

First Year of the Cycle

Spring Term

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: **NEW YEAR**

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship takes a reflective view of New Year celebrations and considers again the opportunities and challenges which a new start brings.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: recognise that failure is part of what it is to be human, but that forgiveness allows the possibility of a new start and a new hope.

Moral: develop a sense of personal resolve.

Social: reflect on how well we respond to the failures of others.

Cultural: acknowledge that new starts are celebrated in a variety of ways.

Theme for Week NEW YEAR	Day
Theme for Today Happy New Year	1

When is New Years Day? Most of us would probably say January 1st. But there are many different New Year's days, at different times of the year. Our school year begins in September and so does the Jewish New Year. The festival of Divali which celebrates New Year for Hindus takes place in October or November.

For many people New Year is a time of celebration. Families may give presents, eat festive foods and wear new clothes. It is also a time of resolutions. A time to remember the events of the past year as well as looking forward to the new one.

Looking back might also mean recognising what we may have done wrong in the past and resolving to do better in future.

During their New Year celebrations, called Rosh Hashanah, Jews eat apples dipped in honey. The sharpness of the apple is a sign that they have done wrong and the honey is a sign of sweetness and hope for the coming year. Many Jews will also shake out all the dust and fluff that has gathered in their pockets to symbolise the idea of casting off sins and making a fresh start.

Reflection/Prayer

May it be your will, O God, to give us a good and sweet year.

7 Why do you think people like to wear new clothes at this time?

8 New Year for Jews is a time of forgiveness. Are there any quarrels which you could forgive? Why is new year a good time for saying sorry - and for forgiveness?

9 Jews greet each other at New Year by saying "Le-Shanah tovah" which means "May God write you down for a good year". What would you like to be 'written down' for?

10 At this stage in your life what resolutions do you think you ought to be making?

11 What use are resolutions if they aren't strictly kept?

Theme for Week NEW YEAR	Day
Theme for Today Out with the old and in with the new	2

It is good sometimes to be able to make a fresh start, to put the past behind us and look to a better future. New Year provides this opportunity and at this time many people resolve to do better than in the past.

When you look back on the previous year there may be things which you are not proud of. Perhaps you let a friend down, did not tell the whole truth, or feel that you let yourself down by not doing as well as you would have hoped in an exam.

Remember, everyone gets it wrong sometimes! Dwelling on our failings is not very helpful, but reflecting on them occasionally can be a valuable exercise.

If we can recognise where we have gone wrong, be sorry and try to improve in the future we can set out again with a clear conscience and a positive attitude.

Reflection/Prayer

Thank you for all the things which have given us pleasure and helped us to grow wiser. Forgive us for things which we have done wrong and help us to learn from our mistakes so that we can grow stronger in the year ahead.

7 Feeling a failure is not very nice - but it's important not to give up! Think of a situation when you got something wrong. What helped you to start again?

8 What does it take to put your failure behind you and start again?

9 It is often said that people learn from their mistakes. Think back over the previous year. What have you learnt from any of your mistakes?

10 What can we learn by reflecting on our failings?

11 It is said that our failures are as important a part of life's experience as our successes. Why do you think this is the case?

Theme for Week NEW YEAR

Day

Theme for Today Here and Now

3

This is a Buddhist story about life.....

As the children walked through the forest, an ox-drawn cart came rumbling towards them. In the cart were three men. One was standing at the front, holding a telescope and looking ahead. He appeared to be very anxious. The man at the back of the cart also had a telescope and was looking back at the way they had come. He looked serious and tormented with worry. The man in the middle was quite different - he had a lively air. He seemed to be enjoying life and he called to the children to join him in the cart. As they jumped up the two men with telescopes did not seem to have even noticed them.

"What are they doing?" asked the children. "The one at the front is Mr Prospect" replied the man in the middle. "All he does is look in front, make plans and worry about the future. The other one is Mr Retrospect. He looks behind him at the past and regrets the things he has done."

"What about you?" enquired the children.

"I look at the present - the here and now. I see the birds flying, the wind in the trees, the flowers blooming. Of course sometimes I have to look ahead to see where I am going and look back to see where I have come from, but I hold that to live for the moment is what gives me life.

"You see, tomorrow has not yet arrived and yesterday has already gone. All that we have is **now**, today. If we do not use it properly we will have wasted all our lives".

Reflection/Prayer

The present is the fruit of the past and the seed of the future.

7 How much time do you spend looking ahead or looking back? How much time do you give yourself to enjoy the present?

8 What are the dangers of constantly looking back to the past or forward to the future?

9 How is the present the fruit of the past?

10 Why is it important to enjoy the present?

11 At this stage in your school life you are obviously thinking a great deal about what the future may hold. How is your present a seed for the future?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: RELATING TO OUR NEIGHBOURS

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship focuses on relationships with our neighbours in the context of the Hindu celebration of Makar Sankranti.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: recognise that they are not the 'centre of the Universe' and, to be themselves, they need to recognise their neighbours' rights to be themselves too.

Moral: understand how a society/community has responsibilities to its members.

Social: consider how far each member of a society can choose whether or not to fulfil his or her role.

Cultural: remember that they belong to a world community and a multi-cultural society and to encourage respect for cultures different from their own.

Theme for Week	RELATING TO OUR NEIGHBOURS	Day
Theme for Today	A new start	1

Many people have some kind of New Year celebration, and sometimes this is linked to the Winter Solstice. We all know what New Year is - and many will know that a Winter Solstice is the time when we reach the shortest day and the days begin to lengthen.

Both New Year and Winter Solstice are a new start. For Hindu people, especially those living in certain parts of India, there are two celebrations - Makar Sankranti and Lohri - at this time of year.

In some ways they are very similar, because they encourage people to think about their neighbours.

