St Thomas More R.C. Primary – Early Years (Nursery & Reception)
What I am Learning – Autumn 2: Celebrations & Festivals

Area of Learning	Activities	Area of Learning	Activities
Communication & Language	This half term we will be continuing to develop our listening skills through whole class, small group and circle time sessions. We will be discussing different festivals and celebrations e.g. Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day, Diwali, Hannukah, Advent and Christmas. We will be looking at how we and others in our community and around the world celebrate these occasions. We will be introducing lots of new 'subject specific' vocabulary that is closely linked to the different celebrations and continuing to develop our language and communication skills through our conversations and interactions with the children in our areas of continuous provision. Nursery children are accessing BLAST sessions each week – a scheme we use to develop language, auditory and communication skills. Reception children will continue to explore the RWI 'Talk through Stories' sessions that we have been working on over the last half term. The 'Talk Through Stories' programme helps children love stories and brings them to life through talk. It specifically and systematically builds their vocabulary and comprehension so they understand – and love – the books that they will go on to read for themselves.	Mathematics	Nursery – We will be continuing our daily maths sessions following the White Rose Maths Scheme. This half term we will be focussing on repeating patterns, positional language and space and the early stages of seeing quantities of numbers (subitising). Reception – We will continue our daily maths sessions following the NCETM scheme. This half term we will be focussing on counting objects accurately, subitising, using objects to represent numbers and quantities and we will begin to introduce children to the part whole model.
Physical Development	During this half term we will be working on developing our fine and gross motor skills. We will continue with our 'Wiggle me into a Squiggler/Squiggle while you Wiggle sessions – a scheme that encourages lots of 'big' movements that develops gross motor skills, co-ordination and strength which in turn will develop the muscles and movements for fine motor skills. Reception children will be continuing with their weekly PE sessions. We will be continuing to work on fundamental body movements and control. Reception children are also practicing their handwriting and letter formation each day.	Understanding the World	We will continue to look at changes in our environment and discuss them. We will be discussing/learning lots more about different Festivals and Celebrations –Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day, Diwali, Hannukah, Advent and Christmas. We will be discussing the different celebrations that we and other communities have and how these are celebrated. We will explore the different places of Worship, family celebrations, foods, clothing and events that the different communities share. We will also be continuing to develop our Technology skills and using different equipment e.g. iPad's, Interactive Whiteboard.
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	We will be continuing to follow and familiarise ourselves with three school rules – 'Ready, Respectful and Safe' and we will be continuing to encourage the children to be independent in managing their own self-care and putting on/taking off coats/cardigans/jumpers, putting our belongings on our pegs, putting used tissues into the bin and washing out hands and managing the bathroom with independence. We will also be working on our 'MyHappyMind' sessions each week. MyHappyMind is an NHS-backed, science-based mental health and wellbeing programme designed for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) settings, nurseries, and schools to build resilience, self-esteem, and emotional regulation. This half term we will be exploring the brain, how it works and how to ensure we look after it so that we can manage our emotions and be at our best.	Expressive Arts & Design	We will be exploring lots of different creative opportunities during this half term. We will begin our half term by exploring the artist 'Jackson Pollock' and creating bonfire and firework paintings using his approach. We will also be creating poppy artwork, salt dough Diya lamps and Rangoli Patterns for Diwali and we will explore using different tools to paint with. We will also be exploring a variety of media and materials and using these in our independent work. We will also be working on our Nativity songs during this half term in preparation for our Nativity Worships in December.
Literacy	During our Literacy sessions, we will be sharing a number of focus texts linked to our theme. We will be talking about the different celebrations and festivals and how/why they are celebrated. We will be exploring different mark making and writing opportunities linked to our themes. We will be encouraging Nursery children to make different marks to represent the things that they talk about. Reception children will be using their phonic skills to identify the initial sound of words and begin to write some of the sounds that they can hear. Nursery will continue their daily phonics sessions with our focus for this half term being 'Instrumental Sounds.' Reception children will continue with their daily RWI (Read Write Inc) Phonics sessions. The children will be working in smaller groups linked to their most recent phonics assessment. Reception children will be bringing home their weekly 'book bags.' Further information will be emailed to Reception families. Weekly RWI Phonics updates and virtual classroom activities are uploaded to Tapestry.	RE	During our RE sessions, we will be working on 'Branch 2' of our RE scheme 'Lighting the Path.' We will be covering three main areas – Catholic Social Teaching (CST) - human dignity, the story of the birth of Jesus and Advent. Through the CST theme of 'human dignity' we will be exploring the concept that we are all created and loved by God and link this to our previous learning in Branch 1 where we explored the 'Creation Story.' We will also explore 'The Annunciation' and Angel Gabriel's visit to Mary and how God's love, Jesus, enters Creation. We will talk about how Angel Gabriel visited Mary and she was invited to be the mother of God made human (Luke 1:26-31,38). We will look at Annunciation artwork, talk about Mary and wonder what type of person she must have been for God to choose her. We will be sharing the Nativity story, talking about how we would welcome Jesus, the shepherds visiting, the tradition of the Crib and celebrating Christmas. We will also be exploring Advent, the significance of the colour purple, the Advent Wreath and the candles that are lit each week during Advent and their meaning. We will also be sending home our 'Shelter Seeking' sets during Advent (further details about this will be emailed in the coming weeks).