

Ultimate Church Visit



teacher guide

Thank you for choosing to take part in an Ultimate Church Visit with your class. This guide will tell you how your visit to The Salvation Army will be organised and will help you to prepare for, and make the most of your visit.

preparing for your visit

There are a number of things which will help you and your local Salvation Army church to arrange your visit and make sure it runs smoothly:

- Complete the pre-visit form and send/give this to the Salvation Army minister or children's worker who is organising the visit with you.
- Divide your class into small groups prior to the visit (the minister will advise you on size and number of groups) and if possible provide a list of names details of pupils with special needs.
- Due to the nature of the visit it would also be helpful if you could provide adult helpers to accompany your class.
- Every leader has their criminal record background checked and all adults are *Safe & Sound* trained. *Safe & Sound* is The Salvation Army's Safeguarding policy on keeping children safe from harm. Ask the minister or children's worker to chat to you about the guidelines which leaders will be following.
- It is advisable for the school and the Salvation Army minister to share their insurance policies and risk assessments before the visit.

outline of the visit

On the day, the church building will be divided up into a number of zones (usually three or four) which highlight different aspects of Salvation Army beliefs, worship, work and history. There is a welcome and plenary session to ensure pupils know what the aims of the visit are and to allow them to reflect and share what they have learnt.

Below is a sample timetable of the visit (exact timings and number of zones can be worked out with your local Salvation Army church):

9.30am	Arrive at The Salvation Army
9.40am	Introductions and welcome session
10.00am	Zone 1
10.30am	Zone 2
11.00am	Refreshments
11.10am	Zone 3
11.40am	Zone 4
12.10pm	Think Tank session
12.30pm	Leave for school

the zones

Ultimate Church Visit is designed to allow you to decide on the topics you would like to cover and the aims and objectives you would like your pupils to achieve. There are nine possible zones which can be set up during an Ultimate Church Visit, each one exploring a different aspect of The Salvation Army.

1. Bible zone
2. Worship zone
3. Community zone
4. International zone
5. Symbol zone
6. Music zone
7. History zone
8. Uniform zone
9. Homelessness zone

In a typical half-day school visit three or four will usually be set up. These can be chosen by the teacher to fit into the topic(s) the class are studying, or may be chosen by the church to reflect the particular work or ministry which is especially important to them. Each zone lasts approximately 20-30 minutes depending on the time available for the visit.

Choosing your zones

It is recommended that the Bible zone is always included in an Ultimate Church Visit, as this helps pupils to understand that The Salvation Army's beliefs, mission and work are based on the Bible and on Jesus' teaching.

If pupils are studying a particular topic in RE, you may want to choose zones on a theme, for example, worship (Bible, Worship, Music and Symbol zones) or belief in action (Bible, Community, Homelessness and History zones).

Extra zones could be presented at the school as a whole-class lesson or workshop prior to, or as a follow-up to the visit. Talk to the Salvation Army minister or children's worker to see whether this is possible.

There are a range of activities in each zone, designed to appeal to different learning styles and to keep the pupils engaged and motivated throughout the visit. Below is a brief overview of each zone and refers to activities for younger and older pupils. There are also extra activities which the leader may choose to add depending on the time available and the focus of your visit.

overview of the zones

Bible zone

The zone begins with a discussion about stories and special and holy books, and the importance of the Bible for Christians and therefore for members of The Salvation Army. Then pupils hear a parable or story about Jesus, using a method of storytelling based on 'Godly Play' (visit www.godlyplay.org.uk to find out more). Pupils are encouraged to wonder about the story and its meaning, and then to respond by expressing their own feelings about the story through drawing or writing. The session ends by thinking about how members of The Salvation Army put Jesus' teaching into practice, and the leader may share how they try to follow the Bible's teaching in their own life.

Worship zone

In this zone pupils begin by thinking about the concept of worship and the special places and objects which help people to worship. Pupils watch a short DVD showing the features of a Salvation Army church (or simply look around the main worship hall) and then go onto explore the meaning and significance of the objects found in a Salvation Army church, using a set of picture/word cards. Older pupils can then arrange the objects in order of how important they think they are to members of The Salvation Army, which should promote some good discussion. Finally pupils watch another DVD clip showing examples of different types of worship in The Salvation Army.

Community zone

The aim of this zone is to discover how The Salvation Army helps people in the community, through one or more of the following activities:

- playing a specially designed board game
- watching a DVD clip of community work around the UK and Ireland
- watching a presentation of your own community work using the PowerPoint template or your own video
- using a story bag and objects which illustrate different aspects of community work
- following a picture trail using display boards depicting The Salvation Army's work

Pupils also learn how members of The Salvation Army put their beliefs into action by looking at a Bible passage. They then think about ways they could help their community and show kindness to others at home and at school, by filling in a bookmark (Key stage 2) or their pupil book (Key Stage 1).

International zone

This zone takes the form of a speedy trip around the world, visiting (up to) five different countries where The Salvation Army is at work. Pupils think about what life is like in each country, discover the kind of problems and difficult situations that people may face, and find out how The Salvation Army is helping. To reinforce and record what pupils have learnt, they complete a section of their passport for each country they visit.

Symbol zone (recommended for 7-11yrs)

In the symbol zone, pupils take on the role of secret agents who have to complete a number of missions in order to explore and uncover the meanings of some Salvation Army symbols. They also think about why we sometimes use signs and symbols instead of words and have the chance to design a flag which represents their own beliefs or things which are important to them.

Music zone

This zone begins by introducing pupils to the kinds of musical instruments used in The Salvation Army. Pupils can try out the traditional brass and percussion instruments, and find out what other kinds of instruments they might see in their local Salvation Army church. Pupils then discover more about the history of music in The Salvation Army, as well as its place in worship today. To help pupils think about how feelings and beliefs can be expressed through music, pupils listen to a series of different kinds of music and show, through movement or holding up emotion cards, how the music makes them feel. The extra activities help pupils to understand more about how music is used to express feelings and beliefs.

History zone

In this zone, pupils use their imagination to travel back in time, finding out about life in Victorian Britain and discovering the story of how William & Catherine Booth started The Salvation Army. Pupils explore artefacts, objects and other clues from a time capsule or character bags, or take part in a drama in which they play different characters involved in the story. The zone ends with a picture activity or quiz to reinforce what pupils have learnt.

Uniform zone

In the uniform zone pupils think about why different people wear uniform and have the opportunity to dress up in a range of Salvation Army uniforms. Pupils trace the development of The Salvation Army uniform and think about why there are different uniforms for different cultures and climates, and for different occasions and jobs. Finally, they either make a Victorian bonnet or modern-day cap, or design their own Salvation Army uniform for the future.

Homelessness zone

In this zone pupils reflect on what it might be like to be homeless and find out how The Salvation Army tries to help. They begin by thinking about what makes a home and what they think is important in a home. Whilst acknowledging that people can be homeless in different ways, the main activities in this zone focus on people who live on the street. Pupils create a dramatic 'freeze-frame' scene to explore different attitudes and responses to people who are homeless, and build their own living space. A selection of objects and an optional DVD tour of a Lifehouse help pupils to understand different ways in which The Salvation Army supports people who are homeless.

after your visit

Once you have returned to the classroom and reflected on your visit to The Salvation Army, it would be valuable to us if you could complete the feedback forms with your pupils to let us know how you feel the visit went. This enables us to develop and improve this resource for the future, and will help your local church to think about what went well and how they can do better next time.

If there is anything more we can do to support your school then please feel free to contact us:

Your local Salvation Army church:

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