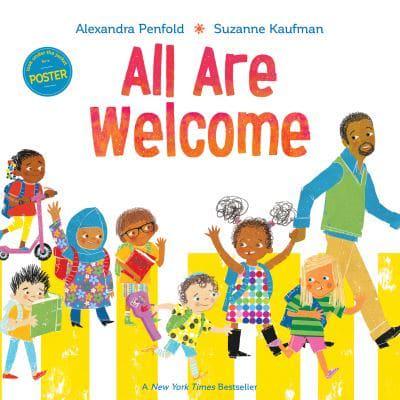
**All Are Welcome RE Ideas**

This lesson explores the importance of making other people feel welcome, whoever they are.

These ideas are aimed at children in Year 2, but can be adapted for older or younger pupils. They are based on the book ‘All are Welcome’ by Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman and link to the class reflection and art ideas in the Diocesan ‘All Are Welcome’ Project. It’s helpful to have a copy of the book, but you can also watch the story being read [here.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5gia39y5uo) **(Slide 1.)**

There are more ideas than you will be able to use, so select the activities that you think will work best with your class, but try to include something from each section. It is better to do one or two things well, than try to cover too much (less is more!)

**Communicate and Apply – Welcoming others**

**Slide 2**Play the Bruno Mars [Welcome Back](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=bruno+mars+welcome+back+RIo+2&view=detail&mid=27BFB8596880DF3B56E427BFB8596880DF3B56E4&FORM=VIRE) song from Rio 2, where Roberto welcomes Jewel back to the Amazon.

Would you feel you’d been welcomed if somebody sang to you like that? If not, then what else could Roberto have done to welcome Jewel home?

Do the class know how people in different countries welcome each other? Some people in England shake hands *(ask the children to do this)* In France and Spain they give a kiss on the cheek. (Or two, or even three!) Some people think that Eskimos rub noses, in some African countries you give people a glass of water and in Hawaii you might welcome someone with a garland of flowers.

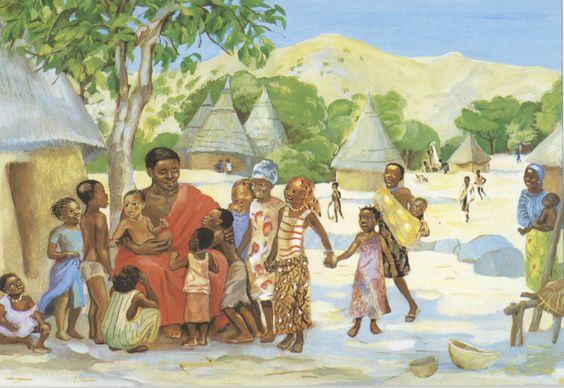
**Slide 3** You might like to show them some of the pictures on this website <https://www.opodo.co.uk/blog/greetings-around-the-world/> and see if the children can copy some of the actions.

Can the children think of any more ways to welcome people? Fist bumps? High five? Bowing or clapping?

Ask them to work in pairs and invent a new way to greet people.

What would their faces and body language look like if they weren’t being friendly and welcoming? Ask them to show you different ways, such as turning their back on someone, folding their arms and looking grumpy, holding their hand up to say go away.

Establish that there are lots of different ways to welcome somebody, but the important things are the feelings of being friendly and open.

**Inquire and contextualise – Jesus welcomes children**

**Slide 4** Show the children this picture from [Jesus Mafa.](https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=BLF%2fD5YG&id=78157F7592CE2E98D27A11E8A7132FD1835E819A&thid=OIP.BLF_D5YGQW58eskkX8OSKQHaE7&mediaurl=https%3a%2f%2fi.pinimg.com%2foriginals%2f0d%2faf%2fc5%2f0dafc517a650f85828690dcd63b226a1.jpg&cdnurl=https%3a%2f%2fth.bing.com%2fth%2fid%2fR.04b17f0f9606416e7c7ac9245fc39229%3frik%3dmoFeg9EvE6foEQ%26pid%3dImgRaw%26r%3d0%26sres%3d1%26sresct%3d1%26srh%3d799%26srw%3d1200&exph=473&expw=710&q=jesus+mafa+jesus+welcomes+children&simid=608037515287421335&FORM=IRPRST&ck=62EE26FC8E367EFE0E27748BBD3D84DB&selectedIndex=0&idpp=overlayview&ajaxhist=0&ajaxserp=0)

What do they notice? Can they spot anything in the picture that nobody else will have seen?

