



Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures

(Nursery - 5th Grade)

Nursery

Our nursery is open during the worship service hour (for infants up to preschool age) as well as the Sunday School hour (for infants up to age 3). Our aim is to minister to children and their families by providing a loving and safe environment where children are cared for by our church family and hear about Jesus through stories and songs, while parents are able to fully engage in the church service and adult Sunday School.

We encourage parents to begin including their children in the full worship service as they reach kindergarten and we strive to equip and support parents in this process.

Nursery Specific Guidelines

1. All visitors need to check-in and complete visitor information forms before their child is to be left in the nursery.
2. The ratio of Children to Caregivers will typically be no more than 4:1. Nursery workers will remain in the nursery for the entire time they are scheduled to serve.
3. Nursery volunteers are NEVER to be on duty ALONE with any children - even just one! Therefore, if you arrive and there is only one adult volunteer, please stay with your child until another adult volunteer or the ministry director arrives to help. This rule also applies to a Husband/Wife/Family Team. Another volunteer must always be present with them.
4. Anyone besides Nursery volunteers, children who have been checked-in, and the Children's Ministry director will be asked to remain in the hallway, outside of the gate from 8:50 am until 11:25 am.
5. Please bring a diaper bag for your child (if they are not potty trained) that has your child's name on it and contains diapers for caregivers to use if needed.
6. We provide goldfish, cheerios, and water for snack time. If you prefer your child not to have this, please let us know. Please do not send your child with their own snack, unless you have discussed this with the ministry director first.
7. There is an area designated for Nursing to the right of the front desk, past the double doors.
8. Any volunteers under the age of 12 must serve in the Nursery with one of their parents who is also volunteering. Volunteers under the age of 14 are not permitted to hold infants when working in the nursery.

9. See rest of policy for specific guidelines for the following: Cleanliness, Discipline, Diaper Changing, Restroom Procedures, Check-In and Safety, Illness Policy, First Aid Policy

Nursery Drop-off & Pick Up Safety

Your help during check-in is important!

1. Every parent/guardian must check-in their child and note any new important information the nursery workers will need to know (such as changes in food allergies, diaper and potty assistance, or other help your child may need).
2. Visitors should complete any visitor information forms for each of their children before leaving a child in the nursery.
3. Parents of visiting children should receive a number tag that corresponds to tags placed on their children. You **must** bring this number tag with you when you return to pick up your child(ren). Nursery volunteers may only release a child to **an adult who has the matching number tag**. Nursery workers should contact the Children's ministry director or an officer for assistance if someone tries to pick up a child without a matching tag.

Cleanliness Guidelines

1. Any toys placed in the child's mouth should be wiped and cleaned before returning them to the toy container or they should be put in the dirty cup container to be cleaned later.
2. Hand Washing: Caregivers should wash their hands prior to coming into the nursery and use hand sanitizer as necessary after contact with a child to help decrease the spreading of germs.
3. Washing and Sanitizing of Toys & Equipment: The Nursery Coordinator and Volunteers should wipe down the tables and spray all the toys & equipment used with Lysol/Clorox spray provided at the end of their service time.

Diaper Changing Policy

-These guidelines are to be posted in the nursery-

***Women only** will change diapers.

1. Changing table should be located where child being changed can easily be seen by another worker. Only women can change diapers.

2. Latex gloves are used when changing diapers.
3. All supplies should be assembled and ready before starting (diapers, wipes, & ointment etc.) so that child will not be left alone.
4. A disposable changing pad should be used on the changing table.
5. When finished, the caregiver's hands (and, if necessary, the child's hands) should be cleaned with hand sanitizer.
6. The changing table should only be used to change diapers on. The child is not to be left unattended.

Nursery Restroom Procedure

-These guidelines are to be posted in the nursery-

***Women only** will assist children with the restroom.

If a child needs assistance...

1. One caregiver will observe from the doorway of the nursery as a female caregiver assists the child in the bathroom. The bathroom door will remain open the entire time. The caregiver in the bathroom will remain near the doorway, within view from the hallway, except when she is directly assisting the child. Either a man or woman can observe from the nursery doorway.
2. Female caregiver will assist the child as needed and help him/her wash their hands before returning to the classroom. Caregiver will wash hands as well.

Elementary Sunday School

We offer two Sunday School classes for our elementary aged children (Pre-K 4 - 2nd grade, and 3rd - 5th grade). These classes will share in a large group time of worship through music and a pastoral homily. Then they will split into their separate classes for a Bible lesson, activities, discussion and prayer.

We hope this will be a time for our children to continue worshiping together, deepen their understanding of God's word, and grow in relationships with one another and with their Sunday School teachers.

