

## SMSC News Autumn Term 2022

This school year is once again flying by. We are already well into November so let's have a look at some of the SMSC that has been covered this academic year and what's still to come.

This term has involved a lot of cross-curricular links, particularly around Humanities and Science where, although the main theme was Space (which links to our new classroom names), it also digs deeper into who we are and where we are from. Enquiry questions such as 'What is the History of the Earth?' 'What is the evidence for the existence of God?' 'Who created the Earth?', 'Science or Religion?' and 'What makes up the Solar System?' have been explored and discussed with some strong views!

### **SMSC can be fun as well as informative!**

**Social** aspects reflect that there are many different celebrations that take place between September and the New Year, many of which we have been fortunate enough to celebrate in school or in the wider community. Many of which are a chance for families to come together and celebrate or come together as a community. However, with Christmas in sight, we need to be mindful that not everyone gets the chance to celebrate the season with family and friends. For some people, especially this year with the cost of living crisis upon us, Christmas is a time of hardship or sadness and it's very easy to turn a blind eye to those people in our society that are ill, alone, bereaved, missing or homeless. Taking a step towards developing personal qualities and using social skills by volunteering, visiting or raising money adds to an understanding of how communities and societies function.

#### **Missing at Christmas**


Christmas must be the hardest time of the year if a member of the family has gone missing. This charity does its best to find the missing.

<https://www.missingpeople.org.uk>

#### **Somewhere to Go**

Homelessness is becoming more prevalent - This Charity is looking at ways to end homelessness.

<https://www.crisis.org.uk>



**Moral**, in terms of values and ethical issues, is again all around us at this time of year. Overspending, overindulging, the temptation of asking for expensive presents. There is never a better time to recognise right and wrong and understand the consequences of actions. It is also a time for forgiveness and moving forward.

**Cultural** celebrates and respects diversity in local, national and global communities. It encourages participation in and responding to cultural opportunities. It recognises the things people and communities share in common and aids understanding different cultures which is essential for life in modern Britain in terms of the wide range of cultural influences that shape heritage.

There are plenty of festivals and celebrations throughout each year that allow us to celebrate our culture and heritage (not that we've been able to do that just lately).

Here's an optimistic list of festivals that are taking place in 2023 - all have cultural aspects, except maybe for the World Bog Snorkelling Championships scheduled for next August in Wales (I'm not joking!)

[Best annual events in Britain in 2023 | VisitBritain](#)

**Spiritual** also plays a strong part at this time of year. Developing personal values and beliefs and understanding that Christmas doesn't just mean presents under the tree or going to church - it signals the end of another year, a chance to be with family and friends. The fascination, awe and wonder that comes with sparkly lights and snow and a hope that whilst each person celebrates (or not) in their own way, they take an interest and respect the values and beliefs of others.

Of course, there's SMSC in the tradition and the reason, however, as individuals we decide how we celebrate, if at all and as it's the season of goodwill, mutual respect and tolerance should be at the top of the agenda.

Brook View School ensures that SMSC runs throughout the curriculum and raises awareness of events and special dates through theme weeks, drop down events and tutorial activities. This term we have had many SMSC events however here are just a few of the themes that our young people have been involved in.





## Black History Month



Black History Month is an annual celebration that champions and commemorates the contribution of African and Caribbean communities to culture and society. It is marked in both the United States and the United Kingdom, though in different months. In the USA, Black History Month is held every February, but in the UK it takes place in October.

Black History Month has been recognised in the USA for nearly 100 years, while in the UK, it has only been formally celebrated since the 1980s

The theme for Black History Month 2022 is ***Time for Change: Action, Not Words***. The focus is on the double-burden black people carry: experiencing racism and discrimination and then being expected to fix the problem themselves. The theme is drilling down into this with the hope of everybody coming together to make change for the better.

The theme focuses on bringing the black community together with allies and pushing those allies to give more than just words to support the cause.

Black History Month is a chance to act upon the idea of '*see something, say something*'.

More organisations than ever before are playing a role in tackling racism. There is no reason more people can't get involved and play a pivotal role in breaking down institutional racism and making the country a better place. Black History Month is an opportunity to learn about and celebrate history but also look towards a better future. Studies consistently show that black professionals are still experiencing racism in the workplace and are consistently held at a disadvantage in comparison to their peers. Black people also face assumptions about their abilities, skills, and character due to their race, and these are all inequalities no one should be happy to accept.

UK Black History Month has evolved to be fully focused on black British history and leading figures from British history and society.

