



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY

Good Practice and Operational Guidelines

*"Train up a child in the way he should go;
and when he is old, he will not depart from it." — Proverbs 22:6*

RCCG - ICC

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY

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1) KEY

This key lists the positions within the Church

2) GOOD PRACTICE AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Dear Children's Volunteer or Staff Member,

Welcome to __ we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. The Children Act 1989 and Every Child Matters 2006 Government Policy serves as the Legal foundation for the development of this policy.

This policy and practice guideline takes into account the Ten National Standards Set within the Redeemed Christian Church of God Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this *handbook* provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for our volunteers and workers. Our *policies* are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of this church.

The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced. After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

PCN

3) OVERVIEW OF THIS DOCUMENT

Because we love children and desire to protect them, RCCG _____ requires all workers and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete 4 SAFETY STEPS before ministry work or volunteer placements begin (Children pertain to those in age from Infant to 16 years of age)

For the purposes of clarity, see definitions:

'workers' – all those who have undergone the 'Workers-In-Training' Program

'volunteers' – who are yet to complete 'Workers-In-Training' Program

STEP ONE: Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness Training

Our **policies and** procedures require:

- Workers and volunteers to avoid abusive behaviour of any kind
- Workers and volunteers to report any policy violations to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL and or directly to the Pastor in Charge
- Workers and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abuse and its impact on children and their families both long and short term.
- All workers and volunteers to complete Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness Training. This training will be renewed every year in order to equip our workers and volunteers with information necessary to recognize, manage and assess issues and risk of abuse to children and vulnerable young adults.

STEP TWO: Screening Process (Acts 6:3 AMPC)

Therefore select out from among yourselves, brethren, seven men of good and attested character and repute, full of the [Holy] Spirit and wisdom, whom we may assign to look after this business and duty.

1 Timothy 3:10 AMPC

And let them also be tried and investigated and proved first; then, if they turn out to be above reproach, let them serve.

Workers and volunteers are required to:

- complete our Screening and Safe Recruitment Process, This requires a worker or volunteer to complete an Application form
- complete the Health and Safety Application (Workers and volunteers)
- complete a face-to-face interview (Workers and volunteers)
- provide minimum of two references to be checked (workers and volunteers)

A volunteer must attend this church for at least six months (must have completed the in-house membership and workers in training program) with regular and consistent attendance before being eligible to serve in positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations.

Volunteer - Requirements to Serve

1. Each volunteer is required to complete an application process, which includes a personal interview and background check (DBS)
2. Periodically, we will hold comprehensive teacher trainings to (1) ensure our volunteers understand and follow our policies and to (2) enable them to nurture our children in the fear and admonition of the Lord.
3. Youth volunteers must be at least 15 years old to work in the nursery with a parent, and 16 without a parent, through permission of the Children's Ministry Pastor and adult teacher
4. In the event that there are last minute volunteers who have not been screened, they will be approved by the Children's Church Coordinator and placed with a volunteer or staff member who has had a background check.
5. Volunteers are entrusted to teach the children about the Gospel. We ask that volunteers commit themselves to the responsibility of building a strong, spiritual foundation in the hearts of the children.
6. The priority of staff and volunteers is always to be ministered to, rather than to minister. Therefore, if a volunteer or staff worker is only able to attend one service, and they are scheduled to teach – they are to find a replacement teacher so that they can attend corporate worship.
7. When a volunteer is unable to continue serving with the Children's Ministry we ask that they please provide at least 4 weeks' notice, so that we may find a substitute or replacement as well as prepare the children for the transition process.

STEP THREE: Workers Agreement

Workers and volunteers are required to review the contents of this document, sign the last page indicating his or her understanding and agreement to comply with the Policy requirements.

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check (DBS)

RCCG ____ requires that all workers and volunteers working or volunteering in children's or student activities or Programming undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

4) ENFORCEMENT OF POLICY

Workers and volunteers who supervise other workers or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all our Policies. Violations of these policies are possible grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Children's Ministry's positions. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Pastor and the Church Leadership Council

ABUSE INTOLERANCE

RCCG _____ has a zero tolerance for abuse of any nature in ministry Programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at this church to act in the best interest of all children in every Program Safeguarding and ethical conduct is the responsibility of everyone in the church and not just the designated Safeguarding leads or pastorate.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS: VIOLATION OF POLICY

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children, our workers and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of **this Policy and practice Guideline** to their immediate Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ministry Lead, or Pastor-in-Charge.