What do the children think is happening in the picture? Who is being welcoming? Can they see anyone who isn’t being friendly?

Read the story of Jesus welcoming the children from Mark 10:13-16. Use a story Bible such as the Lion Storyteller Bible (page 128) or the Desmond Tutu Children’s Storybook Bible (Chapter 34.) Ask the children if they can make three connections between the story and the picture (E.g. lots of children are coming to Jesus, he’s welcoming them, he’s blessing them.)

Is anything missing from the picture? What about the grumpy adults who tried to keep the children away?

Ask the children to act the story out in small groups, or create freeze frames and ask different characters what they are thinking or feeling at different points in the story.

Why do they think that some of Jesus’ friends tried to stop him welcoming the children? Did they think Jesus was too busy? Or that the children weren’t important enough? Or was there another reason?

**Slide 5** You could also use [this video.](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=jesus+blesses+the+children+youtube&view=detail&mid=DB1751DCE68DA6198568DB1751DCE68DA6198568&FORM=VIRE)

**How do Christians welcome people?**

Possibly visit a local church for signs of how they welcome people – is there a welcome sign outside? A welcome desk? A welcome team? A coffee area? Do they have a group to support older people or young mums or people with additional needs?

If it’s not practical to take the class, you could take photos beforehand (perhaps with the class teddy?) Which areas are the most welcoming? Compare Teddy in the carpark, with Teddy in a comfy armchair. Or you could invite a member of the local church to come in and talk about how they welcome people – or set up a Zoom call.

**Evaluate – How we can welcome people**

Giant Steps Ask the children to stand in a line.

Read out these statements about welcoming people and ask them to take a giant step forwards if they definitely agree, a small step forwards if they agree a little, stand still if they’re not sure, or take a step backwards if they disagree.

Ask a few children to explain why they have moved (or not moved.)

* The best way to welcome someone is to say the word ‘welcome.’
* Jesus welcomed everybody, whoever they were.
* Jesus wouldn’t have welcomed people who were unkind or who behaved badly.
* It wouldn’t really have mattered if Jesus hadn’t welcomed the children.
* The children in the story were happy that Jesus had welcomed them.
* It’s especially important to welcome people who look like or sound like us.
* We should make a special effort to welcome people who are different from us.
* Sometimes it can be hard to welcome people.

Alternatively, you could use the Four Corners’ technique. Label the four corners of the room ‘Agree strongly,’ ‘Agree,’ ‘Disagree strongly,’ and ‘Disagree,’ and ask the children to go and stand in the corner that fits their opinion for each statement. After they’ve listened to a few different ideas, encourage them to move places if they have changed their minds.

Talk with the children about what they could do to welcome a new child into their class or school, or a new family to their street? What if they spoke a different language, or dressed differently, or behaved differently from them? Would that make it harder to be welcoming? What could they do to help the new child feel at home?

How could you make your classroom as welcoming as possible? Could you make a special sign or song? Could you choose some children to be official welcomers? Perhaps you could invite a visitor in and make a special effort to make them feel welcome?

**Follow up books**

You may like to read one or more of these books with your class to explore the idea of welcoming strangers.

* The Colour of Home, Mary Hoffman
* Azzi In Between, Sarah Garland
* My Name is not Refugee, Kate Milner
* When the Dragons Came, Lynn Moore & Naomi Kefford
* Frog and the Stranger, Max Velthuijs
* Beegu, Alexis Deacon

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