

Journeys in the Spirit with children aged 0 to 4



This is a simple guide to being with children aged 0 to 4 years in a Quaker setting. This might be in Children's Meeting for Worship, a Quaker all age residential event or a one day Quaker gathering.

This offers ideas, resources and frameworks to encourage and equip volunteers being with this age group in Quaker Meeting.

Being with children aged 0 to 4 is very special – a gift. Being in Quaker Meeting with children of this age can be a delight.

Thinking of 0 to 4s having a full and accepted place in the life of the Meeting can be a source of joy and also of challenge. Quaker Faith & Practice, Advices and Queries 19 contains the following thoughts for reflection on this challenge for ourselves and for Meeting as a whole:

Rejoice in the presence of children and young people in your meeting and recognise the gifts they bring. What are the gifts of children of these ages?

How do you share your deepest beliefs with them, while leaving them free to develop as the spirit of God may lead them? Can you put your deepest beliefs into how you prepare a Children's Meeting for Worship space for 0 to 4 year olds.

The youngest of people offer us the chance to be with them in play, song, rhyme, stories, sadness, excitement, frustration, tiredness, upset, wonder, thrill, noise, running, crawling and utter concentration.

Are you ready both to learn from them and to accept your responsibilities towards them? What can you learn from a baby or child of these ages?

A simple guide to being with children aged 0 to 4 years old in a Quaker setting

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Things to consider when developing your space

Space

What you need

Young children learn about the world around them by exploring and discovering their environment and the people in it. As they play they learn about relationships, ideas, feelings, objects and how things work. This is the same for faith development. Since this play experience is so important, creating a space in which children's faith can grow will take careful thought and planning.

Room space

Find out what room space is available to you for this group. Once children are mobile they need space to move about, space for a range of activities and areas to be available e.g. a quiet area, a storytelling rug, an area for construction.

Look at what furniture is available to you, is it child sized? Is the room well lit and warm? Do you have access to running water? Is there a space you can designate for babies? Set up a system for contacting parents if you need to e.g. parents sit in designated area in the meeting.

Safety

Check that the space is safe, for example: plug sockets covered, loose carpet secure, no stacked furniture. Make sure the space is clean. Have a basic first aid kit in your room and if possible someone with first aid training on hand.

Have a fire and emergency evacuation plan and make sure all helpers know what it is. It is a good idea to display it in the room.

Make sure you have sufficient helpers for the number of children in your care. See *Setting up on page 3*.

Resources

Collect together resources that are appropriate for this age group wooden bricks, jigsaws, books, craft resources, dressing up clothes, stacking toys etc. These can be manufactured or natural/reclaimed. Natural resources are great because they are freely available, reflect seasonal change and provide a sense of wonder in the world around us. Young children learn by using all their senses, so consider using play dough, corn flour, sand and water.

Where will you store your resources? Is there any money available to spend on good quality resources?

How a room might look



Things to consider when getting ready

Volunteers

Setting up

How to do it

Having found a space for your group, addressed issues of safety and gathered some resources, here are some other considerations for setting up your group.

In order to offer the best care for young children you will need enough adults to interact with them. An appropriate ratio of adults to children is one adult to every two infants and one adult to every three children aged between one and four years old. There should always be at least two volunteers present so that one is able to leave the room to contact a parent or guardian. These adults will all need to be CRB checked. Ask your children's committee, an Overseer or contact your Area Meeting Safeguarding Co-ordinator about how to do these checks.

A group name

It is a good idea to give your group a name. The children will then feel a sense of belonging to that group and identify with it. You could discuss this with your helpers e.g. Bytesize, Sparklers, Tiddlywinks, Little Foxes, Small Fry, Little Lights. Children could contribute to making a sign with their group name on it.

A welcome board

When children arrive welcome them and their parents. Set up a board that has photos and names of children and volunteers. The children can find their picture and put it up on a '*we are here board*' so all can see who is part of the group that session. Use the children's names often, doing so shows the children that you care about them individually. If you are unsure of their names maybe put a name label on them especially if they are new to the group so that all volunteers can remember their names. Volunteers should have name labels too.

