



# Synagogue Opens Doors to Explain Culture and Customs

St. Ambrose College students were given a masterclass in the fundamental principles of Judaism when they visited the Hale Synagogue.

As part of the Catholic grammar school's objective to understand and embrace the beliefs and values of other faiths, in last weeks of term boys visit a Synagogue, a Mosque and a Sikh temple to learn from their elders.



Pictured with Sonia Lee to the left and Anne Rosenfield on her right are from left to Rory Corrin Matteo Booth, Shan Ulhaq and Elliot Tramard.

At the Shay Lane Synagogue, established over 40 years ago, they met one of the founders Sonia Lee and award winning educator Anne Rosenfield, who has been honoured for her work 'building bridges' in the local community.

Anne, who together with her husband Harvey runs the synagogue tours, said: "We love meeting pupils from local schools and first give a brief synopsis of the synagogue's history and our culture and customs: We explain how all Jewish people throughout the world, when praying, always face towards Jerusalem. The Hale Synagogue has one side decorated with stone from Jerusalem to remind the congregation of this. We explain why we eat in the Kashrut style, what we wear and, of course, what we believe and our history."

Anne added: "However, each session is led by the pupils and their questions and what they want to know about Judaism."

Sonia Lee, who is one of the founder of the Hale and District Hebrew Congregation, which now numbers 650, added: "It's always important to learn from one another and be open and accepting and we believe the school visits are an important element of the Congregation's rich life."

St. Ambrose College Religious Education teacher, Marika Richardson, who coordinates their interfaith programme, said: "Anne and Sonia are two of Hale Barns' most wonderful and colourful characters who convey both the joy and commitment to God of local Jewish people to an audience eager to listen and learn."