

St. John's Episcopal Church

Children's Christian Formation: Childcare & Nursery

Policies and Procedures

Welcome to St. John's~ We're so glad you found us! 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. We serve all families, regardless of race, social, economic or LGBT status and care will be taken to accommodate all children's special needs. All our childcare workers have been trained in child abuse prevention and have had full background checks. ***If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Children's Christian Formation ministry group leaders, Gina Malone (childcare & nursery) at ginamalone23@gmail.com or Susan Brower-Toland (Godly Play) at suescbt@gmail.com.***

PART I. GUIDELINES FOR NURSERY

1. Childcare is provided in the nursery from 9-12 on Sundays with occasional mid-week and extended hours. Summer hours are 10:15-noon.
 - There are two rooms: 0-4 and 5 and up.
 - From 10:15-11:15, parents attending the main service may leave children under 3 in the 0-3 room. During the 10:30 service, children ages 3 and up (as they become ready) are invited to attend Godly Play (more on Godly Play can be found below). There will be no nursery available at this time for this age group as we highly encourage children to attend this powerfully formative program. If your child was signed in to nursery before 10:25, Godly Play staff will retrieve and escort children ages 3 and up to line up outside the Godly Play room. ****If you do not attend Adult Ed, please make sure your child is lined up outside the Godly Play room no later than 10:25.***
 - Parents may retrieve their children from the Godly Play classroom and/or nursery during announcements so that they may join the broader community to share the peace and receive Eucharist.
 - The 0-4 room will remain open throughout the service if you would prefer to leave your younger child in the nursery for any reason.
2. Parents must 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, emergency or for bathroom visits.
3. Parents are also encouraged to inform all childcare workers of any special needs (including allergies or other

medical conditions). Do let us know of any special concerns you have regarding your child and we will do our best to help.

4. Parents and childcare workers are asked to be considerate 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, 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 (including pretend weapons or fighting) or inappropriate language
 - d. Children will be expected to be respectful of others (other children and childcare providers);

***If behavior is a problem the parent/caregiver will be texted to retrieve their child until they are able to play calmly. If they are unable to return and play calmly parents/caregivers will be asked to keep their child with them during the remainder of the service. Thank you for your cooperation with this.**

PART II. GUIDELINES FOR CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

1. Volunteers: In order to ensure a safe and secure environment for our children, we ask that those who volunteer in our children's ministry meet the following basic requirements:
 - a. be an active member at St. John's 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 Gina Malone ginamalone23@gmail.com for details)
2. Paid childcare workers must:
 - a. fill out an application and provide references
 - b. complete an interview with a Children's Ministry Working Group leader
 - c. complete the *Safeguarding God's Children* training

*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*. Depending on the number of children present, a volunteer from the church body may be necessary. We will have no fewer than 1 adult for every 4 children in the nursery.
3. Childcare providers are asked to be mindful 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.

4. Gina Malone will write a schedule for all childcare workers and/or volunteers. If you cannot be present on a Sunday that you've been scheduled you are responsible for finding your own replacement. If you cannot find a replacement you must notify Gina prior to Sunday morning (314-495-5604).
 - a. childcare workers and volunteers should arrive at 9 am, 10 am during summer hours or when Adult Ed is not in session
 - b. only those on the schedule should be present in the nursery/classroom (exceptions for parents/guardians when necessary)
 - c. a volunteer may be asked to serve if (i) there are more than 8 children present in the nursery or (ii) the regularly scheduled volunteer does not show up
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 use this time to organize and sanitize any toys used and the furniture in the nursery space. 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 providers have been charged with the responsibility of directing classroom/nursery activities. Volunteers are asked to assist in this work and, where necessary, to be willing to take their lead.

PART III. GUIDELINES GODLY PLAY CLASSROOM

1. Children line up for Godly Play in the hallway at 10:25. If your child (age 3 and up) is in childcare before this time, they will be retrieved by the Godly Play staff.
2. 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).
3. Please have your child visit the restroom before dropping them off.
4. Please have your child remove any coats or outerwear before entering the room.
5. Please consult the "10 Best Ways for Parents" for further information about how best to prepare your child for Godly Play.