



# Preschool Handbook

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# Preschool Leadership

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# Requirements for Working in the Preschool Ministry

The following procedures reflect our commitment to provide protective care for all children and caregivers who participate in church-sponsored activities.

1. Workers must be eighteen years old or older.
2. Workers must be growing Christians who are members of Metairie Baptist Church for at least six months.
3. All workers will receive a handbook of nursery guidelines, procedures, and policies.
4. All workers must complete an application/screening form for the purpose of obtaining information regarding criminal history or abuse findings.
  - Background/Criminal records check

This application and the results of any screenings will be kept confidential. Any adult member of the congregation or volunteer worker who has been convicted of a crime against a child will not provide service in any church-sponsored activity or program for children.

# Leadership Opportunities

The Preschool Ministry of Metairie Baptist Church provides preschoolers from birth through kindergarten, Christian education and care in a healthy, secure environment.

The Preschool operates in three capacities: during regularly scheduled church services and Sunday School, as support for other ministries of the church, and for special occasions calendared through the church.

**Listed below are some of the many ways you can be a part of the Preschool Ministry Leadership:**

- Sunday School Teachers
  - Sunday School is for babies through five year olds.
- Extended Teaching Care Workers
  - Extended Care is for birth through four year olds.
- Wednesday Night Workers
  - Mission Friends
  - Wednesday night activities are for babies through five year olds.

# Characteristics of Preschoolers

Life Stage	Characteristics	Leader Action
Birth-12 months	Key Word: Dependent Physical: Cries to communicate Mental: Starting to learn all five senses Spiritual: Absorbs attitudes of those around them	Give Care 1 Peter 5:7
Toddlers	Key Word: Discovery Physical: Active, Growing Rapidly Mental: Sees everything, wants to handle Spiritual: What they do is determined by others	Right Responses Exodus 2:9
Age 2 - 3	Key Word: Imitation Physical: Active, "Let me do it" Mental: Realistic, likes to touch and feel Spiritual: Likes prayer before meals and bedtime	To Impress Mark 10:14
Age 4 - 5	Key Word: Receptivity Physical: Continual motion, restless, wiggler Mental: Open mind, a bundle of questions Spiritual: Trusting, literal	To Guide Psalm 32:8

## Babies

### Because babies...

Use senses to learn

Roll over and crawl

Know and respond to their names

Are developing a sense of trust

Are learning who God is

Can sense that the Bible is important

### Teachers...

Provide safe materials to see, touch, smell, taste, feel

Provide a room with space to move safely

Say and sing the children's names often

Meet needs promptly and consistently

Say God's name frequently and lovingly

Provide a Bible that babies can touch and handle

## Ones

### Because ones...

Move constantly

Use trial and error in learning

Love to explore

Understand and use words for items

Begin to make simple choices

Are discovering who Jesus is

### Teachers...

Provide space with little furniture

Offer materials that encourage repetition and success

Provide safe and interesting toys and materials

Say the names of objects and say new words repeatedly

Offer a variety of materials related to children's interests

Say Jesus' name when looking at the Bible and pictures

## Twos

### Because twos...

Have better body coordination

Begin using sentences

Enjoy repetition

Can listen to brief Bible stories

Can say thank you to God

Can sing songs about God and Jesus

### Teachers...

May lead moving games with twos

Talk to the children and encourage responses

Offer activities that can be repeated

Tell stories as twos are involved in activities

Pray in brief, simple sentences

Sing songs about God and Jesus to familiar tunes

## **Threes**

### **Because threes...**

- Gain more control over body
- Display creativity and imagination
- Respond to verbal guidance
- Enjoy handling and using Bible
- Understand that God and Jesus are special
- Can only do one thing at a time

## **Teachers...**

- Offer more involved activities
- Provide materials that can be used in different ways
- Use positive statements to guide behavior
- Place Bible markers and pictures in the Bible
- Talk lovingly about God and Jesus as children play
- Give simple directions and repeat as necessary

## **Fours/Pre-Kindergartners**

### **Because Fours...**

- Develop good muscle control
- Have increased attention span
- Enjoy being silly
- Focus on cooperative play
- Can help others
- Like retelling Bible stories

## **Teachers...**

- Provide cutting, painting, drawing activities
- Offer activities that can last for longer periods of time
- Allow times of silliness and joking
- Encourage groups of children to work together
- Provide opportunities for children to help
- Initiate conversations about Bible stories

# Kindergartners

## Because kindergartners... Teachers...

Display good hand-eye coordination

Provide activities that encourage writing, drawing, and so forth

Use a large vocabulary

Encourage children to talk about experiences

Enjoy group play

Offer activities that the group can do together

Use the Bible

Include activities that encourage finding verses

Like to care for God's world

Provide opportunities for children to help

May read words

Offer books and other word-oriented activities

# Now That You Are a Preschool Ministry Leader!

## **L**ead

Work with the other classroom leaders in sharing responsibilities for the class time.

