

Leading a class with the full diversity of children

Unique children. Various techniques. Same Gospel.



Step 1. Prepare our own hearts

	Philippians 2:1-4	1 Corinthians 9: 19-23
What is Paul's attitude to others?		
Why has he adopted this attitude?		

Step 2. Love the children as unique individuals

Child's name	What do you thank God for about this child?	What do you expect from this child in a lesson?	How is this child unique or broken?	What do you pray for this child?	I would like to remember to....
	Can you identify how God has gifted this child to serve others?	What is this child like? How are they special? Do they usually engage with the lesson?	Do you know what makes this child unhappy?	What might be the next step in faith? Trusting, obeying or speaking?	[See Step 3]
	How does this child encourage you or others?	How do they treat other children?	Are you aware of any particular situation in the family?	What good might Christ be doing in this child's life?	... talk to this child's parent?
	What would you miss if this child was not with you?	Do you have any idea what they think of Jesus Christ, the Bible or Church?	Do you know what this child finds difficult or worries about?	What is your greatest desire for this child?	... look to encourage this child with a particular truth?

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Step 3. What techniques will you use for each child?

<i>Do you have a clear discipline procedure? Do the children understand what will happen if their behaviour is poor?</i>	<i>Does your class need some additional class management techniques? The traffic light system? Clearer routines? Movement around your space? Talk to a school teacher!</i>	<i>Would a conversation with their parents help? Could you ask them what the child's school teachers say? What helps the child to learn/listen?</i>	<i>Does this child know that you love and enjoy them? Could you show more warmth and encouragement? Could you one of the leaders take a greater interest?</i>
<i>Could one or two other children in the class help the situation? Is this a chance for them to serve and use their gifts?</i>	<i>Is there a job or responsibility that this child could be given? Usually when we show that we trust a child and have identified their gifts; they mature.</i>	<i>Does each leader understand the situation? Is there a consistent approach? Is there a personality clash? Would a conversation together help?</i>	<i>Does a leader need to sit next to one or two particular children each week? Does the leader know how to help the child to listen? A hand on the shoulder? A word in their ear?</i>
<i>Is the quiet child being left to be silent for the whole lesson? Would they talk in small groups or in pairs? Do they prefer to be quiet? Are they content?</i>	<i>Could you have a loving conversation before (and after) each session? Could you discuss expectations? Would a reward at the end be appropriate?</i>	<i>How could you encourage this child? Is it just a word of praise after a good answer? Could you praise the child's contribution in front of the child?</i>	<i>Are you using names when you ask questions? Are you drawing the newcomer in using simple questions? Are you restraining the know-it-all?</i>

Pick one or more of these children and ponder how this approach might prompt you to care for each of these children

- **Benjy** is 7 years old and is usually quiet in your class. His Mum has mentioned that he has started to say that he doesn't want to come to Church anymore. She says that he feels like he hasn't got any friends.
- **Taylor** is 10 years old. She is often brought along to Church by her school friend, Sarah. Sarah's family are long term members of your Church, while you've never met Taylor's parents. Taylor has been talkative, relaxed and engaged in your group. Her parents have recently separated. Taylor told Sarah's Dad on the way to Church today that she thinks Christianity is all nonsense.
- **Carl** is 5 years old. He is excitable, talkative and energetic. During the class, he often shouts out answers of turn, gets up to look at the books on the shelves during activities and takes off his shoes to fiddle with them. His parents haven't let you know of anything in particular.
- **Katie** is 9 years old. She is quiet, like her Dad. She rarely offers answers freely, but when prompted will speak timidly. As the lesson goes on, she starts to become tearful, but tries to hide it. When you speak to her parents afterwards, they can't think of any reason why she would have been upset.
- **James** is 8 years old. His mother became a Christian a year ago, and since then has been coming to Church regularly with her and his younger sister. James seems to look for opportunities to misbehave. When he sits next to Jake, he can get him to join in with him. Often, at the start of the lesson, he can be engaged in the lesson. However, his behaviour usually deteriorates.
- **Jayden** is 11 years old. He is the son of the Minister. He appears to know every answer. You sometimes wonder if he knows more than you! He shouts out all the time. Sometimes helpfully, often not. There is very little consideration of others.
- **Macey** is 8 years old. Today is the 3rd time you have seen her in Church. You suspect it's the 3rd time she has ever been in a Church. She seems to have no experience of the Bible, prayer or Christian things. She seems talkative, but a little intimidated by the Christian understanding that the rest of the class shows.