

# ***Grove Kids***

**The Grove Tampa**

## **Policies and Procedures Manual**



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## **1. OUR PHILOSOPHY**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

Our purpose is to partner with parents in the discipleship of their children. The Grove believes in and champions the role of the parents as the God-appointed, primary discipleship influence for their children. We desire to come alongside parents as a partner and a resource to equip for this important work.

Our ministry is intentionally built to return the task of discipleship to the parent and to emphasize the God-ordained responsibility that is discipleship within the home. We seek to provide activities that will help engage children in the discipleship process and surround them with others who are faithfully walking with Christ. We also seek to provide resources and tools that continually engage the home and the church in a committed partnership toward the spiritual maturity of our children.

### **1.2 MISSION**

Our mission is to glorify God by making disciples of all nations. We have chosen to fulfill this through the foundational pillars of The Grove –

- Proclaiming the authority of God's Word without apology
- Lifting high the name of Jesus through worship
- Believing firmly in the power of prayer
- Sharing the good news of Jesus with boldness

## **2 MINISTRY BASICS**

### **2.1 MINISTRY DEPARTMENTS**

Our ministry departments are based primarily on age and grade. However, if a parent feels that a child needs to be moved to a different class based on special needs, we will be more than happy to do what we can to work with the parent.

#### **2.1.1 INFANTS (BIRTH – AGE 2)**

In this class, we want children to know that Jesus Christ is the foundation for life from their very earliest days in the church. We desire for children to experience the love of Christ through the caring volunteers who minister to them, the safe environment in which they play and learn, and the age-appropriate classroom activities designed just for them.

This class features exceptional adult/child ratios for optimum care and safety of each child. We want these very young children to experience first hand that God's house is a great place to be through personalized care and interaction with other children at their own level of development.

During each service, children will hear an age-appropriate Bible lesson, sing songs of worship to God, and participate in age appropriate play.

#### **2.1.2 PRESCHOOL (AGES 3-5)**

Each Sunday children will take part in a diverse learning experience geared specifically towards preschool aged children. Children will be a part of a group experience that includes an active time of worship and a Bible lesson presented in a creative and relevant way.

Children will have an opportunity to discuss the lesson in the classroom. Classroom time offers children an experience that includes group discussion, fun and lesson-oriented activities, Scripture memory, and prayer.

#### **2.1.3 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (KINDERGARTEN - FIFTH grade)**

During each service, we offer children the opportunity to learn the truth of Scripture and how to apply it to their lives--at home, at school, with their friends, and when they are alone.

This time includes a time of worship, a large group teaching time, fun games, and a time in small

groups. These small groups focus on life application of the lesson, prayer, and scripture memory.

## 2.2 MINISTRY STRUCTURE

### 2.2.1 CLASSROOM SCHEDULES

#### **Infants Class (Birth-2)**

9:25a Volunteers arrive  
9:30a Prayer together as a group  
9:40a Check in kids / Playtime  
10:30a Snack while read the Bible story / Worship Songs  
11:00a Diaper Check / bathroom break  
11:10a Play  
11:30a Check Out

Complete the clean-up checklist. Turn in all teaching materials, leftover supplies, Logbook, and checklist to the bin that is marked "Grove Kids- General Supplies" at the check-in table.

#### **Pre-School Class (Ages 3-5)**

9:25a Volunteers arrive  
9:30a Pray together as a group  
9:40-10:15a Check in kids / Play Time  
10:15-10:20a Clean Up Time (music will play)  
10:20-10:40a Restroom Break / Snack  
10:40-10:50a Worship  
10:50-11:05a Bible Lesson  
11:05-11:15a Activity &/or Group Game  
11:15-11:30a Craft (*Keep the children engaged during this time until the teacher calls for the child to be picked up*)  
11:30a Dismissal- Hand out take home sheets as they leave

Complete the clean-up checklist. Turn in all teaching materials, leftover supplies, Logbook, and checklist to the bin that is marked "Grove Kids- General Supplies" at the check-in table.

