
Children's Ministry Policy & Procedure Manual

Emmanuel Church of
Greenwood

2011

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I. Children's Ministry Philosophy

a. Vision –

We exist to create relevant environments where children experience and embrace the unconditional love of Jesus.

b. Wins –

i. Hospitality Team

Create an environment that enhances Children's Ministry events

ii. Small Group Leader

Be the primary influence, on Sunday mornings, who makes the unconditional love of Jesus real

iii. Drama Cast

Provide energetic, excellent and engaging performances that bring to life monthly virtues

iv. Preschool Volunteer

Provide safe, loving and engaging experiences that encourage preschoolers to love Jesus

v. Nursery Volunteer

Provide an environment of care and concern for future Christ followers

vi. Storyteller and Host

Bring to life bible truths and everyday examples to make Jesus relevant to children

vii. Check-in Team

Provide a positive first contact with families entering the Children's Ministry

viii. Worship Team

Lead kids in praising God by making a connection, having high energy and knowing the songs and dance moves

II. Policies & Procedures – Volunteer

a. Requirements

- i. Because we love children and desire to protect them, all volunteers of Emmanuel working with children must agree to complete the following steps.
 1. Application with reference check if necessary
 2. Background Check (18 years and older)
 3. Agreement to comply with Policy & Procedures
- ii. In order to begin serving in a class, volunteers must be in 6th grade. Middle School students may serve in limited capacities as determined by the leadership.

b. Expectations

- i. Arrival – Volunteers must arrive 35 minutes prior to the event/service at which they are serving unless otherwise instructed by leadership.
- ii. Huddle – 35 minutes prior to the start of each service, Children’s Ministry leadership will hold a Huddle. Each volunteer is expected to attend the Huddle prior to the service in which they are serving.
- iii. Check-In – All volunteers will utilize the computer check-in system prior to reporting to their area to print out a name tag. Name tags should be worn in plain view where parents, visitors and other leaders can easily locate and identify you.
- iv. Departure – Volunteers must remain at the Children’s Ministry event/service until the last child has been picked up by a parent or until relieved by a member of leadership.
- v. Absences – Volunteers are responsible for reporting an absence, planned or unforeseen, to a member of the Children’s Ministry leadership. Whenever possible, the volunteer should attempt to secure a substitute or switch responsibilities with another volunteer and inform leadership of the change.

c. Involvement

- i. Preparation – Read your lesson before you arrive in your classroom on Sunday. Often the best advice for classroom management is being prepared.
- ii. Prayer – Pray for your kids and your patience consistently. Ask for guidance, discernment and confidence as you lead the class.
- iii. Training – The Children’s Ministry leadership believes that ongoing training is an important, effective and required part of being a responsible volunteer.
 1. CPR certification and AED training will be offered periodically throughout the year for Children’s Ministry volunteers.

2. Volunteers are required to attend any ongoing training sessions as designated by Children's Ministry leadership as pertaining to their area of service.
- iv. Personal Care – All volunteers are expected to present themselves modestly in consideration for parents, visitors, leaders, other volunteers and the congregation.
1. Dress Code – Attire when working with children must be neat, clean, and appropriate for the week being performed. Please consider the general guideline of shirts that are not low cut or showing cleavage and shorts/skirts/dresses that are to the mid-thigh or longer; also, tops or bottoms that are tight or too fitted are not a good choice in the classroom. When working with the kids, you may be bending over, leaning forward, kneeling down, and running around - movements that cause clothing to become revealing.

III. Policies & Procedures – Classroom

a. General

- i. For the protection of our volunteers and the children, a closed-circuit surveillance system is in place in the children's area.
- ii. If you notice any unfamiliar person in the classroom, please ask his or her identity and notify the Children's Ministry leadership. The person's needs will be addressed and they will either be signed in as a visitor or notified about our Family Room and directed there.
- iii. A parent should be called from service in the event that a child is completely inconsolable (after at least 10 minutes in our care), ill, injured, has a disciplinary issue, or is a danger to him or herself or other children.
- iv. Parents are to be notified and an "Incident Report" completed as soon as possible in the event that an injury has occurred in the classroom. The same applies in the event of a biting situation and a "Bite Report". Each report should be completed, signed by a parent and turned into a member of Children's Ministry leadership.

