

PRESCHOOL MINISTRY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Including, but not limited to ...

Sunday School
Extended Teaching Care
Discipleship
Team Kid
Mission Friends
Preschool Choir
Mothers Day Out
Vacation Bible School
Childcare
Special Events



Your Church

Address

~

Pastor ~

Dear Friend,

We thank God for preschoolers and the opportunity we have to teach them at church. We want them to feel loved, and have happy church experiences as they grow. We take seriously our privilege and responsibility to provide quality Bible-teaching and quality care in a clean and safe learning environment at church.

We have compiled this Policies and Procedures Manual to provide information and clarification concerning the programs and ministries for preschool age children. These guidelines are not intended to be restrictive but rather to enhance and improve our ministry.

Please read this manual carefully and cooperate with us in this effort. If you have questions and suggestions, please feel free to call us.

Our prayer is that you and your family will have many happy and rewarding experiences through your involvement in the preschool ministry of

Sincerely,

~ Acknowledgements ~

This policies and procedures manual is the result of the sustained, prayerful, reasoned efforts of the duly appointed Preschool Policies and Procedures Task Force. Members of the Task Force were:

Acknowledging that “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (Gen. 1:27), for the sake of consistency and clarity of this manual, references to preschoolers as he, his or him are to be understood as non-gender specific and intend to be interpreted by the reader as male and female in application.

References to Minister of Childhood Education in this manual are meant to refer to the person filling that position on a full time staff basis or the volunteer or part time church approved designee responsible for preschool ministry.

First Adopted:

Revised: Not yet applicable

Church, _____, _____ has established and approved this Policies and Procedures Manual with the sole intention and purpose of establishing policies and procedures applicable to its ministry to Preschoolers and their families based on its unique needs and requirements. These policies reflect the principles and convictions of _____ Church, _____, and should not be reproduced as a template for any other program as individual needs and policies will vary.

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Mission Statement

The Preschool Ministry of _____ Church exists to provide a secure, nurturing environment for preschoolers where biblical truths are taught as a foundation for salvation and Christian living.

Purpose of Our Preschool Ministry

*“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”
(Luke 2:52, NIV)*

Our goals for the growth of preschoolers are based on the fact that preschoolers grow just as Jesus grew – mentally (*in wisdom*), physically (*in stature*), socially/emotionally (*in favor with man*), and spiritually (*in favor with God*).

Therefore we seek to:

- **Lay a strong spiritual foundation** in the life of each preschooler we teach, with the hope that when older, each child will accept Christ as Savior.
- **Help preschoolers begin to understand**
 - God** is creator, giver of all good things;
 - Jesus** is God’s Son and our best friend; and the
 - Bible** is the true, special book that tells about God and Jesus.
- **Make church a happy**, clean, and safe place to learn Bible truths.
- **Provide activity-based teaching**, which includes Bible-learning activities that allow preschoolers to make progress in problem solving, sharing, expressing themselves in appropriate ways, thinking of others with kindness, and learning to love others as themselves.
- **Partner with the home** in nurturing the spiritual growth of the young child.
- **Encourage parents/guardians** to actively participate in worship, Bible study, fellowship, and ministry opportunities.

Our Activity-Based Teaching Approach

Preschoolers are children from birth through Kindergarten. They can be described in one word: ACTIVE! They are constantly exploring their environment and actively learning. Because preschoolers are always learning, *we* are always teaching. Preschoolers need to be challenged with activities for which they are ready and which help them grow as Jesus grew – in body, mind, and spirit.

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 instructs adults to teach children as they go about the everyday, familiar activities of life. This biblical principle is implemented at church as we utilize all or some of the following Bible teaching activities for all age levels of preschoolers: Books, Puzzles, Art, Blocks, Homeliving, Dramatic Play, Nature, and Music. Each activity is planned to help children learn a Bible truth. *The active involvement of Christian teachers is essential; otherwise the children's play has no spiritual purpose.* The teacher uses Bible phrases, verses, stories, pictures, songs, and Bible conversation at appropriate times so children can relate the Bible truth to what they are doing. In this way preschoolers learn that the Bible has meaning for daily living.

God seeks to make Himself known to persons of all ages through whatever means they can become more aware of Him. God designed preschoolers to learn through: Play, Imitation, Relationships, Curiosity, Senses, Satisfaction, Repetition, and Hands-On Experience.

Activity teaching, planned by intentional teachers, allows preschoolers to learn in the ways God intended.

Curriculum

Church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. Our Preschool Division uses Southern Baptist literature because it is Bible based, doctrinally and educationally sound -- planned for the growth and development of preschoolers from birth through Kindergarten.

Curriculum for each preschool organization is activity based and maintains a consistent teaching philosophy for all our church's preschool programs. Sunday School, Discipleship, Mission Friends, Preschool Choir, and WEE Learn (MDO) all provide learning experiences based on our eight biblical concept areas: God, Jesus, Bible, Self, Family, God's Creation, Church, Community and World.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESCHOOLERS

SUNDAY MORNING

Sunday School

Departments for preschoolers, Babies – Kindergarten

Worship Service and ETC (*Extended Teaching Care*)

*Babies through three-year olds remain in their Sunday School rooms during the worship service.
Fours through Kindergarten participate in the worship service with their family.*

SUNDAY NIGHT

TeamKid

Worship Service

(Childcare for children under four)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Family Night Supper

Mission Friends (2-K)

Preschool Choir (4-K)

MOTHERS DAY OUT

Two days weekly during the school year. Call _____ for information.

