

organising an ultimate church visit

The following guidelines will help you to organise your Ultimate Church Visit, whether it's a single class visiting your corps for a morning or afternoon, or a series of visits from a number of schools taking place over the course of one or two weeks.

If you're using Ultimate Church Visit in a slightly different way, eg taking it into a school or using it as a series of lessons, adapt these guidelines as necessary (see 'Adapting Ultimate Church Visit').

Making contact with schools

If you are planning to use Ultimate Church Visit as a way of making initial contact with schools, there are a number of ways to approach this:

- Using the sample invitation letter and flyer (available from the Resource Hub), send invitations to the Head Teacher or RE Co-ordinator at each school. Alternatively, arrange a meeting and deliver the invitation in person. You may also like to include a Primary Teacher Information Pack and a set of posters (available from the Resource Hub and are free).
- Visit your local RE resource centre/library and ask to display Ultimate Church Visit flyers and promote it to teachers visiting the centre.
- Contact your local RE Advisor or the Chair of your local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) and ask about the best way to promote Ultimate Church Visit in your local schools. Some LEAs set aside special weeks for schools to visit places of worship.
- Make use of any links with schools you may already have in your corps (teachers, parents, school governors etc).

If you already have some links with schools, or there are schools which have specifically asked to visit your corps, then offering to deliver an Ultimate Church Visit is a great way to build on those existing links and to support teachers in delivering parts of the RE curriculum. Use the suggestions above to explore the possibility of getting schools to take part in an Ultimate Church Visit.

Organising dates and times

You will of course need to plan the date(s) and time(s) of your visit(s) to fit in with your corps programme and with the school or schools who are interested. You will also need to make sure the resources are available to loan at the time you need them. The Resource Hub have a set and additional resources available and your DHQ may also have their own set. The earlier this is done the better, but try to allow at least two months if possible. When you book the resources remember to include enough time for setting up, packing away, and any training you may want to do just before the visit(s).

Planning with the school

Once you have some interest from a few schools and have decided to go ahead with your Ultimate Church Visit, it's important to plan each visit carefully with the class teacher(s). The pre-visit form for teachers is a useful tool to help you get all the information you need, and the teacher pack tells the

Ultimate Church Visit



school everything they need to know about the visit, from overviews of the zones to follow-up activities for the classroom. All the relevant resources which make up the teacher pack can be printed from the USB.

Organising your team

As you begin to organise your Ultimate Church Visit it's a good idea to get support from members of your corps. Use the introduction/overview and PowerPoint template to help you present your vision and ideas to your corps.

The minimum number of people you will need to run an Ultimate Church Visit is one leader per zone (usually three or four for a morning/afternoon visit). A small, hard-working team can be very effective. However, if you are able to get more support from members of your corps, it is good to involve as many people as possible – and a great way to use everyone's gifts! The following roles could be fulfilled by a small or a large team:

- **Zone leaders**

Each leader is responsible for leading one of the zones. They will need to learn (as far as possible!) one script and repeat this with each of the small groups of pupils as they travel around the zones.

- **Shepherds (optional)**

Shepherds are attached to a small group and lead pupils from one zone to the next, ensuring they don't leave anything behind etc. They may also support pupils with any writing or reading in the zones and show pupils to the toilets etc. These could be members of your corps and/or teachers and teaching assistants.

- **Refreshments**

Usually a drink and biscuit or snack is provided half-way through a morning visit (time may be limited during afternoon visits).

- **Setting up and packing away the hall**

If you have extra helpers, this can be an extremely valuable ministry, freeing up leaders to prepare themselves for leading their zone. Perhaps you have some creative people in your corps who could be involved in designing and making some of the suggested extra resources.

- **Prayer support**

Download the prayer cards and encourage a team of people to pray for different aspects of the visit.

- **Organising the follow-up event**

Whilst many working people will be unable to help run an Ultimate Church Visit, they may be willing to help organise the follow-up coffee morning/open day/children's event.

PLEASE NOTE:

The leader will need to have been DBS checked within the last three years and all adults who come into contact with the pupils will need to have been Safe & Sound trained.

Resources

In addition to the resources contained on this USB you will need to borrow a set of Ultimate Church Visit resources from the Resource Hub at THQ, or alternatively from your DHQ if they have their own set. The set of resources includes information and activity cards, extra copies of the DVD, audio CD (Music zone) and a variety of artefacts, objects and display material. Book the resources by phone or email as soon as you have some proposed dates for your visit(s).

There is no charge for loaning the resources from THQ to corps apart from post and packaging and resources that are collected from THQ are free. A loan charge will apply to schools, depending on the number of zones borrowed, but best practice is for Ultimate Church Visit to be organised through a corps or centre.

When you have decided on the zones you are using, complete the Resources List tick sheet to indicate exactly what you need to borrow and what you are able to provide yourself. When you're ready, send this to the Resource Hub/DHQ.

