



Report to Governors: Early Years Lunar New Year Visit to The Silk Road Chinese Restaurant

To celebrate Lunar New Year, our Early Years pupils visited The Silk Road Chinese Restaurant for a cultural enrichment experience linked to their recent learning.

Upon arrival, we were delighted to find that the entire restaurant had been reserved exclusively for our group. The tables were beautifully prepared, each laid with bowls of prawn crackers, napkins and cutlery. For a few memorable moments, the only sound to be heard was that of thirty children happily munching on prawn crackers. The children commented on how “grown up” they felt sitting at the tables in such a special setting.

The attentive staff provided excellent service, waiting on the children and bringing a selection of dishes to each table. The menu included fried rice, chow mein, sweet and sour chicken, and spring rolls. It was particularly pleasing to see all children engaging with the experience so positively. Even those who had initially felt unsure were encouraged to taste the food and many discovered new flavours they enjoyed.

Following the meal, we gathered with the restaurant staff on the carpeted area to watch an educational video about the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac and the story of the Great Race which determined their order. A quiz followed, and the children demonstrated impressive knowledge and understanding. Both Nursery and Reception classes had been learning about the zodiac, as well as the traditions and festivities associated with Lunar New Year, and it was evident how much they had retained. Children who answered questions correctly were awarded prizes, which added to the excitement and sense of achievement.

The celebrations continued with practical, hands-on activities. The children had the opportunity to perform lion dances beneath a spectacular lion costume and head. Others were chosen to create celebratory sounds using cymbals and drums, leading a lively procession around the restaurant. This continued until every child had taken part, ensuring a fully inclusive experience. By the end of the festivities, we were happily exhausted.

Our coach was waiting for us outside, and we returned safely to school in time for home time.

The trip supported the EYFS curriculum in the following ways:

The experience of dining in a real restaurant environment strongly supported **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**. Children demonstrated confidence, independence and appropriate behaviour in a public setting. Many commented on how “grown up” they felt, reflecting growing self-assurance and self-awareness.

The staff provided table service, bringing dishes including fried rice, chow mein, sweet and sour chicken and spring rolls. This aspect of the visit supported several areas of learning:

- **PSED (Managing Self)** – Children tried unfamiliar foods, showing resilience and willingness to experience new things. Even those who were initially unsure engaged positively.
- **Communication and Language** – Pupils listened attentively to instructions, engaged in conversations about the food, and used new vocabulary linked to Chinese cuisine and cultural celebration.
- **Physical Development** – Children used cutlery appropriately and practised fine motor control while serving and eating their meal.

Following the meal, we gathered to watch an educational video about the twelve animals of the zodiac and the story of the Great Race. This directly supported:

- **Understanding the World (Past and Present / People, Culture and Communities)** – Children deepened their understanding of cultural traditions, comparing Lunar New Year celebrations with their own experiences.
- **Communication and Language (Listening, Attention and Understanding)** – Children maintained focus and responded thoughtfully during the follow-up quiz.
- **Literacy (Comprehension)** – Pupils recalled key details from the story of the zodiac race and applied their knowledge when answering questions.

The quiz demonstrated clear progress in learning, as both Nursery and Reception classes had been studying the zodiac animals, traditions and festivities. The children’s ability to recall and apply knowledge showed secure understanding within **Understanding the World** and effective retention of taught content.

The practical activities that followed provided further curriculum links:

- **Expressive Arts and Design (Being Imaginative and Expressive)** – Children performed lion dances under the traditional lion costume and created rhythmic accompaniment using cymbals and drums.
- **Physical Development (Gross Motor Skills)** – Participation in the procession and dance supported coordination, balance and spatial awareness.
- **PSED (Building Relationships)** – Children took turns, cooperated in group performances and celebrated each other’s participation, demonstrating positive peer

interaction.

The visit concluded with a safe return to school by coach, reinforcing expectations around behaviour and safety in the wider community.

Overall, this visit brought classroom learning to life and provided meaningful, real-world application across all seven areas of the EYFS. It particularly strengthened outcomes in Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Communication and Language; Understanding the World; and Expressive Arts and Design. The experience promoted independence, cultural awareness, curiosity and confidence — all key foundations for future learning.

