



Faith Community Church Children's Ministry Policy

Mission

To partner with families in raising the next generation for a lifetime of knowing God, experiencing His love in community, reaching out to them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and guiding them to follow Him in His mission.

What We Value

- A safe, secure, and loving environment where parents feel comfortable leaving their children
- Parents as the primary spiritual nurturers
- Bible-based teaching of essential Gospel truths
- Helping each child understand that God is real and a personal relationship with Him is everything in life.
- Ensuring each child feels the warm sense of belonging to their church family
- Equipping children for a lifetime of worship and missional living
- Experiencing the Kingdom of God in creative, relevant, and fun ways

Children's Ministry Co-Directors: Amy Jo Wierenga and Camie Perrin

Nursery Coordinator: Valerie Austin

Policies

Wellness:

1. Children must be symptom free from the following illness without medication for 24 hours before entering the classroom:

- Fever of 100 or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye or other eye infection)
- Rash
- Nasal drainage that is green or yellow
- Sore throat
- Open sores
- Cold
- Excessive coughing
- Lice

2. If a child develops any of these symptoms while in class, the parent will be paged to pick up the child. If a parent cannot be reached via cell phone or our paging system, the child will stay away from other children in room with the assistant.

3. Parents should also discuss allergies with teachers at drop-off.

Injury and First Aid:

1. We can administer only Band-Aids and Ice Packs.

2. For children with severe allergies requiring an epi-pen, please give it to the supervisor.

3. If there is an injury in the classroom, the teachers and/or volunteers should immediately tell the supervisor. Any injury must be reported since some trivial injuries can turn out to be serious. The teacher must complete a Parent Communication Form as soon as possible, to be filed, and have it copied for the parent to take home.

Safety and Security

We believe that it is of utmost importance that our children are nurtured in a safe and responsible environment. We also desire that our staff and volunteers be protected from any false allegations of misconduct.

1. Each volunteer in our ministry is required to complete an application process, which includes a personal interview and background check.

2. Each volunteer is required to read and agree to follow the stipulations in this comprehensive manual regarding Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures.
3. We hold comprehensive teacher trainings to (1) ensure our volunteers understand and follow our policies and to (2) enable them to nurture our children.
4. We have a detailed security procedure for picking up a child outlined in the Parent Responsibility section of this manual.
5. There is a Two-Adult rule in place for all classrooms. This means there should always be two adults, at least one of whom is a woman and must not be related, present while children are there. This is to protect the children from the possibility of abuse and to protect the adults from false accusations. If there is a situation in which there is only one adult, the door to the room should be open.
6. If there are last minute volunteers who have not been screened, they will be approved by the supervisor or greeter and placed with a volunteer or staff member who has had a background check.

Nursery Volunteers

Restroom and Diapering:

1. Parents are encouraged to take their toilet-trained child to the restroom prior to dropping him/her off in class.
2. Only women should take children to the restroom.
3. Only staff or the parent of a child may change diapers.
4. Adults must wash their own hands as well as the children's hands (at a sink or with hand sanitizer) after going to the restroom or changing a diaper.
5. Staff must always attend a child who is on the changing table. Prepare ahead so that all supplies are within reach. Never leave a child alone on the table, even if just to reach for something.

Evacuation:

1. If the fire alarm sounds while parents are in the service, they must follow the evacuation instructions out of the auditorium. Parents flooding the childcare area will cause congestion and prevent the children from being able to safely evacuate the building.
2. All volunteers/supervisors/teachers are aware of the plan to follow in case of an emergency. The supervisors will be responsible for getting everyone out of the building and helping people to follow the evacuation plans in their designated areas.
 - Teachers and assistants will lead their students in a line outdoors to the back/south parking lot. Infants and toddlers will be carried outside by volunteers. Preschoolers will hold hands with leaders.
 - Parents will pick up their children outside in the back/south church parking lot. Parents should not go to children's rooms. We cannot wait for pick up of children as delays could jeopardize lives.