#### **Elementary School (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade)**

9:25a Volunteers arrive  
9:30a Pray together as a group  
9:40-10:07a Check in kids / Play Time; activity sheets (Small Group Leaders use this time to develop relationships with the kids)  
10:07a Clean Up Time (music will play)  
10:10-10:15a Small groups meet (welcome visitors, use bookmarks and locate Bible passage, ask key questions to prepare for Bible lesson) Only take Bibles to Large Group.  
10:15-10:55a Worship and Large Group Bible Lesson  
10:55-11:30a Small Groups (application activity, prayer), then play together until picked up  
11:30a Dismiss (Stay in small group until name is called for pick-up; small group leaders stay engaged with kids until they leave) Hand out activity sheets as they leave

Complete the clean-up checklist. Turn in all teaching materials, leftover supplies, Logbook, and checklist to the bin that is marked "Grove Kids- General Supplies" at the check-in table.

### 2.2.2 CURRICULUM SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The following are questions we will ask to ensure curriculum *Grove Kids* user meets quality and Biblically sound criteria.

Criteria 1: Bible content & usage

Is the Bible the central driving force for the scope and sequence (Content) or is the scope and

sequence driven by concepts like kindness, forgiveness, obeying, etc (Concept)?  
Is this curriculum true to the Word and uncompromising?

Criteria 2: Student

What do we want students to do in the classroom?

What do we want students to take home?

Does this curriculum challenge students to walk closer to Jesus Christ?

Criteria 3: Teacher

Is the curriculum easy for teachers to use?

Do teachers learn spiritually as well as the students?

Does this curriculum challenge teachers to walk closer to Jesus Christ?

Criteria 4: Home Connect

Does the weekend lesson carry through the whole week?

Does this curriculum equip families to walk with Christ during the week?

Does this curriculum challenge families to walk closer to Jesus Christ and work for Christ?

### **2.2.3 INTENTIONAL SMALL GROUPS IN THE CLASSROOM**

A key part of *Grove Kids* is small groups in the classroom between small group leaders and the children. This helps reinforce the weekend lesson and gives the children a personal connection to the lesson as they discuss how to apply what was taught. Here are “Key C’s” that should happen in small groups:

#### **CONNECT**

- Listen to their comments
- Ask thought provoking and application-oriented questions
- Show interest in them

#### **CARE**

- Learn about their home life
- Learn about their difficulties in life
- Learn about their spiritual condition

#### **COMMUNICATE**

- Pray with students
- Interact with students
- Compliment student’s achievements and character

#### **CHALLENGE**

- Drive home the main point of the lesson and follow up the next week of class.

To evaluate effectiveness, teachers should ask themselves:

- Do I know the names of the students I’m ministering to?
- Do I know the spiritual condition of each student I’m ministering to?
- Have I attempted each of the “Key C’s” with each of the students I’m ministering to?

### **2.2.4 TAKE HOME SHEETS**

In *Grove Kids*, our aim is that the lessons we teach would not end on Sunday. In order to come alongside parents as they teach their children about God and His Word throughout the week, every child receives a take home page each week. Our goal is to equip parents with the material for family devotionals that flows out of our lessons with their children. Each age (except the infants room) receives a take home sheet especially tailored to their class’s lesson. Our hope is that each family would participate in doing family devotions together each day of the week.

Having a take home sheet from the lesson is a key component to children’s spiritual development. It teaches the discipline and value of daily devotionals to children at a young age and also allows for open communication between parents and children about spiritual matters beginning from a

young age. Ideally, family devotionals will foster a healthy parent-child spiritual openness as the children mature.

## **3 VOLUNTEERS**

### **3.1 JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **3.1.1 POSITION: LEADS**

**Definition:** A Lead offers leadership and support to all the classroom teachers and to the ministry in general and is in charge of parent check in.