## **E**ngage

Each child in your classroom will be different! Here are some tips to help children/parents feel comfortable in your classroom:

**Connect** with the child.

Get down on the child's level and make eye contact with each child as they arrive.

**High** five each child and give them a warm hug.

With a smile say hi to children by name and compliment them.

Example: "Hi Bobby! I like your cool tennis shoes. It is so great to see you today."

**Introduce** yourself.

Introduce yourself to each child.

Example: "My name is Miss Val. I am going to be one of your teachers today."

**Learning** center fun.

Involve each child in the classroom with interactive learning or other toys. Direct them to a special toy or book and ask them, "What would you like to do?"

**Dismiss** with a thank you.

Thank each child and parent for coming today.

Example: "Thank you, hope you enjoyed the service!"

# A

## Atmosphere

### 1. Classroom Rules

Remind preschoolers of the rules as needed so they know what you expect. Here are five rules for a happy class:

**Help** each other.

**Always** be a good listener.

**Practice** saying kind words.

**Play** and share with each other.

**You** should use quiet voices and keep hands to yourself.

### 2. Classroom signal

Establish a signal that lets the kids know that you need them to stop what they are doing and listen to you.

Examples for early childhood classrooms:

- Lights off - Kids stop what they are doing and put their hands on their head.
- Clap three times and kids repeat - Kids clap along with the leader and then wait for instructions.
- "One-Two-Three, eyes on me."

### 3. How to handle a child who is an "opportunity"

One child should never dominate all of your time and attention. If you have a child who is disruptive to the class:

- Re-direct
- Take aside

"The atmosphere of the room determines the attitude of the room!"

# D

## irection

Our aim is to direct kids toward God and the Bible. Every opportunity that we have, even in a small way, to direct their attention to Christ is valuable. Let's minister to preschoolers each time we meet together by directing them toward:

- Prayer
- Bible Verse/lesson

## **E**ncourage

An excellent time to encourage parents and children is when children are being checked out of their classroom. Affirm kids to their parents. Say: "Your daughter was such a joy today. We really enjoyed having her in our class. We hope she comes back next week."

## **R**eview

**Review** how the class went. Ask yourselves these four questions:

- What was right about today?
- What went wrong today?
- What was missing today?
- What was confusing today?

# **Safety Reminders**

**We want to protect kids through an uncompromising safety process.**

**To do that best, let's...**

1. Never be alone with a child.
2. Maintain a minimum of two teachers in each class at all times regardless of how many preschoolers are present.
  - Allows emergency situations to be dealt with
  - Protects the caregivers and church from unsupported parent complaints.
3. A married couple must serve with another adult leader in the room at all times.
4. Female leaders must leave the stall door open if it is necessary to enter to help a child.
5. Make sure there is another adult close by while changing a child's diaper.

# Check-In Process

- Welcome the parent with a smile, and introduce yourself to those you do not know.
- Children should be dropped off at the nursery desk and parents obtain a badge/tag.
- Parents are to keep cell phones on vibrate in case the nursery needs to reach them.
- Parents should always stay on the church campus while their children are in the nursery's care.

# Check-Out Process

- Greet the parent as he or she arrives to pick up their child.
- The parent/guardian **must present their badge** in order to receive their child(ren.)
- Parents should wait at the front desk to receive their child.
- Thank the parent for bringing their child.

# Nursery Hygiene Procedures

## Washing Hands – When?

- After changing a diaper and removing disposable gloves
- After assisting a child with bathroom needs
- After wiping a child's nose or mouth
- Before feeding a baby or serving snacks
- Before and after attending to a cut or other injury

## Washing Hands – How?

- Use mild liquid antibacterial soap and warm water.
- Scrub hands vigorously for 10-15 seconds.
- Wash all surfaces, including backs of hands, between fingers, and under fingernails.
- Rinse well.
- Dry hands with a disposable paper towel.

## Assisting Preschoolers in Developing Hygiene Habits

- Provide antibacterial soap and paper towels for preschoolers to use after going to the bathroom.
- For two's who are wearing diapers, encourage hand washing after diapering.
- Encourage hand washing after inside and outside activities, before snacks, and before food-tasting experiences.
- Guide preschoolers to wash hands after blowing nose or sneezing.