All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behaviour should be directed to **an immediate supervisor in the ministry area, the Children's Ministry Pastor/Pastor-in-Charge.**

Examples of any reportable incidents (this is a guideline and not an exhaustive list):

- policy violations
- neglectful supervision
- poor role-modelling
- or suspected abuse (neglect, physical, emotional, or sexual)

To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviours or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and UK laws, to our Children's Welfare Safeguarding and Advisory Board Chair and Local Authority Children's Services, or other appropriate agency.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be required to temporarily withdraw from participation in Children's Ministries to give adequate time and space for a thorough investigation to be carried out to establish the facts of the matter. This is not an indictment of guilt as no allegation will be upheld without the testimony of two or three witnesses or corroborating facts.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act against a minor or vulnerable person would be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and Programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at _____. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from _____.

According to Leviticus 20:1-5, Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated persons is a violation of this policy and possible grounds for termination of employment of a staff member or employee. Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act **may be asked to leave or** restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at ____.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LEGAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Workers and volunteers at ____ are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behaviour of a colleague or co-worker, to the immediate supervisor of the area, the Children's Ministry Pastor/Pastor-in-Charge. The UK law requires that any person having cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must make a report to the appropriate organisational officers, government agency (Social Services) or law enforcement agency (Police).

If the staff member or volunteer prefers, the staff member or volunteer may request reporting assistance from an immediate supervisor, Children's Pastor/Pastor-in-Charge to make a report to the appropriate authorities.

If the staff member or volunteer makes a report regarding a suspicion of abuse or neglect without assistance, the staff member or volunteer will immediately notify an immediate supervisor, Children's Ministry Pastor/Pastor-in-Charge.

In no way does any provision in this policy discourage any staff member or volunteer from reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect **directly** to the appropriate authorities, however every effort must be initially exhausted to ensure that the proper in-house channels and structures are followed through.

If appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Children's Ministry Pastor/the Pastor-in-Charge will inform the following: Relevant Local Authority Children's Services at _____

5) RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

Our **Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Advisory Board (CWSAB)** will take appropriate action on behalf of the church when a report of abuse occurs.

Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Advisory Board (CWSAB)

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, RCCG _____ will appoint and maintain a Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Advisory Board, which will meet once each quarter.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Advisory Board is to enable our Children's Ministries to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding Program-participants against neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

COMPOSITION

The Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Advisory Board will be comprised of the following members*:

1. The Pastor-in-Charges and Associate Pastors
2. The Children's Ministry Pastor
3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy

4. A member from the Board of Trustees

Other optional members that may be determined by _____ leadership (*These positions or titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within a church body.)

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Advisory Board will be held on a quarterly basis to discuss risk management practices and updates. The Children's Welfare Safeguarding and Advisory Board will also meet on an emergency basis upon the recommendation of a member or following the report of any incident or allegation.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CWSAB

The Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Advisory Board will be charged with the following duties:

1. **Applying** existing policies and procedures related to children's safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Children's Ministries Programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. **Liaising with and** making recommendations to _____ the Leadership Council regarding safety issues.

6) CHILDREN'S MINISTRY STAFF MONITORING PLAN

Monitoring of staff and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each Program to provide the Pastor-in-Charges the opportunity to observe workers and volunteer interactions with children. This is exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation chapters 1-3 and defined by management theorists as Management By Walking About (MBWA)

1. **Each supervisor** conducts an unscheduled observation at least once each week for Programs that occur on a daily basis.
2. **The Children's Ministry Pastor** conducts written performance evaluations every six months for individuals in teaching positions.
3. **The Children's Ministry Pastor** conducts periodic verbal performance evaluations that include items that address participation in risk management training and adherence to risk management procedures.
4. **The Pastor** conducts an unscheduled observation of a Children's Ministry Program at least once each quarter.
5. **The Pastor** meets with the Children's Ministry Pastor once monthly to discuss Children's Ministry.
6. **Church Leadership Council** meets with the Children's Ministry Pastor once each year to discuss Children's Ministry, including safety training and procedures.
7. **The Children's Ministry Pastor** conducts an unscheduled observation at least once each month for Programs occurring weekly.

7) GOOD PRACTICE AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Parents should be well informed of Children's Ministry Code of Conduct and made to commit to upholding and supporting teachers with its enforcement.