Neighbours are not just the people who live next door. They could be your own family, or the people who live in your part of town or countryside or even further away.

At the celebration, symbolic sweets are shared. The sweets have sesame seeds in them, which are symbols of life. When the sweets are shared, the message they give is that you want the people who receive them to have all the good things which life offers.

Reflection/prayer

*Give me the strength
to bear lightly my joys and sorrows
to make my love fruitful in service
never to disown the poor or bend my knees before bullies
to raise my head above earthly trivia*

from a prayer by Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)

7 How far do your neighbours annoy you more than you annoy them?

8 How do your neighbours matter to you?

9 Why do people know their neighbours better in a small town than in a large city?

10 Which of your neighbours do you need to make a 'new start' with?
What will you do?

11 What do you think are the good things of life?

Theme for Week RELATING TO OUR NEIGHBOURS

Day

Theme for Today Magic Moments!

2

You may have seen some adverts on television about a small boy who is always knocking on his neighbour's door, and asking for his kite or his ball back.

We don't know how annoyed the neighbour is getting by these constant interruptions, but it looks like bad news when the lad turns up dressed as an American Indian, complete with bow but no arrow ... What has happened this time?

Then the boy pulls a box of chocolates from behind his back, and his smiling neighbour is delighted to receive them. As he reaches down to take them, the camera pulls back to show the rubber sucker of the boy's arrow stuck firmly to his neighbour's forehead!

Of course, adverts almost always have happy endings... but what about *our* neighbours?!

Reflection/Prayer

*Give me the strength
to bear lightly my joys and sorrows
to make my love fruitful in service
never to disown the poor or bend my knees before bullies
to raise my head above earthly trivia*

from a prayer by Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)

7 What does your neighbour have to put up with because of you?

8 What kindness have you done for your neighbour recently?

9 What does a box of chocolates solve?

10 How would you know if your neighbour was sad about something?
How willing would you be to try and offer comfort?

11 How glad do you think your neighbours are that you are their neighbour?

Theme for Week	RELATING TO OUR NEIGHBOURS	Day
Theme for Today	Neighbours needing help.	3

In most communities, the neighbours are made up of young people and older people, of people with different coloured skins, different likes and dislikes.

Some of these people can get on through life reasonably well at present. Others will need more help.

In your community, there may be people who have lived in a hospital or a home for many years, and who have now been transferred to live in the community. They may be a little slow to understand some things, and may be confused by life from time to time. What sort of neighbours do they need?

You may have an elderly neighbour who needs help with shopping sometimes - but seems to want your company more and more, even if you are in a hurry to get on. What sort of neighbours does a person like this need?

There may be people who have only recently come to this country from another part of the world. They may not have much money, not much English and not many friends. What sort of neighbour do they need?

Reflection/Prayer

*Give me strength
to bear lightly my joys and sorrows
to make my love fruitful in service
never to disown the poor or bend my knees before bullies
to raise my head above earthly trivia*

from a prayer of Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)

7 Why do some unkind people make fun of those who are different from them in one way or another?

8 It is easy to do favours for people. How willing are you to give your **time**?

9 How do you react if you see someone bullying another person?

10 How do you think your community might care better for the people who find life a struggle at times?

11 What responsibility do you have to your neighbours? Why?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship looks at how a good future depends upon a wise present.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: consider their own sense of transience in a fleeting world.

Moral: reflect on the responsibilities they have as trustees of the future.

Social: develop a critique of sacrifice in the present by individuals and society.

Cultural: understand that cultural understandings have both permanent and changing dimensions.

Theme for Week PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Day

Theme for Today Tu B'Shevat

1

When the State of Israel was founded in 1948, much of the land was of poor quality, more like a desert than anything else. To help turn the land into useful land, a new festival called 'Tu B'Shevat' was started, when children planted tree saplings on the edge of the desert. In time - a long time - these trees would grow, provide shelter, hold the shifting sands more firmly and turn the desert green.

There is another tradition in Judaism. When men and women marry, they do so under a canopy held up by four wooden poles, two cypress poles for the woman, two cedar poles for the man.

So when children plant trees at Tu B'Shevat, they are planting for the future in more than one way.

Reflection/Prayer

A hymn by Fred Kaan asks this question in its first verse:-

*Were the world to end tomorrow
Would we plant a tree today?*

7 What sort of tree would you plant as a symbol of you? Why?

8 In an 'instant' age, how good are you at being patient and waiting for things to grow?

9 What do you 'plant' for the future?

10 How do you think the Israeli children of 1948 feel now about what they did all those years ago?

11 To bring about change we need to think about the future rather than the present. Which part of your life do you focus on most sharply?

Theme for Week PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Day

Theme for Today A personal memory

2

The National Trust was founded in 1895. It was set up to preserve historic land and buildings so that they could be enjoyed by future generations. Many people visit the buildings or walk on the land to keep in touch with the past.

On one National Trust site in the Midlands is a small oak tree. It was planted in the late 1980s by a young woman whose husband had tragically died. She was uncertain about where his ashes should be buried and eventually decided to plant a young oak sapling on National Trust land where she and her husband had had many happy times and to bury the casket of ashes at its roots.

She will see the tree grow, although it will last well beyond her generation, a symbol of life carrying on. The tree has become a part of her life, part of the National Trust's history and part of the future - all at the same time.

Reflection/Prayer

A hymn by Fred Kaan asks this question in its first verse:-

*Were the world to end tomorrow
Would we plant a tree today?*

7 Why was planting a tree a good idea?

8 Is the past as important as the future? Why?

9 How easily can you accept that you are just a short episode in the history of life?

10 Why are symbols like the tree important?

11 Why do we need to preserve the past, both personal and national?

Theme for Week PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Day

Theme for Today A fruitful world

3

A Rabbi was walking down a road when he saw a man planting a tree. The Rabbi asked him how many years it would take for the tree to bear fruit. The man answered that it would take seventy years. The Rabbi asked, "Are you so fit and strong that you expect to live that long and eat of its fruit?"

