

Year 4's visit to the Gurdwara

Year 4 visited Darlington's Gurdwara Sahib. A Gurdwara is the place where Sikhs come together for congregational worship.

Before entering the Gurdwara Sahib we covered our heads with scarves as a sign of respect and once inside we removed our socks and shoes. We sat on the floor and listened to Bopphder, who is a volunteer of the Gurdwara Sahib; he told us many interesting facts about the Sikh religion. We learnt that everyone sits on the floor in a Gurdwara Sahib. This is to be humble before the Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Sikh Bible) and because it gives everyone a place of equal status to sit. Most people sit cross-legged. Cushions and seats are not allowed but disabled people can sit on chairs)

We learnt that a Gurdwara Sahib is a place to learn spiritual wisdom, it's a place for religious ceremonies and where children learn the Sikh faith of ethics, customs, traditions and texts and it also offers food, shelter, and companionship to those who need it. The Gurdwara Sahib is open to all faiths.

Manni then told us about the 5K's. The 5 K's are 5 physical symbols worn by Sikhs who have been initiated into the Khalsa.

Kesh (uncut hair)

Kara (a steel bracelet)

Kanga (a wooden comb)

Kachera - (cotton underwear)

Kirpan (steel sword)

We then shared food and sat on the floor so we were all equal.

After we had eaten, we washed our hands and went upstairs to where a Sikh service was taking place. Each Gurdwara Sahib has a *Granthi* (a Priest) who organises the daily services and reads from the Guru Granth Sahib which is like a Christian Bible.

When we got upstairs we saw how beautiful the Gurdwara is. There was a Granthi (priest) reciting prayers from the Guru Granth Sahib. We were allowed to walk up to the Darbaar Sahib in the prayer hall which is like a Christian altar and we offered money as a gift then we listened to the hymns being sung. Then we saw where the holy scriptures were kept in a Sach Kand which is like a covered bedroom it was golden and beautifully decorated.

Our visit was amazing and we would like to say a huge thank you to Manpreet, Pally and granddad for organising our visit and making it a spiritual special experience for us all and a special thank you to Bob.

