



Seeds

Milwood Baptist Church
Children's Ministry
Policies and Procedures Handbook

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Dear Parents & Volunteers,

The Seeds Children's Ministry is fully dedicated to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. He loves these children and desires to have a relationship with them. All that we say and do is to make His name great, and to encourage these children to know Him more. As much as we appreciate your willingness to serve, your service is not for us. This service is for the King, Jesus!

We have established these policies and procedures to protect our children, our volunteers, and Milwood Baptist Church. These rules will be strictly enforced. It is, therefore, imperative that you know and observe the rules listed in this handbook. After carefully reading this handbook, please sign and date the acknowledgement page and return it to Denise Watts.

Sincerely,

Denise Watts

Children's Ministry Coordinator

Milwood Baptist Church

Denise's Cell Phone #: (201) 320-7906

Email: seeds@milwoodbaptist.com

Our Ministry

In the children's ministry at Milwood Baptist Church, our purpose is to joyfully build up the body of Christ for the Glory of God. We will be phasing out of the *Generations of Grace* curriculum and starting *The Biggest Story* in August. Using this new curriculum on Sundays, *The Biggest Story* leads readers on an exciting journey through the Bible, from the garden of Eden to the return of Christ. This fun curriculum based on the book draws kids into Scripture and helps them grasp its overarching message of redemption.

Each lesson points to the **Gospel**: The atoning work of Jesus Christ, God's Son, who lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father, died on the cross in the place of guilty sinners, is risen to the right Hand of the Father, and coming again soon to judge the world! God purposefully had His Word written the way it is so that we could see Jesus in all of it (Luke 24:27)! Our hope is that in teaching the Bible, and preaching our need for salvation and God's provision through His Son Jesus, children over time will come to see and trust in Christ alone, loving Him with their whole heart, soul, mind and strength.

The key for parents and volunteers alike is “patience.” Like a seed that is planted in the ground, we don’t know what takes place in the soil of the children’s hearts. But our goal is to pray fervently as we plant the good seed, the Word of God, trusting His Holy Spirit to do the work we can’t.

Our ministry is a precious gift, and we can’t do it without each of you!

Classes & Age Groups

All children’s classes are located on the 1st floor down the hall that leads out of the Fellowship Hall.

Parents may enter the side door labeled “Children’s Entrance: Welcome,” come straight back, and sign in their children at the laptop kiosk up to 15 minutes prior to service. Volunteers should also print their name tags.

Room 102: Nursery (babies & children under 3 y.o.)

Room 103: Kindergarten - 2nd grade (or 5 y.o. to 7 y.o.)

Room 105: 3rd - 4th grade (or 8 y.o. to 9 y.o.)

Due to our current church size & need, we have three classes, listed above. In the future, we may extend to having a fourth class. If the church were to have a large increase in the number of infants and toddlers, for example, we may split the “Infants” class into two age groups, one for infants and one for 18 mo-3 y.o. (using Room 104 as well). *But for our current need and number of children in attendance each week, this grouping works well.*

Volunteer Guidelines

- All volunteers must submit to a *background check*. No cost is required on your part. Background checks will be required every **two years** for parents and volunteers. Individuals who have been arrested for, charged with, are on deferred adjudication or regular probation for, or have been convicted of sexually oriented or sex related crimes, either misdemeanor or felony, will be asked not to serve in any area of the children’s ministry. Milwood Baptist Church utilizes a comprehensive background check and relies upon the truthful answers of applicants for this information.
- All volunteers must complete a *Sex Abuse Awareness Training* which must be repeated every **two years**.
- All volunteers are required to be Milwood Baptist Church **members**, with the exception of “helpers.” Helpers are 16 years

old and up, have expressed a desire to serve, and have met with our children's coordinator. They are *not* responsible for teaching. They will be a **third** person in the room assisting the two teachers.

- All volunteers must arrive early to print out their name badge and make sure their room is set up for class.
- Volunteers must remain in the classroom until all children have been checked out by their parent/guardian.
- If you are going to be absent on a Sunday you are scheduled to work in a classroom, it is **your** responsibility to contact the director **after** you have found a replacement to let him/her know of the change. If you have not found a replacement, please let the director know at least **five days** in advance of your absence that you will be gone and you have not been able to find a replacement (*unless there is an emergency*).
- All parents and volunteers are required to read all of the Seeds policies and procedures and sign the Acknowledgement and Agreement form at the end of this handbook.
- Children's ministry training dates will be set throughout the year. Volunteers are required to attend at least **one** training session every **other** year you serve in Seeds. Training sessions will cover a range of topics such as: changes to policies and procedures, curriculum updates, and general training for working with children.

Check-in and Check-out

In order to attend the Seeds class, parents/guardians must check-in their child(ren) using the computer **kiosk** on the first floor.

For a child to enter your classroom, they must have a sticker on their clothing (infants' sticker can be placed on the diaper bag) that matches their parent/guardian sticker. If a child does not have a sticker, please refer them to the check-in desk to be helped with check-in or registration.