The man answered, "I found a fruitful world because my forefathers planted for me. So I will do the same for my children."

The Talmud

Reflection/Prayer

A hymn by Fred Kaan asks this question in its first verse:-

*Were the world to end tomorrow
Would we plant a tree today?*

7 How good are you at waiting?

8 What is the best way of thanking the people from the past whom you will never meet?

9 If this was really a fruitful world, who planted the 'seeds' of pain and despair?

10 What worthwhile things are **you** doing now which will be of value only after many years have passed?

11 If the world were to end tomorrow, what would **you** do today?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: UNITY

Date:

Summary: This is the week of prayer for Christian Unity. Collective Worship explores the idea of unity in a present situation and a biblical context.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: consider the importance of personal conviction in bringing people together and also separating them.

Moral: reflect on their responsibility to each other.

Social: think about the importance of relationships and the strengthening potential of connectedness.

Cultural: challenge accepted traditions and practices.

Theme for Week UNITY

Day

Theme for Today A tale of two churches

1

In a little Welsh village outside Aberystwyth, two churches stand side by side. Just over a hundred years ago, two separate groups of Christian people believed they should start a church in the village. It is true to say they had slightly different beliefs but did they really need separate buildings?

For the first fifty years, both prospered, but since World War II, as people have left the village to look for work, the number of worshippers has gone down. They shared an occasional service but neither was prepared to close their church and move in with their neighbour. They were faithful to their beliefs but it seemed likely that the only place they would be side by side would be in the graveyard.

They are joined together now ... but have they left it too late?

Reflection/Prayer

United we stand
Divided we fall.

7 What would you think if you saw two churches next to each other?

8 What do you think is the purpose of a church?

9 What difference would it make if they had come together earlier?

10 What did they eventually have to abandon in order to come together?

11 When is it counter-productive to stick to your beliefs?

Theme for Week UNITY

Day

Theme for Today Belonging together

2

To be a Christian in the early days was dangerous. Jesus had been killed because he was a revolutionary and no one wanted problems after his death, so his followers were persecuted in very nasty ways.

They had to meet in secret and be careful what they said to people whom they didn't know. They soon developed a secret sign which no one else understood. It was the shape of a fish, chosen because the Greek word for fish is ICHTHUS, a code in Greek for 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour'. That summed up all that these people believed.

If one of them met a stranger, he or she would idly make the shape of the fish in the dust with a foot and if the other person recognised the shape, he or she would add the fish's eye. That way, each knew the other was a Jesus person before a single word had been spoken about him.

Reflection/Prayer

United we stand
Divided we fall.

7 What 'binds' you together with other people?

8 Why is it important to everyone to belong somewhere?

9 When do you have to be careful what you say and to whom?

10 Where are people persecuted today for their faith?

11 Why might persecution actually strengthen faith?

Theme for Week UNITY	Day
Theme for Today One Body	3

It didn't take long for people in the Early Church to disagree. St Paul worked very hard to keep the churches together and in order, by visiting them and writing them long letters giving advice and sometimes telling them off.

In his first letter to the Christians in Corinth, St Paul described the church as a body, with Jesus as the head. It would be nonsense for the ear to say it didn't belong to the body because it wasn't an eye, or the foot to say, because it wasn't a hand, the body had no use for it. Every part of the body is needed; the eye doesn't say it doesn't need the hand, nor the ear, the feet!

Paul was trying to show the people that they belonged together, that each one of them had a role to fulfil and their differences should not separate them.

Reflection/Prayer

United we stand
Divided we fall.

7 What separates you from other people?

8 Where do you belong?

9 In which 'body' do you play a part?

10 In what way does unity strengthen a group of people?

11 When do differences separate people today?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: IS THERE ANYONE THERE?

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship explores the mysteries of the Universe and the possibility of the existence of God.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: ponder questions about the Universe, their place in it and the possibility of the existence of God.

Moral: explore issues of responsibility and ownership of the Universe.

Social: reflect on the possible social implications of life existing elsewhere.

Cultural: reflect upon the challenges posed by seeing human society from an external perspective.

Theme for Week	IS THERE ANYONE THERE?	Day
Theme for Today	The Vogons	1

If you have read the *Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, or seen it on television, you will remember the day when a Vogon Constructor fleet appeared over the earth. The fleet had arrived to build a hyperspatial express route through our galaxy, and the Vogons were preparing to demolish the earth to make way for it.

The people of earth were naturally rather upset about this; but the Vogons felt that they were acting perfectly legally, since the plans for the hyperspace expressway had been on display in the local planning office on Alpha Centauri for the last fifty years. When someone protested that no one from earth had ever actually been to Alpha Centauri, the reply from the Vogon Captain was that if the people of earth were too apathetic to take an interest in local planning, then that was their problem, and he'd got no sympathy at all.

Following which, after a 'terrible, ghastly silence', the Vogons destroyed the earth, silence returned, and they went off to the next stage of the job.

Reflection/Prayer

Marvel at the wonder, ponder the mystery and don't take anything for granted.

7 When have you experienced a 'terrible, ghastly silence'?

8 What should the Vogons have done in the first place if they wanted to play fair?

9 Who owns space?

10 How important do you think the human race really is?

11 How often do you act like a Vogon - and to whom? And what are you going to do about it?

Theme for Week IS THERE ANYONE THERE

Day

Theme for Today A simple question

2

A simple question, for anyone who has ever read science fiction, looked up at the stars, wondered about crop circles, or watched ET, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* or any one of a hundred other films:

IS ANYONE OUT THERE TRYING TO GET THROUGH TO US?

Reflection/Prayer

Marvel at the wonder, ponder the mystery and don't take anything for granted.

