

Primary school pupils reach out to religion

YEAR Six pupils from across the county were given the opportunity to receive hands-on religious education as part of the council's focus on religion last month.

All primary schools were invited to four special RE days at Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth feeder comprehensive schools where they were introduced to the world's major religions of Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism and the Jewish, Baha'i and Hindu faiths.

Faith representatives engaged pupils with educational activities which gave an insight into their faith, answered questions and explained the significance of particular artefacts. In addition, Monmouthshire's Schools Literacy and Resource Centre provided exciting quizzes and word searches which gave pupils the opportunity to make use of its comprehensive collection of books on religion and religious artefacts which

are available for loan to all schools in the county.

The four days provided valuable opportunities to raise awareness of the prominent role religious education has in drawing communities together and allowed those taking part to understand its impact locally, regionally and nationally. The events were also a chance for Monmouthshire's year six pupils to visit the secondary establishments they are likely to attend this September.

Children thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and were totally absorbed in the activities provided. One youngster said: "The best thing today was learning about all the different religions," while another declared: "I have learnt that everyone's committed to their own faith but they understand each other's as well".

County Councillor Liz Hackett Pain, Monmouthshire's cabinet member for Schools and Learning said: "It is wonderful to see how so

many young people are involved in this project. They have participated with such enthusiasm to all aspects of these special days. They have had fun with time to reflect on the meaning of faith."

Religious Education consultant Gill Vaisey who organised the four events added: "The response from each and every pupil has shown what a huge success the events have been and what an incredibly valuable experience it has proved to be for our Year 6 pupils across Monmouthshire.

"We are so grateful to all our faith representatives and workshop providers who have given so freely and generously of their time to work with the pupils. This has been a wonderful opportunity for pupils and they have experienced how exciting and valuable it can be to learn about different beliefs and practices whilst enabling them to become better equipped to live in a mutually understanding and respectful society."



Rogiet Primary School pupils listen to the Jewish faith representative

Be aware of protesters on your land

IF you live with a reasonable distance of the Celidh Manor resort are you likely to get asked by anyone at all about camping on your land within the next few months? Gwent Police are asking you to take details (if possible) and let them know as soon as possible.

Gwent is hosting this year's NATO summit and there will be numerous protesters that you would like to be aware of.

Call information in to 101.

Council goes bananas for Fairtrade



Pictured left to right: Deputy Mayor Ned Heywood enjoying the products, Tanya White from Chepstow Fairtrade Forum and Mayor of Chepstow Stephanie Dovey.

FAIRTRADE Fortnight marked Chepstow Fairtrade Forum with a tea party.

This year's event has run from 24th February to 9th March.

At the town council's monthly meeting last Wednesday (26th February) Tanya White, chairwoman of Chepstow Fairtrade Forum, addressed the council to help raise awareness of the producers' plight.

Julie Parslow, chairwoman of Chepstow Fairtrade Forum, spoke about being fair to producers of things that we consume.

Bananas are the fourth most important food crop in global agriculture. The British consume 1.5 billion a year, only one in ten bananas sold in the UK are Fairtrade. This leaves growers in a difficult position. But the forum believes we can all make a difference by choosing Fairtrade products during our shopping.

Chepstow has been a Fairtrade Town since 2008. This year the forum organised a tea party on February 24th to celebrate the day when they became a Fairtrade Town.

Over 100 people came along to the tea party at St Mary's Church Hall. A barga enjoyed the delicious cake made with ingredients as a refreshment of various teas or coffees.

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