

## Visit to Nightingale House, April 24<sup>th</sup> 2013

I was delighted to join 16 children from Year 5 on their visit to Nightingale House-a care home in Balham for elderly Jewish people. I was with 4 children who met a group of the residents in the activity room; most of them were involved with baking. The children were very polite and co-operative; they helped the elderly residents by collecting and preparing ingredients and giving out cups of tea.

After about 30 minutes in the activity room, we were taken by Betty, one of the residents, to the care home's synagogue. There we found out more about the Jewish faith and some of the ways in which it is practised. There are many similarities between Judaism and Islam, for instance, separate seating for women and men, the Hebrew script which is read from right to left, the special names for the Jewish calendar months and the different numbering of the Jewish years.

I was impressed by how much the children already knew about Judaism and by the sensible, intelligent questions they asked.

Although this was a brief morning only visit, I felt it was extremely worthwhile in the way it continued the established relationship with the care home and its residents, in the way it enabled the children to meet with elderly citizens and built bridges between two faith communities. I look forward to another visit!

Alison Hatt (Foundation Governor)