
CHURCH

CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

1. Nursery thru pre-school teachers should greet each child and parent at the door. A child/parent identification system will be utilized.
2. Classrooms and teaching areas should never be locked while in use, with the exception of the nursery and early childhood areas. Lights should remain on.
3. Each door of a classroom should have a window. If there is no window, the door should be left open. Sight lines through each window should remain unobstructed at all times.
4. ALL children and youth workers **MUST** have a current questionnaire on file in the pastor's office.
5. Wellness Policy: Children should not be brought into class with any of the following symptoms and/or illness: fever within the last 24 hours, questionable rashes, coughing, diarrhea, impetigo, active chicken pox, measles, mumps, or conjunctivitis (pinkeye). Any child on antibiotics should have been on the drug for at least 48 hours before coming to a children's activity. *Workers will not administer any medication.*

NURSERY – PRE-SCHOOL WORKER GUIDELINES

We will use the following guidelines for all nursery thru pre-school classes:

1. One female adult will always be present in each classroom.
2. All staff/leader personnel must be 18 years old or older.
3. High school and junior high students are allowed to be helpers only. Exceptions are possible for quarterly congregational meetings and potlucks.

CLASSROOM STAFFING & CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENTS

1. No child will be allowed into a classroom before an adult worker is present.
2. Nurseries, as well as all classrooms, are overseen by a "wandering coordinator" to ensure classrooms are properly supervised and safety standards are being met.
3. If a class is unexpectedly short-staffed, the following steps will be taken:

- Utilization of On-Call help – Individuals may be available to fill unexpected staffing needs and will be the first called upon.
 - Combining of Classes – Two classes may be combined, if practical, to meet the staffing requirements.
4. All assigned children’s ministry workers are expected to arrange for their own pre-approved substitute. The sub list can be obtained in the office or see the list posted in each classroom.

CONDUCT POLICIES

1. Discipline

- At no time will any form of physical discipline be used on a child.
- Teachers need to share pertinent information with the appropriate staff person regarding individuals in class. In turn, the pastors will share pertinent information with the teacher about individual children. These matters will be considered confidential.

2. Bathroom Usage

- Parents should be encouraged to take their children to the bathroom before class. Parents might also want to consider taking their child to the bathroom between Sunday School and the worship service when potty training.
- Volunteers and staff should never enter a stall and then shut the door when assisting a child. Prop the bathroom door open when taking an entire class into the bathroom.
- If accompanying a child to the bathroom, the adult should then remain outside the bathroom door and wait for him/her there, then escort the child back to the classroom. The adult should open the bathroom door and call the child’s name if he/she is taking longer than seems necessary.

3. Special Events / Overnight Policies

Field Trips and Special Events for Children

- A minimum of two approved adult leaders is required for any trip.
- The appropriate ministry leader must pre-approve off-campus group activities. Parents will be notified at least one week prior to an outing.

- Proper written consent forms are required for each child participating in off-campus group activities. Medical release forms may be required depending on the activity and location.
- When an activity requires travel, all drivers must be at least 25 years old and must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance. The number of persons per car should not exceed the number of seatbelts. Each driver should have a copy of the activity permission slip for those students riding in his/her car. Emergency contact phone numbers are of primary concern and shall be available to the leaders.

Best Policy: When the activity is local, it is best if parents arrange their own transportation to and from the activity site. At least two adults must stay until the last child is picked up.

Overnight Policy

- All overnight events must be accompanied by at least two approved staff.
- All overnight events should be pre-approved by the appropriate ministry leader.
- There will not be overnight events for children younger than 3rd grade unless it is specifically a parent/child outing.
- At least two supervising adults attending the overnight need to have a ministry application and approved on file.

4. Incident Reports (sample attached)

- Report any serious incident or injury to the appropriate ministry leader by filling out an incident/accident form. It is important to complete the form immediately while the incident is fresh in your mind.

5. Proper Display of Affection

Touch is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. Physical contact with children should be age and developmentally appropriate. Be aware of and sensitive to differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. The following guidelines are to be promoted for pure, genuine and positive displays of God's love:

Hugs: One-arm side hugs or hand-to-arm hugs are positive contacts. Avoid initiating full contact, body-to-body hugs, or kisses.

Lap Sitting: Appropriate sitting on laps may occur with children five years old and younger. Discourage lap sitting with school-age children. Rather, encourage them to sit next to you.

Casual Touch: Gentle contacts during activities may be on children's heads, shoulders, arms and hands.

6. Special Concerns for Youth Ministry (middle school – high school)

Physical Contact: Anyone working with youth should avoid physical contact with the youth of the opposite sex.

Driving: When a staff member (volunteer or paid) is driving students home, they should not be alone with a student. However, if there are times when a driver has only one child to bring home, the driver is to call the parents and give the estimated time of departure and arrival at destination. The driver must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance. The number of persons in a car should not exceed the number of seat belts. A staff person must never take a student of the opposite sex anywhere alone.

Lunches: One-on-one lunch or outside appointments with students of the opposite sex are discouraged. If necessary, meetings with members of the opposite sex should only be made if separate transportation is used. Meetings should only be in public places. Late night meetings with students are discouraged.

Best Policy: When possible, meet with at least two students for off-site appointments. If there is a question about this, check with the appropriate pastor.

Dating: At no time shall anyone working with youth pursue a dating relationship with a student. Staff should always be sensitive to students' "crushes."

Open Door Policy: At no time should anyone working with youth have a one-on-one meeting behind windowless, closed doors. For your protection, keep the door at least partially open, if there is no window.

HANDLING OF REPORTS

REPORTS OF ABUSE OR SUSPECTED ABUSE

If you become aware of abuse, you need to report it to the Ministry Leader who will directly report it to the Senior Pastor/Chairman of the Board.

Reports may be direct complaints from parents, children, or other persons within the church, or persons outside the church. All reports will be reasonably investigated. It is our intention to be alert to any abusive situation and to take prudent steps to respond to each report.

1. Report the incident to Senior Pastor/Chairman of the Board

- The Senior Pastor/Chairman of the Board will speak directly with the person making the complaint and his/her family. Either the Senior Pastor, Chairman of the Board, or an outside non-staff professional counselor shall interview the person and document the complaint. The purpose of the interview would be to obtain factual data. (The interviewer will be sensitive to evidence requirements such as clothing tears, stains, injuries, etc. Also, the interviewer would be aware of varying viewpoints of the child, family, church, or others.)

2. Disclosure

- If it is determined that disclosure to the congregation should be made, this will be done through properly appointed persons. In most cases, disclosure will be determined and made by the Senior Pastor/Chairman of the Board, working with the pastoral staff and deacons.

3. Support Systems

- Adequate support systems to minister to those who have need will be initiated. It is the intent that help be given wherever appropriate.

INCIDENTAL/ACCIDENT REPORT

Date _____

Child's Name _____

Parent's Name _____

Explanation: (what took place, between whom, etc.)

Were parents told? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain:

If treated, where? And nature of treatment:

Ministry Leader(s)