- Evacuating staff and volunteers will NOT return to the building until an all clear has been transmitted by the fire department or the fire safety staff.
- Make sure that no one is left in the areas where you are serving. CLOSE THE DOORS as you exit rooms, but do not lock them. Move briskly to outside evacuation areas.
- Children's ministry leaders will check bathrooms.
- Accounting for children: Teachers will have sign in sheets with them.

The Children's Ministry has classes available for the following ages:

Nursery: Infants through young 3's

Preschool: 3 years through PreK

Elementary: Kindergarten through 5th Grade

Childcare for Infants through PreK is located on the northside of building near to the sanctuary. It opens 15 min prior to each service. Elementary age children join their parents and participate in the worship service.

Parents must check in their children prior to leaving them in a classroom. Our classes adhere to promotional markers and ratios, as follows:

Adult:Child Ratio

Infants 1:3

Two's (The month after turning 2) 1:5

Three's (When 3 years by Dec. 31) 1:6

Pre-K (When 4 years by Dec. 31) 1:6

Since we want to provide the best care for your child, we closely monitor the adult-child ratio in each classroom. Should a classroom go over the appropriate ratio, the supervisor or greeter will ask parents to volunteer. On occasion, a classroom may be closed. Generally, we promote children the first Sunday after Labor Day in September, with the exception of infant/toddlers.

CURRICULUM

"From infancy you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."2 Timothy 3:15

Nursery (up to 2)

The Faith nursery curriculum is centered around learning about God.

In every lesson, we teach children that the Bible is God's Word, that God made them, and that God loves them. Through singing and stories, the teacher opens little hearts and minds to knowing and loving God.

.

Preschool (ages 3 through Pre-K)

Lessons focus on the Big God Story and allow children to learn God's entire story, with a different emphasis each year. The children will explore how they too are a meaningful part of God's wonderful story. They will then free play, providing an opportunity to build relationships with peers and leaders as they apply and reflect on the lessons through art, activities, and prayer.

Elementary (K-5th grade)

Elementary students will be guided by a curriculum that "immerses children in the gospel through every story, theological concept, and call to mission from Genesis to Revelation." This framework aims for heart transformation through the gospel as children see how the gospel is present in the entire Bible. Children will understand that the Bible "is not just a collection of stories, but one unified story—God's story of redemption" It is our prayer and deepest desire that the Lord would use this series to help your children go deeper into God's Word, grow in the Gospel of Christ, and be able to share the joy and love they have received from God with others!

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

For the safety and well-being of your child, please adhere to the policies and procedures that are outlined in this entire manual.

Alerts and Requests

If your child has any allergies or special conditions, please explain them to the staff member or volunteer leading your child's class. For allergies, make sure that a note about the allergy has been made during the check-in.

Alert the teachers if your child is potty training. Please take potty-trained children to the restroom before dropping them off in class.

We welcome parents to spend up to 2 weeks acclimating their children to the class. Once your child feels comfortable, we encourage you to leave your child in class so that you may enjoy the service.

It is often most beneficial to quickly drop off your child, as this reduces separation anxiety and helps the child more quickly adjust to the classroom. Drop off your child at the door rather than entering the classroom is also beneficial.

Items you Bring

- Label all of your child's belongings, including diaper bags, cups, bottles, pacifiers, etc.
- All bottles must be pre-mixed. Nursery workers are not allowed to mix formula for health and sanitation reasons.

Tags

1. Every parent is required to register their child via FCC registration form.
2. Every child will have a name tag affixed to their backs.

Security for Child Pick Up

As mentioned above, each child receives a name tag and parent receives a corresponding numbered pager. Parents must retain the pager. It allow the parent or approved person to pick up their child from class. No adult can pick up a child without the corresponding pager without direct consent of the supervisor.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Requirements to Serve

1. Each volunteer in our ministry is required to complete an application process, which includes a personal interview and background check.
2. We hold comprehensive teacher trainings to (1) ensure our volunteers understand and follow our policies and to (2) enable them to nurture our children.
3. Youth must be at least 12 years old to work in the nursery with an adult.
4. In the event that there are last minute volunteers who have not been screened, they will be approved by the supervisor or greeter and placed with a volunteer or staff member who has had a background check.
5. Volunteers are entrusted to teach the children of Faith Community about the Gospel. We ask that volunteers commit themselves to the responsibility of building a strong, spiritual foundation in the hearts of the children.