Knowing your group

Collect information about the children in your group: family information, allergies, sensitivities, likes and dislikes, special toys or objects like blankets or cuddlies. Create a form that parents/guardians can fill in when they first come to the group.

On the day

Set up your space before the children arrive. Have a little quiet time before the session. Make sure all adults know what the theme is and what activities are available that day. Also make sure that the adults know what they are responsible for e.g. who is with the babies and who is with the slightly older children.



Sessions

A simple outline

A little structure goes a long way

It is important to establish routines and rituals within your group. These will provide continuity and security for children, especially anxious children. If the pattern of the session is the same every week they know where they are and what is coming next. Children need to know how things are done in their group – birthdays and other celebrations for example. Here is a suggested structure for your session that you could consider using for a session lasting about 40 to 45 minutes.

Welcome

The children come in, find their name and put it on the board. Gather any information from the parents they may like to tell you about their child this time. When children arrive always have one person to greet them and another in the room to welcome and settle them. Children can settle and play with some toys set out ready for them to engage with and to be involved with. These could be linked to your theme and might include books to look at, jigsaws of book characters, empty paper books to draw and write in; simple toys and construction or imaginative equipment.

Gather

Gather on a carpeted area or rug as a group, maybe sit in a circle. Always begin with a time for stillness and centering. *See page 5 for more detail about setting up stilling and centering activities and what to do.*

Theme

Introduce the theme using a story, a song, a poster, puppets, figures to act out a drama or use Godly Play. With a story have a playful group activity to engage with the theme of the story. This should where possible be active. *See page 6 for story ideas.*

Snack

Share a snack and a drink. Fruit, crackers, vegetables, juice etc.

Activity

Provide a range of creative, physical, building, messy, role play, exploration and quiet activities to fit with your theme or story. *See pages 7 – 9.*

Tidy up

Involve the children in tidying up. Have a piece of music or a song that indicates that it is time to tidy up. *See page 9.*

Stillness, prayer & song

Gather back on the carpet area or rug for some stillness to close the session. *See ideas on page 5.* This could also include a sending out prayer or rhyme - this could stay the same for a number of weeks. Thank each child for coming. Children then remove their names from the board or sign and return them to where they are kept. Know what the arrangements are for children to be re-united with their parents.

Reflecting time

Together with other volunteers think about what went well about the session, raise any concerns and share ideas for next time.

The Message Bible:

Matthew 18:2

‘For an answer Jesus called over a child, whom he stood in the middle of the room, and said, "I'm telling you, once and for all, that unless you return to square one and start over like children, you're not even going to get a look at the kingdom, let alone get in. Whoever becomes simple and elemental again, like this child, will rank high in God's kingdom. What's more, when you receive the childlike on my account, it's the same as receiving me.’



Things to do with children

Stilling, centering and quiet activities

Stillness, centering and quiet activities mark the beginning and ending of your Quaker Meeting for Worship for 0 to 4 year olds. Whatever way you do it you are giving children practice and experience of being in deeper quiet. This can grow into an inner resource that reinforces and nurtures an ability for awe, wonder and attention to the Divine that children naturally have.

Stillness, centering and quiet can be encouraged at any time but you will also need a particular time for this when you begin and end your session.

For this you will need:

Rugs, cushions and coloured fabric of soft colours for draping on walls and over furniture in your carpet or rug area.

Focus objects or sounds to draw and hold the attention of children and babies. These can include candles in safe holders, a lava lamp with coloured oil and bubbles of different hues, a musical box, Tibetan singing bowl or finger chimes, a bowl of water with floating candles.

What to do:

Gather the children on the rug or carpet area. Use the focus object or sound that you have chosen. Hold the quiet for a few minutes - children soon become comfortable with 5 minutes or more. All this can also be done outside on warm days. After some weeks explain the Elder's role - ask a child to share the role with an adult volunteer.

