

Policies and Procedures for Childcare and Childcare Workers

Saint John's Episcopal Church

At St. John's it is our goal to provide a safe and edifying environment for all children who enter our doors. The following policies and procedures aim to maintain this environment through practices that will benefit the families of our church body. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Children's Christian Formation ministry group at www.towergrovechurch.org.

PART I. GUIDELINES FOR NURSERY

1. Childcare will be provided in the nursery from 9-12 on Sundays with occasional mid-week hours.
 - From 9am-10am, parents attending adult formation classes may leave children in the nursery.
 - From 10:15-11:15, parents attending the main service may leave children under 3 in the nursery. Children ages 3 and up are encouraged to participate in the Godly Play curriculum.
 - Parents may retrieve their children from the Godly Play classroom and/or nursery during announcements. We invited the children to join the broader community to Share the Peace and participate in Eucharist.
2. Parents are asked to sign children in and out of the nursery (and, if possible, leave a cell number so that nursery care providers may call or text in case of concern or emergency).
3. Parents are encouraged to inform all childcare workers of any special needs their children may have.
4. For the sake of the health of childcare providers and children in the nursery, parents are asked to keep sick children (if they suspect the illness to be contagious) out of the nursery. Likewise, childcare workers and volunteers are asked not to serve in the nursery when they are sick.

5. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of all our kids, there are a few simple ground rules for behavior in the nursery:
 - a. No running or rough-housing in the nursery or classrooms;
 - b. Children are asked to treat toys, books, and other classroom materials with respect;
 - c. No violent play or inappropriate language;
 - d. Children will be expected to be respectful of others (other children and childcare providers)

PART II. GUIDELINES FOR CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

1. In order to ensure a safe and secure environment for our children, we ask that those who serve in our children's ministry—especially, those who serve as childcare providers—meet the following basic requirements:
 - a. be an active member at St. John's (i.e. attend worship services regularly) for a period of at least 6 months**
 - b. complete a Childcare Worker Application and have it on file at St. John's
 - c. complete the *Safeguarding God's Children* training (this training can be completed online, contact Susan Brower-Toland for details)

It is the rector's responsibility to give final approval for all childcare workers (and, hence, to ensure that those who work with our children have met the foregoing guidelines).

2. There should *always be at least two childcare providers present with children at all times*. Typically, there will have one paid childcare provider and one volunteer from the St. John's community serving in the nursery each week. Depending on the number of children present, two volunteers may be necessary. We will have no fewer than 1 adult for every 4 children in the nursery.
3. There will be a quarterly schedule of volunteers for the nursery: one volunteer and one alternate per Sunday. If you cannot serve on a Sunday that you've been scheduled on please let Teresa know as quickly as possible (but no later than a

week in advance of your scheduled date) so that requisite changes to the schedule can be made.

- a. childcare providers should arrive 5 minutes early
 - b. only those on the schedule should be present in the nursery/classroom
 - c. alternates serve only if (i) there are more than 8 children present in the nursery or (ii) the regularly scheduled volunteer does not show up (hence, if you are an alternate please be sure to show up and check-in at the nursery to see whether your help is needed)
4. Childcare providers are asked to be mindful to about choice language and topics of conversation when in the presence of children. Please be sure your words are appropriate for the ears of small children.
5. We ask that childcare providers (both paid and volunteer) help us with the work of keeping our childcare space organized, clean, and inviting. Please be sure that you leave the room clean and tidy. If there are none, or very few children present in the nursery, please consider using the time to help with organization and sanitation of the toys and furniture in the nursery space. Specific cleaning materials are available for this purpose.
6. In order to provide our children with a sense of consistency both in expectations and the general tone and environment of the nursery, our paid childcare provider (Kay Kolinsky) has been charged with the responsibility of directing the kids' activities. Volunteers are asked to assist her in this work and, where necessary, to be willing to take her lead.

** This requirement can be waived—at the discretion of the rector—in two cases: (a) paid childcare workers (who needn't be members of the church, but who should have background check) and (b) parents of children who are involved in the nursery or childcare program.

PART III. GUIDELINES GODLY PLAY CLASSROOM

1. The Godly play classroom is a designed to be sacred place set aside just for our children. It is for children and Godly play workers only (parents and other adults are asked to remain outside the room while sessions are underway).
2. Please have your child visit the restroom before dropping them off.

3. Please have your child remove any coats or outerwear before entering the room.

4. Please consult the “10 Best Ways for Parents” for further information about how best to prepare your child for Godly Play.