Parent/Child Dedication

Usually the parent/child dedication ceremony takes place during the morning worship hour. This is a time for parents to publicly express their commitment to raising their child in a Christ-centered home as they lay spiritual foundations that will one day make it possible for their child to accept Jesus as Savior. This ceremony also gives the church family the opportunity to show their support for the parents in this most important task. Arrangements for the ceremony are made through the Minister of Childhood Education.

Worship Orientation

Each August, our church offers a special session for the parents of four-year olds who will begin attending the worship service for the first time. *When I Go To Church* presents ways to help make the worship experience more meaningful for the whole family. A special tour of the worship center is offered for four-year olds while their parents attend the session.

General Policies

1. Preschool facilities will open for receiving children 15 minutes prior to regular church-wide activities and services.
2. Preschoolers must be brought to their departments by a parent or adult guardian, and will only be released to the parent or adult guardian who presents the security card.
3. A parent should come for his/her child immediately following the service or function. This prevents children becoming upset when they have to wait too long and also shows respect for the child's teachers.
4. To avoid congestion in the Preschool Area, it is recommended that only one parent deliver and pick up the child from his/her room.
5. Preschoolers may be brought to the preschool division only when the person bringing them is attending a church function.
6. For the safety of our preschoolers and to provide the best teaching environment, only preschoolers and approved teaching personnel are permitted in preschool rooms.
7. Under no circumstances are children to be left in the Preschool Area unattended at any time.
8. In order to provide safety and enable teachers to provide activities that meet the needs of preschoolers, the use of the Preschool Area and equipment is limited to preschoolers. (Preschool rooms and furnishings are not multi-age appropriate.)
9. Supplies and/or equipment may not be added or removed from preschool rooms without consultation with the Preschool Division Director or Minister of Childhood Education.
10. For the safety of our preschoolers and the liability protection of our adults, at least 2 teachers should be in the room with preschoolers during any given session. (*The Two Adult Rule is a recommended safeguard from church insurance companies.*)



Playground Policies

1. The playground is located adjacent to the back parking lot. It is fenced and only accessible through a locked gate.
2. The playground is designed for children up to age 7.
3. Adult supervision is required for children using the playground at any time. (The “Two Adult Rule” applies for use during church activities.)
4. For the safety of preschoolers, broad age-groups of children may not use the playground *at the same time* during scheduled church activities. [Younger preschoolers (up to age 3) are allowed on the playground at times when older children (ages 4 to 7) are not present and only when accompanied by a teacher or authorized adult.]
5. Older children (ages 8 and up) and teens may not “play” on playground equipment.
6. No rough play or misuse of equipment will be permitted.
7. The playground may be used only during daylight hours.
8. A sign posted in plain view reads:
 - Equipment designed for children to age 7
 - Adult supervision required
 - Not responsible for injuries
9. Damaged equipment and other hazards should be reported immediately to the Minister of Childhood Education.

Health Policies

1. For the protection of all children and adults at church, parents are requested not to bring a child who appears to be ill.

The Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a child should not be taken from home when any of the following exists:

- Fever – currently or within the previous 24 hours (without medication)
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - Any symptom of a childhood disease such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
 - Common cold – from the onset through one week
 - Sore throat
 - Croup
 - Any unexplained rash
 - Any skin infection – boils, ringworm, impetigo
 - Pink eye or other eye infection
2. A parent will be notified if a child develops illness during preschool activities. The child will be separated from other children and the parent/guardian called to remove the sick child.
 3. No oral medication will be given to a preschool child except by a parent or guardian. (All medication should remain in the parent's possession.)
 4. If a child contracts a childhood disease following a session in a preschool department, parents should notify the Minister of Childhood Education so that other parents and teachers may be informed.
 5. Parents should report any allergies and special needs to the department director.
 6. All toys used by young preschoolers are washed and sanitized before, during, and after each teaching session.

Infectious Disease Policy

Believing we have a biblical mandate to minister to *all* people, the occasion may arise when we are called to respond to the health care needs of children with serious diseases including, but not limited to, Hepatitis-B, HIV and Tuberculosis.

Parents or guardians of children with these types of health concerns are expected to inform the Minister of Childhood Education. (All information and records, whether publicly or privately maintained, that identify a person with AIDS virus infection shall be strictly confidential.) At the discretion of the Minister of Childhood Education, a committee may be formed to review individual cases of infectious disease for the protection of all those involved. If the parent or guardian does not agree to disclosure as necessary, the Minister of Childhood Education may work with the family to see that home ministry is provided as resources allow.

After review and consultation with professional medical personnel (and legal, if deemed necessary), teachers and caregivers will be instructed in the universal precautions and procedures for hygiene (appropriate for the particular disease) and will be expected to follow them.

Hygiene Policies

Maintaining a germ-free environment is a top priority. Because hands are the main carriers of germs, we enforce a strict hand washing policy for all caregivers.

Teachers or Caregivers should wash hands* ...

1. Upon arrival into the preschool room or before beginning a teaching assignment outside the room.
2. Before preparing, serving, or eating food.
3. Before and after feeding infants or children.
4. After using or helping a child use the toilet.
5. After every diaper change.
6. After removal of disposable gloves.
7. After contact with body fluids (such as spit up, nasal discharge, tears, saliva, urine, stool, blood or vomitus).
8. After handling soiled items.

Infants and Children should wash hands* ...