Treasure boxes

A treasure box is a collection of themed resources chosen to engage children's attention, encourage curiosity and spark imagination. Treasure boxes are designed to provide starting points for young children's investigation and exploration of the world around them. They could be a natural box with seasonal items in, with different fruits and vegetables in or a tool box with a variety of play tools or a selection of kitchen equipment.

Treasure boxes can be used across the age range 0-4 (once babies can be propped up). It is important that initially the child chooses what to explore. With babies the adult is attentive and maintains social contact but does not intervene with the play unless it is a matter of safety. With older children questions can be asked e.g. which spoon is biggest; can you find a way to...?

Examples of what to put in a treasure box:

A touch basket for babies – fir cones (different sizes), shells, gourds, big feathers, a pumice stone, a loofah, a natural sponge, pebbles (smooth and rough), driftwood, corks, rope, fruit, cardboard tubes, paper (foil, tissue, greaseproof), a hairbrush, a shaving brush, a nail brush, a tea strainer, a wooden bowl, a small teddy.

A natural box with leaves for older children – a selection of simple leaves (sycamore, beech), pine tree needles, different coloured leaves, leaves with stripes and different patterns, hairy leaves, shiny and prickly leaves, scented leaves (mint, sage). Also have paper, pens and wax crayons available and space for sorting. Questions to ask: Which leaf do you like the best? Why do you think that? I wonder why some leaves have a strong smell?

For further ideas see More resources on page 12.

Stories

Hearing a story can be like a door opening, without effort, onto another world, another person's life. They are simple magic. With children aged 0 to 4 stories are one of the main starting points for a session. They can be the stimulus for every sort of activity suggested in this guide.

What is story? It is usually in a book but it can also be simple objects as in the method called Godly Play. Story can also be told using finger puppets, a single puppet, a sock over the hand with stuck on wobbly eyes or cut out figures on lolly or garden sticks. Puppets can



be bought or made. Use your carpeted area for story telling or, if the weather is good, go outside under a tree or an awning. Always practice the story first. Here are some stories and activities that Friends have used or developed:

“We had the story of the Very Hungry Caterpillar - The caterpillar in this story turns into a butterfly but has to eat and eat to get there! We all talked about how we change as we grow up. A mirror was brought so that each child could look at themselves. After that one of the mum's sang a song "If you have blue eyes jump up high...." leading to brown hair, wearing pink etc etc, during which the children jumped around as appropriate. Then outlines of children were handed round and the children personalised these.”

“Any Shirley Hughes stories, they are about little children and very good for looking at what is going on in our everyday lives and talking about feelings. You really can't beat telling stories in your own words, Biblical and Quaker are worth a try. Tell them very, very simply using good pictures if you have them (in an older book maybe) or any toys and bits and pieces you have around to bring it to life. You have to repeat, going over the same ground, and work your way to finding the right kind of language for your group. I recently talked through King Herod and the Holy Innocents with a girl aged 4, and known to be very sensitive! 'Zoe goes to Meeting' is another good story, a bit dated, but children won't mind. It is not very close to what goes on in 'our' meeting but is a good starting point to talk about Sunday meeting for Worship and what might be going on.” Get it online at: www.quaker.org.uk/working-children-0-12-years-0

“We used Handa's Surprise' by Eileen Browne at Yearly Meeting. We chose it because we were thinking about giving. The story is very simple with large clear pictures of fruit. We talked about the different animals and fruit in the story, counted down the fruit as it was eaten by the animals and then (the best bit) tried real fruit. There was also discussion about favourite fruit and which fruit the children would give to their best friend.”

Some other stories that have been used and enjoyed:

'Giraffes can't dance' (*1): The giraffe's friends help her feel more confident.

'In God's name': What name do you have for God?

'Yes we can': Little Roo and friends usually play really well but not today.

'It's lovely when you smile': Little Roo wakes up and just feels grumpy.

'The velveteen rabbit' (*2): Rabbit learns how toys become real when loved.

'The owl babies': The three baby owls wake up and their mother has gone.