7 Why is it impossible to be certain whether other life forms exist in the universe?

8 If alien life forms do exist, how might they try to communicate with us? What problems would they have?

9 If aliens are trying to communicate with us - would we notice? Would we understand?

10 Why are so many people reluctant to admit the possibility that alien life might exist?

11 Do you think there is life 'out there'?

Theme for Week IS THERE ANYONE THERE

Day

Theme for Today Is it God?

3

Every time someone sees what they think is a UFO or some kind of communication from aliens, there is always someone else who can explain it away as something quite natural and ordinary.

Religious believers have always had the same problems. Every time they see something which they believe is caused by God, non-believers can always explain it away as a coincidence or a fluke. Rather like the aliens, God may be out there, but the evidence is hard to interpret.

Reflection/Prayer

Marvel at the wonder, ponder the mystery and don't take anything for granted.

7 Since it is so hard to be sure whether God exists or not, is it worth worrying about it?

8 If God exists, what methods might he be using to try and communicate with humans? What problems might he encounter?

9 If God is communicating with humanity - how would we notice? Would we understand?

10 Why are so many people reluctant to consider the possibility that God's existence might matter to them?

11 Do you think God is out there? (Or anywhere else?)

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: SELF DISCIPLINE

Date:

Summary: This week's Collective Worship theme is linked to fasting. We will think about Ramadan, which has just started, the month when Muslims fast during daylight hours.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: reflect on the need for personal reflection and quiet, in order to get the 'fuller picture' on the shape of their search for meaning and purpose in life.

Moral: consider their responsibilities both to the hungry of the world, and to those who encourage or suffer from racism.

Social: think about the differences which exist between people, and ask why these can cause division.

Cultural: consider their reactions to the religious expressions of others.

Theme for Week	SELF DISCIPLINE	Day
Theme for Today	Ramadan	1

For a month once every year, Muslims go without food during the hours of daylight. We call this fasting. They do this because it is one of the five pillars, five rules, of Islam. It is to spend time thinking about God.

If you have ever gone without food, you will know what it feels like. Ramadan lasts for about 30 days, so although Muslims get up early for breakfast, and have supper once it gets dark, it is still a tough way of showing your faith.

But Muslims would say that going without food is not enough! Fasting should make you think as well. Muslims will think about people who are poor and may have to go without food for most days of the year.

And there are many people throughout the world who are desperately hungry today. What Muslims do is not just religious. It is to do with thinking about the whole world and its needs.

Meditation/Prayer

Giving something up is not always enough. It is the attitude behind it that matters. The Prophet Muhammad once warned: "There are many whose fasting is nothing beyond eating and drinking."

7 If you fasted, what foods would you especially miss? What reasons would cause you to fast?

8 What use is fasting really?

9 If you are late for a meal, do you think you have a right to eat it? Why?

10 What are the 'Five Pillars' - the really important guidelines - of your life?

11 How might fasting help hungry people?

Theme for Week SELF DISCIPLINE

Day

Theme for Today Fasting for a purpose

2

Another reason why Ramadan is important is because Muslims can think about the Qur'an, the Muslim holy book.

In fact, Ramadan is a celebration of the time when the prophet Muhammad was first given the Qur'an by the angel Gabriel. Muhammad could neither read nor write, so the Angel told him to recite it. The word Qur'an means 'recite'.

From the earliest days of Islam, Muslims have memorised passages from the Qur'an. Some Muslims have learnt the whole of the Qur'an by heart. Because they know the Qur'an, they can think about its meaning, and apply it to their everyday life.

Muslims hope to read the whole of the Qur'an during the month of Ramadan. It is just as important as the fast. Indeed, fasting without thinking would be unthinkable!

Meditation/Prayer

Let us give thanks for the power of memory.
Let us pray for help to remember what is important.

7 What words can you remember from when you were very young?

8 Which books do you have that are particularly important to you?

9 Why is it important to have rules for everyday life?

10 What good reasons can you think of for learning the Holy Book by heart?

11 What could you use as a guide for life?

Theme for Week SELF DISCIPLINE

Day

Theme for Today The problem of fasting

3

Being a Muslim in Britain during Ramadan can be difficult. This is partly because people don't fully understand what Ramadan involves. When a Muslim is fasting, he or she may not feel as strong as usual. Think of a Muslim boy or girl in a school sports team. They don't want to let their side down, but they don't want to let their faith down either.

Another difficulty arises because Islam has a 'moon year' instead of a 'sun year'. A moon year is 11 days shorter so sometimes Ramadan is in Britain's winter, but as the years go by, it moves towards Britain's summer.

Muslim countries are usually near the equator, so day and night are the same length. However, in a country like Britain, there are more hours of daylight each day in the summer than the winter. When Ramadan falls in the British summer, the fast lasts for a very long time each day!

Perhaps the worst problem about Ramadan for Muslims is that some people are racist. They call people names - or hurt them - simply because of the differences.

Meditation/Prayer

May our differences be a cause of hope for us all - not a source of division.

7 How understanding are you when someone 'lets your team down'?

8 Are there times in your life when, though you like them both, pleasing one person will not please someone else?

9 Are there people in your form who can be 'picked on' by others? What do you do to put things right?

10 Is fasting for up to 17 or 18 hours each day for a month something you admire? Why do you feel like that?

11 If we can never completely stop racism, do we need to try? Why?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: CHINESE NEW YEAR

Date:

Summary: At Chinese New Year, the celebration is just as much about tidying up the past as it is about looking to the future

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: reflect on the stages of life through which they are passing, and the need to take stock of themselves and the direction which they are taking.

Moral: reflect on the mutuality of relationships, and the ways in which those relationships can be sustained.

Social: consider the ways in which their behaviour can have an impact upon those around them.