1. Before preparing, handling, or eating food or snacks.
2. After every diaper change.
3. After using the toilet.
4. After contact with body fluids.

*According to the Center for Disease Control, the proper method to wash hands is to wet them, rub soap into lather and rub hands together for 15 seconds. Rinse. The faucet should be turned off with a paper towel after drying your hands.

Diaper Changing Procedure*

1. Gather all necessary items.
2. Lay child on a strip of changing paper (wax paper).
3. Put on a new pair of disposable gloves for every diaper change.
4. Remove wet/soiled diaper and use wipes or damp paper towels to clean child. (Use only wipes provided by parent or wipes labeled hypoallergenic.)
5. Place wipes and diaper in plastic bag or lined trash receptacle with lid.
6. Remove gloves by pulling the glove inside out from the wrist so that all residue remains inside the glove.
7. Put on clean diaper.
8. Wash hands with soap and water after each diaper change.
9. For Babies/Ones, record the changing time and indicate “BM” or “WET”.
10. CHECK CHILDREN NEAR THE END OF THE SESSION. Send them home dry!

*NOTE: The same procedure applies to children who are wearing “Pull-Ups”.

Body Fluids Spill Procedure

1. Control bleeding by applying pressure with a clean towel or cloth and care for the injured appropriately depending on the severity of the situation.
2. First Aid supplies are located in rooms and in the preschool kitchen pantry.
3. In order to protect everyone, disposable gloves are to be worn when handling any accident involving blood or body fluids. This includes:
 - Wiping a runny nose
 - Cleaning a cut or scrape
 - Checking a diaper
 - Assisting a child with toileting needs
 - Any time there is a risk of touching blood, vomitus, mucus, urine, or stool
4. If an emergency prevents the use of gloves, immediately clean the exposed skin with soap and water to reduce the possibility of infection.
5. Any teacher with an open wound or lesion will keep it covered until the area has healed.
6. Clean any affected surfaces with disinfectant. (Bleach Solution: ¼ cup bleach to 1 gallon cool water OR 1 tablespoon bleach to 1 quart cool water.)
7. Wash hands, even after wearing gloves.

Room Cleaning Procedure

*The primary sanitizer used is a bleach solution, mixed fresh daily.
The Center For Disease Control recommends:*

For bathrooms, diapering areas, etc.:

¼ cup bleach to 1-gallon cool water **OR** 1-tablespoon bleach to 1-quart cool water

For disinfecting toys, eating utensils, etc.

1-tablespoon bleach to 1-gallon cool water **OR** 1-tsp bleach to 1-quart cool water

1. In rooms with cribs, beds must be stripped of used linens and other items as the children leave.
2. Linens, smocks, bibs, burping diapers, blankets, etc. should be laundered after each use.
3. Each bed (including mattresses, rails, and any items attached to the beds such as mobiles, mirrors, etc) should be wiped thoroughly with bleach solution and left to air dry.
4. All equipment such as infant swings, walkers should be washed and sanitized after children leave.
5. Mats and vinyl-covered climbing equipment for babies/toddlers should be washed and sanitized after each session.
6. Diaper changing surfaces must be sanitized at the end of each session.
7. All toys used by infants or toddlers must be sanitized between uses by individual children (see Washing and Disinfecting Toys).
8. Furniture used by older preschoolers should be cleaned weekly or when soiled.
9. Tables and countertops used for food preparation and eating must be sanitized before and after using.
10. Toys and equipment used by older preschoolers and not put into their mouths should be cleaned at least weekly and when obviously soiled. A soap and water wash followed by clear water rinsing and air drying should be adequate. No disinfecting is required. (This includes toy dishes, dolls, transportation toys, etc.)

Washing and Disinfecting Toys

Toys mouthed by a child must be sanitized before another child plays with that toy. When a baby or toddler finishes playing with a toy, teachers should retrieve it from the play area and put it in a bin reserved for dirty toys. (This bin should be out of children's reach.) Toys can be washed at a convenient time and then transferred to a bin for clean toys and safely reused.

1. To wash and disinfect a hard plastic toy:
 - Scrub the toy in warm, soapy water. Use a brush to reach into the crevices.
 - Rinse the toy in clean water.
 - Immerse the toy in a mild bleach solution and allow it to soak for 10-20 minutes.
 - Remove the toy from the bleach solution and rinse in cool water.
 - Air dry.
2. Children in diapers should have only washable toys.
3. Stuffed toys and those not easily washed and sanitized should not be used for any session.
4. Toys too large to immerse in water must be washed and sanitized by wiping.
5. Toys used outside, on the playground, or inside with sand must be washed before they are returned to the Resource Room.

End of Session Clean-Up

1. Put away all items, art equipment, and supplies to their designated places.
2. Make sure all puzzles and items having more than one piece are complete before putting them away.
3. Clean, disinfect, and air dry the tables, chairs, toys, cabinets, sink, etc. (Refer to Room/Toy Cleaning procedures.)
4. Sweep or vacuum any debris.
5. Furniture and equipment should be arranged according to Sunday School placement. Any furniture that was moved should be returned to its designated area at the conclusion of each program.

Safety

At Church, we believe a few simple procedures are a small price to pay for the safety and security of preschoolers and for the peace of mind of teachers and parents.