People such as:

- [Walter Tull](#), the first black officer to command white troops in the British Army and one of the first black English footballers
- Malorie Blackman, a bestselling and award-winning author, and the first black Children's Laureate
- [Lewis Hamilton](#), one of the most successful and well-known Formula 1 competitors and the only black driver

[Black History Month 2022](#)

[Rosa Parks](#)

## Halloween



It all started with the Celts over 2000 years ago. The Celts celebrated the 1<sup>st</sup> of November as their New Year. They believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the living and the dead became blurred. On this night they held the festival called Samhain and they believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth on this night. To celebrate the event, the Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic gods. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes made of animal heads and skins and attempted to tell each other's fortunes. Eventually Samhain was blended together with festivals of Roman and Christian origin. In Christianity All Saints Day was celebrated on November 1<sup>st</sup> and All Souls Day was celebrated on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. All Souls Day was a day to commemorate or remember the dead.

All Souls Day was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades, and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels and devils.

The All Saints Day celebration was also called All-hallows and the night before it, (the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion), began to be called All-hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween. Halloween wasn't very popular in America until people started to move there from other countries (especially Irish people during the famine). Pranks and scaring people were very popular at one time until people began to celebrate Halloween with parties and family get-togethers.

Halloween eventually became more about fun and games instead of superstition and religious beliefs.

Brook View celebrated Halloween with a week of activities for our young people including Pumpkin picking and carving and a Halloween movie afternoon with a themed buffet.



## Bonfire Night

Britain's night skies light up with blazing bonfires and sparkling fireworks to celebrate Guy Fawkes Night. This unique British tradition, also known as Guy Fawkes Night, Bonfire Night or Fireworks Night, celebrates the foiling of the infamous Gunpowder Plot - a plan to blow up the Houses of Parliament on 5 November, 1605. It's celebrated across Britain and most towns and cities host their own bonfire night celebrations.



Here are some little-known facts.

1. Guy Fawkes was born on 13 April 1570 in York, and died on 31 January 1606 in London.
2. He was alive at the end of [Queen Elizabeth I](#) reign, and the beginning of King James I reign.
3. Guy Fawkes was a Catholic, and didn't agree with the Protestant faith of the King.
4. Guy became friends with Robert Catesby, who had an idea to kill the King by blowing up the houses of Parliament.
5. It was actually Robert Catesby who led the Gunpowder Plot, not Guy Fawkes – there were 13 people involved.
6. The job Guy Fawkes had in the Gunpowder Plot was to guard the 36 barrels of gunpowder that had been stored in a basement underneath the House of Lords.
7. Guy Fawkes was arrested in the basement on the day he was going to light the gunpowder, 5 November, and he was taken to the Tower of London.
8. King James I decreed that 5 November should be the day that people always celebrate that the Gunpowder Plot didn't happen.

UK parliament video links below.

[The Gunpowder Plot Part 1](#)

[The Gunpowder Plot part 2](#)



## Remembrance Day



Remembrance Day (also called Armistice Day or Poppy Day) is a Memorial Day celebrated in Commonwealth countries, such as Great Britain, Australia and Canada. It's celebrated every year on November 11<sup>th</sup>. Remembrance Sunday is also celebrated and this is held on the second Sunday in November each year.

Remembrance Day, on November 11<sup>th</sup>, marks the anniversary of when [World War One](#) ended. It ended on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1918 at 11 am, which is why many people hold a two-minute silence at 11 am on this day. The War was officially ended with the signing of the Armistice, which is why the day is also called Armistice Day.

Remembrance Day gives people the chance to remember those who fought and lost their lives during the war and honour their memory. It makes sure that we never forget the past, and that those who died didn't die in vain.

A great way to honour the soldiers who fought in World War One is to listen to their stories and their experiences. You can do this by reading poetry by war poets such as:

- John McCrae
- Wilfred Owen
- Siegfried Sassoon
- Rupert Brooke
- Laurence Binyon

Alternatively, watching interviews with people who lived through the First World War is another way to learn about first-hand experiences. Have a look at the video link below.

### [Being a pilot in WW1](#)

Brook View pupils learnt all about Remembrance Day and participated in a range of activities to commemorate.

## Diwali



Diwali is one of the most recognised and celebrated festivals in Hinduism and is known as the festival of lights. Diwali is an ancient festival celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains all over the world. It represents the universal messages of good over evil, of truth over falsehood and of light shining in the dark of the year. It is traditionally a time for exchanging gifts, friendship, peace, and goodwill to all. Diwali honours Lord Rama and his wife Sita returning to their kingdom of Ayodhya, following Rama and Hanuman's victory over the demon King Ravana and rescue of Sita from his evil clutches. Diwali is usually celebrated in October or November and lasts five days. The festival is celebrated by cleaning the home and getting the accounts in order for the next financial year. Hindus also have firework displays and light diya lamps. Hindus also worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, in the hope that they will have a prosperous new year, as Diwali is the beginning of the Hindu New Year.

Of course, there are plenty of cultural celebrations taking place in Britain from all over the world and plenty of chance for us to enjoy and get involved.