Cultural: explore issues in the context of a culture which is both part of and distinct from their own.

Theme for Week Chinese New Year	Day
Theme for Today The twelve animals of China	1

When does a New Year begin? For Chinese people it is the second new moon after the shortest day. In the British Calendar, that means some time in late January or early February.

Each year is named after a different animal, and there are twelve animals all together. For people who follow the Chinese calendar, their birth sign is not the monthly sign of the Zodiac, but the animal of the year they are born.

People born in 1979, for example, are born in the year of the Ram, 1980 is the year of the Monkey and the rest of the years are like this:

1981 Rooster; 1982 Dog; 1983 Pig; 1984 Rat
 1985 Ox; 1986 Tiger; 1987 Hare; 1988 Dragon
 1989 Snake; 1990 Horse;

The cycle starts with the Rat and there is an old legend which explains why.

All the animals wanted to be first on the list, so it was decided to hold a competition. The first animal to cross the river would be the first animal in the cycle. The Ox expected to win and set off at great speed - not realising that he had a passenger on board. As the Ox neared the bank, the rat jumped off and arrived first.

Now, was that good or bad?!

When the New Year arrives, and people say "Kung hay fat choy" which means, "May you be prosperous".

Meditation/prayer

May every New Year, and any new day, bring prosperity and peace.

7 Does your animal fit the year you were born in? What animal would be a good symbol for you?

8 When are you like the rat - getting something by cheating?

9 When are you like the rat - see impossible odds, but turn them to your advantage?

10 How do you react to others who are prosperous with little effort?

11 At the start of the New Year, people wish you "all the best". Where does the "best" come from?

Theme for Week	Chinese New Year	Day
Theme for Today	All hard work?	2

The Chinese New year marks the end of the financial year. A lot of hard work is done to clear up the business accounts and make sure everything is tidied up properly.

The home is also tidied up at the end of the year, and much hard work is done to make sure that the rubbish is taken out. Firecrackers are let off to scare away the Devil and new charms are put up to bring good luck to the family and the home.

In a way, you could say that people are working hard to get rid of the rubbish in their hearts, as well as in their homes and in their bank accounts.

Meditation/Prayer

May every New Year, and any new day bring prosperity and peace.

7 Can you think of people who are always working? Are they doing any of your work?

8 When did you last tidy your room? How many family arguments does an untidy room cause? Could this be your New Year resolution?

9 Getting ready for anything is important, but at least once a year, we all need to take stock of our lives and clear out the rubbish. Some of that rubbish can be anger with other people. Some of the rubbish could be jealousy. What sort of rubbish do you carry about?

10 How good are you at relaxing and at working hard? How do you get the balance between the two?

11 Will firecrackers always get rid of evil? How else could we get rid of evil?

Theme for Week	Chinese New Year	Day
Theme for Today	Paying off debts	3

Chinese New Year is a time of giving gifts and being generous. People want to share what they have with others.

So it is interesting that at Chinese New Year, before the community celebrations with the Lion Dance through the streets, before the gifts of presents, sweets and money, the Chinese community makes sure that all debts are paid.

If you think about it, when someone owes you something, you can hold a grudge against them.

If you owe someone something, it could make you feel awkward when you see them. It can cause trust to break down and friendships to break up.

So for the community to celebrate together, to stay strong, they must first make sure they have paid their debt

Meditation/Prayer

May every New Year, and any new day bring prosperity and peace.

7 Do you prefer giving presents or getting them? Why?

8 What is your memory like? How good are you at paying your debts?

9 Paying off debts does not mean getting your own back! It means being honest about yourself and your dealings so you really can make a fresh start. When did you last make an honest assessment of yourself? Do you need a fresh start?

10 How easy is it to trust someone if they have let you down? How trustworthy are you?

11 How important is a sense of 'community' to you? What part do you have to play, to make sure the community of your family, or your friends, stays strong?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship looks at the meaning and significance of names to an individual's identity.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: recognise the significance of names to a person's identity, particularly their own.

Moral: think about authority in the lives of religious people and their own.

Social: understand the importance of using people's names.

Cultural: see the symbolism of names from three religious perspectives.

Theme for Week WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Day

Theme for Today Choosing a Name

1

When babies are born to Sikh families they are taken to the Gurdwara, the place where Sikhs go to worship God, to be given a name. Sikhs look to their holy book to give them guidance in choosing the name because they believe the book is their teacher and the greatest authority in their lives. The sacred book is opened at random and the first word of the first hymn on the left-hand page is read out. The baby's parents then choose a name for their child which begins with the same initial letter as that word.

Sikh babies are all given another name which shows they are Sikhs. Little boys are all called Singh which means 'lion', a sign that they will be strong and ready to defend their faith if they have to do so. Girls are all given the name 'Kaur' which means 'princess'.

Reflection/Prayer

The true God has sent this child.

The long-lived child has been born by destiny.

Guru Arjan

7 Who chose your name?

8 What does your name mean?

9 How does your name say who you are?

10 Where is the authority in your life?

11 Who 'sends' children?

Theme for Week WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Day

Theme for Today Christian Names

2

In our society it is quite common for people to refer to first names as 'Christian' names without considering what the phrase means. Some people would say everyone has one or more 'Christian' names to go before their surname or family name, to identify who they are. But what does the phrase 'Christian' name mean? For Christians, it is the name given to a baby at baptism or dedication, when the child is welcomed into the fellowship of the Church. A Christening is when a Christian name is given. It shows the child belongs to Jesus Christ and promises are made on the child's behalf about his or her life to come.

Some children are named after Christian saints like St. Francis or St. Teresa or St. Anne. In some traditions those children celebrate their 'name-day' which is the day dedicated to the saint after whom they are named. It's like having two birthdays.

For some people, taking a Christian name can mean changing what they are called because they are committing themselves to a life of service to God in a religious order of monks or nuns. They leave behind their own names and take on a new identify when they join.