b. Ratio

- i. Two Volunteer Policy – Two volunteers should remain together with children at all times. No child should be checked into a room where less than two adults are present. This is for the safety and protection of both the children and our volunteers.
- ii. It is always our goal to provide a comfortable adult to child 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.

c. Wellness/Medication

- i. Any child with any of the following symptoms will not be allowed to participate with the other children. If a child should develop any of these while in the program, the parent/guardian shall be notified and the child will be picked up in a timely manner.
 1. Fever over 100°F in the last 24 hours
 2. Vomiting in the last 24 hours
 3. Diarrhea in the last 24 hours
 4. Skin rashes or eruptions of unknown origin, including but not limited to: impetigo, measles, chicken pox, etc. If your child contracts any of these or another contagious illness, please notify the Children's Ministry at 535-9673.
 5. Persistent coughing associated with respiratory infection, including cold, bronchitis, and so forth
 6. Runny nose with a yellow- or green-colored discharge or congestion associated with a cough or fever
 7. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) that may also have a colored discharge or drainage

8. Parasites, any form of lice, mites, or ringworm. These aren't common, but when present, are very contagious.
- ii. The parent or guardian of a child is the only one allowed to administer any form of medication to a child with the exception of diaper rash cream with parental instruction.

d. Feeding/Snacks/Allergies

- i. Infants & Toddlers – Ask each parent at check-in if their child is able to have one of our pre-approved snacks. Pre-approved snacks may include, Cheerios, Puffs, or Goldfish. If the child is able to have a snack, please affix the snack sticker to the tag on your check-in sheet.
 1. When checking an infant into class, please ask for detailed instructions for how to best care for their child. In regards to feeding, please follow the instructions carefully.
- ii. 2 – 5 year olds – There are pre-approved snacks for this area, including Goldfish, Animal Crackers, Marshmallows, or Fruit Loops. Please check the children's tags prior to serving a snack for any allergies. If in doubt as to whether a food is safe for a child, do not give it. Ask the parent at pick-up and make a notation on the tag on the check-in sheet. We will do our best to input those notes to the computer for future reference.
 1. Our weekly activities sometimes call for additional snacks to be introduced to the class. In that event, please be sure you have picked up one of the laminated dry-erase posters to be placed at the check-in desk. The volunteer responsible for checking kids in should be sure to point out the items and ask if there is any problems or allergies. Again, always check the allergies listed and when in doubt, do not give the children the food.
- iii. Elementary – When activities call for a snack, or if you choose to bring a food item in for your class, be sure to check the children's tags for allergies. Whenever possible, check with the parents first.

e. Check-In

- i. Upon arrival, check each child (birth to 5th grade) into the computer check-in system and attach the name tag to the child's garment. Hand the parent or guardian two claim receipts. The parent is to give one receipt to a leader in the nursery or classroom upon dropping off the child. The other receipt is kept by the parent/guardian to claim the child at the end of the service.
- ii. One volunteer should be responsible for checking each child family in to the room, i.e. greeting, taking stickers, asking for special instructions, completing the internal numbering process (Preschool), etc.
- iii. The parent or guardian must provide the appropriate receipt when checking a child out of the nursery or classroom. When a parent arrives, be sure to collect the matching claim receipt prior to releasing the child. If

the receipt is not available, the classroom leader is to call the Head Coach on duty and have him or her handle the release process.

- iv. No person under the age of 16 is allowed to claim a child out of the classroom without the matching claim receipt and written permission on file.
- v. Classroom leaders are to remove each child's name tag label from the child's clothing before releasing him or her to a verified adult. This notifies security that the child has been properly checked out.