Scheduling

1. Volunteers will communicate with the supervisor concerning the schedule.
2. Once the schedule is set by the supervisor, any changes should be made by switching with another team member and notifying the supervisor as soon as possible. Team members' contact information is supplied by the supervisor.
3. In case of an emergency that causes the volunteer to run late or be unable to serve, it is imperative to call or text the supervisor.
4. When a volunteer is no longer able to serve with the Children's Ministry, providing some notice is needed to find a replacement.

General

1. Volunteers must be knowledgeable about and adhere to applicable policies and procedures in this manual.
2. Volunteers are not permitted to have any personal drink (other than water) or food during class.
3. Personal belongings must remain off of the floor and out of reach of children.
4. Phones are to be on vibrate and may not be used in the classroom except in the case of an emergency.
5. Any special treats or activities involving food outside of the scheduled curriculum must be approved by the supervisor.

Arrival and Setup

1. Arrive a minimum of 15 minutes before the service begins, and sooner if preparation is required. Please be on time. Punctuality is important and tardiness compromises the quality of programming for the children. Please remember that tardiness has a domino effect, involving fellow teachers, children, and families.
2. Find and wear identity lanyard.
3. Wash your hands before setting up the room.
4. Set out any materials needed for class.
5. Ensure that all tables are wiped clean and toys and supplies are put away neatly in their proper places prior to leaving the room.
6. All bottles must be pre-mixed. Nursery workers are not allowed to mix formula for health and sanitation reasons.

Class Time

1. Anyone not wearing an approved name tag is not permitted to enter the classroom. If there is a problem, or you feel uncomfortable asking someone if they are approved, see the supervisor.
2. One volunteer should welcome children and take attendance while the other engages the other children.
3. Be particularly aware of children with allergies and check the sign in sheet and registration form for any indication of allergies or other special needs. Ask parents for further clarification.
4. Review the classroom guidelines with the children every week. (Refer to Classroom Management section for details.)
5. Whenever possible, sit on the floor with children to interact with them. Being on their eye level helps gain and maintain their attention.
6. Remain in the classroom at all times unless you are leaving to take a child to the restroom.
7. Enjoy being with the kids! Remember that this is not babysitting, but ministering to these children and guiding them closer to the Lord.

Departure Procedures

1. Children must be wearing a printed name tag to enter the classroom.
2. When a parent arrives, ask for the child's pager before releasing the child.
This is imperative: do not release a child without having the pager.
3. Match the child's name tag with the pager.
4. After all children have been picked up, tidy your classroom and return your lanyard.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Classroom Rules:

1. Obey the Teacher
2. Listen
3. Respect Others
4. Keep your Hands and Feet to yourself

Proactive Steps for helping Children in the Classroom:

1. Communicate the rules at the beginning of class every Sunday.
2. Make eye contact when speaking to the child.
3. Use positive and encouraging language.
4. Have the child repeat what you have asked them to do.
5. Try to redirect the child if they are doing something they shouldn't be doing.
6. Correction should always be given in love, not in anger. No physical correction should be given.

Preventative Actions

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 children.

Aggressive Behavior

1. Biting, hitting, pushing, scratching, or pulling is considered aggressive behavior
2. If a child displays any of these behaviors, he or she will be removed from the class and the parent will be notified.

Discipline Steps:

1. Verbal Warning: If possible, whisper to the child in order to not draw attention away from the teaching and onto the inappropriate behavior.
2. Remove and Set Apart: Remove the child from the rest of the class. Have him or her sit in a different area of the classroom for a set amount of time or until the child is ready to participate cooperatively.
3. If child was unresponsive, to correction then it may be important to involve the parents in finding solutions.
3. Communicate with the CM Director about the behavior.

Self-Evaluation

1. Pay attention to how you feel. If you are stressed, children will sense that. Try to focus on the present moment and the children in front of you rather than outside stresses and circumstances.