1. Only persons 18 or older may teach in the Preschool Division. (See “Youth Helpers” for information regarding teenage teachers).
2. All preschool rooms should have at least 2 teachers present for any given session. If the teachers are related, it is recommended a third non-related teacher be enlisted. (The *Two Adult Rule* reduces the risk of child sexual abuse, and also reduces the risk of false accusations of molestation. According to *Church Law Today*, the legal ramifications are that two related individuals are considered as one person, therefore requiring a third, unrelated person in the room.)
3. Teacher-child ratios should be maintained according to current standards. (See Teacher-Child Ratios)
4. Because preschool equipment and room furnishings are developmentally specific and age specific, only preschoolers may use preschool rooms.
5. Entry into preschool rooms is limited to preschoolers and their teachers during teaching sessions.
6. Each department door has a window for teachers to see who is at the door and parents to see inside the room. (However, “peeking” in the window should be done sparingly! Onlookers unnecessarily upset young children and distract teachers from their tasks.)
7. Names of preschoolers with food allergies will be posted in plain view.
8. Foods served for tasting activities will be posted to notify parents.
9. Bottles are to be warmed in a slow cooker if needed. The kitchen microwave is NEVER to be used to warm bottles or food that is given to preschoolers.
10. Bottles, sipper cups and pacifiers MUST be labeled with the child’s name.
11. Running, shouting, etc. should be reserved for outside play.
12. Because of the potential danger for eye damage, GLITTER should not be used with preschoolers.
13. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in each preschool room. Other emergency procedures will be made available to teachers.
 - In case of Fire or other disaster, teachers in each room will take preschoolers to the _____ Area. Parents may come for their children at the _____.
 - In case of Tornado or weather emergency, teachers in each room will take preschoolers to the _____. (The _____ is near the Preschool Area and is a basement room with no windows.)
14. Fire Extinguishers are available in the Preschool kitchen and hallways.
15. First Aid Kits are located in the Preschool Pantry, Resource Rooms, and preschool rooms.
16. The nearest telephone is located in the preschool hallway.
17. Cell phones must be turned off during teaching sessions.

Handling Accidents/Injuries:

1. In the unlikely event a child is injured seriously, parents will be notified immediately.
2. If a child sustains a minor injury (i.e. bump, bruise, scrape), parents will be notified when the child is picked up.
3. An *Accident/Incident Form* will be completed for every accident. These reports will be signed and dated by the teachers and parent/guardian, and kept on file. (See Accident/Injury Report Form)



Security

Security Cards

Security Cards* are our means of identifying the parents or guardians of children in the Preschool Ministry. The Security Card's purpose is: (1) to assure parents/guardians that their child will be released only to the appropriate adult holding the child's card; and (2) to enable teachers to be confident they are releasing children to appropriate persons.

Why do we need Security Cards?

1. Teachers cannot know the parents/guardians of every child. Situations in which this is true include attendance by guests, infrequent attendees, new or substitute teachers and staff changes between Sunday School and Worship. The teacher who met the parent when the child arrived may not be in the room when the child leaves.
2. Non-custodial parent kidnapping and stranger abductions are no longer unheard of in churches.
3. Older siblings, relatives or friends may want to take a child from the room. Whether or not this is acceptable to the parent, the teacher should not be responsible for making the judgment on releasing the child.

Procedure:

1. Parents/guardians will receive a personalized Security Card (and/or pager) upon arrival at the preschool department door.
2. Guests will receive a temporary Security Card bearing the child's name when they check in at the Welcome Center desk. Guests will be escorted to the appropriate room for their child.
3. Parents/guardians will complete the Sign-In Sheet at the door, being specific about their location in the building.
4. When returning for the child, parents/guardians should knock on the door of the preschool room and hold the card to the window. A teacher will bring the child to the door and collect the Security Card.
5. The child will only be released to the adult bearer of the Security Card.
6. Parents/guardians who misplace the Security Card may be asked to present photo identification and signature.
7. Only the Minister of Childhood Education or approved designee may make new Security Cards or replacement cards.
8. Security Cards will be stored until the next scheduled session.
9. Parent Custody/legal guardianship changes must be reported to the Minister of Childhood Education. (Written legal documentation must be presented and kept on file.)

* Or current Security Method in use

Additional Security Measures:

1. Security cameras continuously scan preschool hallways.
2. Appointed ushers/deacons patrol the church campus during worship services.
3. Lower level and Family Life Center entrances will be locked during Worship Services.

Child Abuse Policy

According to Tennessee law, all suspected incidents of child abuse must be reported to:

- The county Department of Children's Services, *or*
- The local juvenile court, *or*
- The local Sheriff/ Police.

The Minister of Childhood Education *or other ministerial staff* should follow these procedures:

1. Document all efforts at handling the incident.
2. Report the incident as soon as possible to the church's insurance company and attorney; then follow their professional guidance and recommendations.
3. Seek help for those involved through the guidance of a Christian Counselor.
4. Notify the child's parents, guardians, or teachers if appropriate.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. Teachers at church count it a privilege to partner with parents in laying foundations for faith in young lives.

Parents can help teachers by observing the following guidelines:

- Become familiar with the Preschool Policies and Procedures. These policies have been adopted by our church family and are enforced for the well being of every child in our care.
- Remember that each policy and guideline is based on the desire to provide a safe, secure learning environment for your child. If you do not understand the reason for a policy or guideline, please ask the Minister of Childhood Education, or preschool teacher to discuss it with you.