f. Diapering/Restroom Policy

- i. Diapering – To provide the best care for children, the diapers of all infants and toddlers should be checked, and changed if necessary, before the end of service. If a child will be present in the class for more than one service, the child should be changed at least once, or as needed.
 - 1. Change all diapers in full view of other classroom leaders and only on designated changing stations.
 - 2. Be sure to have all supplies ready and with you before placing child on the changing pad. No child should ever be left unattended on the changing pad.
 - 3. Wear a new pair of gloves with each diaper change.
 - 4. Spray the changing pad with disinfectant and wipe clean between each diaper change.
 - 5. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer after each diaper change.
- ii. Restrooms – Ages 2 – 3
 - 1. Parents should be encouraged to take their children to the restroom prior to the start of class.
 - 2. When a preschool child needs to use the restroom, an adult should escort them to the door of the restroom, assist them in the open doorway with any clothing or undergarments, and let them go into the restroom on their own.
 - 3. If a child needs assistance, enter while keeping the door propped open. Be sure to wash both your own hands and the child's hands before leaving.
 - 4. In the event that a potty-training child has an accident, please call the Children's Ministry leadership to determine if there are spare dry clothes that can be used. When possible, we will change the child and into dry clothes and bag the soiled clothes for the parents to pick up after service. If no dry clothes are available, or the accident requires parental assistance, please call the parent from service to assist and comfort their child.
- iii. Restrooms – Ages 4 – 5
 - 1. Parents should be encouraged to take their children to the restroom prior to the start of service.

2. If the classroom is equipped with a restroom, the child may be allowed to enter and use the bathroom independently.
 3. If the child requires assistance with clothing, the volunteer may assist at the propped open door. If the child requires further assistance, the volunteer may enter, while keeping the bathroom door propped.
 4. In the event that there are developmental issues or accidents requiring adult assistance, please notify the Children's Ministry leadership for assistance and supervision.
 5. In the event that a potty-training child has an accident, please call the Children's Ministry leadership to determine if there are spare dry clothes that can be used. When possible, we will change the child and into dry clothes and bag the soiled clothes for the parents to pick up after service. If no dry clothes are available, or the accident requires parental assistance, please call the parent from service to assist and comfort their child.
- iv. Restrooms – Elementary
1. Children should be encouraged to use the restroom prior to the start of class.
 2. If a child needs to use the restroom, and cannot wait until the end of class, they must be accompanied by an adult leader. The adult leader will wait in the hallway and escort the child back to class. During large group time, please be sure to inform another leader in the room and ask them to watch your small group.
 3. If there is only one leader with the child's small group, Children's Ministry leadership should be called to assist.

g. Classroom Management

- i. There is to be no corporal punishment of any kind for any reason (i.e. spanking, pinching, etc.).
- ii. Review the classroom rules with the children frequently. Rules may vary but can include:
 1. Obey the teacher.
 2. Listen. And, be respectful of others when they are speaking.
 3. Be kind and safe.
 4. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- iii. Preventative steps to take to help maintain a controlled classroom:
 1. Create a loving, caring atmosphere.
 2. Establish and communicate realistic expectations for children.
 3. Focus on positive actions.
 4. Be fair and consistent with the children.
 5. Be prepared. When you are prepared, there is less opportunity for you to lose control.

iv. Corrective Actions:

1. Try to handle issues individually.
2. Give verbal redirection when the child is not following the rules.
 - a. Redirection or correction should not be harsh or demeaning.
 - b. Get the child's attention, explain what the wrong behavior was, and redirect using verbiage that talks about what you want done.
3. If behavior does not cease, use the walkie-talkie in your classroom to contact Children's Ministry leadership. We will handle behavior issues as needed with the child and/or parents.

IV. Policies & Procedures – Medical and Emergency Situations

a. Medical Procedures

- i. **Minor injuries** can be treated with a little tender loving care, a cool cloth, and a Band-Aid. There is a well-stocked First Aid kit in the Teacher Workroom and Boo-Boo Bottles (ice packs) in the fridge. When you treat a child, please complete an Incident Report located in the Teacher Workroom and have Children's Ministry leadership sign the report. When the parent arrives, let them know what happened. A staff member will follow up with the parent, if necessary, the following week. The Children's Ministry will keep a copy of the report on file and will provide a copy to the administration.
- ii. **It is important to remember that we are not authorized to dispense any over-the-counter or prescription medications (with the exception of diaper rash ointment only with parental instruction).** In the event a child needs more assistance than we can provide, please notify Children's Ministry leadership, and the parent will be notified.
- iii. **Serious injuries** involving broken bones, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, or other serious bodily injury should be treated as follows:
 1. Do not move the injured child. A volunteer must remain with the child.
 2. Stay calm and speak in an assuring manner to the child while another team leader cares for the other children in your class.
 3. Have another volunteer radio or find a member of Children's Ministry leadership for assistance. In the event of an emergency, security can radio '000' in the sanctuary to alert leadership.
 4. A staff member will call for medical assistance, or, if necessary, will call 911. Please, **DO NOT CALL 911** from your room or your cell phone. This call should only be made by an Emmanuel Church of Greenwood staff member or security team member.
 5. The staff member will contact the parent and take over the situation so you may return to the classroom.
 6. A staff member will contact you with updates of the child's condition. You may be asked to give information to assist the staff in reporting the incident.