Safe Working Practices:

- The Children's Ministry Pastor will be responsible for ensuring that the Children's Building/Area is monitored during Sunday classes or Programming. This will include announced and unannounced monitoring of workers, volunteers and children in children's classrooms.
- No child should ever be left unattended or unsupervised within the premises or on the children's playground during children's ministry times or classes. Children's Ministry workers or volunteers are strongly advised not to be alone with an individual child in any room or building to avoid any issues of unwarranted allegations.
- In the event a staff member or volunteer finds he/she is alone with children after departure of other adults, that staff member or volunteer will take the child to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other workers or volunteers are present.)
- After every programming event, Children's Ministries workers and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.
- On the children's playground, workers and volunteers are to circulate, watching children during play periods, giving particular attention to the areas which are not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures depending on your building).
- Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the premises.
- Good practice advice recommends that any additional helpers should be at least five (5) years older than the oldest child participant.

WORKER TO CHILD RATIOS

RCCG _____ is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Ministry activities and Programs. A general principle of life and scripture is a minimum of two unrelated adults are required at all times and using more where, and if possible, or necessary.

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his/her responsibility to immediately notify the Children's Ministry who should make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker to children's ratios into compliance with this policy.

8) DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

It is the policy that workers and volunteers are prohibited from using physical (corporal) discipline, abusive and threatening language in any manner for behavioural management of children. No form of physical discipline or chastisement is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviours by children.

Furthermore, it is inappropriate to shout at or to use threatening and verbally aggressive language or tone to address children of any age. Adults must learn how to exercise emotional intelligence and self-regulation in order to de-escalate potentially eruptive and challenging behaviour. Remember peaceful resolution, love and restoration must always underpin all action taken to exercise discipline. Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behaviour management. In employing this procedure, workers and volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

- 1) Calmly de-escalate a situation using a soft but firm tone of voice to redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- 2) If the behaviour does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is not meeting (avoid being alone with the child, request another person to come in and support if necessary).
- 3) Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the time-out, and provide the child with a clear explanation of your expectations. ("Jamie, you didn't stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the blue chair for three minutes.") In addition, be verbally reassuring, as being removed from the group will likely upset the child. Do not physically restrain the child for the duration of the time-out. Inform the child of the duration of the Time-out using the long arm of the clock as an aid.
- 4) Provide the child with a chair to sit in or a "safe spot" to sit on (using a pillow, blanket, carpet square, etc.) until their time-out is complete. This time is meant to be a personal reflection time.
- 5) Follow the rule of thumb that a time-out is ineffective if it lasts longer than one to two minutes for every year of the child's life (3 years old, 3 minutes).
- 6) Monitor the child through the entire time-out without giving your undivided attention. For longer time-outs give intermittent praise to reassure the child and keep them on task. ("Jamie, you're doing a great job of sitting quietly – just 2 more minutes.")
- 7) Praise the child once he or she has completed the time-out and tell them that their reward is being able to rejoin the group. Remind them that repeating their initial behaviour will result in further time-out. Follow this with praise.

Employ the use of the Traffic Light System to assist with behaviour management strategies.

Uncontrollable or unusual behaviour should be recorded in the critical incident logbook as soon as possible but no longer than 24 hours after the incident but must be reported immediately to parents and the Children's Ministry Pastor.

Further Discipline and Behaviour Management Practices

1. Praise the Positive and reward good behaviours

Children often learn by modelling behaviour. 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 behaviour 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 (See Children's Ministry Code of Conduct)

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 children cope with an environment and

understand appropriate behaviour. Parents should be well informed of Children's Ministry Code of Conduct and made to commit to upholding and supporting teachers with its enforcement.

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 up the toys (if possible) so kids do not become bored.

5. Incorporate the Word of God when you are disciplining 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

9) BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES FOR NURSERY CHILDREN

Because nursery children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all workers and volunteers will observe the following practices:

10) NAPPY CHANGING GUIDELINES

- 1) Best practices of childcare suggest that only female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will undertake the nappy changing of children of either sex.
- 2) Changing of nappies should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- 3) Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- 4) Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in nursery will be recorded on the registration cards ("Seth Adams has a medicine in the bag for rash.")
- 5) Children should be re-clothed where necessary immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled nappies.
- 6) Children should be changed on changing stations only.

11) TOILET TRAINING

- 1) No child will be forced to toilet train.
- 2) Best practices of childcare suggest that only female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.
- 3) When children are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open.
- 4) Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- 5) The adult to child ratios should be monitored during toilet duties of any age
- 6) Workers should consult with parents about their child's stage of progress in the toilet training process before leaving the child with volunteers or workers. Any special instructions given by parents leaving children will be recorded on the registration form (*"Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go."*).
- 7) Children should be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children.
- 8) "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available by _____ in the children's area, if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.

