

The areas of learning and development which will be primarily addressed through the units will be:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Understanding the World

In addition, the following will be addressed in various ways:

- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Religious Education Learning Intentions:

AT2: To know that each person is special and unique.

Resources:

- **Kipper's Birthday**, by Nick Inkpen. ISBN: 978-0340610565
- **Birthdays! (Read & Learn: Celebrations)** By Denise Jordan. ISBN: 978-1844215232
- <http://www.royal.gov.uk> for pictures and details of the Queen's 80th birthday celebrations and photographs of the Queen growing up.

Suggested Planned/Teacher Directed Activity

- Prepare a box/bag filled with 'birthday artefacts': candles, birthday wrapping paper, words to happy birthday song, birthday card, balloon, picture of a birthday cake, birthday banner etc. Invite children to take an item out of the box/bag. Can the children identify the objects are all related to birthdays? Discuss the items and their significance e.g. candles representing years of age etc. Encourage the children to share experiences of birthdays.
- Talk about how the children were born on their birthday. Share ages and recall birthday celebrations that the children have experienced. What happens on the children's birthdays? (Be sensitive to cultural differences that might make birthday traditions varied or children who are Jehovah's Witnesses and do not celebrate birthdays.) Talk about birthday dates. Do any of the children have their birthday in the same month/on the same day? How old will the children be on their next birthday?
- Look at a birthday of someone who is familiar to all of the children – e.g. Queen who turned 80 on 21 April 2006. Look closely at pictures of how the Queen has changed as she has grown older.

Ongoing activities/resources to take learning forward

- Make a birthday wall display with children's birthdays marked in the correct months of the year.
- Make a class birthday crown/hat for the children to wear when it is their birthday.
- Paint pictures related to birthday traditions children have experienced.
- Bake fairy cakes and decorate with children's ages in icing.
- Use plasticine/clay to make birthday cakes/candles and other party food.
- Make a class post box - provide the children with key words or writing frames to write their own birthday party invitations or birthday cards.

Events/outings or visits

- Invite a grandparent into school to talk about their age and recall memories of birthdays as a child and adult!

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- <http://www.birthdaycelebrations.net/traditions.htm> information sections on 'birthday traditions' from around the world.

Suggested Planned/Teacher Directed Activity

- Talk about giving and receiving with the children. Talk about gifts that the children have received – how did they feel to receive them? Talk about saying thank you. Emphasise that gifts do not always have to be expensive! Discuss presents children might have made for family and friends and how much the person receiving the present appreciated the thought and hard work that had gone into it. Talk about non-material gifts such as a smile, friendship, kindness etc. and how much these things can mean to the person giving and receiving.

Ongoing activities/resources to take learning forward

- Design birthday wrapping paper with paint stamps.
- Make birthday cards with paint/colouring materials.

- Create a 'birthday party' role play area with a table set up with replica birthday cake and birthday party food, balloons, banners, party hats, toys for the children to wrap as presents, cards for the children to write, candles, etc.
- Talk about birthday celebrations in other countries.

Events/outings or visits

- Provide the children with a range of creative materials and encourage them to design and make a gift for a parent/carer. Invite the parents/carers into class so that the children can give their gifts. Discuss how the children feel at giving their gift and question the parents/carers about how they feel to receive the gift.

Religious Education Learning Intentions:**ATI:** To know that Christians believe God loved everyone so much he sent Jesus**Resources:**

- **The Lion First Bible**, by Pat Alexander. ISBN: 978-0745961033
- **The First Christmas**, by Lois Rock. ISBN:978-0745948676
- <http://www.reonline.org.uk/> - infant section – Christmas story read online, suitable for interactive white board.

Suggested Planned/Teacher Directed Activity

- Explain to the children that the Bible is a book that is special to Christians. Introduce the Christmas story as an event that happened long ago, read to the children about Mary being visited by an Angel, finding out she is going to have a special baby. Explain that Christians believe Jesus' daddy on earth is Joseph and his Daddy in heaven is God. Emphasise what a very special event this is to Christians.
- Continue the Christmas story telling the children why Mary and Joseph had to leave home and travel on a donkey to Bethlehem, on arrival not being able to find anywhere to stay. Emphasise the significance of Mary having to stay and have her baby in a lowly stable and what this means to Christians.
- Pre-prepare the characters from the story so far (Mary, Joseph, angel, stable animals) as models or cut outs and with the class position them in a classroom nativity scene.

Ongoing activities/resources to take learning forward

- Create a class Advent calendar to count down to Christmas. Make sure it is a religious calendar rather than a secular one.
- Make masks, paper puppets or story boards to enable the children to retell the story themselves.
- Provide the children with role play props such as: a donkey template, robes and costumes (compare to contemporary clothing), 'full up' inn keeper signs, a manger etc.
- Use a paint package on the classroom computer to allow the children to create their own angel, travelling on a donkey or resting in the stable pictures.

- Encourage the children to record elements of the story that they have heard in words and pictures. Discuss their pictures to allow the children to retell the story in their own words.

Events/outings or visits

- Take part in a class/key stage or whole school Nativity play and Christmas celebrations.
- Invite a member of the clergy into class to tell the Nativity story to the children.

