

Nursery Policies and Procedures



Our Purpose

We recognize the importance of the role of the church in providing for the spiritual and physical needs of babies and toddlers. First impressions are being formed of the church, of God's people and of God. We want to make time spent in the nursery a meaningful and positive experience for all children under our care. We adhere to the scriptures with hopes that they will grow as children of God and that we might witness God's favor in their lives. Jesus grew up from a little baby into an adult, just like us, experiencing God through each life stage until his death.

"The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him." Luke 2:40

Our Nursery Ministry is Two-Fold:

1. It enables parents to participate in church services and Sunday School freely.
2. It exposes even the youngest babies to loving attitudes, actions, and a Christian atmosphere, which begins to form their spiritual development

To insure the success of this ministry, the nursery committee is committed to the following:

1. strict adherence to health rules, including cleanliness and space requirements
2. an environment where babies and toddlers are happy and comfortable.
3. age-based opportunities for spiritual development

The nursery policies have been set for the following reasons:

1. to ensure the safety and well-being of the babies and toddlers.
2. to aid in the consistency and expectations for babies, parents and workers.
3. to promote clear communication aiding parents and nursery workers.

Our Mission Statement

The nursery at FBCP is intentional. It is our mission to express the love of Christ to all children (6 weeks-kindergarten) while implementing the best of care and age appropriate spiritual formation.

Coming to the Nursery

A. What to bring

1. diaper bag (Your child's diaper bag ensures that your child receives only his/her bottle/food and wears only his/her own diaper. This is very important as many children have allergies and sensitivities, even to specific brands of diapers.)
 2. three to five diapers
 3. a plastic bag for wet diapers (if cloth are used)
 4. plastic bottles or sippy cup (enough for child's stay)
 5. a pacifier if he/she is accustomed to one (please include a holder to attach pacifier to child's clothing)
 6. a change of clothing, including undergarments
- *The diaper bag and all bottles, pacifiers, and sippy cups should be labeled with your child's name.

B. Check-In and Out

Please sign in your child on the sign in sheet and then fill out a label and attach it to your child and child's bag. Please fill out a "Nursery Info Sheet" if you are visiting the nursery for the first time. Please report any known allergies on the "Nursery Info Sheet". When picking up your child please return the portion of the label that indicates you are the child's parent. It will be helpful to have the same parent, when possible, to drop off and pick up each child.

C. Food

We provide some form of crackers, low sugar juice, and water. Please alert us of any allergies on your child's "Nursery Info Form".

D. Health

1. For the safety of every infant, we ask that parents attending church with an infant younger than 6 weeks old keep their child with them. Once an infant is 6 weeks old, they may be brought to the nursery. The library/conference room with audio of the worship services is available to new and nursing mothers and infants.
2. If your child is not feeling well, please keep him/her with you. We cannot allow children in the nursery if they are sick. We feel that:
 - a. Mom or dad best comforts a child who is sick.
 - b. Well children should not be exposed to sick children.
 - c. The teacher cannot teach and take care of a sick child at the same time.
 - d. NOTE: Our policy will not allow nursery workers to dispense medication to your child under any circumstances.
3. Please do not bring a child to the nursery that has any of the following symptoms:
 - a. a runny nose with discolored mucus

- b. an above normal temperature (over 98.6)
- c. an irritating cough that has persisted for more than 48 hours
- d. drainage in the eyes, conjunctivitis, or pink eye
- e. irritability and fever due to immunizations in the last 24 hours
- f. undiagnosed rashes or eruptions of unknown origins
- g. diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours
- h. irritability and pulling at ears
- i. parasites such as lice, mites or ringworm

NOTE: if your child has been sick earlier in the week the 24 hour rule applies: if a child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours, without fever for 24 hours, and shows no other symptoms for 24 hours, it is considered safe for them to be in a nursery setting.

E. Diaper Changing/Restroom

1. Nursery workers will use rubber gloves when changing diapers or when in contact with blood or bodily fluids.
2. When children needing assistance use the restroom, the door will be left partly open so that the other caretaker in the room may observe. Children's hands will be washed following a visit to the restroom.
3. Parents are asked to specify their child's restroom and diapering needs on the "Nursery Child Info Sheet."

