

RELIGIOUS STUDIES · Y3-Y6

Sikhism

Knowledge Organiser — KS2 RE

Key vocabulary

1

Sikh

A follower of Sikhism. The word means 'learner' or 'disciple'. There are around 30 million Sikhs worldwide.

2

Guru Nanak

The founder of Sikhism. Born in 1469 in what is now Pakistan. He taught that there is one God who is the same for everyone.

3

Guru

A teacher and spiritual guide. Sikhism has ten human Gurus, then the holy book became the eternal Guru.

4

Guru Granth Sahib

The Sikh holy book. Treated with great respect — it is the eternal Guru. Read in every gurdwara.

5

Gurdwara

The Sikh place of worship. Means 'doorway to the Guru'. Open to all, regardless of faith.

6

Khalsa

The Sikh community of those who have committed fully to the faith. Founded by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

7

Langar

The free community kitchen at every gurdwara, where everyone eats together regardless of background.



8

Ik Onkar

Means 'There is one God'. The opening words of the Sikh holy book and the central belief of Sikhism.

The Five Ks

Five articles of faith for Khalsa

- 1. Kesh — uncut hair (covered by a turban for men)
- 2. Kara — a steel bracelet, reminding the wearer of their unity with God
- 3. Kanga — a small wooden comb, representing cleanliness
- 4. Kachera — special undergarments, representing self-control
- 5. Kirpan — a small sword, representing readiness to defend the weak and stand for justice
- These mark out a Khalsa Sikh and remind them of their commitment to their faith.
- The turban worn by Sikh men is a sign of dignity and equality.

Beliefs and practices

Core elements of Sikh life

- Belief in one God (Ik Onkar) who is the same for all people
- All people are equal — no caste, no gender hierarchy
- Honest work, sharing with others, remembering God
- Daily prayer, especially at dawn
- Reading from the Guru Granth Sahib in worship
- Visiting the gurdwara on Sundays (in the UK) for service and shared meal
- Langar — every gurdwara serves a free vegetarian meal to anyone who comes
- Karah Parshad — a sweet blessed food shared at the end of worship
- Service to others (seva) is central — caring for the community is a religious duty





Sikhs are taught to stand against injustice and protect the vulnerable

Festivals, places of worship and symbols

Sikhs worship at the gurdwara. The most important is the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar, India. Major festivals: Vaisakhi (April — birth of the Khalsa, also harvest festival), Bandi Chhor Divas (autumn — coincides with Diwali, celebrates Guru Hargobind's release from prison), Guru Nanak's birthday (autumn), Hola Mohalla (spring — coincides with Holi). Symbols include: the Khanda (the central Sikh emblem with a double-edged sword and two curved swords), Ik Onkar in script form, the turban. Visitors to a gurdwara remove shoes, cover their heads, and may share langar with the community.