'Jesus' Christmas story': The inn keeper is tired and people keep knocking.

'God's Quiet things': All about quiet things - worms, fish, clouds and flowers.

[*1 used in Journeys in the Spirit Children's Edition Issue 0; *2 used in Journeys in the Spirit Children's Edition Issue 1. See the Archive at www.quaker.org.uk/journeys/archive-children]

Role play

Role play is providing resources and props to encourage children to act out real life situations and stories they have heard or made up using their own imagination. Children learn about story and real life situations by having the time to act out and pretend. They can explore feelings and ways to respond in a safe and secure situation.

Role play resources include:

Dressing up clothes: ordinary clothing as well as cultural and profession based. Scarves, hats, bags, shoes and large pieces of material.

Props: animals, shopping till, bags, kettle, phones, tables, chairs, blankets.

Other equipment: wooden people, soft figures, a dolls house, a garage.

A role play set could include: a plastic tea set, beakers, napkins and serviettes, plastic cutlery, trays, play food, cakes and biscuits, menu cards, trays, blackboard for menu, tables and chairs, notepads and pencils, hats and aprons. This is for a café role play and would also fit with a food theme.

Messy play

Messy or sensory play is just that - 'messy! It is inexpensive and open ended. It provides children with endless opportunities to develop and learn. Messy play can improve physical skills and co-ordination, develop co-operative and collaborative play, encourage children to use all their senses to discover and explore their environment, develop imagination, creative thinking and an ability to problem solve. It is possible to place messy play into 3 categories:

Natural resources: soil, mud, sawdust, sand, bark chippings, pebbles, hay, straw, leaves, blossom and petals, water, shredded or mulched paper, wool, ice, clay.

Food based resources: rice, pasta, spaghetti, flour, icing sugar, rolled oats, custard, corn flour, lentils, pulses, jelly, squirty cream, popping corn, play dough, rice pudding, mousse. Lots of these resources can be used cooked or dry.

Arts, craft and toy resources: shaving foam, paint, play dough, glitter, glue, sequins, building blocks, animals, containers, small world people.

All the above can be mixed e.g. play dough and dry rice, paint and glitter, corn flour and water, plastic insects set in jelly. Adding containers and utensils, small world people and animals and different textures enhances the possibilities and experiences. Use trays, bowls or ice cream tubs to contain messy stuff. Also have big plastic sheets for painting in a big way. Do consider allergies, sensitivities and diet issues when planning which messy play resources to use with your group. Also consider how you and the parents of the children in your group feel about the use of food based resources. For further ideas see *More resources and links on page 12*.



Building play

Building play is providing the children with opportunities to construct, to make a 3-dimensional object. This requires creativity and imagination, problem solving skills and manipulative skills to physically put it all together.

Resources you could provide for children to build with include:

Wooden bricks – natural or painted, different shapes and sizes.

Straws- plastic or paper, commercially produced sets.

Construction sets – lego, lego duplo, stickle bricks, meccano, Knex, polydron.

Sawn branches and twigs – different shapes and sizes.

Recycled materials – cereal boxes, cardboard tubes, egg boxes, plastic bottles and trays.

Den building materials – crates, planks, material, plastic airers.

You would also need glue and fixings for some of these materials. You could also add small world people and animals to some of these resources.

Active, physical play and games

Active, physical play and games are good to enable the children to have active time, to run around to let off steam and just have fun. They will benefit from this as they return to the more reflective pursuits and hopefully this will be a time when everyone can laugh together. It is important to offer some structure to this time and to create a suitable space for the activities that you will do. Maybe there is an outside area to go to or you might need to clear up some things from your space so that it is a safe place for running around. It is good at times for children to be encouraged to make noise, but you will need to be aware of those who might be worshipping in silence nearby.

Below are three activities for children who can run around and two activities for younger children, you may well have lots of other ideas. Don't worry if you play the same games each week, the children will enjoy the repetition.