Before Coming to Church

1. Remember to *label all items* (i.e. diaper bags, pacifiers, bottles, cups, toddler snacks, infant seats, clothing) with your child's name.
2. Preschoolers who are being toilet trained need to bring extra changes of clothing in a labeled bag. Clothes should be easy to take off and put on.
3. Leave personal toys at home. They make sharing too difficult and may not be appropriate for use in teaching. (An infant's "security toy or blanket" would be an exception.)
4. Bring your child regularly to church. He will feel more secure and eager to enter his room when church becomes his established routine.
5. Talk to your child *positively* about going to church. Use names of your child's teachers and friends in his room when talking about happy times at church.

Arriving at Your Child's Room

1. When bringing your child to a preschool room, please knock at the door and wait for a teacher to open the door and greet you and your child with a personal welcome.
2. Give teachers any necessary information about your child. (Allergies, special physical needs, feeding and sleeping preferences, etc.) Update the Child Information Sheet as needed.
3. You will be given a *Security Card* and/or *Pager*, which must be presented when you return for your child.
4. Complete the *Sign-In Sheet* at the door. Be specific about your location in the building so teachers can find you quickly in case of an emergency.
5. For the security of our preschoolers and their best teaching environment, parents and siblings *should not enter the preschool room*. (Nursing mothers are an exception.) Traffic in and out of the preschool room causes disruptions in teaching and unnecessarily upsets young children already in the room.

6. Tell your child you will be back for him, and then leave promptly. Prolonging the goodbye only makes separation more difficult for your child. Should your child experience prolonged anxiety, teachers will send for you.

Special note to parents of younger preschoolers: If you need to check on your child, ask a preschool staff person to help you. They can check and give you a report. Your baby is smart and knows the sound of mother's voice! If you check on your child yourself after he has settled in and your child becomes upset because he sees or hears you, please be prepared at that time to take your child with you. It may be too difficult for your child to separate from you more than once.

Calling for Your Child

1. When returning for your child, *knock at the door*, hold your child's *Security Card/pager* to the window, and *wait* for your child to be brought to you. (Waiting outside the door prevents other children from becoming anxious while awaiting their parents' arrival).
2. Your child will only be released to the parent/guardian who presents the Security Card/Pager. (Your child will not be released to a sibling or another child.)
3. Explain to grandparents, other adult relatives and friends that your child will not be released to them unless they present your child's Security Card/Pager.

Tips and Suggestions

1. If a child has a problem at church, it is better to discuss this with his teachers at a time other than Sunday morning. Never discuss a child's problem in his presence.
2. Parents are encouraged to participate in Parenting Events offered at church throughout the year. These may include topical studies, workshops, conferences, and training sessions for preschool leadership.
3. Use the "take-home" literature provided by preschool programs. These will help you continue at home what your child learned at church!

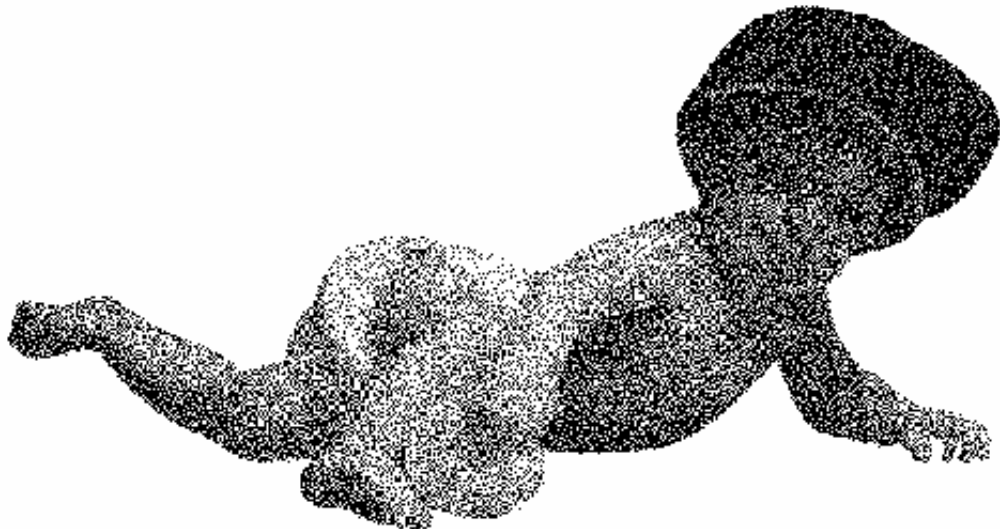


Promotion

At _____ Church, promotion of children to the next age level is based on the Sunday School year.

Our Sunday School year runs from September through August. On the first Sunday in September, all preschoolers who have turned two years of age by September 30 promote to the next age level. Children under the age of two advance to new rooms based upon maturation at any time during the Sunday School year (and as space is available). These children are grouped into departments for Infants, Older Babies, and Ones. Toddlers who turn two years of age after September 30, remain in a Ones department until the following September.

Each fall as the new school year begins, Music, Missions, and Discipleship organizations start for preschoolers. If these programs begin before the first Sunday in September, the new Sunday School year promotion dates will still apply.



Teacher-Child Ratios

Proper teacher/child ratios in each department allow teachers to provide quality learning experiences and more adequately meet the needs of each individual child. The number of preschoolers in a department and the ratio of teachers to preschoolers are determined by the age of the preschoolers. (An additional teacher may be needed for each child with special needs.)

