

# THE GESHER GAZETTE

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The Bridge

26th January 2024

## World Religion Day

On Tuesday 23rd January, we recognised World Religion Day at Gesher as part of our British Values Curriculum. We hosted leaders and educators of five religions - Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. The enrichment morning enabled the students to learn about the different practices, beliefs and rituals of these religions and develop a deeper respect and appreciation when engaging and interacting with a wide range of diverse people as they get older. The religious leaders and educators gave an overview of their religions at the appropriate level for each class. They introduced the students to different artefacts, clothing and music connected to their faith. Following the presentations, the students participated in short activities like dancing to Hindu music, meditating, writing their names in Sanskrit, and creating Rangoli pictures and stained glass windows. We were also honoured to have four secondary students from a Sikh school, Pioneer Secondary Academy, come and play the Kirtan, a musical performance from the Sikh religion. The day was a huge success



and the students were engaged and enthusiastic throughout the morning, asking many interesting questions to further their understanding. We are very grateful to all the leaders and educators who came in, including our very own

Mr Aymane and Mr and Mrs Rajpara, parents of a student in the school. We look forward to further interfaith initiatives and supporting our students in understanding, respecting, and appreciating different religions, which are crucial traits for their future.



### Kodesh Corner

This week we have been celebrating Tu B'Shevat (New Year for 'Trees') by learning about the importance of trees in society, similarities between humans and trees, planting fruit seeds to grow at home, and having a Tu B'Shevat seder (sit-down fruit meal). Going from a high of celebrations, we must come back down on Shabbat to remember Holocaust Memorial Day

and have in memory all those who lost their life in various genocides, including Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. This year's theme is 'Fragility of Freedom', and with events around the world, shows that freedom of any kind should not be taken for granted. May peace come quickly in our days and may we never experience the darkness that those individuals went through in History. Please remember to light your HMD candles before Shabbat begins or after Shabbat finishes. Shabbat Shalom.

### Therapy Corner

Expressive arts are sometimes overlooked, and assumed to be 'just a fun activity'. Studies have shown that being creative has many therapeutic properties. Sometimes we have trouble expressing ourselves with words, particularly if we have a word-finding difficulty or other cognitive or physical difficulties. Expressive arts are a non-verbal way of communicating, helping find meaning when things feel confusing or difficult. Engaging in expressive arts supports self-regulation, improved self-confidence and support a growth mindset. At Gesher we have whole class expressive arts sessions every week. These sessions include an emotional 'check-in', before moving to the chosen creative activity. You can further support your children to continue this exploration at home, whether it's painting, drawing, clay playdough or puppetry and role play. Don't forget, that being expressive isn't about creating a beautiful final piece, it's about the process. Happy creating, Hollie