

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY



Holocaust Memorial Day is an annual event that takes place on January 27th.

HMD was established in the UK in 2000 and the first HMD was held in January 2001. January 27th marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz- Birkenhau concentration camp by soviet troops in 1945. Holocaust Memorial Day seeks to change the future by learning from and remembering the past. Schools are encouraged to participate in Holocaust Memorial Day in order to remember the victims of the Holocaust and more recent genocides. It provides a framework to explore issues of morality, human reactions, individual experiences, responsibilities and larger questions of the role of governments and democracies. The government, including the Welsh Government, encourages schools and LAs to commemorate this event in some way.

Further information and **free educational materials** for primary to post 16 students specific to the theme of Holocaust Memorial Day can be accessed online at <http://education.hmd.org.uk>

The theme for 2017 is 'How can life go on?'

The aftermath of the Holocaust and of subsequent genocides continue to raise challenging questions for individuals, communities and nations. How do people react in the immediate aftermath of unimaginable suffering? How can life be rebuilt after such trauma? Is justice after genocide possible? What role do we in the UK have towards individuals, communities and nations who have survived genocide?

Holocaust Memorial Day is not only about commemorating past genocides and honouring those who died, but about standing with those who survive.

By phrasing the theme as a question, HMD 2017 asks audiences to think about what happens after genocide and of our own responsibilities in the wake of such a crime.

This year's theme is broad and open ended, and there are few known answers.

We hope that you will find the materials useful if you wish to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day on January 27th 2017.

Please do let us know of your involvement and we look forward to hearing about your pupil experiences and learning outcomes.

NEW GCSE SPECIFICATION

SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2015 – 2016

The SACRE Annual Report was finalised in the autumn term and contains useful information and a summary of all the advice provided to schools over the course of the academic year.

Copies will be distributed to all schools as soon as possible.

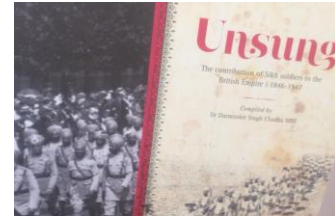
VISITS TO PLACES OF WORSHIP AND VISITORS TO SCHOOLS

SACRE has updated the contact list for school visits to places of worship and visitors to schools. Copies of the revised list will soon be distributed to schools.

If you have a recent experience of visiting a place of worship or receiving a visitor to school and can provide some details for us to share with other schools please do let us know. Details should be sent to Gill Vaisey at gill_press@hotmail.com

UNSUNG

– BOOK BY DR DARMINDER SINGH CHADA



The book *Unsung* has been compiled by Dr Darminder Singh Chadha in order to raise awareness of the contribution of the Sikh soldiers to the British Empire.

The aim of the book, published in the centenary year of the Great War is to remember and pay homage to all Sikh soldiers who served in the British army between 1846-1947 which is the significant part of the Anglo-Sikh history.

The author begins the book with a brief history of the Sikh religion followed by the Sikh holocaust where over 30,000 civilian Sikhs were massacred.

It shows how Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Kingdom was incorporated into the British Empire.

Many young Sikhs fought in the trenches of Western Europe, the deserts of North Africa and the mountains of Italy often in indescribable conditions still holding on to their faith.

The book is for free distribution however, a small contribution of £5.00 is suggested to the Parkinson's Society as the author has suffered from this illness for nearly 14 years now.

Copies can be obtained from SACRE member Neeta Baicher

Neetabaicher@hotmail.com

DIWALI FOR THREE FAITH TRADITIONS

Diwali or Dīpāvali is a significant religious festival in Hinduism, Sikhism and Jainism. It is also popularly known as the "*Festival of Lights*" and is a lunar-calendar based event that occurs between mid-October and mid-November. The word "Diwali" is a contraction of "Deepavali" which translates into "row of lamps".



Diwali is an official holiday in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, Malaysia, Singapore, and Fiji.

The festival of Diwali symbolizes the victory of light over dark, good over evil and knowledge over darkness.

Hindu tradition: Diwali is one of the biggest festivals in the Hindu calendar and there are multiple reasons why Hindus celebrate this festival. The most popular narrative, based in the ancient Sanskrit epic Ramayana, is of Lord Rama, his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana returning to their kingdom Ayodhya after defeating demon king Ravana.

Jain tradition, Diwali marks the attainment of enlightenment by Lord Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara of Jainism who laid down the central tenets of the Jain religion as it is practiced today.

Sikh tradition: Diwali commemorates the release of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Sikh Guru, who was imprisoned by the Mughal emperor Jahangir. When Guru Hargobind arrived in Amritsar, his devotees lit thousands of oil lamps to celebrate his return. For Sikhs, this day is known as *Bandi Chhor Divas* (day of release from prison).

Diwali is also associated with the martyrdom of the elderly Sikh scholar and strategist Bhai Mani Singh in 1737. Bhai Mani Singh was the Granthi (keeper/reader of Sikh scripture) of Harmandir Sahib (popularly known as the Golden Temple). He transcribed the final version of Guru Granth Sahib dictated to him by Guru Gobind Singh in 1704. In 1737, he received permission from Zakariya Khan, the then Mughal governor of Punjab, to hold a religious gathering of the Khalsa for celebrating *Bandi Chhorh Divas* on the auspicious day of Diwali for a tax of 5000 Rupees. He expected to put together the required sum from contributions made by the Sikhs who would assemble that day. But when he discovered the governor's plot to kill the Sikhs during the gathering, he sent out messages warning them not to turn up for the meeting. As a result the tax could not be paid and the governor ordered Bhai Mani Singh's execution at Lahore. Sikhs celebrate Diwali by lighting lamps, distributing sweets, fasting and practising acts of charity.