## Changing a Diaper

- Diaper preschoolers on the diapering table.
- Put on disposable gloves.
- Place waxed paper on top of the table and slide clean diaper under child.
- Roll soiled/wet diaper and used moist wipes into waxed paper.
- Fasten clean diaper securely.
- Place waxed paper and diaper in palm of one hand. With other hand, pull disposable glove over diaper. Place glove with diaper in gloved hand. Pull other glove over other end of diaper. (This process seals diaper inside gloves.)
- Wipe surface with disinfectant solution.
- Wash hands. Also wash child's hands.

# Preschool Workers' Responsibilities

## **What to do when you can't make your scheduled time:**

If you know in advance you won't be there, it is your responsibility to call the director of the group you lead (Extended Session Directors and/or Preschool Directors.)

## **Arrival**

Be in place and prepared when the first child arrives. Please arrive at least fifteen minutes before your scheduled time. Keep in mind, preschoolers can begin to arrive fifteen minutes before worship services/Sunday School/Wednesday activities.

## **Room Maintenance**

All used toys go into the basket marked "dirty." Please keep the designated area you work in neat, orderly, and as clean as possible.

## **Food**

- Infants through one year olds should be fed only items provided by their parents.
- A small snack and water will be provided for children two through three year olds during Extended Session/childcare.

## **Contacting a Parent During Worship**

Reasons for contacting a parent:

1. If the child is ill.
2. If the child is injured.
3. If the child cries for an excess period of time.

## **Teacher's "To Do" List for Extended Session**

- Arrive promptly and quietly. Store belongings in a safe place.
- Do not bring coffee or other beverages into the room.
- Wash hands with antibacterial soap and dry with disposable towel.
- Ask Sunday School teachers for any special instructions before they leave.
- Keep department room door closed during the session.
- Guide children to wash hands after going to rest room and before handling and eating food.
- If a preschooler mouths a toy, remove it from the play area. Place it in the designated area for washing.
- Use disposable gloves when changing diapers. Follow the hygiene practices for changing diapers.
- Wash hands after attending to a child's needs (or personal needs).
- Use activities that Sunday School teachers leave to teach preschoolers about God.
- Encourage the children to help put away toys and clean up the room as the session closes.
- When the parents arrive, calmly bring the child to the door to parents. Make sure to send home all personal belongings.
- Release children only to the persons authorized to pick them up.
- Leave room ready for next use.
- Gather personal belongings.

# Preschool Parents' Responsibilities

- Parents are to remain on the church campus at all times while their child is in the nursery.
- Parents are to provide a bag clearly labeled with the following items for their child: diapers, wipes, pacifiers, bottles, etc. (depending on the age of the child).
- We understand that the nature of our ministry involves a communicable environment and that we have a responsibility to protect well children from exposure to sick ones. Unfortunately, even with certified medical personnel, medical conditions do not always lend themselves to observational diagnosis. Practically speaking, we must rely upon the parent's honesty as to the condition of their child. The teacher who receives a child only has a short time to observe his condition. If after receiving a child the teacher discovers a rash, or that the child's nose is continually running, or that the child feels, warm, it is standard procedure for the child to be isolated as much as possible until the parent can be contacted.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics, a child with any of the following symptoms should stay at home:

- A fever or has had a fever in the previous 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Any symptom of a childhood disease such as chicken pox or whooping cough
- A cold or nose with excessive or discolored drainage
- Sore throat
- Croup
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection such as boils, ringworm, or impetigo
- Any hair or skin infestation such as head lice
- Pink eye or other eye infection

# Medical Procedures

**Minor Injuries** can be treated with a little tender loving care, a cool cloth and a Band-Aid. When a child is treated, the Preschool Directors or Extended Session Director will complete an "Ouch Report." Give a copy to the parent and another will be kept on file at the church. When the parent arrives, please let them know what happened. This form must be signed by the Preschool Directors or Extended Session Director.

**It is important to remember that we are not authorized to dispense any over the counter or prescription medications.** In the event a child needs more attention than we can provide, please notify the Preschool Directors or Extended Session Director, and the parent will be contacted.

**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.
2. Stay calm and speak assuring to the child while another worker cares for the other children in your class.
3. Contact the Preschool Directors or Extended Session Director.
4. The parent will be contacted and be sent to the nursery immediately to deal with the injury. Please do not call 911.