching an atlas for the added detail. Everyone added the information and colours to their own map. One boy told me he was enjoying this very much as he liked art and this was very similar. He told me that there were lots of people living in China and India. He said "I love art and I have a whole room of it at home".

I then visited Foundation Class who had just returned in from outside play. They sat down and watched and listened to a story about Rama and Sita, the story behind Diwali, the Festival of Light. This is a big Hindu festival celebrating good over evil.

Year 1 were learning about tigers and some were cutting out shapes of tigers, covering them in shaving foam and food colouring. Others were making bracelets and many came to show me what they had done as they were very proud of their achievements. Others sitting on the mat were colouring in flags of India. Some had an outline of a bracelet on paper which they coloured and stuck jewels on to. These were Rakhi bracelets which were given as a sign of love and protection.

It is always humbling when I am able to learn something new and today's Around the World in India taught me many things that I had not been aware of. The sights, sounds and smell around the school were very evocative of India.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The consensus of all Governors who attended and saw the school day in action is that all the elements of the curriculum are being met in these "Around the World Days" and is having a big impact on pupil achievement. The fun injected into these days and the tremendous hard work staff put in over and above their normal duties is evident to see. The school really was transformed into India for the day and every pupil appeared happy and engaged in this. This is down to the skill, professionalism and dedication of all the staff within the school.

AND FINALLY

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff of the school for their patience, humour and interaction with the Governors on this specially designated day. And not forgetting to thank

my great team of Governors, all of whom work tirelessly towards ensuring the school is a great place in which to learn. I am proud to be Chair of such a great team of staff and governors and to see the school thrive.

Anne Wright
Chair of Governors