If you want to invest in your own set of resources, or gradually build up your own set, most of the resources are also available to purchase from the Resource Hub. This could be done in partnership with other corps. Download the 'Complete price list and order form' for details.

Resources for pupils to keep

Some of the pupil materials you may need can be downloaded and printed from this USB. Pupil books and other pupil resources can be purchased from the Resource Hub using the 'Resources order form'.

Training

Whether your Ultimate Church Visit team have plenty of experience of working with children, or none at all, you may find that a training evening or day would be helpful. This can be organised well in advance of your visit, or even one or two weeks before when you have all the resources ready and your team have become familiar with the material. There are two ways to organise this:

- If your Regional Children's Specialist is familiar with Ultimate Church Visit he/she may be willing to host a training day/evening. This could be organised with other corps in the division who are planning to use Ultimate Church Visit.
- Contact the Resource Hub if you wish to discuss more about how to use Ultimate Church Visit or if organising a training event is feasible.

If you are including the Bible zone in your Ultimate Church Visit, the leader of the zone may benefit from attending a Godly Play training day (contact the Godly Play Enabler, Enabling Mission Team at THQ for more details or visit www.godlyplay.org.uk).

Preparing for the visit(s)

Zone leaders

Each zone leader will need a copy of the information about their zone, along with the script and any other relevant resources. They should be given their scripts well in advance to allow them to prepare and learn their script as much as possible, so that the zone runs smoothly and keeps to time. Zone leaders (and other helpers) will also need:

- Zone leaders' guide
- Glossary (terms to avoid or explain)
- Timetable for the visit
- List of groups and names of pupils (including information about pupils with special needs)
- Pupil books for their first group
- Any other pupil resources they may need in their zone

You may also want to ask zone leaders to be responsible for gathering the extra resources needed for their zone.

Risk assessment and insurance

Before the visit(s), complete a risk assessment form (see the Safe & Sound Manual and Safe Mission). This should be shared with all members of your team just before the visit(s) to ensure everyone is aware of any possible risks and takes all the necessary precautions. The school should also have completed their own risk assessment, and these could be shared prior to the visit. Copies of insurance policies should also be exchanged with the schools prior to the visit.

Safe & Sound

All leaders will need to have had their criminal record background checked (within the last three years) and all adults who come in contact with the pupils will need to have been Safe & Sound trained. During the visits it is important to follow The Salvation Army's Safeguarding Children policy. If possible, discuss this with the class teacher before the visit to make them aware of the policy.

Pay particular attention to guidance and procedures relating to 'Creating safe environments' (taking photographs/video, risk assessments, food and drink) and 'Creating safe relationships' (general conduct, language, touch, dealing with challenging behaviour, children with special needs/disabilities/from minority ethnic groups, supervision ratios).

Planning the visit(s)

- Use the sample timetable and template to help you plan your visit(s).
- In a typical visit, zones last approximately 30 minutes each.
- Allow between 20-30 minutes for the welcome session (from when the pupils arrive).
- For morning visits try to include a 10-minute refreshment/toilet break half-way through. Be aware that some children may need to visit the toilet at other times during the visit! Afternoon visits tend to be slightly shorter, so a drink could be served at the end of the visit, or during the think tank session.
- Allow between 10-15 minutes for the think tank session, including time for pupils to complete the relevant page in their pupil booklet before sharing what they have learnt.

Typical overview of a 3-hour morning visit

9.00am	Pupils arrive Welcome session
9.20am	Organise pupils into groups Hand out pupil booklets
9.30am	Zone 1
10.00am	Zone 2
10.30am	Refreshment/toilet break
10.40am	Zone 3
11.10am	Zone 4
11.40am	Think tank session
11.55am	Pupils leave

For shorter visits there are a number of ways to adapt the timetable:

- Reduce the length of each session by using the 'Make the zone shorter' suggestions in the scripts/information for each zone.
- Divide the class into four groups, but have each group visit only three out of the four (or more) zones set up. Pupils can find out about the zones they didn't visit from their classmates later.
- Divide the class into three slightly larger groups, and only set up 3 zones for each group to visit.

For whole-day visits, simply include more zones or extend the length of each zone using the extra activities suggested in the scripts.

Setting up your hall/the school

You'll need an area for all the pupils to sit together at the beginning and end of the visit, preferably in the main worship hall. The other zones can be set up around the main hall and in any other suitable rooms you have available. Here are a few points to consider:

- The Worship zone works best in the main hall as it focuses on objects used in worship.
- The Music zone is fairly noisy (as you can imagine!) and is best set up in a separate room. Some activities may require a large space, but alternative activities can be used if space is limited.
- The Bible zone requires a calm and quiet environment – a prayer room is perfect, or another similar space.
- Check which zones include DVD/audio clips, and remember that whilst some are essential to the activities in the zone, others are optional. If possible, avoid having two DVD clips playing at the same time next to each other!
- Look at the zone scripts for more tips on setting up each zone.