Reflection/Prayer

*Our names are written in his hand;
He leads us to the promised land.*

Fred Kaan

7 What name would you choose for yourself?

8 Who would you like to be named after?

9 What would you be prepared to give up your name for?

10 What phrases do you use without thinking about their real meaning?

11 Why do names have a religious significance for some people?

Theme for Week WHAT'S IN A NAME	Day
Theme for Today Purim	3

Imagine having your name completely obliterated by all sorts of loud shouting and banging every time someone said it. That's what happens to Haman, the 'baddie' in the book of Esther, when the story is read aloud in the synagogue at the festival of Purim.

In the story, Queen Esther defeated the wicked Haman who disliked her and plotted to kill her and her uncle, along with all the Jewish people in the kingdom. Haman was a powerful man in the court but he was not clever enough to outwit Queen Esther.

When Jewish people remember Esther's great courage in speaking up for her people, they also remember Haman's treachery. Every time his name is mentioned during the celebration, people swing rattles and shout and stamp to drown out the sound. By doing so they deny Haman the right to exist, even in the story.

Reflection/Prayer

Let us sanctify the great name of God

from the Kaddish

7 How does it feel to hear your name called?

8 When have you ever wished that your name could be obliterated?

9 Would you still be a person if you had no name?

10 Whose name would you like to obliterate?

11 What name does evil have today?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: NO ONE SAID LIFE WOULD BE EASY Date:

Summary: This week's Collective Worship theme considers the 'hard sayings' of Jesus and questions contemporary attitudes in the light of Christian teaching.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Collective Worship contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: think about the teaching of a religious figure.

Moral: consider the issues raised in terms of their own situations.

Social: reflect on how they respond to those around, especially to those with whom they may not get on.

Cultural: evaluate the contribution of religious ideas and attitudes to their culture.

Theme for Week NO ONE SAID LIFE WOULD BE EASY

Day

Theme for Today Turning the other cheek

1

Jesus taught:

"If someone hits you on one cheek, offer them the other so they can hit that one as well".

This saying of Jesus seems very strange - even stupid. There may well be times when it is better to run away, though many people would want to hit the other person back.

However, Jesus was doing more than saying retaliation is wrong. Instead, he was saying that if someone does something unkind, don't respond in just the same way. Instead, do the last thing that person would expect.

He is challenging his listeners to take charge of a difficult situation.

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught, "Turn the other cheek".

7 How did you react to people who were unkind to you last week?

8 Why do some people retaliate quicker than others?

9 How often do you retaliate first and think later?

10 Who is the greater coward - the one who hits back or the one who does not? Why?

11 How does retaliation feel - at the time itself, and later on?

Theme for Week NO ONE SAID LIFE WOULD BE EASY

Day

Theme for Today Loving your enemies

2

Most people believe that you should look out for your neighbour. You never know - you may need his or her help one day. So loving your neighbour is not especially difficult.

However, the teaching of Jesus was not just about loving your neighbour. He also said:

"Love your enemy".

The difference between loving your neighbour and loving your enemy is crucial. Loving your neighbour might be about self interest. But loving your enemy means ignoring what you **feel** about that person and concentrating on what he or she **needs**.

Perhaps it is helpful to remember that Jesus said, "Love your enemy". He did not say that you had to like your enemy!

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught, "Love your enemy".

7 Why do people become enemies?

8 How helpful are you to your neighbour?

9 Who are you making into an enemy?

10 How much of your life is based on self interest?

11 How realistic is it to "love your enemy"?

Theme for Week	NO ONE SAID LIFE WOULD BE EASY	Day
Theme for Today	Calling someone a fool	3

Jesus taught that if anyone called his brother a fool, he would be thrown into hell.

These are strong words, but Jesus is saying that hating someone is just as bad as doing something wrong to them.

The Ten Commandments said that murder was against what God wanted, but Jesus said that it's not just the action, it is the attitude which matters.

And you don't have to have a brother to think about the problems a bad attitude can produce - or how much trouble a bad attitude can cause.

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught that if anyone called his brother a fool, he would be thrown into hell.

7 What sort of attitude do you have to people at home?

8 How easy it is to control your attitude?

9 How would your friends describe your attitude?

10 What is an 'attitude problem'?

11 Should the law worry more about actions or attitudes?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship addresses issues of injustice and prejudice in the contexts of disability, religious belief and gender differences.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: recognise the importance and uniqueness of every individual.

Moral: consider and recognise the unfairness of discrimination.

Social: see the world from another's perspective and increase their capacity to empathise.

Cultural: question their own assumptions about people who are different from themselves.

Theme for Week	EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	Day
Theme for Today	People with differing abilities	1

This week we ask questions about how fair life is and how we can make it fairer. Some people might say life is unfair because someone is born with a disability, or something happens in their life which causes some kind of disability.

People with disabilities can be looked down on. People feel sorry for those who don't see or hear well, or who find moving about tricky or who are slow to understand things.

But a person with a disability is a **person** first and foremost. Everyone has the right to an equal chance in life, so a society which cares is one which makes sure people with a disability have the opportunities to live life to the full. This means ramps instead of steps for people in wheelchairs; beepers on Pelican Crossings so people can **hear** when it is safe to cross; and for those who find understanding life difficult, it means having friends to speak up for them.

But these are not enough! More important is the attitude which people have to a disability. All the ramps in the world won't help if people are treated unfairly.

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught, "I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness."

John 10:10

May we share in this task.

7 Imagine you are in a wheelchair. What everyday problems would you face? How easily could you get to your favourite places?

8 Have you tried walking round your home with your eyes shut? Could you walk round the streets where you live in a blindfold? How would you feel?

