Coley Primary School – Knowledge Organiser

SUBJECT FOCUS:	RE	YEAR 3	TERM 2

WHAT? – Key Knowledge

Christmas - Christianity

Has Christmas lost it's true meaning?

Christmas is celebrated to remember the birth of Jesus Christ, who **Christians** believe is the Son of God.

God chose a **Jewish** young woman called Mary, who was **betrothed** to Joseph the carpenter, to be the mother of his earthly son.

God sent his angel, Gabriel, to ask this of her. Mary agreed to allow this to happen and Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

This is the Christian concept of "**The Incarnation**" which means God becoming man or literally being "made flesh" and coming to earth to help people.

Christians celebrate Christmas each year to show their **gratitude** to God for what He did, to remember the birth of Jesus Christ by giving gifts, **worshipping** him and thinking of the poor and less fortunate.

People around the world now celebrate Christmas, whether they are Christians or not.

It is a time when family and friends come together and remember the good things they have. People, especially children, also like Christmas, as it is a time when you can give and receive presents.

The **Christmas story** shows us the importance of the shepherds, wise men, star and the gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.

The Shepherds were the first people to learn of the birth of Christ. Shepherds had the worst profession in Jewish culture because they were unclean and had to sleep with animals as part of their job. Being told about the birth of Jesus first, signifies to Christians that God loves the poor and marginalised.

The **star** led the wise men from a great distance to Jesus. It also portrays to Christians that Jesus is the **light of the world.**

WHAT? – Key vocabulary

Incarnation – God became man and dwelt on earth

Jewish – a person of Jewish descent.

Betrothed – to be engaged to be married to someone

Angel Gabriel – a special messenger from Heaven

Worshipping – to adore and give praise to God

Christians – a follower of Jesus or the Christian Faith.

Christmas Story – a record of the Birth of Jesus documented in the Bible.

Gratitude – to be thankful for something or someone.

Shepherds - a person whose job is to take care of sheep and move them from one place to another

Marginalised – to treat someone as if they are not important

Light of the World – a term used by Christians to describe God or Jesus.

Wise men – the magi or royalty that travelled from afar to visit Jesus

Gold – a precious, expensive metal.

Frankincense - an aromatic gum resin obtained from an African tree and burnt as incense.

Myrrh - a fragrant gum resin obtained from certain trees and used, especially in the Near East, in perfumery, medicines, and incense.

Royalty - people of royal blood or status.

Light of the World – Jesus is the exclusive source of spiritual light and Christians learn about it through His example.

Stable - a building set apart and adapted for keeping animals.

Kingship – the state or position of being a King

Profession – occupation or job

The **wise men** travelled a long way to find Jesus because the **star** signified to them that a **king** had been born. They chose **gifts** fit for royalty and which signified Jesus' life to come. **The three gifts** had a spiritual meaning: **gold** as a symbol of **kingship** on earth, **frankincense** (an incense) as a symbol of **deity**, and **myrrh** (an embalming oil) as a symbol of **death.**

Earthly royalty would be born in a palace, but Jesus was born in a **stable.** This signifies to Christians that Jesus will be accessible to all people, not just the privileged. It is also indicates that some people would reject Jesus in their lives because they believed that he did not fit the traditional Jewish idea of a Messiah.

Possible experiences:

- Put at a variety of symbolic Christmas items under a blanket or in a box. For example, presents, trees, pine cones, Christmas cards, Christmas Puddings, advent candles, etc and discuss the meanings with the children.
- Visit St Mary's Butts to talk to the vicar about how they support the poor in the community during Christmas. They can also see the life size Nativity display (if available).
- Bring an expert to talk about the Bed for the Night scheme for homeless in Reading.
- Bring some myrrh and Frankincense incense for children to smell and some gold to talk about its worth. Children to draw and write about the significance of the symbols.

Learning outcomes:

I can explain what Christmas means to me and talk about whether this involves giving and receiving gifts.

I can start to explain the Christian belief that Jesus was God in human form and why God gave him to the world.

I can start to tell you what Christmas means to Christians and what it means to me.

Diagrams and symbols

Candle – represents the Light of the World





Christmas Tree, decorations and presents

Nativity scene with the star, stable and the wise men



Frankincense- an incense





Gold – a precious metal

Myrrh – fragrant gum resin





Christmas Wreath