

Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools



This resource is for meetings thinking about or already undertaking outreach with children and young people. It offers ideas and activities for outreach sessions, visits to schools or for when schools visit Meeting Houses. It is offered with the intention of providing opportunities for children and young people to find out about Quaker beliefs, values and practices and give an experience of Quaker worship.



Offering a range of ideas to use in outreach with children, young people and for Quaker Meetings visiting or hosting schools.

Using this resource

There are five sections to help you plan and structure your session.

Getting ready: planning and thinking about the session in advance.

Gather: ideas for welcoming people and starting the session.

Engage: beginning to think about your theme.

Respond: activities to link to your theme and help children and young people from primary and secondary schools explore Quakerism.

Reflect: ways to complete your session with reflection.

Review: to use after your session to evaluate what has happened.

To ensure a **balanced session** choose at least one element from each of the sections Gather, Engage, Respond and Reflect. Timings are not stated, as this will depend on the group and how the activities are used. This resource includes additional sheets with information and activities.

Resources and Equipment Needed: In each section and on and on additional sheets There is a list of resources needed for each activity.

Getting ready

Planning

Good planning is vital to the success of your event. Start to think well ahead of time to make sure that you have considered and done everything needed to make it successful. If there are children or young people in, or connected with, your meeting involve them in the planning and preparation of the event – invite them to be part of a planning group.

Sheet A has ideas to help with planning and Sheet B has ideas for making links with local schools.

Preparing Hearts & Minds

We are all people on spiritual and religious journeys. Children and young people are a valid part of the Quaker community. This means being a part in all aspects of the life of the Meeting. We should talk to children and young people about Quakerism and we can invite them to join us and share in Meeting for Worship.

There are children and young people with little or no religion, but who are aware of their spirituality. Quakers have something special to share with them. We can try to 'speak to their condition' to equip and encourage them on their spiritual journey.

Sheet A has some questions to ensure that you are prepared for the session.

Underpinning references and ideas

National Quaker Week provides an excellent opportunity to undertake outreach with children and young people and make links with schools. Make one of your National Quaker Week activities something that enables children and young people in your community to discover more about Quakerism.

Advices & Queries 18 & 19

Quaker faith & practice 28.09, 28.10

Linking Churches and Schools (2003)
Gillian Wood
Churches Together in England.
ISBN 1874295239
Available from CTE
Tel 020 7529 8141

Gather

Welcome

Make your Meeting House and the rooms you are using welcoming. Put up some Quaker posters, available from the Quaker bookshop or Quaker Life Outreach, and make a welcome sign.

If you are visiting a school or people are visiting your Meeting wear name badges so people can talk to you by name. If people are coming to you have stickers and pens available for them to quickly make a name badge when they arrive. It will help people to feel welcome and will help you know you're talking to.

Introductions

If a group is coming to your Meeting have the whole group together for a welcome – if possible use a room other than the room used for worship. If you're visiting a school say that you're pleased to have been invited to talk about who Quakers are, what they believe about God and what they do. Outline what you are going to do - say that you hope they enjoy it. Introduce yourself and the other people involved in the session. Have a quick go round of names if the group is less than 20.

Resources needed: posters, sticky labels or badges for names.

Engage

Starting Points *(young people and children)*

Ask people what they know about Quakers? Have they heard anything about Quakers before? Reassure people that it's ok to say even if they're not sure or they are only things that they think they know. Write these up on a flip chart. If there are few or no replies you could ask if anyone has heard of Cadbury's chocolate, Rowntrees sweets, Barclays Bank, Clarks Shoes or Fisher Price toys – say that these were all originally started by Quakers. Write the names on a big piece of paper. You could also pass round around one or two five pound notes with Elizabeth Fry on the back – say that she helped people in prisons. Get the money back!

Resources needed: Large sheets of paper, marker pens.