9 If someone with a profound 'learning difficulty' moved into a home near you, how would you and your neighbours react? Would children in your street react differently?

10 How might feeling sorry for people get in the way of relationships?

11 Do you agree with this statement: a person may have a disability but it is society which makes it a handicap? Why?

Theme for Week EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Day

Theme for Today When religion is a problem

2

Making life fair for everyone is what you'd expect from religious people. Sadly religious people have not always been very good at it. Just think about:

... the Christians and the Muslims who killed each other when they fought over who should own Jerusalem and Constantinople in what we call the Crusades.

... the situation in Ireland where some extreme Catholics and Protestants have been ready to kill each other.

Religious people have often suffered because of their beliefs - like the millions of Jews who were killed by the Nazis in the Second World War. Sometimes people suffer because of their skin colour, like the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims who live in our communities..

A person's culture, background and beliefs help make that person who he or she is. When people make unkind fun of - or are violent to - others because of these differences, fairness goes out of the window.

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught, "I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness."

John 10:10

May we share in this task.

7 How much do you know about the different religions in Britain?

8 Does it surprise you that religious people have fought each other? Why?

9 What makes you who you are?

10 Do you know when racism happens? How do you react?

11 At what point does pride in your own culture become dangerous?

Theme for Week EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Day

Theme for Today Are people the same?

3

Are people the same? Are people equal? Are men and women equal? Here is a poem which raises some interesting questions. It's called: "What shall I say? (When a boy asks me out?)"

If a boy asks me out
What do I reply
Yes, to please him,
But not to please me.
No, to please me,
But not to please him.
What do I reply?

If a boy asks me out
What am I to do?
Say I'll think about it.
And think till he gives in,
And goes away?
Or say I've got one,
When I haven't?
What do I say,
WHEN A BOY ASKS ME OUT?

Vicky Hewish (Aged 13)

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught, "I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness."
John 10:10

May we share in this task.

7 Is it only girls who show their feelings? How often do boys cry?

8 Should a boy always ask a girl out? Could a girl ask a boy out?

9 Are there things you wanted to do but didn't because you thought it was appropriate to the opposite sex and not to yours?

10 Do you think it's true that boys are traditionally not supposed to show their feelings, apart from aggression and anger? What emotions are girls traditionally supposed to hide?

11 What emotions do boys or girls hold back? Why do they do it? Is it damaging to them? What might help?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: FORGIVENESS

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship takes a contemporary and traditional look at the teaching of Jesus about forgiveness.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: reflect on the impact on an individual's spirit of the giving or withholding of forgiveness.

Moral: consider whether they apply the same standards to themselves as they expect of others.

Social: acknowledge the effect their own attitudes have on others.

Cultural: challenge the cultural norm which often seeks to prove others wrong.

Theme for Week **FORGIVENESS**

Day

Theme for Today The Unforgiving Manager

1

Once, there was a manager who borrowed several thousand pounds from his boss when he needed help to buy a car. Times were hard and he went to see the boss to ask if he could be given more time to repay the loan. It was a small company but it had made a good profit. So the boss said to his manager, "You've worked really well, so let's forget about the debt. Let's call it your bonus."

The manager was thrilled and left the boss's office with a spring in his step. However, as he turned the corner, he bumped into one of the workers.

"That money I lent you to get your car through its MOT," he said crossly. "When do I get it back?"

The worker said, "As soon as I can". The manager took a step towards him and said in a loud, menacing voice "The money... or your job."

Just then, who should walk round the corner, but the company boss.....

Reflection/Prayer

The Lord's Prayer says:

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us".

7 What do you think will happen next?

8 What would you do if you were the boss? Why?

9 If you were in this story, which character would you be? Why?

10 What differences are there between the boss and the manager?

11 The scenario might be unlikely but who do you know who is a bit like the manager?

Theme for Week **FORGIVENESS**

Day

Theme for Today Love will drive out hate

2

Losing someone you love is always hard to bear; it would be so much more difficult to come to terms with such a tragedy if that person's life had been ended deliberately in an act of violence. I wonder how you would feel ...

That's what happened to Mr Gordon Wilson, the father of a 20 year old nurse who died after an IRA bomb blast. Gordon Wilson and Marie were at the Remembrance Day Service in the centre of Enniskillen in 1987. The silence of the act of remembrance was shattered by the explosion. Many lives were shattered too in that massacre.

Instead of responding to the violence with hate and bitterness, Gordon Wilson amazed the world by speaking about his daughter's killers in words of peace and reconciliation. He said "I am sorry for them but I bear them no ill will. I prayed for them last night."

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught: Turn the other cheek.

7 What do hate and bitterness breed?

8 How do you react to the words of Gordon Wilson?

9 How can love drive out hate?

10 How would you have felt if you had been in Gordon Wilson's shoes?

11 If you forgive someone who has done wrong to you, how far are you being soft on them?

Theme for Week FORGIVENESS

Day

Theme for Today What is Forgiveness?

3

Forgiveness is not easy. If there is a disagreement, someone has acted selfishly or we have been hurt, it is hard to let go of our anger. Sometimes our pride stops us; it is hard to own up and admit that we might be at fault too.

But what is the alternative? We can't just carry on as if nothing has happened. We can't keep avoiding people and if we still do bear a grudge it often only makes us more bitter and miserable.

Surely it's better to let go of these negative feelings, accept apologies graciously and remain friends. In his teachings in the New Testament, Jesus suggests:

"Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who treat you spitefully. When a man hits you on the cheek, offer him the other cheek too; when a man takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well. Give to everyone who asks you; when someone takes what is yours, do not demand it back. Treat others as you would like them to treat you."

Luke 6:27-35

Reflection/Prayer

Jesus taught:

"Treat others as you would like them to treat you".