Staffing the Nursery

Parents-We encourage all parents, grandparents, or guardians to volunteer their time in the nursery. However, we will only put you on the schedule once you have attended the church for three months and have completed the "Preschool and Children Volunteer Form". When you have received your schedule and you notice a conflicting date you will need to make arrangements to trade days with someone who is on the list of workers. You will then need to call the nursery coordinator and give them the name of the person trading days with you. If you cannot find a person to trade with you, you may call the coordinator, but we ask that you try to find your own replacement first.

Hired Caretakers- Hired nursery workers are utilized to staff the nursery on Wednesday evenings and for special church-wide events. They will arrive 15 minutes prior to scheduled events and activities and will stay 15 minutes following all church activities. They are required to provide substantial references and pass a background check. Hired Caretakers are required to attend periodic training seminars and first-aid certification as well as a yearly nursery policy and procedure meeting. They are under the supervision of the Minister to Children who will review performance of hired caretakers yearly. Approval by the Personnel Committee and Minister to Children will be required to continue in the position.

Volunteers- Volunteers are a vital part of church ministry and are need to make any ministry in the church successful. We need volunteers to teach, substitute, and help with general caring for children. Volunteers must complete a “Children and Preschool Volunteer Form” and have attended this church for at least three months.

What Workers Are Needed?

Nursery Coordinators- The nursery coordinators are responsible for the staffing of the nursery for their particular Sunday. They are to call and remind workers of their duties and to help parents and children through the check-in process. If all needs are met, they may attend services or Sunday School. If designated workers do not show up, the nursery coordinator is responsible for filling the slot himself or herself, or finding an approved volunteer to do so. They are strongly encouraged to attend yearly policy and procedure meetings and participate in other periodic training seminars such as CPR, First-Aid and Child Abuse Prevention Training.

Teachers and Assistants- We plan to always have two persons in each room at all times if at all possible (if it is not possible, half-door must remain open so that the classroom can be easily observed by other nursery workers and parents). An assistant can be an approved youth but never can there be one or two youth assistants in one room without an adult/teacher present. Nursery teachers and assistants are responsible for meeting the physical needs of children as well as for teaching through their attitudes, actions, and activities with the children. They are strongly encouraged to attend yearly policy and procedure meetings and participate in other periodic training seminars such as CPR, First-Aid and Child Abuse Prevention Training. In addition, assistants who are youth age (under 18) are encouraged to complete the Red Cross Babysitting Training.

Extended Session Committee- The extended Session Committee serves as the coordinator of all volunteer nursery workers: nursery coordinators, teachers, and assistants. They are responsible for recruiting workers and developing the worker schedule for worship services.

Preschool/Nursery Committee- The purpose of the Preschool/Nursery Committee shall be to have general oversight of the operation of all nursery programs. Their duties are to recommend and oversee ongoing nursery policy (such as this), consider the purchase of nursery equipment and supplies, make recommendations about cleanliness and care of rooms and equipment, employ, in consultation with the Personnel Committee and Minister to Children, paid nursery workers as needed, and to supervise volunteer nursery workers.

Minister to Children- The Minister to Children shall be an ex-officio member of the Preschool/Nursery Committee. He/She will supervise paid nursery workers, be responsible for “Children and Preschool Volunteer” applicants and screening, and perform background checks as needed.

The nursery committee, nursery coordinators, teachers, assistants, and extended session committee have the awesome responsibility of influencing a child's first impressions of Jesus, God, and the church. These are not "factual" impressions based on concepts he/she learns, but rather based on what the child senses. However, these first experiences affect the lasting impressions the child will have, as they grow older. These impressions are formed primarily through the child's contact with the nursery worker. In order to ensure good first impressions, nursery workers should meet the following qualifications:

1. **Be a mature, committed Christian** with a deep devotion to Christ. The worker must possess what they profess. Their life will continually reflect their relationship with Jesus as they care for the children and minister to the parents. They will embody our church mission statement, "rooted in faith, and growing in love."
2. **Be committed to service.** The nursery worker must be motivated to serve because of commitment to Christ and a desire to minister to God's children.
3. **Keep a loving attitude with children.** A genuine love for children must dominate the nursery worker's attitudes, thoughts, and actions. A child senses whether or not a loving person is caring for them. They will develop a sense of trust, as they feel secure in the caretaker's love.