## Inter-Faith Week



Inter Faith Week 2022 takes place from Sunday 13 - Sunday 20 November.

Each year, Inter Faith Week begins on Remembrance Sunday, and runs until the following Sunday. It is hoped that the additional Sunday provides the opportunity

for other weekend events to take place as well as those linked to Remembrance Sunday. Remembrance Sunday was chosen as a start day to encourage people to remember together the contributions of all faiths and none, and to consider how best to create a just, peaceful, and harmonious world.



Inter Faith Week also ends on Mitzvah Day, an annual day of faith-based social action: <https://mitzvahday.org.uk/>

Inter Faith Week:

**Highlights** the good work done by local faith, inter faith and faith-based groups and organisations

**Draws** new people into inter faith learning and cooperation

**Enables** greater interaction between people of different backgrounds

**Helps** develop integrated and neighbourly communities

**Celebrates** diversity and commonality

**Opens** new possibilities for partnership

Building good relationships and working partnerships between people of different faiths and beliefs is part of the year-round work of many people and organisations across the UK.

Having a special Week provides a focal point, helping to open inter faith activity up to a wider audience so that more and more people are made aware of the importance of this vital work and are able to participate in it.

The 3 aims of the week are:

- Strengthening good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increasing understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

Our young people have been learning about the importance of respecting other faiths and beliefs and learning about different religions and beliefs.

## Anti- Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying Week is an annual event which takes place in the UK in the third week of November. It aims to raise awareness about bullying of children and young people, in schools and elsewhere, and to highlight ways of preventing it and responding to it.

It started in 2002 and has grown year upon year, with an estimated 80% of schools in the UK taking part today, reaching over 7.5 million children and young people.

It is coordinated by the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) in England and Wales and the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (ABA's sister organisation) in Northern Ireland. Their vision is to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.



Odd Socks Day marks the beginning of Anti-Bullying Week on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

For more information about Anti-Bullying Week, including where to get help and advice, you may wish to visit the following websites

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## Children in Need



This year, BBC Children in Need will be taking place on Friday 18th November 2022. This will mark the 42nd TV Appeal to raise money for disadvantaged children and young people around the UK. The very first BBC Children in Need telethon was broadcast in 1980 and the annual appeal has continued every year since, taking place each November.

BBC Children in Need is a charity that provides grants and funding to projects based in the UK that have the aim of helping disadvantaged young people. This help comes in a wide variety of forms. For example, a lot of Children in Need's invaluable work involves supporting charities that help children who have been affected by poverty, disabilities, abuse, and mental health difficulties.

Children in Need currently supports over 3,000 projects in communities across the UK, all of which aim to improve the lives of children. To support this fantastic work, each year, in November, the BBC hosts an appeal show that features appearances from celebrities and comedians in order to raise money for the charity.

Pupils and staff at Brook View will be wearing Children in need merchandise or spotty or yellow clothing on the day. Pupils will complete a variety of Children in Need themed activities.

## [Children In need 2022](#)

## Bodhi Day



Buddhists around the world celebrate Gautama's attainment of Enlightenment in 596 BCE on this day while sitting under a Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, in Northern India. Bodhi Day takes place on December 8<sup>th</sup> 2022. Many consider this to be the most sacred of holy places as it was the birth place of their tradition. Bodhi Day is celebrated in many mainstream Mahayan traditions, including Zen, and in Pure Land Buddhist schools in China, Japan and Korea. Buddhists commemorate the day by meditating, studying the *Dharma* (teaching), chanting *sutras* (Buddhist texts) and performing kind acts toward other beings. Some celebrate by a traditional meal of tea, cakes and readings.


Siddhartha Gautama, who would later become the Buddha, was a prince in Nepal who had lived a comfortable and sheltered life under the care of his family. When he grew up he travelled about, witnessing the misery of old age, sickness, and suffering. These profoundly affected him, and at the age of 29, he chose to leave his comfortable surroundings and seek meaning in life.

After spending six years living the life of an ascetic and serving under six teachers, he was still unsatisfied. He tried many different disciplines, even going so far as to survive by eating only one grain of rice per day, but he soon realized that this was not the way to achieve what he sought. Unable to find answers to his questions, he vowed that he would sit under the Bodhi tree (sometimes called the Pipal tree or Bo tree in certain texts) until his way was clear.

Siddhartha fasted and meditated under this tree for a week, and on the morning of the eighth day came to several realizations which were to become the principles of modern Buddhism. It was here, as Siddhartha meditated and gazed upon Venus rising, that the basis of The Noble Eightfold Path and Four Noble Truths were born.

From this point forward he was referred to as the Buddha – The Enlightened One. He was also known as Shakyamuni (the sage of the Shakya clan) Buddha.