School age children

- 1) School age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. (However, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities.)
- 2) Workers and volunteers should never take a lone child to the restroom.
- 3) If a staff member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another worker is not available to accompany, he/she should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance.
- 4) If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist bathroom stall.
- 5) Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.
- 6) Special Needs Parents will offer instruction to workers or volunteers to change the diapers of special needs individuals.
- 7) After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change all special needs individuals.

INTOXICANTS

Workers and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any of _____ facilities, while travelling with children, or while working with or supervising children.

MEDICATION

Prescription medication may be given to a child by a staff member or designated volunteer with a doctor's prescription. All medication must be in the original packaging, including over the counter medication, and a health information sheet must be signed by a parent or guardian. The only exceptions to this policy are nappy ointments and insect bite creams.

NUDITY

Workers and volunteers in our Children's Ministries should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a event, baptism, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), staff member/volunteer will submit a plan for approval to his/her supervisor concerning arrangements for individual and private spaces for showering and changing clothes for all participants.

ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Workers and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one meetings or interaction with children while participating in our Children's Ministry Program. Another adult who has completed the application and screening process should always be present.

TRANSPORTATION

Workers and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:

1. Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Best practices of ministry recommend two adults in every car. **Never will there be a child alone with an adult in a vehicle.**
2. Workers and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
3. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving church vans, or vehicles owned or rented, unless in an emergency.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents who leave a child in the care of our workers and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Children's Ministry Programs. Therefore, you must have contact information for each child at all times.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents have an open invitation to observe all services Programs and activities in which their child is involved and should be encouraged to visit any and all of them. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's Programs will be required to complete our volunteer application and screening process.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

_____ is committed to protecting children in its care. To this end, _____ has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Children's Ministries while protecting children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Children's Ministries Programs:

1. Side hugs, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between workers or volunteers and children are important for children's development and are generally suitable in the church setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the Children's Ministry Pastor/DSL or the Pastor-in-Charge.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or children's workers and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
5. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behaviour of workers or volunteers in Children's Ministries must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
6. Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
7. Children's workers and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
8. Any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, the Children's Pastor or the Senior Pastor.

Two types of relationships are important to consider: Volunteer-to-child and Teen-to-child.

VOLUNTEER-TO-CHILD

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or showing godly love and care, it can also be misinterpreted. Particularly in our interaction with children, we want to be blameless and above reproach. The following will help workers to avoid any compromise or concerns in this area.

1. Always remain in open sight of other adults.
2. Appropriate touch is positive physical contact that nurtures children and develops a sense of emotional security and maturity in their interactions with adults. Appropriate touch is applied to meet the needs of children and not the adults.
3. Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting on laps, etc.) will not be appropriate for school age school children.
4. Inappropriate touch involves but is not limited to coercion or other forms of physical contact which exploits the child's lack of knowledge, satisfies adult physical needs at the expense of the child, violates laws against sexual or physical contact between adult and child, and any attempt to modify child behaviour with physical force.
5. For ages 2 through to 5, only women can take children to the restroom. Our Children's Church facility has bathrooms in each classroom. Depending on the ability of the child (3& up typically) – the teacher should remain outside the door.
6. Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 to 5.

7. In general, a man will need to limit physical contact more than a woman in the same situation, especially when working with older children.

8. Volunteers should refrain from rough-housing, wrestling, shoulder or piggy-back rides, rubbing, massaging, or any physical activity that might make a child feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

9. Only touch children in “safe” areas and for brief time. “Safe” areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of the head. Never touch a child on or near any region that is private or personal, unless when necessary while assisting in a diaper change or restroom visit.

10. Never touch a child out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting children especially someone else’s child.

TEEN-TO-CHILD:

1. Young people under 18 (Teens) are strongly advised to avoid being alone unsupervised with children under 12 except same family groups

2. No inappropriate touching (as defined above) of any kind will be accepted.

3. Fighting or verbal aggression will not be tolerated and any child participating in violent action will be dismissed from a class/Program and placed into his or her parent’s care.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS

Workers and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the Program. However, it is expected that from time to time the children’s ministry discussions and lessons may address age-appropriate issues related to human sexuality. These lessons will convey to the children the church’s biblical view on these topics. A parent/guardian signature will be required for each child.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS

Workers and volunteers of our Children’s Ministry are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS (OVERNIGHT OUTINGS AND CAMPS)

It is anticipated that certain Children Ministry activities may occasionally require that overnight sleeping arrangements be made for children and staff/volunteers (i.e. lock-ins, mission trips, etc.). In the event an activity requires sleeping arrangements, workers and volunteers will strictly observe the following rules:

1. The 2-adult non-related rule must be followed. The 2 adult leaders present must have previously completed ____’s application and screening process.

