

Children's meeting at <Lancaster >

Welcome to <Lancaster > Quaker Meeting. This is a leaflet for parents/carers to explain the arrangements for children's meeting. <Lancaster > meeting has a growing number of children of all ages and they are an important part of the meeting. Children learn about Quaker spirituality, practice and values through activities which are creative and engaging.

At the start of Meeting for Worship on a Sunday morning, everyone of all ages gathers in the meeting room for 10.30am. The children stay with the adults for the next 10-15 minutes. Don't worry if your child finds it hard to be quiet and still during this time (many adults do too!). Most small children find the silence strange to start with and might ask questions, talk, sing or grumble. Please don't worry about this or feel that you need to take your child out of the meeting room if they are not quiet (although it is fine to do this if they are upset and you think it might help).

After 10-15 minutes, some of the adults in the meeting will stand and head for the door, followed by the children. These are the adults who have agreed to lead or help with children's meeting. Those leading the children's meeting are usually part of the Children's Committee and the meeting has completed a disclosure and barring service application to check that they are appropriate adults to be working with children. They will be assisted by volunteers who have signed up on the rota in the hallway.

Children's meeting usually takes place in the children's room upstairs in the meeting house, which is equipped with craft materials, books and some toys. We sometimes use neighbouring rooms and the meeting house garden. Occasionally, there might be a local visit to somewhere outside of the meeting house but those leading children's meeting will inform you about this in advance.

Please do accompany your child into children's meeting, especially if they are attending for the first time or they are small and would like you with them. If you have a child who is confident about coming to children's meeting by themselves, please try to be aware of when the children's meeting might be short of helpers by checking for gaps on the rota and volunteering yourself occasionally.

Older children approaching their teenage years may prefer to stay with the adults in the main meeting room and that is fine too.

Children's meeting often starts by sitting in a circle for a short time of welcome and quiet or reflection. Depending on the numbers of children and helpers, the group will then sometimes split into two (under 7s and over 7s), so that activities can be age appropriate.

At the end of meeting/children's meeting, the children will rejoin the adults in the main meeting room and usually, when the notices are given out, there is an opportunity for the children to share what they have been doing, after which they will wait in the room next door for parents to try to minimize noise during the notices. Please note that parents/carers are then responsible for their own children during coffee.

The children's committee meets regularly and some of the meetings are held at a time when all children and parents/carers can join in the meeting and everyone is

very welcome.

If you have any questions about children's meeting, please ask anyone who is leading the children's meeting or any members of the children's committee. If you provide your contact details, you will be notified about events.

The current members of the children's committee are:-