Responsibilities of a Nursery Caretaker

1. Greet children when parents drop them off and assign their belongings to a hook at the entrance of the classroom. Assist parents in sign in procedures. When parents pick up and sign out, dismiss children one at a time with their belongings.
2. Engage children in activities appropriate for their age. Use videos as a last resort.
3. Use rubber gloves when changing diapers or when in contact with blood or bodily fluids.
4. When assisting children in the restroom, always leave the door open so that the other caretaker in the room may observe you. Wash your hands and the child's hands following a visit to the restroom.
5. If first-aid is required, materials are located in the nursery lobby in a labeled drawer. Always, fill out a "boo-boo report" (located in the nursery notebook) for all accidents requiring any treatment and give a copy to parents with any further explanations of the event. In the event of serious injury, dial 911 immediately, begin first-aid or CPR, and send another worker to locate parents.
6. Put away toys and supplies used in your class. Clean anything in need of attention.
7. Report any needed items to the Nursery Committee chair such as diapers, wipes, sanitizer, snacks, etc. Report anything broken or in need of attention.

FIVE TIPS FOR GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

By Elaine Goodwin, Ed.D.

1. Promote Positive Behavior. Both parents and caregivers who use positive reinforcement find it a "self-fulfilling prophecy." Children become what we expect of them. Be very specific about the compliments and praise you give. This lets the child know exactly what behavior, actions, and words you liked. For example, "I really like the cooperation I saw between June, Steve, and Siron in cleaning up the dress-ups." Or, "I really appreciate how well you listened to the directions for this activity. It helped things to run smoothly." Or, "I noticed how helpful you were to Terrence today outdoors. I know he appreciates that, and I do too." The child is then more likely to repeat the positive behavior.

Caregivers can build a child's self-esteem in many other small ways. Share hugs, smiles, and kisses. Tell a child s/he is important to you. Praise a child within the earshot of others. Give a child your undivided attention. For those children who seem to get your attention for their misbehavior only, try shifting the focus of your attention. Try writing down a list of the things you like or appreciate about that child. Give that child at least as much attention for his or her positive behavior as for misbehavior.

2. Expect Children to Obey

Be very clear about rules and expectations. Give children an option unless there is a question of personal safety or health, when there is destruction or aggression involved, or when, you as the adult, decide the situation calls for prompt action. Demonstrate your confidence by using short, clear, positive statements. Use a tone that says you expect compliance.

3. Maintain Fairness and Consistency

Deal with challenges in a matter-of-fact, calm manner. Consider the child's age and "normal" behavior for this age range. Learn about developmental stages of children and their accompanying physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs. For example, it is unrealistic to expect a child who is 18-months-old to do much sharing, since toddlers, by their nature, are very self-centered.

Communicate rules and their consequences in words that children understand. When a child breaks a rule, follow through with a fair, appropriate, and meaningful consequence right away. When you are fair and consistent in your response to misbehavior, the child's sense of security and knowledge of right from wrong will be reinforced.

4. Allow the Expression of Feelings

Allowing a child to express his or her feelings does not mean allowing such inappropriate expressions as hitting or hurting others. Sometimes, providing quiet time along with a favorite toy or blanket will help a child to relax and calm down. Some children express anger, resentment, and frustration by pounding with a hammer on a

pegboard, punching an old pillow, kicking a soccer ball in the backyard, creating a picture, or using self-talk with their stuffed animals. Offer to take a walk with the child or to read a story together. These activities may help diffuse strong feelings of anger or frustration. It is important to provide a range of acceptable avenues for children to release these very strong, yet natural emotions.

4. Think and Plan for the Future

Look past today's difficult moments. Remember that your goal is for the child to achieve self-discipline. When problems do arise, step back from the scene if you can. Count to ten, or do whatever helps you maintain your composure and your perspective. Keep in mind the example you set through your own behavior. The way in which adults treat children and each other in your program serves as a model for children. For example, the use of phrases like, "Thank you," "Please," or "Can I help you?" should be a part of everyone's routine behavior.

Guiding children's behavior is a major commitment from caregivers. Progress may seem slow at times. Regression and setbacks are likely to occur. Through it all, keep your sense of humor, and remind yourself of your successes and of the important role you play in caring for children.