Elementary Specific Guidelines

1. All first-time visitors need to complete a Visitor Information Form when dropping off their child in Sunday School (please see a Sunday School Volunteer for assistance).
2. In accordance with state-wide best practices, there should be at least 1 adult for every 8 children age 3 and under; 1 adult for every 13 children age 4-5; 1 adult for every 15 children age 6-8; 1 adult for every 19 children age 9-12.
3. Sunday School Volunteers are NEVER to be on duty ALONE with any children - even just one! Therefore, if you arrive and there is only one adult volunteer, please stay with your child until another adult volunteer or the ministry director arrives to help. This rule also applies to a Husband/Wife/Family Team. Another adult volunteer must always be present with them.
4. There should always be a designated hallway monitor outside the Sunday School classrooms during the Sunday School hour.
5. Only children, designated volunteers, and officers may enter the Sunday School classrooms during the Sunday school hour. Parents may briefly help their child into the classroom and then view from the hallway.
6. We provide gummy bears for snack time. If you prefer your child not to have this, please let us know. *Please do not send your child with their own snack, unless you have discussed this with the ministry director first.
7. You or another adult member of your family must pick up your child from Sunday School at the door if they are in 2nd grade or below. If the adult picking them up is someone other than the child's parent, please let the Sunday School volunteer know this at drop-off. Children grades 3rd - 5th will be released from Sunday School at 11:20am to find their parents. If you would like to pick them up instead, please let the Sunday School teacher know at drop-off.
8. See the rest of policy for ministry-wide guidelines for the following: Discipline Guidelines, Restroom Procedures, Illness Policy, First Aid Policy, and Child Protection Policy

Elementary Restroom Procedure

If a child needs assistance...

The hallway monitor will observe from the doorway while a volunteer is assisting the child. They will assist the child as needed and help him/her wash hands before returning to the classroom. The volunteer will wash their hands before returning to class as well.

If a child does not need assistance...

A volunteer will walk into the hallway with the child and ensure the child reaches the bathroom. They will remain in the hallway, along with the hallway monitor, until the child is finished and ensure the child returns directly back to class.

General Policies

Illness Policy

Ensuring a safe and healthy environment for the children is of primary importance.

Parents DO NOT leave your child if he/she has had any of the following symptoms:

In the past 24 hour:

Fever (100.4 rectal, oral, ears)
Vomiting and/or Diarrhea
Unexplained rash with fever
Mouth sores with drooling

Until there has been 24 hours of treatment for:

Strep throat
Impetigo
Pink Eye
Head Lice

> The most common question of inclusion or exclusion is the common cold (i.e. runny nose, cough and congestion). If mucus is thick green, the cough is severe and/or persistent or the child cannot participate comfortably, is unusually fussy, needs to be held constantly or needs a level of care that compromises the ability of the staff to care for the others DO NOT leave him.

> Children's ministry volunteers are not allowed to administer medication of any kind.

> Open wounds/sores must be covered before a child will be allowed to enter.

> Children with Chicken Pox may return once all lesions have crusted over.

> If a child becomes ill, call the ministry director and separate the child from the others until the parent or ministry director comes to remove the child from the nursery.

> Caregivers are instructed to follow the same health guidelines.

> The most important preventative measure to stop the spread of infection is frequent hand washing.

Allergies

> We do NOT allow nuts (including peanuts or tree nuts) in our nursery or Sunday School classrooms. However, we cannot guarantee these environments will be 100% free of allergens.

> All tables being used for Children's ministry events should be thoroughly wiped down before children arrive

> Please DO NOT send your child to class with their own snack. *If your child is not able to eat the snacks provided in class, please contact ministry director about an alternative.

First Aid

There is a first aid kit kept in the storage cart in the hallway.

In the event of an injury:

If the injury is minor and does not require emergency treatment, please contact the parent using the number given on the roster.

For serious injuries:

> Send another teacher/assistant to get the Children's Director or a church officer who will then contact the parents.

> Call 911. (*address: 960 Heritage Way, Brentwood, TN– in the Fifty Forward Martin Center*)

> Following both minor and serious injuries, please see the Children's Director to report the incident.

Communication and Social Media Policy

Volunteers are **not** permitted to have private communication with any of the children of ASPC through social media or by texting. Parents **must** be included in all digital communication with children.

Volunteers are not permitted to post photos or videos of children online without first obtaining permission from the child's parents.

Discipline Guidelines

1. No throwing, hitting, biting, or kicking can be allowed. If a child expresses this behavior, in a kind firm voice, we will explain the behavior that is expected and remove them from the source of conflict if necessary.
2. If the behavior continues, it is appropriate to place the child in a time out in the hall with an adult volunteer or hall monitor for no more than one minute for each year of their age.
3. At the end of the time out, the child will be asked if he knows why he was in time out. A simple Biblical explanation will be given. We will assist him in an apology "I'm sorry I ____ you. Will you please forgive me?" and then assure him of our love and forgiveness and get him involved in a new activity.

4. Yelling at children is absolutely prohibited. No rough housing with children will be permitted.
5. Under NO circumstance shall use or threat of physical force be used. If the child is unmanageable, the Children's Ministry Director or an officer will be called. If they cannot settle the child, the parents will be called. (If parents prefer to be called first, please indicate that on the Child Information Sheet.)

* Our children's ministry policies have been approved by the session and will be reviewed on a biennial basis.