

Session 4

Pursuing Justice

Key learning

Pupils understand justice as an essential part of peacemaking and learn that even small voices can stand up for what is right.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A3 paper or card
- Markers, paint, scissors, glue
- Examples of Banksy's artwork
- Materials for props/posters for mock march (e.g. sticks, string, banners, paper rolls)

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Story

Be Curious (Community)

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Children's literature

Watch or read up to the point about noise and halting thinking in *Varmints*.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Where are the moments of noise in our lives? How do they relate to disagreements or conflict?
- Why are moments of quiet or silence important? What do they allow us to do?
- What has happened to the creatures in the story? Does this remind you of any past or present events? (Some pupils may link this to colonisation or extremism – additional guidance provided in the appendix on p74)



Highlight the mood and imagery the authors use:

- The authors use dark and light elements. How does this affect the mood you feel as a reader/observer?
- (Optional) Recall the artwork created in the last session. How does this piece differ from the one created previously?

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Children's literature

Read up to "It was...TIME" in *Varmints*.

Talk to pupils about what "darkness leading to light" means.

Ask:

- Why do you think people use the words 'dark' and 'light' to talk about hard times and hopeful times?

This can help children begin to explore the metaphor and its deeper meaning.

Highlight that in life, we sometimes face difficult times that make us feel sad, scared, or confused. These are like the dark parts of our journey. But just like the creature finds a light switch, we can always find brightness again.

Ask:

- Have you ever had a time when you felt like you were in the 'dark' – maybe confused, sad, or worried?

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- What helped you feel better again?
- What does 'light' mean to you when you're going through something difficult?

The creature in the book faces challenges, but instead of giving up, they find hope – even in the darkest times.

Encourage discussion with questions such as:

- What challenges did the creature face?
- How did they respond?
- What do you think the 'light' was for the creature?
- What helped them keep going?

'Darkness leading to light' reminds us that even in tough times, there's always hope and a way forward. By staying strong, having faith, and learning from experiences, we can find happiness again – just like finding light in a dark room.



Invite pupils to reflect on:

- How can we be a 'light' for someone else when they're going through a hard time?
- What can we learn from hard times that can help us grow stronger or wiser?



Activity

Peaceful protests

Look at examples of peaceful protests using powerful but safe imagery.

Ask:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Suggested questions for discussion:

- How can people express their opinions peacefully?
- Why do people have peaceful protests?
- How can peaceful protests help bring change in society?



Activity

Creative campaigns

Pick one of the activities below to do with your pupils:

1 Banksy-inspired art

Banksy's art often uses simple yet powerful images to express big ideas about society, such as the beauty of nature, urban development, and environmental conservation.

Discuss how Banksy's art addresses these themes, then encourage pupils to create their own artwork about nature, urban change, or protecting the environment.

Remind pupils to respect public spaces – art should be created on paper or canvas, not walls (without permission).

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We've provided some additional slides with some images of Banksy's artwork, or you may like to print your own. You'll find this on the slides.

2 Wildlife protection march

Inspired by the book's theme of conservation, pupils can organise a march to raise awareness about protecting wildlife and habitats.

Create posters with messages like "Save Our Wild Friends" or "Protect Our Forests" and walk together peacefully to advocate for nature preservation.

3 Anti-bullying campaign

Varmints addresses standing up to bullies and promoting kindness. Pupils can organise a peaceful protest against bullying at school or in the community.

Create banners with messages like "Spread Kindness, Not Bullying" or "Stand Up Against Bullying," and organise activities promoting inclusivity and empathy.



Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

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Bible passage

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

John 1:5 (NIV)

This reminds us that even in difficult moments, light and hope can always overcome darkness.

It is undeniably the case that some people have more power than others and this power can be used for good or ill.

Ask:

- How was power used in *Varmints*?
- How much power do you think you have? What influences this?
- How can you use your position of power? Emphasise that even from a young age, our pupils can still stand up against things that they see as wrong and that their voices matter.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Sometimes, we see things that aren't right, and it can be hard to know what to do. But standing up for what is wrong means being brave and speaking up or helping out when we see someone being treated unfairly. It's important to remember that even though it might be

difference.

difficult, standing up for what is right helps make things better and shows that we care about others. By doing this, we help make our world a kinder and fairer place for everyone.

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Prayer

Dear God,

Give us the courage to stand up for what is right and to speak out when we see something that isn't fair or kind. Help us to be brave and loving, just as you are. Guide us to make choices that reflect your love and justice. May we always act with compassion and make our world a better place for everyone.

Amen.



End of session 4

difference.