

Welcome to Lewes Children's Meeting

We feel very fortunate at Lewes Quaker Meeting to have such a happy, active and thriving children's meeting, which has been in place for many years. Our children and their parents are a much-valued part of our community.

The children of Lewes Meeting range in age from the youngest (0 – 3 years) who play and enjoy stories together, to those aged 10 and over. We meet in the Children's Room on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m., and share joint activities, games and discussions.

Friends try to demonstrate Quaker values of loving care for one another in everything we do, rather than try to impose a set of beliefs. We aim to make children's meeting an enjoyable experience, and to help older children to explore spiritual and social issues for themselves. We offer a variety of activities such as crafts, drama, cooking, co-operative games and gardening.

Older children learn about other religious traditions and take part in discussions about Quaker testimonies and contemporary issues.

Young people of secondary school age are also very welcome. (Once a month the session will include activities that are particularly suited to older children.) Young people might also like to attend special events which we occasionally hold.

The children's room at the meeting house is open from 10:20 a.m. Parents of young children are asked to ensure that their children are happily settled before they go into meeting for worship next door. Should there be a problem with your child during children's meeting, someone will come and find you.

If you are new to Quaker meeting, you might prefer to stay with your child in children's meeting for a while, and this is welcomed.

Children are offered a drink of fruit juice and a biscuit during the session. Please let the leader know if your child has allergies or if you prefer to bring an alternative snack for them.

It is our custom to bring the children into meeting for worship for about the last ten minutes of the main meeting. Most Quakers are very tolerant and indeed delighted to see them and to hear occasional chatter. Small children are not

designed to sit quietly! Quakers consider the contributions of our children to be ministry.

To help children sit quietly, we encourage them to bring books or quiet toys into meeting. Bags of books and soft toys are made available for this purpose. Over time most children become accustomed to spending some quiet time in meeting for worship.

During notices after meeting for worship, children and their parents usually leave the meeting room and return to the children's room. They are joined later by everyone in the meeting, for tea and coffee. Notices given by the clerk are usually also displayed on the notice board in the corridor and are available by email. Please just ask, if you feel that you are missing out if you are unable to stay for notices.

Parents and carers are responsible for supervising their children from the rise of meeting for worship. The meeting does not provide supervision for children during tea / coffee time after meeting for worship, or when they are playing in the garden.

The meeting house garden is near a busy road and gates should be kept closed and

latched at all times. Please look after your children when they are playing in the garden, and at all times after meeting for worship.

Children's meeting is run by a rota of volunteer leaders and helpers, including some parents. Before becoming involved, Friends who volunteer to serve children's meeting are asked to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for Safeguarding purposes.

The meeting has a written Safeguarding policy and we are happy to provide you with a copy.

Children's meeting is also, at times, supported by a paid children's worker. Please feel free to talk to her, or to any of the leaders or helpers, about the activities and about your child. Members of the Children's Committee are usually available during tea / coffee time after meeting for worship.

The children of Lewes Meeting are an important part of our community and are encouraged to participate as far as they are able in the life of the meeting. Lewes Friends actively seek the involvement of families with young children – or children of any age.

You are all very welcome!

“Remember that each one of us is unique, precious, a child of God.”

- *Advices & Queries Number 22*

If you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child, please speak to the Local Meeting Safeguarding Coordinator:

Sue Hallett
07773 150396

hallettmartin@gmail.com

If you have any questions about children's meeting please speak to any Friend serving on the Children's Committee – listed below:

Camilla Pennant
01323 870 143

pcpennant@btinternet.com

Caroline Pybus
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Susanna Wallace
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January 2020

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Lewes Quaker Meeting Children's Meeting