

# **Windrush 75**

**Commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary of the arrival of the  
Empire Windrush**

**Collective worship  
resources for schools**

Phase: Primary

## **Collective Worship- Our Approach**

### **INVITATIONAL**

Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Children are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

### **INCLUSIVE**

Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Therefore, we choose topics and ideas that are shared by different faiths and worldviews. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is 'what Christians believe', saying things like:

'I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?'

'The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that

...

Our worship should be accessible for children and young people with a range of different backgrounds, and so we take care that activities do not require expensive resources. We also offer a variety of activities, so that children and young people with differing needs can all find something they can engage with.

### **INSPIRING**

We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation? How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions? How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?

## Commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush

We have published these resources to provide a means for schools to reflect on the Empire Windrush story and why we are commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> Windrush anniversary on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, 2023.

It is important that we commemorate the arrival of the Empire Windrush ship because of the part it plays in British History. We learn from history. History tells us that the people on the Empire Windrush came to the UK with the assumption, formal invitation, and understanding that they were British subjects. Many of the people on the Empire Windrush fought in the first and second world wars alongside their British colleagues. However, they experienced discrimination because of the colour of their skin!

Furthermore, it is important that we commemorate and **not celebrate** the arrival of the Empire Windrush. In reality, the Windrush generation has experienced discrimination in the country they came to help. What we do celebrate is the resilience and tenacity of the people of the Windrush generation because, despite the discrimination experienced, they showed great courage, bravery and resilience and have been extremely valuable and essential to the life of Britain.

Schools should adapt these resources to their own context, using local examples where possible.

### Context and notes

Ads appeared in Jamaica's premier newspaper, the *Daily Gleaner*, in late April 1948, offering cheap passage to London. Travellers paid £28 for a berth on the open troop deck, or £48 for a cabin. For someone in Jamaica in 1948, that was more than a month's pay, and would be like paying nearly £1,000 and more than £1,700 respectively today!

The *Empire Windrush* arrived in Trinidad on 20 May 1948, collecting local passengers as well as others who had travelled from other Caribbean islands and British Guiana (now Guyana); she then made scheduled port calls at Kingston, Jamaica, and Bermuda; however, in between she detoured to Tampico, in Mexico – where 66 Polish refugees embarked, all but one to join husbands and fathers who'd fought in the Polish forces-in-exile under the terms of the Polish Resettlement Act 1947.

The Great Depression wrecked the agricultural export market Jamaica's economy relied on; the resulting unemployment, poor living conditions, and inequality still lingered. A hurricane in 1944 meant the farm economy was still depressed, and many people took the opportunity to try their luck in the UK – the mother country. In fact, about one-third of *Windrush's* passengers were either serving members of the RAF or veterans looking to re-enlist.

As *Windrush* steamed toward the UK, immigration was a hot topic. The mother country faced major labour shortage in many sectors, and needed to repair huge amounts of war damage.

## Collective Worship Plan

Slide 2	<p><b>Gathering</b></p> <p>Follow the school's normal gathering routines, using words of liturgy which are familiar to students and adults.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Light a candle and offer the following prayer: '<b>The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you</b>'. Response: <b>and also with you.</b></p>
Slide 3	<p><b>Reading from Scripture</b></p> <p>Introduce the reading. The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians) and helps us to think about how we should treat others.</p> <p>Ask a student to read the passage from the Bible (James 2:1-4)</p> <p>Use the key questions to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does this story say about discrimination?</li> <li>• How does this passage tell us to treat everyone?</li> </ul>
Slide 4	<p><b>The Empire Windrush</b></p> <p>Use this slide to explain to the students the facts around the Empire Windrush and the Windrush Generation.</p>
Slide 5	<p><b>Setting the scene</b></p> <p><i>London is the place for me</i> was written by the musician Lord Kitchener on the Empire Windrush as he journeyed to England.</p> <p>Play the song to the students and use this to explore how the writer and others on the boat would have been feeling.</p> <p>Explore feelings of excitement and apprehension with the students. Remind them that many people were coming to help rebuild Britain and were hopeful of a bright future.</p>
Slide 6	<p><b>What was it really like to come to the UK</b></p> <p>This video lasts just over 2 minutes and explains why the Empire Windrush was coming to Britain alongside some of the negative attitudes that the new arrivals experienced.</p>
Slide 7	<p><b>Questions from the video</b></p> <p>If appropriate, use partners to explore the questions about the video.</p>

Slide 8	<p><b>Contributing to modern Britain</b></p> <p>Display these slides and explore with the students some of the contributions made by the Windrush generation to life in Britain:</p> <p>Nurses responding to the call for help to staff the new NHS.  Transport Workers  Teachers – with the example of Beryl Gilroy</p>
Slide 9	<p><b>Contributing to modern Britain (continued)</b></p> <p>Sam King – who served in the RAF and Post Office, as Mayor of Southwark and who helped to found the Notting Hill Carnival.</p> <p>Emphasise the rich and varied contribution to British life and culture that has been made by the Windrush generation.</p> <p>In pairs, explore other ways including sport, poetry, food.</p>
Slide 10	<p><b>The Windrush Generation</b></p> <p>Remind the students that the experience of the Windrush generation was not always positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many experienced discrimination and racism.</li> <li>• Life in Britain wasn't always better than the life they'd left behind.</li> <li>• Many years later people still experience discrimination. Mistakes were made by government departments that led to people being treated very badly. In some cases people were forced to leave the UK. These mistakes have been called the <i>Windrush scandal</i>.</li> </ul> <p>Read the apologies made by government ministers.  Ask the students how these apologies make them feel?</p>
Slide 11	<p><b>Reflection</b></p> <p>Draw the students' attention back to the bible reading from the start of the Collective Worship.</p> <p>Explore with them:  How do we ensure that the mistreatment experienced by the Windrush Generation these last 75 years does not repeat itself over the next 75 years?  How do we make sure that people are welcomed without discrimination?</p>
Slide 12	<p><b>From lament to action</b></p> <p>Think together about things you can do in your context. Schools may want to adapt this slide to reflect commemorations in their local area.</p>

Slide 13 / 14	<p><b>Prayer</b></p> <p>Invite the school community, if they would like to, to join you in offering a prayer to God reflecting on the arrival of the Windrush and the contribution and experience of the Windrush Generation.</p> <p>You might like to use the following language: I invite you to join with me in a prayer. For Christians, prayer is talking to God, who they believe listens and hears their prayers. If you want to make this prayer your own, then please join me in with the responses and with saying, <b>'Amen'</b>.</p> <p><i>The prayers can be read out by students. Depending on your context, we strongly recommend that a diverse range of students should be involved in the reading of the prayers. (i.e., not only students that are socially racialised as Black should be called upon to read the prayers. Encourage allies to support and read the prayers as well.)</i></p>
Slide 15	<p><b>Sending Out</b></p> <p>Remind the students that our core message today has been to: Treat everyone we meet with dignity and respect. How can we do that in our school, our homes and in our lives?</p>
Slide 16	<p><b>Further reading</b></p>
Slide 17	<p><b>Additional resources</b></p> <p>Video <a href="#">Windrush Lenny Henry -National Tresures Live BBC One - YouTube</a> He is the co-founder of the Windrush Foundation. He started this foundation at the age of 21. To document the experience of people who came to support the 'Mother land' when she cried for help after World War II.</p>
Slide 18	<p><b>Additional resources</b></p> <p>Interview of staff and students at Bluecoat School, Coventry.</p>