Bodhi Day (or Rohatsu), the day of enlightenment, can be celebrated in many ways. To the Buddhist monk it is a day of remembrance and meditation. To the lay people a good way of recognizing this important event in Buddhism is to dwell on its meaning and to place reminders of this event in the home. Often, coloured lights are strung about the home to recognize the day of enlightenment. They are multi-coloured to symbolize the many



pathways to enlightenment. The lights are turned on each evening beginning on December 8th and for 30 days thereafter. A candle is also lit for these thirty days to symbolize enlightenment.

In Buddhist homes, a ficus tree of the genus *ficus religiosa* is often displayed. Beginning on Bodhi Day, these trees are decorated with multi-coloured lights, strung with beads to symbolize the way all things are united and they are hung with three shiny ornaments to represent the Three Jewels – The *Buddha*, the *Dharma*, and the *Sangha*. Sujata offered The Buddha milk and rice which helped him to regain his strength on his pathway to enlightenment. A breakfast of milk and rice would be an appropriate way to start Bodhi day with mindfulness.

Our young people will complete a range of activities relating to Bodhi Day and all staff and pupils will take part in some meditation.

[Bodhi Day 2022](#)

## Advent



This term also sees the start of advent which runs from 27<sup>th</sup> November to Christmas Eve.

Advent is the period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas. Advent means 'Coming' in Latin. This is the coming of Jesus into the world. Christians use the four Sundays

and weeks of Advent to prepare and remember the real meaning of Christmas.

There are three meanings of 'coming' that Christians describe in Advent. The first, and most thought of, happened about 2000 years ago when Jesus came into the world as a baby to live as a man and die for us. The second can happen now because Jesus wants to come back into our lives. And the third will happen in the future when Jesus comes back to the world as King and Judge, not a baby.

Advent only starts on the 1st December when Christmas Day is on a Wednesday (which happened in 2019)! No one is really sure when Advent was first celebrated but it dates back to at least 567 when monks were ordered to fast during December leading up to Christmas.

Some people fast during advent to help them concentrate on preparing to celebrate Jesus's coming.

The most common way to count down Advent is by using a candle or calendar.



There are many types of calendars used in different countries. The most common ones in the UK are made of paper or card with 24 or 25 windows on. A window is opened on every day in December and a Christmas picture is displayed underneath.

In the 19th Century, German protestant Christians counted down to Christmas by marking 24 chalk lines on a door and rubbing one off every day in December.

During World War II, the production of Advent calendars stopped due to a shortage of cardboard.


When they were first made, scenes from the Christmas Story and other Christmas images were used, such as snowmen and robins, but now many calendars are made in the themes of toys, television programmes and sports clubs. The first record of an Advent calendar, in the UK, was in 1956.

The first calendar with chocolate in it was made in 1958; and in the UK Cadbury's made their first chocolate calendar in 1971.

The candles also have their own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are usually purple because the colour violet is a liturgical colour that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice. The pink candle represents joy. If a white candle in the middle of the wreath is included, this candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and represents Christ and purity. The Christ Candle is lit every night until the Feast of the Epiphany, which is twelve days from Christmas.



[Christmas Around the World - WhyChristmas.com](http://WhyChristmas.com)



Why do we do what we do at Christmas?

This article explains where some of our Christmas traditions came from.

[Christmas Traditions: Where Do They Come From And Why? \(marieclaire.co.uk\)](http://marieclaire.co.uk)

### Where Did He Come From?



The legend of Santa Claus (don't tell the little ones I said 'legend') goes back a very long way and he hasn't always looked like he does today (it must be nearly Christmas because I'm rhyming!). This English Heritage article about the history of Father Christmas is well worth a read.

[The History of Father Christmas | English Heritage \(english-heritage.org.uk\)](http://english-heritage.org.uk)

### Oh Christmas Tree




Have you ever wondered why we decorate a tree, hang holly wreaths on the door and kiss under the mistletoe? All is revealed by the English Heritage in this informative article.

[A Short History of Christmas Greenery | English Heritage \(english-heritage.org.uk\)](http://english-heritage.org.uk)

Some countries around the world have strange traditions at Christmas - a witch and a Yule cat. Some are quite scary. Take a look.

[Unusual Christmas Traditions From Around The World \(holidayextras.com\)](http://holidayextras.com)



From the minute the school opens in a morning, SMSC floats in the ethos of a school. A simple 'Good Morning' shows a child is developing personal qualities and using social skills, a rehearsal for a school production means that the performers are investigating moral values and ethical issues, developing personal values and beliefs and learning right and wrong and hopefully applying it in their everyday lives.

Every single aspect of school life has some form of SMSC attached to it which makes it difficult to capture and make sense of.

Everything that SMSC and British Values stand for in the real world.

So, as you prepare for end of term festivities and a New Hope for the New Year, may I wish all of you, a very Merry Christmas.