Religious Education Learning Intentions:

ATI: To know that Christians believe God loved everyone so much he sent Jesus

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- **The Lion First Bible**, by Pat Alexander. ISBN: 978-0745961033
- **The First Christmas**, by Lois Rock. ISBN:978-0745948676
- <http://www.reonline.org.uk/> - infant section – Christmas story read online, suitable for interactive white board.
- <http://www.topmarks.co.uk/christianity/nativity/index.htm> – Christmas story read online, suitable for interactive white board.
- You may be able to find religious pictures of the Shepherds on the internet to view as a slideshow on an interactive whiteboard.

Suggested Planned/Teacher Directed Activity

- Remind the children of the Bible – a special book that Christians believe contains stories about special events and people. Continue the Christmas story, telling the children about the shepherds being visited by angels and setting off to visit Jesus. Talk about a shepherd's job, what the shepherds might have been doing etc. How would the children feel if an angel suddenly appeared to them?! How would the shepherds have felt to be surprised by an angel? How might the shepherds have felt hearing about Jesus?
- Talk about the gift that the shepherds gave to Jesus: a lamb – revise the importance of 'giving what you can' and the notion that gifts do not have to be valuable/expensive to be meaningful.
- Pre-prepare models or cut outs of the shepherds and sheep and with the class add them into the classroom Nativity scene.

Ongoing activities/resources to take learning forward

- Provide the children with a variety of musical instruments and encourage them to select instruments relevant to characters and action, providing sound effects as they retell the shepherds' story e.g. gyro – sheep baa; cymbal -

angel appearing; triangle – angel speaking; drum – hurrying to Bethlehem; bells – meeting baby Jesus.

- Make junk models of the stable in Bethlehem.
- Make sheep grazing and watching shepherd pictures with fabric and cotton wool.
- Make angel images with lace doilies, glitter, paper plates etc.
- Christmas tradition crafts, holly wreaths, Christmas cards etc., stressing their religious significance.

Events/outings or visits

- Take part in a class/key stage or whole school Nativity play and Christmas celebrations.
- Invite a member of the clergy into class to tell the Nativity story to the children.

Religious Education Learning Intentions:

ATI: To know that Christians believe God loved everyone so much that he sent Jesus

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Suggested Planned/Teacher Directed Activity

- Remind the children of the Bible – a special book that Christians believe contains stories about special events and people. Continue the Christmas story telling the children about the Wise Men star gazing and sighting a special star and making a long journey to follow the star which rested over Jesus' stable in Bethlehem.
- Look at the valuable gifts that the Wise Men gave to Jesus and their uses/symbolism to people at the time.
- Pre-prepare models or cut outs of the Wise Men/ camels and the class add them into the classroom nativity scene

Ongoing activities/resources to take learning forward

- Provide the children with a shallow sand tray and replica figures or cardboard character pictures of: 3 Wise Men and camels, stable in Bethlehem, star etc. Encourage them to make their own small world representation of the land that the Wise Men crossed – moulding the sand into dunes etc. Discuss how difficult the journey must have been and how long. Encourage the children to retell the story in their own words.
- Use movement to music to retell the story e.g. play a piece of Middle Eastern inspired music such as 'Arabian Nights' sung by Bruce Adler on Disney's 'Aladdin' soundtrack. Encourage the children to move their bodies to the music imagining they are on a camel!
- Set the children a 'homework' task to look at the stars in the night sky and record their sightings in simple diagrams.
- Make star decorations with foil, glitter etc.
- Find out about the desert. Create desert landscape pictures with coloured sand and discuss temperature, expanse, clothing etc.

Events/outings or visits

- Take part in a class/key stage or whole school Nativity play and Christmas celebrations.
- Invite a member of the clergy into class to tell the Nativity story to the children.
- Invite parents/carers/members of the community into class who have experience of astronomy or have been to a desert to share equipment, photos etc.

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- <http://www.reonline.org.uk/> - infant section – Christmas story read online, suitable for interactive white board.
- **It's a Boy! DVD**. Three quails are present at the birth of Christ in Bethlehem. This animation feature follows the adventures of the quails as they witness the events surrounding the Nativity Story. ASIN: B000BYYIH8

Suggested Planned/Teacher Directed Activity

- Use the now complete classroom Nativity scene to recall the Christmas story with the children, questioning individuals on characters and events.
- Remind the children that the Christmas story is written in the Bible – a special book that Christians believe contains stories about special events and people. Christians believe that God loved the people so much that on the first Christmas, he gave his only son, Jesus, to live with us on the earth. Look at images on traditional nativity scene Christmas cards – link to birthday cards, but the scenes are of Jesus' birthday.
- Link Christmas traditions to birthday celebrations: birthday cake and Christmas cake; decorations, balloons and crackers; happy birthday song and Christmas carols; birthday presents and Christmas presents. Explain to the children that Christians think of Jesus' first birthday at Christmas and may go to a church service to celebrate.

Ongoing activities/resources to take learning forward

- Listen to and sing a selection of carols together and discuss the meaning of the words related to the Christmas story: While Shepherds Watched their Flocks, Away in a Manger, Little Donkey, etc.
- Christmas crafts: tree decorations, gifts for family/friends.

- Create a Nativity scene (stable) in the role play area provide children with props and costumes to retell the Christmas story.

Events/outings or visits

- Participate in Christmas celebrations in assembly/collective worship, church or local community.
- Participate in Christingle service at church or school.
- Visit local Church to look at Christmas decorations and church window displays.