Coley Primary School – Knowledge Organiser

SUBJECT FOCUS:	RE: Sikhism	YEAR 5	TERM 5

Key Knowledge

Area of focus: Prayer and Worship

Key question: What is the best way for a Sikh to show commitment to God?

This unit relates to the previous unit on Sikhism and how far Sikhs would go for their religion. Here is a reminder of how they show their commitment to God:

5 Ks – The symbols of Sikhism worn by Sikhs

- **Kirpan** – Sword: signifies protection.
- **Kesh** – Uncut hair: signifies spirituality.
- **Kara** – Steel band worn on the right wrist: signifies good deeds.
- **Kangha** – Comb worn in the hair: signifies cleanliness.
- **Kachera** – Traditional underwear/ shorts: signifies self-discipline.

- **The Langar:** This was started by Guru Nanak and means everyone, regardless of their religion or wealth, sits and eats freely provided and freshly produced vegetarian food and non-alcoholic drink. The people sit together as equals. The preparation and serving of food as well as cleaning is voluntary and a key part of every Gurdwara.

Other aspects of the commitment Sikhs show is explored in more detail on the following page.



sewa

Key vocabulary

- **Guru** – Teacher: used in Sikhism to refer to the ten human Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib.
- **Amrit** – The Sikh rite of initiation into the Khalsa.
- **Khalsa** – "The community of the pure". The initiated Sikh community.
- **Karah Parshad** – Sanctified food distributed at Sikh ceremonies.
- **Guru Granth Sahib** – Sikh Holy Book.
- **Langar** – Gurdwara dining hall and the food served in it.
- **Golden Temple of Amritsar** – The holiest Sikh gurdwara located in the city of Amritsar, Punjab, India.
- **Guru Nanak** – The first Guru and founder of the Sikh faith (1469 – 1539).
- **Sewa** – To provide a service to the community, including the Sikh community (Khalsa) and others.
- **Gurdwara** – Sikh place of worship: literally means the doorway to the Gurdwara.

Sewa

- Sewa is the belief in selfless service to the community and is an important part of worship.
- Examples of Sewa include helping in the Langar or looking after the gurdwara and giving money or other kinds of help to people in need.
- This is the main reason why the Langar welcomes anyone regardless of religion or background even offering free meals to visitors.

The Guru Granth Sahib

- The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh said that there would be no other living Gurus after him so Sikhs should look to their holy scriptures for guidance instead. The **Guru Granth Sahib** is treated as the living Guru of the Sikhs.
- The Guru Granth Sahib contains poetry which is often set to music.
- The Guru Granth Sahib is kept under a special canopy in the Gurdwara and when is not used is covered up, it is also kept in a separate bedroom overnight.
- Sikhs take off their shoes in the presence of the holy scriptures making sure they never turn their back on them.
- At every festival, the scriptures are read continuously from beginning to end, which takes about 48 hours.
- As the scriptures are being read, the reader or an attendant will occasionally wave a ceremonial whisk called a **chauri** over the scriptures. This is a sign of respect for living Guru or teacher.



chauri



guru

Learning outcomes

I can show an understanding of why people show commitment in different ways.
I can describe how different practises enable Sikhs to show their commitment to God and understand that some of these will be more significant to some Sikhs than others.
I can start to express what I think about the best way a Sikh could show commitment to God.

Possible experiences:

A visit to a Gurdwara.
Discussion of commitment to religion.
Role play Amrit ceremony.

Information and clip art resources are from Discovery RE and Twinkl.

The Gurdwara

A Gurdwara is the place where Sikhs come together for congregational worship. The literal meaning of the word Gurdwara is 'the residence of the Guru', or 'the door that leads to the Guru' however Sikhs believe that God is everywhere.

Worship in the Gurdwara

Any Sikh can lead the prayers and recite the scriptures to the congregation during a service. Each Gurdwara has a *Granthi* (reader/keeper of the Guru Granth Sahib) who organises the services and does the readings. The Granthi must be able to read Gurmukhi (the language of the Guru Granth Sahib) and must be properly trained in looking after the holy book. They are expected to be a full member of the Sikh Khalsa.

Services include the following features

- singing hymns – some of these were written by the Gurus and are often accompanied by instruments. This hymn-singing is called *Kirtan* and is an essential part of Sikh worship.
- A sermon – usually referencing Sikh history or stories
- Prayers
- Readings from the Guru Granth Sahib – these are often chosen randomly on the day

After the service, food is offered to the congregation. This consists of *Parshad* and a more substantial meal in the Langar.



gurdwara



langar

The Amrit Ceremony

The Amrit ceremony involves the drinking of Amrit (sugar water stirred with a dagger) in the presence of 5 Khalsa Sikhs as well as the Guru Granth Sahib. The novice is instructed in the following;

- You shall never remove any hair from any part of thy body
- You shall not use tobacco, alcohol or any other intoxicants
- You shall not eat the meat of an animal slaughtered the Muslim way
- You shall not commit adultery.

The novice is required to wear the physical symbols of a Khalsa at all times (known as the 5 Ks) as well as follow the Khalsa Code of Conduct