Being a Quaker *(young people and children)*

Ask 1 or 2 people from your Meeting to talk for a few minutes about what being a Quaker means to them; why they are a Quaker; what they like about being a Quaker, what is important for them about being a Quaker and what they believe. Think very carefully about timing – up to 3 minutes each for 2 or 3 people is plenty. Ask a range of people. If it can be arranged ask children or young people from your meeting to speak if they would like to – their own school may give them time off to do it as part of their experience and development.

Quaker Meeting House and Worship *(young people and children)*

Ask if anybody has been or goes to a church, temple, mosque or synagogue? Acknowledge any responses. Say that Quakers are a bit different from people in other churches, temples, mosques or synagogues because we worship together in quiet and stillness. This is a time to think about God, to listen to God and to feel God. We sit together sharing quiet and stillness with other people. Some people pray, some think about things or problems, some read from a special book like the Bible or a Quaker book. Gradually people become very still and relaxed. Ask someone from your meeting to talk about what they do in Meeting for Worship. Say that everybody will have a chance later on to be part of a Quaker meeting.

Sheet C has ideas for introducing worship.

Sheet D has two stories about Meetings for Worship.

Sheet E offers some ideas for children and young people of how to get settled in the quiet.

Journeys in the Spirit Children's Issue 12 has a simple guide to help with stilling, this will be particularly useful for younger children or those who are not used to silence.

References & other resources

National Quaker Week pack.
Available from Quaker Life Outreach, address on the back page.

Meeting the Quakers (DVD 2000)
ISBN
014788919678

An Introduction to Watford Quakers. (DVD 2007)

Lighting Candles in the Dark, Stories of Love in Action (2001)
Friends General Conference
ISBN
0962091235

All available from the Quaker Bookshop
020 7663 1030

Places of worship: the Quaker Meeting House (1996)
Margaret Griffin & Paul Bellingham
ISBN
0856040681

Other ways into the theme

Show a clip from either of the two recent DVDs listed above - these give a clear and simple introduction.

Journeys in the Spirit

This is a resource for children and young people's work.

Useful editions of Journeys in the Spirit include:

Children's Issues 12 & 14 for more activities on worship

Children's Issues 4,5, 6, 7 & 8 and Youth Issue 1 for more activities exploring Quaker Testimonies

Children's Issues 9 to 19 for activities exploring peace work done by Quakers today

Journeys in the Spirit is available free by subscription from the CYP office (address on page 4). There are two editions **Children** (monthly) **Youth** (three times a year). To access the **Journeys in the Spirit archive** go to www.quaker.org.uk/cyp click on 'Resources' from the menu on the left hand side then select 'Journeys' Archive'.

Engage continued

Exploring the Quaker Testimonies

(children) Say that Quakers have often done brave things because they don't like war, fighting, slavery, pollution, stealing or lying. Ask 1 or 2 people from your meeting to talk about what they have done or felt about 1 or 2 of these things.

(young people) Ask people from your meeting to talk about how they as an individual seek to put one of the Quaker testimonies into practice in their lives. Ensure that there is a range of people and that it includes the extraordinary and the everyday as both can be equally inspiring examples of how Quakers have put their faith into action.

Sheet F has two activities to help people start thinking about the testimonies.

Respond

Quaker Meeting House and Worship *(young people and children)*

Set up the room for Meeting for Worship. Before everybody goes in make sure there is a doorkeeper to shake hands. Ask your visitors to use their senses – to look around, to smell, to listen. Give out small notebooks or pads for people to jot down the things that they notice. Ask some questions: What can you see (objects, colours, etc)? What can you smell? What can you hear? Say that this is where we, Quakers, worship together. After a little while, say that it is like a church, synagogue, mosque or temple. Ask them if they have ever been to a church, mosque, temple or synagogue? What differences can they spot? Are there things they might expect to see that they can't? What do they think this might say about how Quakers worship? Move from this into a short Meeting for Worship *Sheet C has ideas for ideas on introducing worship.*

See Sheet G for two additional activities to help people discover the Meeting House

Exploring the Quaker Testimonies

- **Ways to think about living *(young people)***

Give out *Sheet H* 'Ten Principles for life'. Explain that these have been adapted from a book written by Richard J Foster an American Quaker.