Traffic lights: Set out a clear space in which the children should stay within, marking this out with cones or the equivalent and telling the children that they must stay within this area. When you say "green" the children should move around within the space as fast as they can, when you say "orange" they should move around at walking pace and when you say "red" they should stand very still. After a while ask for one of the children to shout out the colours so that you can join in.

Animals: As above set up a clear space for this game to be played in. Encourage the children to walk around within the area. You should shout out an animal and they all should continue moving around but in the fashion of the animal that you have said. Get as silly as you like and encourage them to do the same.

Duck, duck, goose: Ask the children to sit in a circle. One child stands up and walks around the circle touching each child's head saying 'duck' as they do so. When they touch a head and say 'goose', the child they touched chases the toucher around the circle to sit back down in the space created. If they catch up the toucher then the toucher has another turn, if they don't the chaser takes the next go. Quakerise the game by using Fox and Fry instead of duck and goose!

Copying: One of the adults does movements and the children all copy. Things that work well are stretching up high or down low and creating different shapes with our arms, legs or bodies. Adults can move the babies so that they can join in too, being careful not to force them to move in ways they don't want to.

Bean bags: Encourage children to balance a bean bag on different parts of their bodies and to move around without dropping it. Babies can join in by trying to grab the bean bag or kick it. Put a bag near a babies hand and they might pull it.

Music and songs

Music and song ideas. Do not be afraid to sing the same song regularly children love to sing familiar songs. Do use songs that you enjoyed singing as a child with them as sometimes these songs get forgotten.

Action songs: such songs are energetic and great fun. Try 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' or 'If you're happy and you know it' with actions like stamp your feet, swing your arms, nod your head or jump around. You could also use this song as a pointing song to be less energetic e.g touch your head, touch your nose, tickle your tummy. This is good with babies.

A welcome song: use the same song every week to welcome the children. For example, to the tune of 'Twinkle twinkle little star, 'Welcome welcome everyone, we're glad you're here let's have some fun. Songs and stories, games and play, help us learn to live God's way. Welcome, welcome everyone, we're glad you're here let's have some fun'. This is a lovely way to welcome the children and signify the start of your together time.

Tidy up time: use a song or piece of music to let the children know it is time to tidy up. It doesn't really matter what piece of music you choose as long as you use the same piece every time, maybe a familiar nursery rhyme. Or you could make up a song to sing, the children can join in while tidying. For example, to the tune of London bridge is falling down 'Let's tidy all the toys away, toys away, toys away, let's tidy all the toys away, we can do it altogether.'

Settling wriggly children: a short action song or rhyme will help settle and gain attention e.g. 'Open shut them, open shut them give a little clap. Open shut them, open shut them lay them in your lap'.

Calming music: create a calm atmosphere by playing gentle music in the background. Sounds of nature or classical pieces like Saint Sean 'The Swan' from Carnival of the animals.

Music to dance to: put on some lively music and have fun dancing to it with the children, classical or modern. Maybe Debussy's Cakewalk or Delibes Pizzicata. Choose different styles to move to.

Making music: explore different percussion instruments and the sounds they make. Have fun making music of your own, you could use instruments to accompany a familiar song. Have fun making your own instruments using cereal boxes, yoghurt pots, rice, pasta and sandpaper.

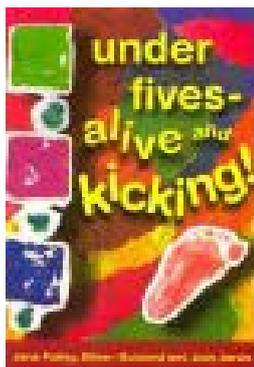
See More resources on page 12 for ideas of where to find music to use.

Welcoming babies

Welcoming babies in a Meeting for Worship can be very special. Here is a simple outline. Begin with a time of stillness. An Elder of any age says that this is a Meeting to welcome a new baby. After a little more stillness welcoming words can be spoken by a member of the Meeting (there is an example below). A soft song could be sung – a gentle hymn, a lullaby. Then, as led, everybody could sign or make their mark on a certificate, like those for Quaker weddings that could have the welcome words written on it. This is a gift for the baby.