2. We only have about an hour with these kids each week to give them our all and teach them about the depth of God's love for them, which we can demonstrate through our actions and our undivided attention. Take a minute away if needed.
3. If you are struggling with a child, pass him or her off to another staff member or volunteer. You are never alone in the classroom, so let those around you help you through the difficult moments.
4. Arrive prepared for the morning, in heart and mind. Arriving on time enables you to have time to prepare for the morning (and get that divine energy juice we call coffee...)

POSITIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

1. Praise the positive and reward good behavior. Children often learn by modeling behavior. So try, for example "I love the way Sarah is sitting quietly with her hands in her lap. Great job!" The other children will follow quickly in hopes of being praised in the same way. Praising kids rewards good behavior and reinforces it for the entire class. You may also use rewards, such as: obedient children are the first to receive snack or art supplies.
2. Explain the rules of the class every week. Children do well when they know what is expected of them. Keep the classroom structure similar from week to week. Having a predictable routine helps kids cope with an environment and understand appropriate behavior.
3. Be assertive: Say what you mean and do what you say. Children need to know what consequences will follow for disobedience. When children know the consequences ahead of time, they are likely to deal with them with less arguing and complaining. It is best to order your classroom around what you have said you are going to do. You are the teacher. Be firm in giving instructions and following through with what you say. You should never yell at a child. Speak on their level. Look at them in the eye and make sure they are listening to what you say. If appropriate, have them repeat back what you just said. Do not discipline a child from across the room: go to the child and pull them aside. Do not let kids tell you what to do. You must be in control.
4. Make things fun! Instead of going into things like clean up time with a negative approach, such as "I'm so sorry, but we have to put toys away now..." try addressing it with a positive spin like "OK, kids, I have a mission for you: do you think we can have all of these toys put away in two minutes?" Or, singing the clean-up song is a fun way to begin and encourage a clean-up routine. Don't offer too many activity choices for kids. Switch out the toys so kids do not become bored.

5. Talk to a child who is crying. Engage an upset child with something of interest. Talk to them in a way that distracts them from thinking about their parents and avoid saying that Mommy is coming. If absolutely necessary, you can remind them that Mommy and Daddy will come back soon, but do not make that the point of your conversation. For children who are likely to cry, ask their parents about how to best soothe them.

6. Incorporate the Gospel when you are correcting a child. Focus on God's love for the child and your love for the child. Be specific as you explain that you want him or her to follow directions, be kind to friends, participate, etc. Talk to the child about how it pleases the Lord when we obey Him. Remember that discipline should always be given in love, not in anger. "For these commands are a lamp, teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way of life." Proverbs 6:23

A SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS

1. God is the Sovereign Creator of all things
2. God created people for His glory.
3. God is Holy and Righteous.
4. Man is sinful.
5. God is just and is right to punish sin.
6. God is merciful. He is kind to undeserving sinners.
7. Jesus is God's Holy and Righteous son.
8. God put our punishment on Jesus.
9. God offers the free gift of salvation to those who repent and believe in Jesus.
10. Those who trust in Jesus will live to please Him and will receive the promise of Eternal Life—Enjoying God forever in Heaven.

From Children Desiring God, Children's Leadership Conference 2007

GOSPEL-CENTERED TEACHING vs. MORALITY-CENTERED TEACHING

Yancey C. Arrington, Gospel-Centered Curriculum

Morality Based	Gospel Based
You must try for Jesus What you do Obedience because of obligation/duty You are the hero of the story The story is about you Aims primarily at action Stays small with the story	You must trust in Jesus What Christ has done for you Obedience because of gratitude/love God is the hero of the story The story is about Jesus Aims primarily at the Heart Appeals to the big story of Redemption

Our volunteers are a valuable part of our ministry. Volunteers are always needed. If you are not currently serving in the Children's Ministry and would like to be, please contact the Children's Ministry leaders.

The information in this manual should help you understand our role in ministering to your child. If you have any questions, please contact one of our Children's Ministry leaders. We welcome you to the children's ministry at Faith Community Church.