2. Overnight sleeping arrangements must be submitted in writing to and approved by the Church Pastor prior to the activity and have signed approval by parents. It is recommended that this information be included in the permission slip for the event and signed by the parent.

3. As long as any children are awake, one of the leaders must also be awake and monitoring children to ensure safe behaviour.

4. Leaders should check with parents and use good judgment regarding PG or PG-13 movies. No R-rated movies are permitted.
5. Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn.
6. In the event of a sleepover on campus that involves both boys and girls, boys and girls must sleep in separate rooms, properly supervised by children's leaders of the same gender.
7. Staff and volunteers will monitor sleeping children by periodically conducting visual bed checks to ensure that sleeping children remain in designated sleeping places. During bed checks, staff and volunteers should never physically touch a child.
8. In the event that overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each staff, volunteer, and child will use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances, a "one-person-to-one bag or blanket" rule will be observed.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, VAPE, NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS OR SUBSTANCE USE

_____ requires workers and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of ANY OF THE ABOVE products in church facilities, while in the presence of children or their parents, or during any activities or Programs. _____ is a tobacco et al. free facility.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between workers or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. Our workers and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children. To this end, workers and volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, workers and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

At any time that a child has been entrusted to our Children's Ministry workers or volunteers, _____ incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Workers and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

Upon entry children should be made to wear a printed name tag to enter the classroom as having a name tag is required for the check out.

Children's Ministry workers or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

In the event that workers or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact their immediate supervisor or the Children's Ministry Pastor before releasing the child.*

SUPERVISION

Workers and volunteers in Children's Ministry are expected to provide adequate supervision for children in their care while working in church Programs.

12) WORKERS / VOLUNTEER

Requirements to Serve

1. Each Worker/ volunteer in our ministry is required to complete an application process, which includes a personal interview and background check.
2. Periodically, 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 volunteers must be at least 14 years old to work in the nursery with a parent, and 16 without a parent, through permission of the Children's Church Coordinator and adult teacher
4. In the event that there are last minute volunteers who have not been screened, they will be approved by the Children's Church Coordinator and placed with a volunteer or staff member who has had a background check.
5. Volunteers are entrusted to teach the children 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 Children's Ministry Pastor/Coordinator concerning the schedule.
2. Once the Rota schedule is set by the Children's Ministry Pastor, any changes should be made by switching with another team member and notifying the Children's Ministry Pastor as soon as possible. Volunteer's contact information can be obtained through the Children's Church Coordinator.
3. In case of an emergency that causes the volunteer to run late or to be unable to serve (such as coming down with a cold or injury), it is imperative to call or text the Children's Church Coordinator ASAP.
4. The priority of staff and volunteers is always to be ministered to, rather than to minister. Therefore, if a volunteer or staff worker is only able to attend one service, and they are scheduled to teach – they are to find a replacement teacher so that they can attend corporate worship.
5. When a volunteer is no longer able to serve with the Children's Ministry, please provide at least 4 weeks' notice, so that we may find a substitute or replacement.

General:

1. Workers and Volunteers must be knowledgeable about and adhere to applicable policies.
2. Workers and Volunteers are not permitted to have any personal drink (other than water) during class (for allergy reasons).
3. Personal belongings should be kept in a safe and secure place at all times and remain off the floor and out of reach of children.
4. Phones are to be on silent or vibrate mode and may not be used in the classroom.
5. Any special treats or activities involving food outside of the scheduled curriculum must be approved by the Children's Church Coordinator.

Arrival and Setup:

1. Arrive by 9.00am for the Workers and Sunday School Meeting and sooner if preparation is required. Please be on time. Punctuality is required and excessive tardiness will not be tolerated as it

compromises the quality of programming for the children. Please remember that tardiness has a domino effect, involving supervisors, fellow teachers, children, and families.

2. Sign in via the _____ upon arrival and take your name tag from the check-in-box.
3. Wash your hands before setting up the room.
4. Set out any materials needed for class, as provided by the Children's Church Coordinator.
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. Notice that there are labels indicating where all toys and supplies are to be stored.