**Responsibilities:**

- In charge of the check in table and assisting parents with checking in their kids.
- In charge of checking in all the volunteers and teachers.
- Make sure there is a teacher in every classroom.
- Make sure the room set up is appropriate and has a positive atmosphere and the room is used with care—all for the goal of honoring the Lord.
- Contact parents when needed for inconsolable, sick, hurt, consistently disruptive, or disobedient children. (by texting production team to post the parents number in the service)
- Interact with classroom volunteers before and after class.
- Be available in the hallway to assist volunteers with accidents, supplies, and any other needs that may arise including filling in where needed in a classroom.
- Read weekly email even on the weeks you are not serving for announcements and ministry updates.

***Before class begins***

- Arrive at 9:15a and make sure name badges are on the check in table and ready for volunteers to pick up.
- Check to see that all those that are on the volunteer schedule to serve have arrived. Place a check by the names for attendance purposes. Mark an X by those that did not show up. Please keep this on the table.
- Pick up your volunteer ID badge at the check in table.
- Make sure all rooms are set up and ready to go by 9:25.
- Lead prayer with all children's ministry volunteers at 9:30
- Make sure all classrooms are able to open up at 9:40.
- Sit at Check-in table and warmly greet those who are checking in children. Be available for any issues with parents who do not understand check-in procedures.
- Move around Helpers to different classrooms if needed so that ratios are appropriate.
- Find last minute subs if needed.
- Make sure each room has your cell phone number to text when needed.

***During class***

- Continually check in with all 3 rooms. Ask if they need anything (supplies, help with discipline, take kids on bathroom breaks/ or fill in while the female helper does)
- For the school age class, make sure children are not leaving for bathroom breaks unless it is an emergency. May need to assist with bathroom breaks for younger kids.
- Contact the production team when a parent needs to be paged.
- If there was any reason for a parent to be paged, offer assistance to the teacher in talking to the parent if needed.

***Check-out***

- Make sure that teachers are checking students out of the classroom correctly. All student tags must be matched with parent tags.
- Be available for any issues with parents who do not understand check-out procedures.
- Collect volunteer ID badges and file them in the accordion folder.

***Clean up (after service)***

- Make sure the rooms have been cleaned and set back up appropriately.
- Make sure Teachers/Helpers/Small Group Leaders turn in volunteer ID badges.
- Make sure Teachers turn in Clean-Up Checklist, teaching materials, leftover supplies, and logbooks as they check out at the check-in table.
- Turn in your ID badge at the check-in table.
- Write any notes for the director on the bottom of the volunteer schedule sheet, including if any supplies are needed for the next week.

### **3.1.2 POSITION: TEACHERS**

**Definition:** A Teacher is the leader of the classroom.

#### **Responsibilities during the week:**

- Prepare for the lesson and know the plan for your room on Sunday. Communicate with your helper/ small group leaders through the week to help you prep any activities.
- Read weekly email even on the weeks you are not serving for announcements and ministry updates.
- Pray for your students.

#### **Responsibilities before class begins:**

- **Arrive at 9:25 at the latest!**
- Sign in at the check-in table and pick up your volunteer ID badge. This badge must be worn at all times.
- Participate in team prayer at 9:30a
- Make sure the room set up is appropriate and has a positive atmosphere and the room is used with care—all for the goal of honoring the Lord.
- Make sure all Helpers have prepared for the lesson for the week (This will not be necessary for infants room).
- Make sure all Helpers are wearing their volunteer ID badge.
- Have classroom ready to go at 9:40am.
- Walk through the schedule for the day so that everyone knows the game plan.
- Make sure Helpers are ready to receive students.
- Make sure everyone understands the bathroom procedures/diaper changing policies.
- Make sure evacuation rope is out and easily accessible.
- Keep the goal in mind: We want our kids to grow up in the Lord.

#### **Classroom Opening:**

- Teacher opens the classroom at 9:40am to receive children.
- Teacher greets parents and children at the door.
- Follow all check-in procedures
- Make sure you stick to the schedule.
- Make sure the Helpers are helping children feel welcome.