A child may **not be released from their classroom unless the parent/guardian has the security tag which corresponds to the name tag on that child.**

Safety and Security

Two Adult Policy:

We require **two** *non-related* adults to lead each class. There must also be at least one **female** adult or helper in the room. When this is not possible, doors must remain open at all times. Specific guidelines for this policy are as follows: Both adults should remain in the room or with the group at all times in order to maintain the

required adult/child ratio. If one of you must be out of the room for an emergency, please text or call the assigned leader to have our emergency person stop by. *If one of you must be away it may not exceed 5 minutes, and it must be for one of the following reasons:*

- Using the restroom
- Escorting a child to the restroom

Adult to Child Ratio:

Nursery - Preschool (babies up to 3 y.o.) – 1 adult : 3 children

Kindergarten - 2nd Grade – 1 adult : 8 children

3rd - 4th Grade – 1 adult : 8 children

We will do our best to make sure these ratios are maintained. If you have too many kids in your class, please let the **coordinator** know. It is always our goal to provide a comfortable ratio in every classroom. All ratios are set relative to the age of the children in the class and the guidelines most appropriate for our facilities and purpose.

Restroom Policies

All downstairs classes have a child-sized restroom shared between classrooms. If a student needs to go, they are free to use the class one (only one student allowed at a time). Students should not be

sent to the main restrooms *unless it is an emergency and the class one is currently in use by another student or out of order*. In this case, one volunteer *with another child* must walk the student down to the main restroom and wait for them outside *with the main door left open*. If there isn't a third person in the room, this is when you would text and/or call the assigned Leader that day.

One volunteer may provide assistance for a child three years or younger in the class restrooms. The door must remain open and there needs to be another volunteer in the classroom adjoining the bathroom. It is okay to talk a child through potty training as long as the parent has asked you to do so. Never touch a child's body parts during potty training. Stick to words and descriptions during training. Again, make sure the door remains open!

Physical Contact

Appropriate touch is part of a **positive**, nurturing environment.

Use good judgment in the following actions:

- Placing an arm around the shoulders
- Walking hand in hand
- Carrying small children piggy-back
- Short hugs to greet children
- Gentle, assuring pat on the shoulder

- Handshakes, high-fives, and fist bumps
- Holding a young child when sad or crying

Do not ever take the following actions:

- Touch a child in **anger** or disgust
- Touch a child in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive
- Touch a child between the navel and the knee
- Touch a child's private parts (with the exception of diaper changes) Physical contact in any form should be **above reproach**.

The personal behavior of volunteers must foster trust at all times. Do NOT force physical contact of any kind on a reluctant child. A child's preference to not be touched must always be respected. For safety and accountability purposes, it is important that all interaction between children and volunteers take place in a location where others can observe what is happening. *At no time should a child and a volunteer disappear behind a closed door with no visibility to outsiders.*

Policy Against Child Abuse

Milwood Baptist Church and Seeds Children's Ministry support and maintain a zero tolerance policy against child abuse and

neglect. Child abuse and neglect include physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or maltreatment. It is against the law, and against Seeds policy, for any volunteer or staff, male or female, to physically, sexually, or mentally abuse or neglect any child at any time. Milwood Baptist and Seeds reserve the right to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with Seeds any volunteer or employee who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

All volunteers shall immediately document and report any incident of abuse or violation of the two adult policy of which they have knowledge or that they have observed. Any person making such a report shall keep the information strictly confidential. Reports shall be made to the **coordinator**. Action will then be taken by the coordinator. You will be responsible for documenting the suspected abuse. You may use the form found in the Seeds folder in your classroom or simply write down the following:

Date of abuse witnessed or heard _____

Name of child _____

Name of suspected abuser _____

Observations of the abusive incident _____

The person reporting an incident of abuse shall contact the Seeds coordinator (or in his/her absence, other appropriate staff member). The reporter shall provide information regarding all relevant facts with respect to the incident. Upon receiving a report of suspected abuse, the director or staff member together with the reporter, will complete a written report of the incident (if not already completed) and submit a copy of the report to the proper authorities. However, in all cases where the alleged wrongdoer is the director or staff member, he or she shall be considered absent for the purposes of this reporting procedure and the report should be submitted to another appropriate staff member. In all cases where an imminent threat of continued or actual abuse exists, any witness shall immediately contact the Seeds Coordinator to request that immediate steps be taken to ensure the safety of the alleged victim. Once the victim is **safe**, written reports can be completed. In response to allegations, the coordinator and staff have the right to remove any persons suspected of abuse from the volunteer position regardless of findings from previous background check.

Sickness

Any child with any of the following symptoms will not be allowed to participate with the other children:

- Fever over 100* F in the last 24 hours
- Vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- Skin rashes or eruptions of unknown origin, including but not limited to: impetigo, measles, chicken pox, etc.
- A positive COVID-19 test, or exposure to a positive person, within the last 5 days

If your child contracts any of these or another contagious illness, please notify the Seeds Coordinator at 201-320-7906:

- Persistent coughing associated with respiratory infection.
- Runny nose with yellow or green colored discharge or congestion associated with a cough or fever.
- Pink-eye
- Parasites, any form of lice, mites, or ringworm.

