

## RECEPTION VISIT TO PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL

When we arrived at the Cathedral, we were met by Toni and she told us that before we started our activities we would enjoy looking at the beautiful building.

*"I can't believe how BIG it is! It is so big, and so beautiful!"*

We have visited our local church many times, and have enjoyed looking for signs and symbols. We enjoyed finding things on the Cathedral building that we had seen in St Peter's Church, Stanion- such as crosses, and the crossed keys of St Peter.

We also had the opportunity to look around the inside of Cathedral and to learn more about this amazing building. The children were definitely filled with a sense of 'awe and wonder'.

The children were encouraged to touch things, look at things and to ask questions. We all really enjoyed looking at details in the stained glass, and Toni shared her knowledge so effectively with the children.

*"I loved looking at the windows. Toni showed us how to find Jesus in the windows. The windows are very beautiful."*



The focus of our session was the Genesis 1 Creation story, which linked to the work we are currently doing in school as part of our RE in EYFS.

The interactive approach to telling the story was so effective, and engaged our Reception children throughout. Toni had prepared a whole range of items to re-tell the story, involving every child actively within the re-telling. Although the children were familiar with the story, this interactive story telling experience really embedded and deepened the children's understanding.



Mrs Hankins commented on the inspirational approach to story-telling, which added such depth to the story of the Creation. We will definitely do this again in school!

The children really enjoyed this activity, and their responses included:

*"I really loved making the story of the Creation. It was fun for all of us and we all had a part. I was lucky because I got to do my favourite part with the animals on the land."*

*"I loved it when we could all use loud voices to shout out IT IS GOOD after every part of the story."*

We responded further to the Creation Story by making our own images of different parts of the story. The children upcycled CDs to create their own pictures, which are now on display in our classroom. We have also created more 'CD' pictures on returning to school, as the children loved this activity so much!

*"I love my picture. It shows how God created the moon and stars to light the sky at night."*

*"I love all the animals and I have put lots of animals on the picture. We must all look after the animals."*



Part of our work in the classroom has been linked to recycling and upcycling, and looking at ways that we can care for our wonderful world. Upcycling CDs linked so well to this classroom work, and all of our 'wonderful world' pictures are now proudly displayed in the classroom.

We also learnt more about the importance of music within church buildings in general. And everyone enjoyed identifying instruments from pieces of music. Everyone was impressed with the sound of the organ, and we learnt about how the sounds are made. Alex showed us how sound is affected by the length of the pipes. We all agreed that the one instrument that we can all use is our voice, and we sang, 'He's got the whole world in his hands' together. It felt very special to sing in the Cathedral.



As we headed outside, we were all reminded about the importance of noticing and caring for our beautiful world, and to be grateful for it. We certainly felt very lucky to enjoy the beautiful cathedral garden, and to have the opportunity to collect things to create our own 'sticky stick'.

*"The flowers are so beautiful. I love looking at them and all the lovely colours."*

*"I can see so many colours! They look so pretty all together."*

The children also experienced, with Toni, the different scents of plants and herbs, and they all engaged in every part of this activity with interest, enthusiasm and excitement.





*"I liked picking the flowers for my sticky stick. It helped me to think of God's wonderful world."*

*"I loved the sticky stick! It was like a journey stick and we could collect lots of lovely things from God's wonderful world."*

*"All the plants and flowers are so special. I love the ones that smell, not just the pretty ones."*

The whole day was a real enrichment of our RE curriculum, and will enable us to develop the unit with even more knowledge, understanding and creativity.

We would like to thank Toni, Alex and everyone involved in enabling our young children to have such a memorable experience, and we will look forward to visiting again soon. All of the activities were so well planned, organised and creatively resourced, and we all felt privileged to have this opportunity to work at the Cathedral.

We are now inspired to develop the work further in school, and we have already started a very creative 'Creation' display!

S. Ettridge April 2024