b. Emergency Procedures

i. Lost Child Procedure

1. Classroom Leader should contact Head Coach on duty via walkie-talkie and let them know of the missing child.
2. Communicate a description of child to Head Coach including age, hair color, eye color, clothing if possible, and any other significant characteristics.
3. Stay with parents and remain calm and reassuring. Other members of the Children's Ministry leadership will initiate a search to locate the child.
4. Communication will be maintained via walkie-talkie.

- ii. Children's Ministry Leadership Plan For Lost Child Procedure
 1. Contact Security team to let them know of lost child.
 2. Go to all logical locations to look for child.
 - a. Double-check classrooms/small group area.
 - b. Check large group environment areas.
 - c. Check surrounding classrooms and other age classes.
 - d. Check bathrooms.
 - e. Check Dugout.
 3. Put team members at Exit doors to be sure that no child has gone off unattended.
 4. If in 2-5 minutes all areas have been checked and child is not located, Children's Ministry leadership will contact Security Team to decide to move to lock down procedures.
- iii. Lock Down Procedure For Children's Ministry Area - in the case of a lost child
 1. Team members positioned at each door are to remain in place.
 2. Prepare them to be able to calmly explain why the doors are remaining shut. Explain situation and ask for cooperation.
 3. No one leaves the Children's Ministry area.
 4. Notify all teachers/coaches/staff of missing child and lockdown status.
 5. Security Team to notify all Host Team members and facilities staff as necessary.
 6. Look in all logical places – AGAIN!
 7. Stay in communication with security and all pertinent teams.
 8. Lockdown to be elevated to entire building, not allowing any children to leave, as necessary.
 9. Decision made by all teams together when to call police.
- iv. Evacuation Procedures
 1. See attached Evacuation Plan.
 2. Evacuation Plans are posted in all classrooms.
- v. Child Abuse Policy
 1. It is our intent to follow the state regulations in the reporting of child abuse. Report any suspicions about possible mistreatment/abuse of any kind to the Children's Ministry leadership immediately.
 2. In cases where reporting is deemed necessary, the appropriate staff from Emmanuel will work closely with the witness, the family, and any of the helping agencies involved. Our desire is to protect the children and support the family.
 3. Any suspected or alleged child abuse by coaches or leaders can result in temporary or permanent removal from the ministry, pending the outcome of an investigation. This would be done to protect both the child and the leader.

V. Compliance Signature

I have read and understand each requirement in the Children's Ministry Policy & Procedure Manual.

I agree to comply with each provision.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

VI. Resource Documents

- a. Incident Report**
- b. Biting Notification**
- c. Evacuation Plan**

INCIDENT REPORT

Incident Report

Date _____ Time _____

Child's Name _____

Age _____

Room _____

This is what happened: _____

Here's how we treated it: _____

Parent Notified

Leader's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Staff Signature: _____

BITING NOTIFICATION FOR PARENTS

Date: _____ Witness to Incident: _____

Children’s Ministry Staff _____

_____ was involved in a biting incident today in their class. Please be aware of our policy regarding bites in the nursery. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at your convenience.

Nursery biting policy

When a child is bitten, our first line of action is to separate the children and deal with the physical and emotional needs of the injured party. Then we will address the inappropriate behavior of the offender. We will simply tell the child, “no biting,” and place them in an age-appropriate time out. A volunteer will be assigned to observe the “biter” closely for the remainder of the service. A “bite report” will be filled out and given to both sets of parents.

If there is a second incident of biting regarding the same offender, a parent will be asked to remain in the nursery to supervise their own child until we (as nursery staff) are satisfied that the child has successfully overcome this “phase” and will no longer pose a threat to the other children.

INJURY NOTIFICATION

Date: _____ Witness to Incident: _____

Children’s Ministry Staff _____

_____ was bitten on the _____ today in the nursery.

The skin was: _____ not broken. _____ broken.

The child was: _____ calmed and parents paged.

We provided comfort and: _____ washed the area.
_____ placed a Band-Aid on the site.
_____ held a cold compress on the site.

Nursery biting policy

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