<i>AGE</i>	<i>RATIO</i>	<i>RECOMMENDED ENROLLMENT*</i>	<i>TOTAL</i> (including teachers)
Babies	1 teacher to 2 preschoolers	8	12
Ones—Twos	1 teacher to 3 preschoolers	9	12
Threes—Pre-K	1 teacher to 4 preschoolers	16	20
Kindergarten	1 teacher to 5 preschoolers	20	24

**Includes Prospects*

Sometimes multi-age groupings of preschoolers are needed. Literature/curriculum is available f

- Babies – Twos in one room (Ratio—1 to 3; Total Enrollment—12)
- Threes – Kindergarten in one room (Ratio—1 to 4; Total Enrollment—15)
- Babies – Kindergarten in one room (Ratio—1 to 3; Total Enrollment—12)

(The Two Adult Rule: At least two adults must be in the room with children at all times.)

Church’s standards for teacher/child ratios meet or exceed the recommendations of *The National Association for the Education of Young Children* (NAEYC) and the *National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education* (NAECS/SDE). Additionally, we strive to meet the minimum recommended space requirements in each preschool room of 35 square feet per child.

Guidelines for Discipline

1. Give encouragement freely. It is inspiring. Use criticism sparingly. It is self-defeating.
2. Set reasonable limits (consider the child's age and needs).
3. Be consistent.
4. Accept a child's feelings that he cannot control; but stop his disruptive or destructive behavior.
5. Correct a child's behavior with love and respect. (If you were in his place, how would you want to be corrected?)
6. Avoid embarrassing a child.
7. Do not force a child to say, "I'm sorry." He may not be sorry. If you force him to say he is sorry when he is not, you may be teaching him to lie.
8. Avoid threats.
9. Notice and acknowledge a child's appropriate behavior. (Spend most of your time this way, and you will not need to take much time correcting misbehavior.)
10. Do not force preschoolers to give up toys as a means of teaching sharing. Sharing is *voluntarily* giving something up to another. Require "taking turns" instead.
11. Provide interesting and challenging things to do and reduce the possibility of behavioral problems.
12. Give bountiful emotional support to the child who misbehaves. Misbehavior is often a plea for help.
13. Let the child learn from the natural or logical consequences of his actions. (If he misuses the blocks, he may not play with the blocks for a while.)
14. Help each child feel good about himself. A healthy self-concept is the right of every child made in God's image.

To avoid basic discipline problems:

- Maintain the correct teacher-child ratio
- Do not exceed recommended enrollment of children for the room
- Plan, Prepare, and Be Ready To Teach
- Never be late (The first one in the room is usually in charge!)
- Play quiet music in the room and use a quiet speaking voice
- Avoid "clutter build-up" in the room (too many scattered toys frustrate and over-excite)
- Keep walls pleasantly plain (posters and wall-hangings tend to over-stimulate preschoolers in group settings)

- Be friendly-firm (Children need to know you love them and are in charge.)
- Consistently enforce Three Rules:
I (the teacher) will not allow you (the child) to...
 1. Hurt yourself
 2. Hurt others
 3. Hurt the things we use in our room



Policies for Teachers

Teachers in the preschool ministry of _____ Church play a vital role in laying a spiritual foundation for young children. *All teachers must be professing Christians*, men and women who want to love and nurture preschoolers.

Volunteer Teachers

Volunteers provide the teaching staff for regular church programs and organizations. To be considered for a volunteer teacher position, an individual should:

1. Be a member of _____ Church for at least 6 months. (Exceptions must be approved by the Minister of Childhood Education.)
2. Submit a Screening Application (when implemented).
3. Be willing to follow all policies and procedures of the Preschool Ministry.

Employed Teachers

Employed teachers may be used at the discretion of the Minister of Childhood Education to supplement teaching staff needs. To be considered for employment, an individual should:

1. Be a member of _____ Church for at least 6 months.
 - Church membership is recommended for MDO (Mothers Day Out), although a Christian who is a member in good standing of another evangelical church may be considered.
2. Submit an employment application and screening application (when implemented).
3. Successfully complete an interview with the appropriate supervisor.
4. Be willing to follow all policies and procedures of the Preschool Ministry.

Training

All preschool teachers (volunteer and employed) will be expected to attend periodic training sessions each year. For employed teachers, this training is mandatory. Training opportunities are offered through our church, association (_____), and state (_____) and national (_____) conventions.

Training will help ensure all teachers are well prepared and informed about curriculum, teaching methods, safety and security procedures, and other important preschool issues.

Expectations of Teachers

- Use and teach according to the literature/curriculum furnished by the church.
- Plan regularly with other teachers in the department.
- Prepare the room and have materials ready to teach BEFORE the first child arrives. Be in the preschool room a minimum of 15 minutes before the session begins.
- Be responsible for securing a substitute when absent and notify the department director in advance when possible. (Provide teaching plans for the substitute.)
- Assist in cleaning the room and putting away all materials at the end of the session.
- Cooperate with teachers in other church programs concerning room arrangement and storage/use of materials.
- Participate regularly in both corporate and personal worship and Bible study.
- Minister to preschoolers and their families.
- Support the work of the church through prayer and faithful service.