7 How do you react to the advice from Jesus?

8 Some people say "I will forgive you but I will never forget....."
How far is this real forgiveness?

9 When you hate, how much damage do you do to yourself, and how much to the other person?

10 How far does forgiving others have an effect on you?

11 What does a grudge do to the person who holds it and won't let it go?

KEY THEME FOR THE WEEK: EASTER

Date:

Summary: Collective Worship takes the theme of Easter, with a sideways look at the story.

School Notes:

Checklist: ideas for large group Collective Worship

Music

Speakers

Drama

Visuals

Artefacts

Posters

Video

Slides

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This theme contributes to pupils' development by encouraging them to:-

Spiritual: think about some dimensions of the events behind the Easter stories.

Moral: reflect upon the merits of the actions of the central characters.

Social: consider how they respond to peer and other forms of pressure which determine their behaviour.

Cultural: consider the significance of these stories within the Christian tradition.

Theme for Week **THE EASTER STORY**

Day

Theme for Today Palm Sunday

1

They weren't sure.

But after three years of knowing him, they had come to trust his judgement. Even if he had told them to jump in the lake, they would have done it - though they didn't think he'd tell them to do that!

So there they were, fetching a donkey. Borrowing it - stealing it? They didn't know. He told them to go and fetch it, and go and fetch it they had. Nice donkey. Quiet, with a smooth grey back.

When they came back with it, he looked like he was going to ride it. One of them took off his cloak, and put it on the donkey's back, and the man they had known for three years climbed on board.

They weren't really sure what happened next. One minute they were slowly walking along towards the city. Then people started to wave. Just a friendly "hello" at first. It got louder and louder. Soon, it was almost as if he was a star, or a king.

No, that couldn't be right. Kings don't ride on donkeys. They have great horses, and armies - and he had neither, just this donkey and a dozen friends or so. The people still cheered.

"Hosanna! " they shouted. And yes, they were calling him 'king'. They waved their coats, and the ones who didn't have anything else to wave pulled a few branches off the trees and waved them instead.

The man on the donkey looked calm, and sad. As they came round a corner, nearer the temple, they noticed some police, and some of the people in charge.

"Tell them to shut up!" shouted one of the people in charge.

The man shook his head. "If they were quiet, the rocks and stones would start to sing," he said.

He slipped off the donkey. One of his friends looked at the donkey and rubbed his eyes. What was that mark on the donkey's back? He hadn't noticed it before - a sort of cross shape. He shrugged his shoulders, and said to the man, "Where now, Jesus?"

The man called Jesus turned towards him - and there was a faraway look in his eye.

Theme for Week **THE EASTER STORY**

Day

Theme for Today Turning the Tables

2

We got up early, that day. The dew was still on the ground, and it felt cool on our toes, through our sandals. The sun was already up, and it had the promise of a really hot day. We didn't know how hot it would be.

Jesus headed straight for the temple. Probably wants to pray, or something, I thought.

Then he seemed to go berserk. It was frightening. In the middle of this crowd of people he went mad. He grabbed some rope lying underneath a barrow, looped it round once, and shouted at the people on the barrows.

There was a table with pigeons and doves in cages - he knocked that table over first. The cages fell on the floor, some birds started to get out, others flapped their wings, wondering what was going on. Then he was at the sheep pen - and now he was shouting.

"THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE GOD'S HOUSE. YOU'VE MADE IT INTO A DEN OF THIEVES."

Now there were sheep bleating all round the crowd. Terrible noise, sheep droppings everywhere, even in your sandals - ugh!

And still he hadn't finished. He went to the tables where they kept the money. You don't know about that, do you? The pigeons and the sheep were sacrificed to God, but some people gave money instead. They couldn't give ordinary money of course, so that had to change it for temple money. Nice little earner, it was, because you had to give £5 of ordinary money to get just £1 of temple money.

He tipped the tables over. The coins rolled everywhere. People rushed to grab them. He looked like a maniac still. "THIS IS A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR THE WHOLE WORLD," he said.

Then he left. Just turned round and left - and there were tears in his eyes.

One of the people in charge stopped me. Very friendly he was. "Could you help", he asked politely. "Do you think Jesus is going a bit mad?" I had to agree, it wasn't like him at all.

"Well", he said, "we want a quiet word with him, just to ... well ... settle him down. We'll make it worth your while."

"No way", I thought. But I knew in my heart they were right. So I said that I'd think about it.

"Who shall we ask for?" they asked.

"Me? Oh, my name's Judas. Judas Iscariot."

Theme for Week **THE EASTER STORY**

Day

Theme for Today The Last Supper

3

Peter belched as he helped himself to some more meat. He had been with Jesus from the earliest days. He was one of the first who had decided to follow him and the others looked to him as a leader. Unfortunately, he was brash with it.

If there was anyone who could make a mistake, it was Peter. He was good hearted, but said things without thinking.

The others were at the meal and Jesus was there too. It was time for the Passover Festival and like many other groups of Jewish friends, Jesus and his friends were celebrating with the traditional meal of lamb, matzot, lettuce with salt water and wine.

Jesus took the matzot, broke it into two and said, "This is my body." Then he poured the wine and said, "This is my blood."

The people eating with him looked at each other. James looked puzzled. Matthew shrugged his shoulders. Peter's eyebrows disappeared into his shaggy, untidy hair and he chewed the matzot thoughtfully.

Jesus was speaking again, "One of you will let me down."

All his friends shook their heads. "Not me", they said in turn. Peter spoke the loudest. "Never!" he said, with an oath. "The rest of these might, but not me. Never!"

Jesus looked at him with eyes which saw straight into him. Quietly, he said, "Before the cock crows tomorrow, you will have said you never knew me." Peter got angry at that.

And just then, Judas got up.

The next time Peter and the others saw him, he had come with the people in charge come to arrest Jesus.

Peter's mistake would come a little later.