The parent of a child is the only one allowed to administer any form of medication with the exception of diaper rash cream with parental instruction. There are thermometers located in the first aid kit above the sink in each classroom. If a sickness, accident or

injury causes a child's bodily fluids to be spilled, follow the procedure below:

- Separate the injured or ill child from the other children.
- Isolate the area where any body fluid may have dropped on carpet, chairs, toys, etc.
- Keep other children from having contact with the body fluid.
- Wear protective gloves and clean the area with a rag or paper towels.
- Attend to the student as needed using the first aid kit.
- Clean the room with a 10% bleach/water mixture.
- Place all soiled gauze, bandages, and wrappers into a disposable bag. Remove gloves and place into bag. Seal the bag and dispose of it in the trash can.
- Wash hands carefully with soap and warm water.

If a child is injured in a classroom, please fill out an accident report. Accident reports can be found in the Seeds folder in your classroom. Please be as detailed as you can in your report. We want to communicate the injury clearly to parents.

Allergies

Volunteers should ask the parent dropping off if the day's snack is appropriate for their child. Allergies will be listed on the child's check-in sticker. Always check the children's stickers before

handing out snacks. Ask the parents when they arrive if the child has an alternate snack in his/her bag.

We ask parents to communicate with their children about waiting to eat their snack until the appropriate time, unless there is a unique condition. *Parents should not be bringing candy to the classrooms or have their children with candy during class. Unless for a special circumstance, please do not have your child with a special snack.* We provide a snack during class.

Emergencies

Fire

The first priority in any fire is that all children and volunteers' safety is maintained. Volunteers should follow the directions below in the event of a fire:

How will you know if there is a fire?

An alarm will sound or you will be instructed by the director to evacuate.

What do you do?

- Remain calm.
- Grab your roster

- Line children up at the door and **count** them
- Check the bathroom for any children
- Place one adult at the front of the line and one adult at the back of the line
- Take the nearest evacuation route away from the fire.

Where do you go?

- Once outside, take all children in a line across the parking lot to the ditch
- Count all of the children again (If one is missing, let the coordinator and /or fire department know.)
- Remain with the children outside until a staff member informs you it is safe to enter the building.

Missing Child

Time is critical if a child is reported missing. Volunteers should contact a coordinator or staff member as soon as possible with the following information:

- Name/ age/ sex
- Color of hair, clothing, skin
- Class or ministry where child was checked in

Medical Emergency

Serious injuries involving broken bones, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, or other serious bodily injury should be treated as follows:

- Do not move the injured child. A volunteer must remain with the child.
- Stay **calm** and speak in an assuring manner to the child while another team leader cares for the other children in your class.
- Have another volunteer contact the Seeds coordinator and the child's parents.
- A staff member will call for medical assistance, or, if necessary, will call 911. Please DO NOT CALL 911 unless you are certain of serious injury to the child.
- You may be asked to give information to assist the staff in reporting the incident.

Discipline

Try to handle each child and issue individually. Give verbal instruction and re-direction when the child is not following the rules. Here are some ways to redirect a child:

- Play dough by himself/herself at a table to calm a child down quickly

- Puzzle or coloring by him/herself in a secluded area
- Send the child to a quiet area with the Bible or a book to read.

They can read alone or with you.

- Threading beads on a string in a quieter area

Try not to use the word “time-out.” Instead, use phrases like “take a break” or “have some quiet time.” Verbal redirection should not be harsh or demean the child in any way. Get the child’s attention and explain the behavior you want to see in the classroom. If the child’s behavior does not stop after giving verbal cues or redirection, you may contact the coordinator or the **parents**.

REMEMBER: Pray with and for the child. We want them to see the power of Jesus in every situation of their lives, especially the difficult times. When speaking with the parents/guardians at the end of class time, use positive words and encouraging examples of the child’s behavior. Don’t spend your time with the parents only telling them about the misbehavior of their child. What happens in your classroom should be dealt with in your classroom or with the help of the director.

Agreement & Acknowledgment

In dependence on the Holy Spirit and by God's grace,

- I will be faithful and dependable in this ministry.
- I will seek to learn more about ministering to children as information and training are available.
- I will faithfully pray for the children who are under my care.
- I commit to knowing when I am scheduled to serve and arriving to serve on time.
- I have read, understood, and commit to abide by the policies contained in the Milwood Baptist Church Seeds Ministry Policies and Procedures Handbook.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to review any new policies and procedures received or dispersed by the Seeds Coordinator.
- I acknowledge that the materials, guidelines, policies, and procedures are important to the safety and security of myself and the children in our ministry
- I understand that as a volunteer, by signing this document, I am not employed by Milwood Baptist Church, and I will not be receiving monetary compensation per hours worked.

Signature Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date Received by Coordinator: _____