Teacher Responsibilities

Preschool Department Director

- Pray with other teachers before each session
- Greet preschoolers and their parents at the door as they arrive
- Maintain department Security System (card, pagers)
- Maintain department records
- Lead group time (in three-year-old and older departments)
- Enlist and assist in training teachers and substitutes for the department
- Lead teachers in regular planning meetings
- Use and follow the literature/curriculum provided by our church
- Assign responsibilities to teachers for Bible teaching activities, outreach and ministry
- Assist in coordinating ETC for the department (when applicable)

Preschool Teacher

- Gather teaching materials and supplies prior to a session
- Plan and prepare using suggestions in the Leader's Guide and Resource Pack
- Assist in cleaning the room and putting away materials at the end of the session
- Visit, make contacts, and minister to children in your department and their families

Preschool Division Director

- Coordinate the work of the preschool departments and determine the organizational needs
- Determine and enlist preschool department directors and assist with enlisting other team members
- Develop a training plan for preschool leadership
- Work with leadership team (department directors) to develop the preschool budget
- Coordinate the use of resources by obtaining needed supplies
- Order curriculum
- Lead in evaluation of the work of the division
- Assist in the coordination of ETC
- Represent the preschool division on the Sunday School Council

Preschool Division Outreach Leader

- Greet visitors on Sunday morning and ensure that preschoolers are placed in the appropriate departments
- Obtain necessary child/parent information for teachers and for follow-up
- Coordinate all reaching activities of the Preschool Division
- Coordinate prospect discovery projects for the division
- Participate in weekly visitation, outreach, and witnessing
- Maintain and/or assist in maintaining active division and department prospect records

Extended Teaching Care (ETC)

Extended Teaching Care (ETC) is a continuation of Bible learning activities and care for preschoolers (birth through 3 yrs.) during the worship service. This important ministry relies on the participation of parents, preschool teachers, and volunteers from our church family.

- Training will be provided for everyone who teaches in ETC.
- All ETC teachers receive a schedule informing them of their Sunday to teach.
- Teaching-helps and reminders are mailed the week before the assigned teaching date.
- If an ETC teacher cannot teach on his assigned day, it is his/her responsibility to secure a substitute and inform the Sunday School contact person. We strongly encourage trading Sundays with another teacher *on the same department schedule*. This provides more consistent teaching for preschoolers.
- Church-member parents of preschoolers are asked to serve in ETC. However, because it is so difficult for young preschoolers to share Mommy or Daddy with other children in a group setting, parents should teach in a room other than their own child's. (Applies to grandparents also.)
- For the safety of preschoolers and to maintain appropriate Bible teaching, older siblings may not stay in ETC. Parent-teachers are encouraged to arrange for their older children to attend the worship service with family or friends.
- To protect couples from the possibility of legal liability, a third teacher in the room is recommended. Or, the couple may teach in different rooms or in the same age group but on different Sundays.
- Teachers should sit on the floor or chairs in the room -- not on preschool tables or other preschool furnishings.
- ETC teachers should follow Preschool Policies and Procedures.
- A low-sugar snack is provided for Two's and Three's during the transition time into ETC.
- Babies and Toddlers may only have snacks provided by parents in diaper bags. (Giving any other snack requires parental permission.)

Youth Helpers

In order to train future teachers, youth (teens) may be enlisted to teach Vacation Bible School *if* Youth VBS is not provided at the same time.

- Youth teachers in VBS are expected to attend training clinics and planning sessions with the adult teachers.
- Youth may serve as teachers under the supervision of adult teachers in the department.
- Youth may teach only in departments for preschoolers two years old and older.

**Youth under the age of 18 (defined minors by law)
may not serve as teachers for regular church programming,
i.e. Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Missions, Music, MDO, or ETC.**

YOUTH HELPERS FOR CHILD CARE (Provisional)

(Events other than regular church programs)

- Youth (teens) should receive training prior to working with preschoolers and periodic training as deemed necessary.
- Youth enlisted for child-care must be approved by the Minister of Childhood Education.
- Youth helpers must always be supervised by at least one adult who is present in the same room. Youth should never be left alone with the children.
- Youth helpers may only work with preschoolers two years old and up.
- Youth helpers will be expected to follow the policies and procedures for all preschool teachers.



Greeters

1. Be available to greet members and visitors 20 minutes before the session or service begins. Visitors often arrive earlier than members!
2. Wear a nametag.
3. Open outside doors for parents coming from parking lots and offer assistance with preschoolers and their belongings.
4. Greet visitors warmly with a smile. Help them feel welcome.
5. Assist with preschoolers who are visiting and secure complete information from the parents.
6. Complete an Information/Registration card for them. (Parents will probably have their hands full with belongings and children in a strange place!)
 - Record each child's birth date, and then refer to the current Age/Room List for proper room assignment.
 - Prepare a Security Card for parent and Nametag for child. (Print child's name on removable labels and place on a laminated security/nametag card.) Briefly tell parent how Security Card is used. (Pagets available for Babies and Ones)
 - If child is under age one, have parent complete a Baby Schedule Card.
7. As you walk the family to the child's room (taking youngest child first) talk about our preschool policy that parents are asked to remain outside the door when leaving or picking up their child. Help them understand this is for the safety and security of their child as well as others already in the room.
8. Knock at the department door and briefly introduce the child and his parents to the teacher. Help parents to **make the break quickly** from the child. Assure the parent that their child will be fine but if the child should be overly upset we will send for them.
9. Ask parents to complete the *Sign In Sheet* by the door. (This will help us locate them quickly in case of emergency.)
10. Show parents stairs to the sanctuary or escort them to an adult Bible Study class.
11. Tell parents again how happy we are to have them with us today!
12. Follow-up: Complete a Registration/Information card for the child's teacher and slip it under the door. (Encourage teachers to call, send a card, or visit the family within the week.)

Screening Procedures for Teachers

In recent years, news stories of violence and abusive conduct toward children by adults have been shocking. Child sexual abuse seems to be increasingly in the headlines. It leads us to the obvious question, “Could something like that happen here at Baptist?”