"How lovely to hear the sounds of a newborn baby in Meeting! It happens to chime with what I was thinking as I came here, that it is almost 30 years to the day that my own daughter was welcomed into Meeting. I appreciated that a lot, so I want to welcome this new baby - whether or not this is the only time or the first of many that joins us in Meeting. And I want to reassure the parents that any amount of noise from a baby is perfectly acceptable in the quiet of a Quaker meeting.....it was important to me that my daughter was welcomed and I offer the same to your baby."

Resource publications



This book, with its companion volume *Under 5s alive* is for everyone involved with under 5s. There is something for use in church, at home, in play and toddlers groups. Lots of ideas, themes and activities.

This is an example published with permission.

Seaside

Preparation

To keep the floor clean and to make it easier to clean up the sand, put an old shower curtain or waterproof sheet underneath the various settings.



Setting

In the Centre

Lay down a length of sand-coloured fabric and a piece of blue fabric on top of the waterproof material.

On the Sand-Coloured Fabric

Scatter sand and shells, driftwood, pebbles, fishing net and other natural artefacts found on the beach.

On the Blue-Coloured Fabric

Place an inflated boat which is big enough for a child to sit in.

In a Corner or at the Side of the Room

Place fabric or a towel with a seaside design. On it put buckets and spades, swimming costumes and other seaside gear.

On a Side Table

Put a blue cloth, then place ships, Lego for dock building paper or papier maché fish, fishing nets, rods and a packet of fish fingers. Beside this, on the floor, place a plastic sheet underneath a water bath with plastic ships and fish.

Sharing

When I say seaside, what do you think of? What do you enjoy doing with sand? What do you enjoy doing in the water? What do we see in the sea? What kinds of different boats are there? What do people do on boats?
In the setting, encourage the children to take off their shoes and play "seasides": row the boat, play with the seaside area.

Bible Story: Matthew 4.18-22

[Note: many of the activities in *under 5s alive* have a second non-biblical story].

Activities

- Sand painting: Use a mixture of paint and paste, large brushes and sugar paper or cereal pack card. When the children have completed the painting, let them sieve or sift sand over it, shaking off the excess.
- Pebble collages: Stick pebbles on to cereal pack card cut into shapes or polystyrene trays, using Children's Glue.
- Junk boats: Build boats from junk.
- Pebble painting: Paint the pebbles with a mixture of PVA glue and paint using small brushes.

Rhymes

Five little children
Walking on the shore
One stopped to catch a crab
And then there were four.

Four little children
Walking by the sea
One saw a jelly fish
And then there were three.

Three little children
Said, "What can we do?"
One threw a great big stone
And then there were two.

Two little children
Having lots of fun
One got his clothes wet
And then there was one.

One little sad girl
Alone by the sea
Found all her friends again
And went home for tea.

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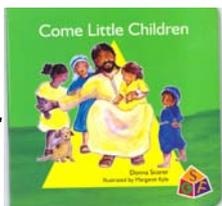
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Seasons of the Spirit is a lectionary-based resource created by an international team of writers and editors representing denominations from Canada, the USA, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand.

This outline is from the **'Jesus welcomes the children' session plan 2011.**



This is an example published with permission.

Preparation time

Bring items for a worship table: one candle, a green cloth, a green plant and a Bible. (*Have a little quiet time around the lit candle.*)

Encourage children to greet one another. Then settle the young ones in cribs, seats or on clean blankets with toys.

Storybook: *Come Little Children*. (Mark 10:13-14). As the children settle in close to you, read the storybook to them. Show each of the pictures as you read. After the story, say "The children in the story knew something special would happen that day. When people tried to stop the children, Jesus brought the children close. Jesus loved the children and wanted to be with them; Jesus loves us too."

Let's pretend

Materials: dress-up clothes (such as scarves, hats and shirts,) dolls, dolls clothes, baby blankets.

Invite children to pretend they are going to meet someone very special – Jesus. Say "What are you going to wear? What will the weather be like? Do you need a coat or a hat? Are you bringing a baby with you to meet Jesus? What will you bring for the baby?"

