



Time to reflect

Note to teachers: It is recognised that children who are happy and relaxed learn more efficiently and effectively. In this complex world, many people of all ages bring their stresses and anxieties into the workplace. Children are no exception.

A visit to any place of worship can provide a valuable opportunity to sit quietly, to listen, to reflect and experience the tranquil environment. This can create a welcome feeling of calm and contentment as important to children as to adults.

There has been much publicity about Mindfulness with claims that it will boost wellbeing or improve mental health. The rationale set out here is simple and does not make any such claims. At the suggestion of a Walsall primary school, you are invited to consider the advantages of integrating these simple techniques into your classroom and to monitor the results over a period of time. They might boost concentration.

Meditation in the classroom



The techniques for meditation have been integrated into a daily programme at Hillary Primary School in Walsall.

Following their visit to Birmingham Buddhist Vihara, one of the monks visited the school to work with the children to create their own set of rules and to adapt the technique to the classroom environment.

The results have been monitored over many months. The outcome is very positive.

Arifa Ravat Y5 Teacher

Watch this clip from a visit to Birmingham Buddhist Vihara by Y5 children from St Johns and St Peters Academy in Birmingham.

The full video can also be viewed here:

<https://birmingham-faith-visits.theartsociety.org/buddhism>

Guidance from Hillary Street for our Mindfulness sessions

- Sit upright on a chair
- Make sure that you are not leaning against the chair
- Keep your head upright and still
- Place your feet firmly on the ground
- Keep your legs together and still
- Put both hands in your lap (relaxed)
- Your writing hand should be under the other hand
- Check that the palms of your hands are facing upwards
- Close your eyes in a relaxed manner
- Focus by clearing your mind of all thoughts, sounds, smells, tastes
- Avoid fidgeting, scratching
- Breathe slowly -- in--out
- Relax and Enjoy!



“All Things Bright and beautiful..”



A Meditative Walk outdoors

Children walking in silence focusing on their steps and using their five senses was shown on the video:



Part 3 of 3 Buddhism in the community

<https://birmingham-faith-visits.theartssociety.org/buddhism>

A quiet walk in a park with children, perhaps equipped with a sketch book and pencil so that a flower or leaf or bird may be drawn, facilitates a period of reflection, helps observation and creates a journal of ideas.



Buddha Board art

A Buddha Board is inspired by the Zen idea of living in the moment. In a quiet space, a few minutes with a Buddha Board can help adults and children feel less stressed and more calm. This activity is not attached to curriculum outcomes, enabling adults and children to explore and connect with their own feelings. You simply paint on the surface with water with no preconceived goals. As the water evaporates, your art will magically disappear leaving you with a clean slate for another creation.



The Arts Society has liaised with Buddha Board Inc. in Vancouver Canada. www.buddhaboard.com. A UK supplier, Entropy Ltd, was identified.

A Buddha Board is recommended as a useful resource for children who need time out of the classroom, perhaps due to anxiety, anger or stress. Mini Buddha Boards are available for group use. If teachers are interested in purchasing a Buddha Board, or Mini Buddha Boards, please make contact with Matt Zarb of Entropy Ltd, the UK distributor (07968 086081) mentioning the Arts Society's Birmingham Faith Visits project.

<https://birmingham-faith-visits.theartssociety.org/>