We believe preventive measures help to avoid problems down the road. In addition to the simple, effective policies and procedures already in place, we recommend a screening process for all those who work with minors* (preschoolers through senior high). The screening process should include an application form to be completed by all volunteers for any position involving the supervision or custody of minors and by all church employees who will have contact with minors in church facilities or on church sponsored activities.

The implementation of a screening process will help our church family provide a safe and secure environment for all boys and girls who participate in our ministries and use our facilities. The screening process will help our church work as a team toward a common goal of being proactive rather than reactive. We want to protect children from sexual abuse or child molestation by employees or volunteers in this church and to protect employees and volunteers from false accusations. We want our church to be the safest and most loving environment possible for every child and youth who enters our doors.

** A minor is defined as any child less than 18 years of age.*



ACCIDENT/INJURY REPORT FORM

Child's Name: _____

Date of Injury: _____ Time of Injury: _____

Brief Description of accident/injury: _____

First Aid Administered: _____

Parent contacted: _____ Time: _____

Signature (Teachers) _____

Signature (Parent/Guardian) _____

Phone: _____

***Give completed form to Division Director or Minister of Childhood Education.
Copy to parent on request.***

FOLLOW-UP: _____

BABY INFORMATION

Baby's Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Comes to church with:

Name(s) _____

Relationship _____

Location at church _____

Feeding Information:

What: _____

When: _____

How much: _____

Comments: _____

Diapering Information:

I have provided: _____ powder, _____ ointment,
_____ wipes to use when diapering my baby.

Comments: _____

Sleep Information:

Position: _____ Back _____ Side _____ Tummy

When: _____

How long: _____

Comments: _____

Other Information I'd Like You to Know:

Today's date: ____ / ____ / ____

*Please slide this item under door when completed.
Thank you!*

ONE'S INFORMATION

Child's Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Comes to church with:

Name(s) _____

Relationship _____

Location at church _____

Snack Information:

Allergies? _____

I have provided: _____

Comments: _____

Diapering Information:

I have provided: _____ powder, _____ ointment,
_____ wipes to use when diapering my baby.

My child is:

_____ beginning to use the toilet

_____ wears disposable training pants

_____ is toilet trained

Words my child uses for:

Urinate _____

Bowel movement: _____

Other Information:

Names of other family members:

Pets: _____

Favorite toy or activity: _____

Other information you should know: _____

Today's date: ____ / ____ / ____

*Please slide this item under door when completed.
Thank you!*

PRESCHOOL SIGN IN SHEET

Baptist Church,

Child's Name	Parent's First & Last Name	Parent's Location (specific)	Who Will Pick Up Child
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
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15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

References

Churches:

Children and Youth Safety Policies

Church, Danville, VA

Health Care Policies and Procedures

Church, Asheboro, NC

Preschool Policies and Procedures

Church, Atlanta, GA

Preschool Ministry Handbook

Baptist Church, Austin, TX

Preschool Ministry Manual

Church, Hendersonville, TN

Preschool Teacher's Handbook

Church, Austin, TX

Infectious Disease Policy and Procedures

Church, Arlington, TX

Policies and Procedures to Prevent the Spread of Infection in the Preschool and Children's Divisions

Church, Fort Worth, TX

Health Policy and Procedures for Preschoolers

Church, Asheboro, NC

Preschool Policies

Church, Orlinda, TN

Preschool Ministry Handbook

Church, Brentwood, TN

Nursery Handbook and Child Care Procedures

, Winter Haven, FL

Publications:

ABCS of Safe and Healthy Child Care

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1996 and 1998

Church Crisis Response Manual

Baptist General Convention of Texas

Center for Community Ministries

Preschool Sunday School for a New Century

Lumpkin and Sanders

LifeWay Press, 1999

Fact Sheet: Playground Safety

GuideOne Center for Risk Management

Guide One Insurance Company, 2002

Teaching Preschoolers: First Steps Toward Faith
Sanders and Bradberry
LifeWay Press, 2000

Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in the Church
Hammar, Klipowicz and Cobble
Church Law and Tax Report, 1993

Keeping Healthy: Parents, Teachers, and Children
[leaflet #577], National Association for the Education of Young Children

Issues Related to Human Immune Deficiency Virus Transmission in Child Care
[RE 9838] August 1999, pp. 318-324
American Academy of Pediatrics

Selecting & Screening Church Workers
A Guide to Selecting and Screening Minister, Church Employees and Volunteer Workers
Cobble and Hammar
Church Law & Tax Report, National Church Safety Program

Church Mutual Insurance Company Booklets:
Recognizing Your Church's Liability Risks
Safety at Your Playground
Safety Tips on a Sensitive Subject – Child Sexual Abuse
Sexual Misconduct

Organizations and Websites:

American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org

Christian Ministries Resources: www.iclonline.com

Cambridge Program in Risk Management for Churches: www.cmr.gospel.com.net/Cambridge

Church Law Today: www.churchlawtoday.com

Church Mutual Insurance: www.churchmutual.com

Guide One Insurance Company: www.guideonecenter.com

LifeWay: Church Staff: Screening Procedures for Preschool Teachers: lifeway.com/staff

National Association for the Education of Young Children: www.naeyc.org

National Program for Playground Safety: www.uni.edu/playground

Tennessee Department of Health and Human Services: www.state.tn.us/health
www.state.tn.us/youth/children/childprotect