Faith talk: Jesus would be happy to see you. What would you tell Jesus about your family? About your favourite things? About what you like to do?

Let's build

Materials: wood, plastic or milk carton blocks, toy tools.

Invite children to use the blocks to build a play house. Say: "How big will it be? What toys will you put in the play house?"

Encourage children to pretend that Jesus is coming to play with them in their new play house.

Faith talk Jesus loved children and knew they liked to play. If Jesus came to see us today, what games would you like to play with him? What songs would you sing with Jesus?

Let's create

Collages of children

Materials: cut out magazine pictures of children, clear adhesive paper.

Spread out an assortment of cut out pictures of children. Position a piece of clear adhesive paper on a table with the sticky side up. (Tape down the corners)

Encourage children to choose a few pictures to place on the sticky paper. (Cover all the sticky spaces. Note: pictures do not need to be placed upside down.) Display the collage with a title such as "Jesus Loves Children".

Faith talk: Jesus loved all children. Jesus wanted the children to know that God loves them too.

"Me" figure

Materials: construction paper, adult scissors, crayons, paper fasteners/brads, tape.

Beforehand: for each child, cut out a large rectangle body with two rectangle arms and legs and a circle for the head.

Give each child a set of paper shapes to colour. The, assemble the shapes with paper fasteners to create a movable figure of themselves. Demonstrate how to move the arms and head. When complete, encourage the children to put their figures near the poster *Jesus Welcomes Children*. Tape the figures in place.

In the United Kingdom and other countries Seasons of the Spirit is only available as downloadable format. Go to www.seasonsonline.ca to find out more. There is an extensive set of resources for work with 0 to 5 year olds available to borrow from the Quaker Resources Centre: www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-resources

More resources and contacts

Books for work with 0 to 4s

For stories, books and resources www.quakerbookshop.org.uk

For *The Little Book of Messy Play*, *The Little Book of Treasure Baskets* and *The Little Book of Treasure Boxes* go to www.featherstone.uk.com

For a wide range of ecumenically produced resources for all ages go to www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk, www.barnabasforchildren.org.uk, and www.messychurch.org.uk.

For a beautiful and rich range of multicultural, non-sexist and special issue children's books for all age ranges go to www.letterboxlibrary.com

"I am on the rota for Children's Meeting in our Local Meeting and the difficulty of finding suitable stories for younger children, linking to craft, drawing and play, as well as the recognition of Birthdays, has prompted me come up with the Birthday Bunch." All the stories are on the website - www.birthdaybunch.co.uk

Music resources

Early Learning Centre has a wide selection of CD's and musical instruments. **Tumble Tots** have some CD's with lovely songs for children.

Play Songs by Sandra Kerr and Leon Rosselson - great for babies & toddlers.

Sticky Kids activity song CD's are great for older children in this age range.

Julia Plaut songs are available on CD from Christian Bookshops.

Ishmael does a CD aimed at young children also in Christian bookshops.

Equipment and toys

For beautiful, natural wooden toys & construction sets - www.myriadonline.co.uk

To buy simple sets of Godly Play story equipment for telling stories from the Bible that invite wonder and questioning - www.stmichaels.co.uk.

To arrange Godly Play training and be able to borrow story resources go to www.quaker.org.uk/training and www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-resources.

Journeys in the Spirit

This is a resource for adult Quakers working with children aged 5 - 12 in Quaker Meetings, all age events, residential gatherings and camps. It comes out every month and is free by subscription. It offers activities and approaches as a springboard for ideas that will stimulate the children and the adults working with them. It has an easy to use structure set out in a four page booklet that always includes the same elements: Getting ready; Gathering; Engaging; Responding; Reflecting – see www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren. An edition for working with young people in Link Groups, residential events and Meetings comes out termly for adults and young people – see www.quaker.org.uk/journeysyouth. Subscription forms for both editions can be filled in online as above through this link: www.quaker.org.uk/subscribe-children

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