#### **Group Time (Worship/Lesson):**

- Make sure Helpers/Small Group Leaders are positioned with children during large group time.
- Make sure Helpers/Small Group Leaders are participating in large group time.
- Make sure children are not leaving for bathroom breaks unless it is an emergency.
- If there is any reason for a parent to be paged, text the Lead from your phone

#### **Small Group Time:**

- The Teacher could also serve as a Small Group Leader.
- Make sure all Small Group Leaders have materials.
- Make sure all Small Group Leaders hand out daily devotional sheets (Devotional take home sheets, for the Pre-K classes, should be put with their take home papers).

#### **Check Out:**

- Greet each parent by his or her NAME.
- Stand at the door, checking out students.
- Follow check-out procedures

- All parents/guardians picking up the child MUST have their claim tag which is matched to the child's number on the child's nametag.
- Make sure you talk to the parent/guardian about their child and how they did that day.
- Encourage the family to do their take home sheets.

**Clean Up:**

- Clean and pack up the room.
- Go through your Room Clean-Up Checklist and make sure each item has been completed.
- Remind all volunteers to stop by the check-in table and return their ID badge.
- Turn in all teaching materials, left over supplies, and Logbook to the bin that is marked "Grove Kids- General Supplies" at check-in table.
- Check out at the check-in table, return your ID badge, and hand in completed Room Set Up/Clean-Up Checklist to the Lead.

**Illness / Accidents:**

- If a child has a life-threatening injury or illness, immediately call 911. Then call the lead.
- If a child becomes ill, the Teacher needs to isolate the child from his/her peers and notify the Lead, who will contact the parents through the parent paging system. Remove any toy the child was playing with and disinfect it.
- If a child is injured, immediately administer first-aid. The first aid kit is located at the check in table. If you are unsure what to do, call the Lead.
- An "Ouch Report" should be filled out any time that general first-aid is administered to a child. The volunteer attending to the child should make two copies. One copy will go to the parents. The other copy should be given to the Lead.
- If a doctor is needed, the teacher attending to the child should fill out an "Incident Report Form." This form is kept on file at the church office. The parent should be given an Ouch Report for their copy.
- These forms are located in the Logbook for each room.

**Discipline:**

- Teachers should clearly define the rules and expectations for their classroom verbally each week.
- The Teachers should be aware of and implement all discipline issues. Teachers should help to implement the discipline, such as sitting with a child. If a child has been disciplined, the situation needs to be addressed with the parent. Check the Policies and Procedures (4.2.9) for more details on guidelines for discipline.
- If verbal warnings and/or time-outs have not corrected the problem, the Teacher should let the Lead know so the parent can be paged.

**Paging a Parent:**

- If a parent is needed for an inconsolable child, sick/injured child, or a child with a discipline problem, the Teacher is to text the Lead on his/her own cell phone. The Teacher needs to tell the Lead what the problem is, the child's name, and the family pager number located on the child's name tag.
- The Lead will then page the parent to come to the children's area and assist the teacher in addressing the issue with the parents.

**3.1.3 POSITION: HELPERS/ SMALL GROUP LEADERS**

**Definition:** A Helper supports the teacher in the classroom and in the elementary school age group leads a small group of students in the classroom.

**Responsibilities:**

- Get to know students, pray for students, and introduce yourself to the families when possible.
- **Arrive at 9:25am at the latest!**
- Help Teacher have the classroom ready to open at 9:40am.
- Prepare for the lesson for the weekend including helping prep activities when asked by the teacher



- Read weekly email even on the weeks you are not serving for announcements and ministry updates

***Before class begins***

- Pick up a volunteer ID badge at the check-in table.
- Participate in team prayer at 9:30a
- Be ready to receive students at 9:40a

***Classroom Opening***

- Help children feel welcome.
- Help students with the memory verse of the month.

***Large Group time***

- Participate in large group time.
- Make sure children are not leaving for bathroom breaks unless it is an emergency.
- Tell the Teacher if a child is misbehaving to a point that requires discipline

***Small Group time***

- Lead small group activities.
- Pray with your students.
- Hand out take-home devotional sheets.

