

Celebrating the gift of Jesus in Nursery

Lorraine McAteer

Nursery Class at SVP School have a special role in our Nativity celebration. Traditionally, they play the role of the Stars shining brightly in the sky alongside the Star of Bethlehem. The children know their role is very important, lighting the way for the shepherds and wise men to visit Baby Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem. As the Nursery children progress through the school they will play the role of the sheep and shepherds in Reception Class and the Wise Men in Year 1. In Year 2, the children become the angels proclaiming the good news of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. When they reach Key Stage 2, the children are part of the school choir and readers sharing the Christmas Story through the readings and hymns. The Nursery children, then, are at the beginning of their journey in our school, growing in faith and love for one another. Our school mission statement follows the teaching of Jesus: 'Love one another as I have loved you', and in Nursery Class we follow this teaching by always promoting kind words and actions.



The Travelling Crib

During Advent, Nursery have been taking turns to look after The Travelling Crib, the Posada. Posada is an old Mexican tradition, where young people dressed as Mary and Joseph travelled from house to house asking for a room for the night and telling people about the imminent arrival of Jesus in the weeks leading up to Christmas. On Christmas Eve they would visit the local church to re-enact the Nativity and place figures of Mary and Joseph in a crib. Modern Posada uses nativity figures of Mary and Joseph, who travel from place to place. In Nursery's Travelling Crib box are a crib, candle, the Nativity story and a purple cloth. Each night, our children's families write about their experience of the Travelling Crib in a special book and take pictures of the special occasion. These are quotes from our parents so far:

'We spoke about the Nativity and the importance of family at this time of year. *** and her daddy lit the candle as we sang.'

'Before lighting the candle, *** and her sister drew a picture of the Travelling Crib. Mum lit the candle, the whole family prayed together and read the Advent Calendar book.'

'We put the Travelling Crib next to our family crib and talked about the similarities and differences and who everyone in the crib scene is.'

'It was a good opportunity to remind *** that Christmas is a time to remember how lucky we are to have Baby Jesus coming into our lives. Jesus is like a light in our hearts that brings so much joy and stays with us forever, no matter what.'

'*** was so excited to have the Travelling Crib come to our house. ***also got to light the Advent candle at church and said a lovely prayer for all her family and friends to be happy. She read the story to her baby brother.'

Another important tradition in our Nursery Class is each child taking Vincent the Bear on a weekend adventure with their family. Vincent has been in our Nursery Class for many years and most of the children can remember taking Vincent home for a weekend when they were in Nursery Class. Vincent has special rules for each child when they take him home. These include:

1. I like my friends to be gentle and friendly.
2. I like to say my prayers at important times of the day. I have a special cross and rosary beads in my bag for my prayer corner when I pray. Please find a special place to put them when I come to stay with you.
3. I like to read my favourite books at bedtime.



Vincent the Bear and the Nursery Crib

Each family is invited to write a prayer which we say in class. Vincent the Bear is another precious way of sharing and practising our mission statement at home and at school. Jesus said to his disciples: 'Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them''. We value the youngest children at SVP School and always celebrate their important voices in our school, church and community family. From the Nursery Class we wish you a blessed Christmas and New Year.

Lorraine McAteer is Class Teacher for the Nursery.