Reception – Autumn 2

'How Do We Celebrate?'

Physical Development

- Gross motor: dance and celebration movement to music
- Balancing on one foot; jumping with two feet together
- Fine motor: cutting along straight lines
- Using paintbrushes and painting tools with control
- Kneading and shaping dough (diva lamps)
- Forming letters correctly with a tripod grip

Communication & Language

- Learn and use festival vocabulary
- Use the past tense to talk about celebrations ('I went…', 'we had…')
- Begin to answer why/how questions
- Begin to use 'because' to explain
- Compare celebrations using 'same' and 'different'
- Retell key events from celebration stories
- Take turns to speak in larger groups

Vocabulary Spine

festival, celebrate, tradition, light, dark, shadow, safe, remember, candle, winter, frost, special

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

- Understand that families celebrate differently
- Show respect for different beliefs
- Reflect on remembrance in an age-appropriate way
- Managing excitement and waiting for a turn
- Beginning to resolve minor conflicts with adult support
- Kindness and standing up to unkindness (Anti-Bullying Week)
- Keeping safe around fireworks, bonfires and candles
- Growing independence with items of clothing
- Knowing what to do if there is a fire

Key Concepts

Respect • Kindness • Community • Belonging

Understanding the World

- Bonfire Night, including firework and fire safety
- Diwali: how Hindus, Sikhs and Jains celebrate
- Remembrance: why we remember people from the past
- Light sources, shadows and the dark
- Materials: which are shiny, reflective or see-through?
- Advent and the Christmas story: why Christmas is special to Christians
- Hanukkah: the Jewish festival of light
- Seasonal change: signs of winter
- Christmas traditions then and now
- Comparing how different communities in this country celebrate

Expressive Arts & Design

- Colour mixing: firework splatter painting
- Printing: poppy printing
- Pattern: rangoli designs
- Clay: pinching and rolling diva lamps
- Music: loud and quiet sounds with percussion (fireworks)
- Performing songs and the nativity to an audience
- Role play: shadow puppet theatre with props
- Explaining which materials they chose
- Winter art: frosty collage and printing

Mathematics

- Identify when a set can be subitised and when counting is needed
- subitise different arrangements, both unstructured and structured,
- make different arrangements of numbers within 5 and talk about what they can see
- spot smaller numbers 'hiding' inside larger numbers
- connect quantities and numbers to finger patterns and explore different ways of representing numbers on their fingers
- hear and join in with the counting sequence, and connect this to the 'staircase' pattern of the counting numbers, seeing that each number is made of one more than the previous number
- develop counting skills and knowledge, including: that the last number in the count tells us 'how many' (cardinality); to be accurate in counting, each thing must be counted once and once only and in any order; the need for 1:1 correspondence; understanding that anything can be counted, including actions and sounds
- compare sets of objects by matching
- begin to develop the language of 'whole' when talking about objects which have parts
- Explore repeating patterns, shape, space and measure through provision

Literacy

Reading & Phonics

- RWI: continue Set 1 Speed Sounds
- Blend CVC words with Fred Talk, magnetic letters and word cards (where appropriate)
- Read simple captions (where appropriate)
- Learn a short poem and rhymes by heart

Writing

- Hear and write initial sounds to make labels
- Orally segment simple words using Fred Fingers
- Form taught letters using RWI formation phrases
- Begin to write simple CVC words and captions when phonically ready

Writing Opportunities

- Firework safety posters
- Diwali card writing
- Poppy labels
- Labels for our light and dark investigation
- Captions for festivals of light
- Christmas cards & wish lists
- Winter clothes lists

Phonics follows Read Write Inc. Children are taught in groups matched to their assessments, so the pace for each child may differ from this overview.

Comprehension & Key Texts

Comprehension

- Retell stories in sequence using story maps
- Anticipate what might happen next in a story
- Talk about illustrations and non-fiction books linked to festivals and seasons
- Timeline: order 5 images using 'first, next, then', with adult prompts
- Emojis: choose an emoji for a character and say why ('sad because…')
- Hashtags: choose the better hashtag from two the adult gives

Key Texts

- The Dragon Who Didn't Like Fire
- The Best Diwali Ever
- Can't You Sleep Little Bear
- A Christmas Story
- Eight Nights, Eight Lights
- The Snow Thief
- Stick Man

Nursery Rhymes & Songs

Week 1 – Remember, Remember the Fifth of November
Week 2 – The Grand Old Duke of York
Week 3 – Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
Week 4 – Christmas Is Coming
Week 5 – I Have a Little Dreidel
Week 6 – The North Wind Doth Blow
Week 7 – We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Say A Poem

Weeks 1 & 2 – Shiny Moon

Weeks 3 & 4 – Night Frights

Weeks 5 & 6 – Winter

Week 7 – Murky Mist

Reception – Autumn 2: Weekly Progression

'How Do We Celebrate?' – 7 weeks

Week:	Weekly Focus:	
Week 1	**Bonfire Night and Fire Safety (3 days)**	Why we celebrate Bonfire Night; staying safe around fireworks, bonfires and sparklers; what to do if there is a fire (get out, stay out, call 999). Signs of Autumn
Week 2	**Diwali and Remembrance**	How Hindus, Sikhs and Jains celebrate Diwali (8 Nov): rangoli and diva lamps. A gentle look at Remembrance (11 Nov): poppies and the two-minute silence.
Week 3	**Light and Dark**	Light sources and shadows; exploring the dark with torches; which materials shine, reflect or let light through? Be bright, be seen (Road Safety Week). Book idea: Can't You Sleep, Little Bear? (Martin Waddell).
Week 4	**Advent and the Christmas Story**	Getting ready for Advent (begins 29 Nov); the nativity story and why Christmas is special to Christians.
Week 5	**Hanukkah**	The Jewish festival of light (4–12 Dec); the menorah; comparing festivals of light.
Week 6	**Winter is Here!**	Signs of winter: frost, cold mornings and dark evenings; how we keep ourselves warm; a frosty winter walk. (Ice and snow investigations follow in Spring 1.)
Week 7	**Christmas Traditions, Then and Now**	How families celebrate Christmas today and how it was celebrated in the past.

Key Dates & Festivals

- Bonfire Night – 5 Nov
- Diwali – 8 Nov 2026
- Remembrance Sunday – 8 Nov; Remembrance Day – 11 Nov
- Anti-Bullying Week and Road Safety Week (mid-Nov)
- Children in Need (Nov)
- Advent Sunday – 29 Nov
- St Andrew's Day – 30 Nov (add Scotland to our UK map)
- Hanukkah – 4–12 Dec 2026
- Christmas Day – 25 Dec

Enrichment, Visits & Home Links

- Firework safety talk from the fire service
- Diwali visitor
- Dark den with torches and reflective materials
- Frosty winter walk
- Christmas Carols for families

Progression Across the Year

Builds on

- Nursery 'Once Upon a Time': Bonfire Night, Remembrance, Christmas
- Autumn 1: family celebrations
- Reception adds Diwali and Hanukkah and compares communities; Remembrance and Christmas used for past and present

Leads to

- Spring 1: we live in the UK; ice and snow investigations; Chinese New Year
- Spring 2 and Summer 1: Eid, Holi, Easter and Vaisakhi complete the year's festivals