A special place for Buddhists
Manchester Buddhist Centre is one of many special places for Buddhists all over the world. Sometimes these places are called “temples”.

What happens in the Centre?
In the Centre there are shrine rooms, offices and a flat where several Buddhists live together. In our shrine halls, people worship the Buddha and meditate. They learn about the things he taught about kindness and awareness.

People also come to use our health centre, cafe and bookshop. Whether or not they are Buddhist, **everyone is welcome** if they respect this special place.

Lots of women and men volunteered as builders for two years to turn this old Victorian warehouse into a special place. We try to keep it simple but beautiful so people will enjoy it when they come here.

Think about and discuss
Volunteering
- Why might people give their free time to do a long, dirty job, for no money?
- Have you ever given your time to do something to help others?
- Why did you do it? How did it make you feel?

Looking forward
- What do you think you might see at the Buddhist Centre?
- What do you know already about Buddhism?
- What else do you want to know?
- What questions do you want to ask?

Some things to think about when you arrive
- What kinds of colours do you see around you?
- What can you smell?

How do people behave at the Buddhist Centre?
When you arrive, people may be working or meditating. Please keep your voice down. However, we like to have fun too and we want you to enjoy yourself. There’s no need to be silent!
Our special place
You’ll be going upstairs to our shrine room, the most special room in our Centre. Here we will ask you to take off your shoes and behave respectfully. Buddhists love the Buddha and want to show respect for him and the things he taught them.

Who can be a Buddhist?
Anybody can be a Buddhist. There are many different kinds of Buddhist all over the world.

Some Buddhists are nuns or monks: women or men who have chosen to live a simple life, studying, teaching and meditating. They don’t have jobs or partners like most people. They often live with other Buddhist nuns or monks. They wear robes and shave their heads to show that they are living this special life.

Manchester Buddhist Centre is run by the Triratna Buddhist Order. Members of the Order are not monks or nuns. They wear ordinary clothes. When they are teaching they wear a piece of white cloth called a kesa round their necks, to show that they have made a special commitment to following the Buddha’s teachings and being kind and helpful.

- Could you guess someone was Buddhist, if they weren’t wearing robes?
- How do we know what a person is like?

Symbols
The Three Jewels
Outside, there’s a sculpture over our front door. It’s made out of metal, by a Buddhist artist. This is the symbol of the Three Jewels, the three things which are most precious to a Buddhist. These are:

- the Buddha
- the Dharma (the teachings of the Buddha) and
- the Sangha (the community of Buddhists)

Look out for another sculpture by him. It’s made out of bits of old cars and machinery.

The Buddha-figure
Upstairs in the shine room, you’ll see our giant gold Buddha statue. He is sitting on a lotus flower and holding another lotus flower. The lotus is a symbol. The Buddha figure is made of resin and covered with a very thin layer of gold.

Think about and discuss
- What is a symbol?
- What might a flower mean, or symbolise?
- What is resin and why isn’t the Buddha made of solid gold?

See you soon!
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