**Top Tips and Ideas for Running Sunday Youth Group**

**Agree Values**: a great thing to do with a new group (and refresh each year) is group values. These are words and statements that sum up how we want to be in the room together. The values you agree together, set the culture. You might want to write them up and display them on the wall for reference.

**Transition Yr6s Sooner:** We’ve found moving Yr6s up to Sunday Youth Group in January works well, as opposed to the Summer or the September they join Yr7. Moving up in January means:

* It’s one less change in summer months for the Yr6: moving up helps them feel at ease and gel with the older youth sooner, which can enable greater belonging at church which helps them stay rooted in the big changes of moving to Secondary School.
* Often by the Springtime Yr6s are maturing and getting ready for something a bit more youth friendly.
* It can also help the Children’s Sunday School team have a bit more breathing space to focus on the younger children!

**Every Voice Matters**: Once a term we do a fully youth lead session, where they grapple with a topic or question chosen by then. In this session, the leaders hold back, and the young people fully direct the conversation and flow of the time. If this is interesting to you, I’ve written 2 articles about this way of doing youth ministry: <https://concreteonline.org/exploration-in-co-construction-sunday-youth-group-experiment/> & <https://concreteonline.org/5-things-i-learned-from-the-sunday-youth-experiment/>

**Whole Church Games**: We’ve invented a game to help foster the youth getting to know the adults in the church a bit better. It's called "Who Am I?"

The game happens a few times a month. We explain and set the challenge at the end of Sunday youth group session. The young people are told an interesting fact about a person in church (this is gathered and shared with their permission!). Then the youth have the time at the end of the service to gather intel and find out who that person is. Once they have a name, they need to find the person and ask them 3 'get to know you' questions and offer to pray for them! The young person who completes the challenge first gets a prize.

**Rewards + Prizes:**

We have a Sunday youth prize box. We reward one young person each week who embodies the Sunday youth values. We also have a box of sweets that get handed out for particularly insightful, honest, brave answers and for remembering to bring their bible to youth.

**A Potential Session Outline:** We’ve found this structure works quite well -

First few minutes: young people arrive in the space get drink and biscuit

10 minutes: Ice breaker/ game

5 minutes: topic introduced, teaching time

10 minutes: activity (way for everyone to engage with topic)

10 minutes: small group discussion and questions (going deeper into topic with small group leader)

5 minutes: prayer as a group or in small groups

5 minutes: session wrap up, prize giving

It’s helpful to break up the time as it keeps young people more engaged, and bitesize chunks is also the best way young people learn.