Firstly ask people to rank each statement for themselves on the scale of 1 to 5. 1 is they do it all the time or think it is important, 5 is they never do it or don't think it's important. Ask people to get into groups of five to compare answers and discuss what they thought – are there any surprises?

Mention that Quakers have what they call *Advices & Queries* that are a series of questions that can help people to think about what their principles for life might be.

Resources needed: one copy of Sheet H for each person.

- **Quaker peacemaking *(children)***

Introduce the story on *Sheet I* by saying that 'Quakers think it is important to do what we can to make the world more peaceful and less violent, and to do things in a way that treats everyone as if they matter. This is a true story about that.'

You can either read the story out (take care to read very slowly so the youngest can understand it) or ask group members to read each paragraph in turn. Once you've read the story, ask if anyone had trouble understanding it and clarify accordingly; then use the questions at the end of the text with the group. You might then go on to do the activity 'a picture of peace' on *Sheet I*

For a modern Quaker peacemaking story read 'The Story of the Trident Three' see Journeys in the Spirit Children's Issue 10 Sheet 10.C.

Quaker beliefs *(young people and children)*

Think about what you have heard people say about their Quaker beliefs. Which do you like the most? Which do you like the least? What confused you? Which bits would you like to know more about? Which things resonated with you? *Give people a chance to ask questions or use one of the Quaker Belief activities on Sheet G.*

Reflect

Give everyone four pieces of paper, each with one of the images on *Sheet J*. Ask people to think about being in the Meeting House or hearing about Quakers. Ask these questions:

- What will they remember about the session/visiting the meeting house?
- What have they learnt or realised about Quakers and Quakerism?
- What will they be taking away for themselves?
- What three things would they say if someone asked them what they know about Quakers?

Ask people to share if they wish.

Resources needed: Sheet J per person cut into four for each person

Check if people have further questions, say you hope they enjoyed the session/visit and say goodbye.

Helping them to find out more:

When people leave you might like to give them a small pack with some further information. Suggested contents are: • Quakers '8 fold' leaflet; • Quaker worship leaflet; • 'Living What We Believe' leaflet about Quaker testimonies; • An outreach reply card to request an enquirers pack; • Quaker Q badge; • Advices & Queries (depending on their age). These are in the National Quaker Week pack or available from Quaker Life Outreach or the Quaker Bookshop.

Review

For adults to consider after the session:

Did everyone get the opportunity to speak and be listened to?

Did everyone get the opportunity to listen to others?

Did everyone have the opportunity to reflect?

How did the activities enable children and young people to:

Find out about Quaker beliefs and values?

Learn about the Quaker testimonies and their relevance in today's world?

Experience Quaker worship?

We'd be really interested to hear how your session went. Contact Simon Best by email at: simonb@quaker.org.uk or by post to the address below.

Links and resources

Quaker Life Outreach 08081091651 outreach@quaker.org.uk: www.quaker.org.uk

Quaker website for young people: www.yqspace.org.uk

Quaker Bookshop 020 7663 1030

Quaker Quest an open and relaxed way to help people find out about the Quaker way of life. There are Quaker Quests in various parts of the country. Guidance is available for people who wish to run sessions in their area www.quakerquest.org

Journeys in the Spirit is available free by subscription from the CYP office (address below).

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Email bevelies@quaker.org.uk Website: www.quaker.org.uk

References & other resources

Journeys in the Light (2007)
Jan Arriens
ISBN
9780955 618314

Good Friends (2002)
Judith Baresel
ISBN
0852453434

Whispers of faith (2005) writing by young Friends about their experiences of Quakerism
ISBN
1888305371

Who do we think we are? young Friends' commitment and belonging.
Swarthmore
Lecture 1998

Quakers: teachers' notes : easy planning reference for the agreed religious studies syllabus using Quaker faith & practice (2001) available from the Quaker Life Resources Room. Tel 020 7663 1013

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