

R.E.

Why is the Gurdwara important to Sikhs?

Year 3

Term: 3

Important Facts

A **Gurdwara** is the place where Sikhs come together for worship but is also used for other reasons:

- Sikhs visit gurdwaras during special festivals to celebrate the gurus
- It's a place to learn more about Sikhism; Sikh faith, ethics, customs, traditions and texts;
- It's a community centre offering food, shelter and companionship to those who need it

The Flag - **The Nishan Sahib** shows the Gurdwara is a special place of worship. This flag has the Sikh symbol called the **khanda** on it.



Inside a Gurdwara

There are four doors into the gurdwara to show that people from the north, east, south and west are welcome.

Anyone is welcome inside a Gurdwara but there are certain rules to follow:

- cover your head
- take off your shoes
- wash hands and feet
- bow in front of the holy book, touching the floor with your forehead
- sit quietly; never point your feet at the Guru Granth Sahib as this is disrespectful
- men and women sit in different places

The 5Ks

Sikhs show that they follow Sikhism by doing the five following things. These are known as the 5Ks.

The 5Ks are:

Kesh (uncut hair) - Sikhs don't cut their hair but let it grow to show their faith. Men wear turbans to keep it tidy.

Kara (a steel bracelet) - Sikhs wear a bracelet to show they belong to the Sikh faith.

Khanga (a wooden comb). This small comb is worn in a Sikh's hair.

Kachha (special underwear) White cotton underwear is worn to show their Sikh faith.

Kirpan (ceremonial sword). Sikhs wear this over or under their clothes to show they protect each other.



Useful Websites

https://hwb.wales.gov.uk/cms/hwbcontent/Shared%20Documents/vtc/2008-09/re/m_parry/gurdwara/eng/index.html

https://resources.hwb.wales.gov.uk/VTC/ngfl/re/m_parry_carmarthenshire/addoldai/gurdwaratwo.html

Key Vocabulary:

The Guru Granth Sahib - This is the Sikh holy book. It is treated like a person and even has its own room during the night.

Chaur - This is a fan, made from Yak's hair, which is waved over the Guru Granth Sahib as a sign of respect.

Langar - This is a free kitchen where food is served to worshippers without charge.