HINDUISM – What does it mean to be Hindu in Britain today?

Our Learning

-Most Hindus worship (puja) every day at home and have a shrine there. Family members often worship together. At the shrine, Hindus make offerings to a murti.

-Hindus have many traditions and customs such as daily prayer, they greet each other with the word 'Namaste', they show respect to their elders by taking care of them in their old age and they sing hymns/songs.

-Light symbolises Brahman and represents the gods in heaven.

-Navratri is a Hindu festival celebrated every autumn, lasting for nine days and celebrates good triumphing over evil. Three goddesses are worshipped: Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. It is a colourful time of celebration which includes feasting and dancing. Dandiya Raas is a dance associated with the festival.

The Puja Tray – holds seven items which help the Hindu to use all their senses when they worship, as a symbol that the whole person is taken up with the worship.

Bell: To wake the deity up for worship – to announce the presence of the worshipper

Flowers: Represents the beauty and fragrance of the created world

Diva lamp: For aarti (Aarti- symbolises that worship removes darkness)

Water in a pot: Represents life

Spoon: Used to give water to worshippers after it has been blessed

Murti: an image, usually representing a deity, and used as a focus for worship

Fruit: An offering of food for the deity

KEY VOCABULARY	MEANING
Hinduism	The world's third most popular religion, with around 750 million followers
Veda	Knowledge
Vedas	Most ancient sacred texts of the Hindu religion -there are four
Puja	Daily prayer or worship
Shrine	Anything from a room, a small altar or simply murtis used for worship
Mandir	A sacred building - Hindu temple
Dharma	The Hindu way of life – Duty
Dandiya	Sticks representing the swords used by the goddess Durga

Puja tray   Shrine   Mandir

In Britain there are 830,000 Hindus and 400 mandirs. There is a mandir in Cheltenham.