***Check-out***

- Help maintain order in the classroom until parents pick up their children.

***Clean up***

- Follow the instructions of the Teacher to clean up the room.
- Check out at the check-in table and return ID badge.

**3.1.4 POSITION: JUNIOR HELPER**

**Definition:** A Jr. Helper is in 6<sup>th</sup> grade-12<sup>th</sup> grade. A Jr. Helper assists a small group leader or teacher in the classroom. A Jr. Helper may not work in the Infants Room.

**Responsibilities:**

- Get to know students, pray for students, and introduce yourself to the families when possible.
- Prepare for the lesson for the weekend.
- Read the weekly *Grove Kids* email each week even if you aren't serving.
- Be in your classroom at 9:45.

***Before class begins***

- Sign in and pick up volunteer ID badge at the check-in table.
- Be ready to receive students.

***Classroom Opening***

- Help children feel welcome.
- Engage children in classroom activities.
- Help students with memory verse of the month.

***Large Group time***

- Participate in large group time. Sit with the kids on the floor.
- Make sure children are not leaving for bathroom breaks unless it is an emergency.
- Tell the Teacher if a child is misbehaving.

***Small Group time***

- Assist Small Group Leaders and Teachers.
- Pray with your students.
- Hand out take-home sheet.

***Check-out***

- Help maintain order in the classroom until parents pick up their children.

#### **Clean up**

- Follow the instructions of the Teacher to clean up the room.
- Check out at the check-in table and return ID badge.

### **3.2 VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN ON SUNDAY MORNING**

When volunteers arrive, they should check in at the children's ministry check in table. There they will pick up their volunteer ID badge with their name and picture on it. This must be worn while they are in the classroom. Photos are for safety and security purposes.

### **3.3 VOLUNTEER ID BADGES**

All volunteers in the classroom are required to wear a *Grove Kids* volunteer ID badge at all times as a means of identifying them as an authorized volunteer in the classroom. New volunteers must wear a temporary tag available from the *Grove Kids* Check-In table.

### **3.4 VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

- There must always be at least two volunteers with the children – even if there are only one or two children. One adult worker must always be in the room; youth workers may not be left unattended. No worker is to ever be alone with a child.
- Volunteers are serving in a very important role. Look upon your time with the children as an opportunity to relate to them and to show them God's love. Share playtime, songs, Bible lessons, hugs, guidance, and love with the children. *You are making an eternal difference in their lives!*
- Eat meals or snacks before your scheduled time to work. At times, parents may bring treats as a thank you for childcare workers. Please wait to enjoy these after the children are checked out of your room.
- Dress should be modest, comfortable, and appropriate for playing with children.
- Safety first! Check the floors before, during, and after the children are in the room for any potential choking or safety hazards. Familiarize yourself with the evacuation procedures for your room in the event of an emergency. Evacuation routes and emergency procedures are posted next to the doors.
- Youth are encouraged to serve as Jr. Helpers in *Grove Kids*. Youth who are younger than 6<sup>th</sup> grade must serve with their parent. Youth 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade may serve alongside other adult volunteers.
- Adult volunteers are to oversee all Jr. Helpers. Take this opportunity to teach the youth how to care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of young children. If you find that a youth worker is more problematic than helpful, please notify the Lead on duty.
- Jr. Helpers are to honor requests made of them by the adults they are assisting. If the Jr. Helper feels the request is out of line, he/she should speak with the children's ministry Lead.

### **3.5 SCHEDULING**

If you are unable to be present at your scheduled time, please "Decline" the request when you receive it through Planning Center Online **ONLY after you have found your own replacement**. Please list the replacement's name in your decline response. Contact Arianne Alvarado by phone or email if you have an unexpected illness or if you are not able to serve at the last minute. Please give as much advance notice as possible.

If you wake up on a Sunday morning that you are scheduled to serve and circumstances are such that you cannot make it, please contact Arianne as soon as possible.