Cardinal rule is to always leave the space better than you found it just like Jesus did with everything He touched

Snacks:

1. All children's hands must be washed prior to eating a snack.
2. Before handing children snacks, ensure they do not have allergies. Allergies will be noted on their name tags.
3. Children may have snacks and drinks only when they are seated. Children are not allowed to walk around with snacks or cups due to allergy 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 Children's Ministry Coordinator.
2. One volunteer should welcome children while the other engages the other children.
3. Be particularly aware of children with allergies and check all name-tags for any indication of allergies or other special needs. Ask parents for further clarification.
4. Be aware of any children with special needs and communicate with the parents for tips on engaging that child.
5. Review the classroom rules and our House Values with the children every week. (Refer to Code of Conduct appended).
6. Whenever possible, sit on the floor with younger children to interact with them. Being on their eye level helps gain and maintain their attention.
7. Remain in the classroom at all times unless you are leaving to take a child to his/her parents or to the restroom. The other teacher assistant must remain in the classroom.
8. Under no circumstances, are children to be left alone in the classroom, or are they permitted to leave the classroom without adult volunteer supervision.
9. 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 should be made to wear a printed name tag to enter the classroom as having a name tag is required for the check out.

2. Children are to remain in their classes until picked up by their parents. After all children have been picked up, tidy your classroom and empty out the bins.

Classroom Rules:

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

13) PROACTIVE STEPS FOR HELPING CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM:

1. Communicate the rules at the beginning of class every Sunday (Doesn't take long and promote order).
2. Make eye contact when speaking to the child.
3. Catch the child being good. Use positive reinforcement.
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. Discipline (verbal only allowed of course) should always be given in love, not in anger.

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 Behaviour:

1. Biting, hitting, pushing, scratching, or pulling is considered aggressive behaviour.
2. If a child displays any of these behaviours and does not respond to discipline, he or she will be removed from the class and the parent will be notified immediately.

Discipline Steps: (for matters including, but not limited to aggressive behaviour)

1. Verbal Warning: If possible, whisper to the child in order to not draw attention away from the teaching and onto the inappropriate behaviour.
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 the above steps don't bring about a change, speak to the parent in private upon child pick-up to inform them of the behaviour and then work with the parent to decide what the best next steps are for the child.

14) SELF-EVALUATION:

1. Pay attention to how you feel

- a. 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.
 - b. We only have about two hours a week with the children in our classes 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.
 - c. Take a minute away if needed.
2. If you are struggling with a child, pass him or her off to another staff member or volunteer. You are strongly advised to never be alone in the classroom, so let those around you help you through the difficult moments.
 3. Arrive prepared for the morning, in heart and mind. Arriving on time enables you to have time to prepare for the morning.

15) 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 the punishment of believers 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 desire to 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'

"Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God." **1 Peter 3:18**

16) GOSPEL CENTRED VS. MORALITY CENTRED TEACHING

Morality Based (Legalism)	Gospel Based (The 'Gospel Project' is good here)
You must try for Jesus	You must trust in Jesus
What you do	What Christ has done for you
Obedience because of obligation/duty	Obedience because of gratitude/love
You are the hero of the story	God is the hero of the story

The story is about you Aims primarily at action Stays small with the story	The story is about Jesus (ultimately) Aims primarily at the heart Appeals to the big story of Redemption
We are going to look at ten different aspects of the work of Calvary. Ten different ways to view what God accomplished there by the death of Jesus.	
Jesus was punished	that we might be forgiven
Jesus was wounded	that we might be healed
Jesus was made sin with our sinfulness	that we might be made righteous with His righteousness
1. Jesus tasted death for us	that we might share His life
2. Jesus was made a curse	that we might receive the blessing
3. Jesus endured our poverty	that we might share His abundance
4. Jesus bore our shame	that we might share His glory
5. Jesus endured my rejection	that I might have His acceptance with the Father
6. Jesus was cut off	that we might be joined to the Lord
7. Our Old Man was put to death in Him	that the New Man might come to life in us

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 Pastor

We appreciate and thank all our Children's Ministry workers and volunteers for lending their availability to the work of God and for doing so with a grateful heart.

Children's Ministry Pastor

The information in this manual should help you understand our role in ministering to your child. If you have any questions, please contact

I hereby confirm that I have read, understand and commit to the ...

Please kindly complete and sign the Workers and Volunteers commitment agreement form

_____ We welcome you to the

Children's Ministry at _____