Arianne Alvarado  
[arianne.rios@yahoo.com](mailto:arianne.rios@yahoo.com)  
 813-361-2126

## **4 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## 4.1 DATABASE

We will track important information in a database. This accomplishes a few main goals: 1) accurate attendance in the classroom; 2) accurate record of children in the ministry; 3) accurate record of volunteers that serve in the ministry; 4) provide information so parents can be contacted to serve, in order to mail out letters, etc.; 5) track the absence of children who miss for a certain number of weeks so they may be contacted; 6) means to link children with parents, enter new families all together and maintain their information together.

## 4.2 CHILD SECURITY

### 4.2.1 CHECK IN TABLE

#### 4.2.1.1 REGULAR ATTENDEES

It is critical that children are properly checked in and out for purposes of attendance and security. As a family enters the building, they will sign their child in at the Computer Check-In Station. They will receive **an ID name badge for each child** in their family and **one claim stub for their entire family**. Each child must wear his name badge which also has his security ID number in the upper right hand corner of the badge. No child will be allowed in the room without his name badge. The parent **claim stub** is used to check children out of their rooms at the end of the service. The parent claim stub has the child's security ID number on it. This number will be matched to the child's number at check out.

- **ID Name badge**-this is the first/last name sticker affixed to the child on the back for Infants and on the front for Preschoolers and School age kids. No child is allowed into the classroom without an ID badge.
- **Claim stub**- It must be brought back to each child's classroom at the end of the service in order to "claim" the child in that classroom. To check-out their child, the parent must present the claim stub to the Teacher. The security ID on the claim stub must match the security ID on the child's ID Name Badge. Children may not be released from the room without the matching security ID or permanent photo ID.

#### 4.2.1.2 VISITORS

It is critical that children are properly checked in and out for purposes of attendance and security.

1<sup>st</sup> Time Visitors – Must complete the Visitor Registration Card in order to sign their children into *Grove Kids*. They should receive a Visitor Information Sheet also. They will then receive the same stickers that the regular attendees receive.

Repeat Visitors – They will receive the same stickers that the regular attendees receive.

#### 4.2.2 WELCOMING VISITORS

First Time Visitors

- *Greet them warmly*
  - Smile; first impressions make a huge difference.
  - Help them feel welcome and comfortable.
  - Ask them how they heard about The Grove.
- *Get information*
  - Walk them through the sign-in process.
  - Make sure that you get all of the information on the visitor registration form.
  - Get the names and birthdates of ALL of their children up through 5th grade, even if they are not checking all of them into *Grove Kids*—this saves time later.
  - Put their info into the system while they are standing there.
- *Give information*
  - Let them know what their child(ren) can expect in the classroom.
  - Let them know what to do when they reach the classroom.
  - Explain the purpose of each sticker that they receive and that they **MUST** bring the claim stub with them to pick up their child.
  - Let them know how we will get in touch with them if we need them (the parent paging system).

- *Guide them to the classrooms*
  - Point them towards their child(ren)'s class and encourage them to stop by the restrooms on the way.

#### Returning Visitors

- Remind them how the pager system works.
- Remind them of the check-in procedures.
- Remind them where their child(ren)'s classrooms are located.

#### Regular Attendees who bring a Visiting Child(ren)

- Follow the check-in procedures for a visiting family or add them into the regular attendees file in the database.

### **4.2.3 CLASSROOM CHECK IN PROCEDURES**

It is critical that children are properly checked in and out for purposes of attendance and security. The *Grove Kids* procedure for check-in gives the Teachers in the room the opportunity to greet each child and their parents individually. Follow all check-in procedures outlined in this manual. Use the classroom roster to record attendance. Write the total attendance at the bottom of the roster.

Children are not to be in any of the classrooms unsupervised at any time. Volunteers should always be in a room with one other volunteer. Do not check in any children until there are two volunteers present. For the protection of our ministry partners as well as our children, a volunteer should never be alone with children they are supervising in or out of the classroom.

#### **4.2.3.1 INFANT PROCEDURES**

- The logbook for the Infant class will be more detailed than other rooms. There will be a place for pacifier, feeding, napping, and diapering instructions.
- Parents sign their child's name in the logbook and add any instructions that they wish to give.
- There will be stickers/ labels and sharpie markers outside the room for parents to fill out/use so every item they are leaving in the nursery can be labeled with their child's name. Have the parent do this so you are free to help any other parents checking in.
- Each child who has their diaper changed should receive a "Changed with Love" sticker on their new diaper.
- Only formula or water are allowed in the classroom due to allergies. No outside snacks are allowed to be served in the classroom due to allergies.

### **4.2.5 CHECK OUT PROCEDURES FOR CLASSROOMS**

It is critical the children are properly checked in and out for purposes of attendance and security. It is helpful if the children are seated with their belongings a few minutes before parents get out of the service.

When parents *pick up* their child, the teacher should:

1. Stand by the door, call children to the door and dismiss them one at a time.
2. Follow all check-out procedures outlined in this manual.
3. If a parent/guardian appears upset regarding the enforcement of this policy, text the Lead immediately. Remember there are often family issues regarding custody we may not be aware of so it is imperative the only person a child is released to be the person who meets the requirements for check-out!! NO EXCEPTIONS!!!
4. Parents/guardians or siblings should not enter the classroom during dismissal time. This will help the Teacher to keep order and facilitate a speedy dismissal.

### **4.2.6 GENERAL SECURITY**

During services, children, birth through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, are to be in their appropriate classroom or with their parent. There should be no child wandering the halls unsupervised. In general, no one is

allowed to be in the children's area during the service. Staff members or security guards who are scheduled during the service will redirect people.

We want to encourage *Grove Kids* volunteers to keep general security in the forefront of their minds at all times. Volunteers must be observant; do not permit people in and out of rooms or allow individuals to wander in the hallways. Notify a Lead or security person immediately if you suspect anything, and they will direct unauthorized parties to where they need to be.

#### **4.2.6.1 AUTHORIZED ENTRY INTO CLASSROOMS**

Do not allow unauthorized individuals into your classroom. Parents are not to enter the room and should say their goodbyes at the door. If they need to remain in the room for any reason, they need to obtain an official "Parent badge" from the Lead. If someone comes to the classroom to observe or to "look around", direct him or her to the Lead who will escort them. No one may look around unless a Lead escorts them. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact a Lead or a staff member immediately.

#### **4.2.6.2 BATHROOM PROCEDURES**

- For the safety of the child as well as your own, take children to the restrooms located closest to where you are.
- All children must be accompanied to the bathroom.
- The best time for a bathroom run is right before or right after the large group worship time. It is best to stop as a group. Encourage all children to "try" at this time (for preschoolers and potty training infants only)
- Bathroom breaks should be discouraged during the large group worship time.
- When taking children to the restroom, two adults (always one female minimum) are to escort the group. The bathroom doors are to be left open (if applicable) and the adult worker(s) is to stay outside the door when possible.
- No male may ever take children to the restroom alone; there must be a female present.
- Text the Lead if you need assistance in following these procedures.

#### **4.2.6.3 COMMUNICATION**

Please bring your cell phones with you each time you serve. We will provide numbers to text each other (or call) in each classroom. Please use this as the means to contact the Lead for assistance in your classroom.

#### **4.2.7 PAGING SYSTEM**

- If a parent needs to be contacted during the service, their check-in receipt number will appear in the corner of the video projection screen used during the service.
- The parent is to then leave the service immediately and report to the *Grove Kids* children's ministry check-in table.
- A *Grove Kids* volunteer will meet the parent at check-in and inform the parent of the child's need.

#### **4.2.8 SUPPLY BINS**

##### **4.2.8.1 GENERAL SUPPLIES BIN (STAYS WITH LEAD AT CHECK-IN TABLE)**

The accordion file at the check-in table should contain:

- Extra First Aid forms
- Policy and Procedure Manual
- Check-In Instructions
- Extra Check-In Logbook Sheets
- Extra Room Set-Up/Clean-Up Checklists
- Background check form
- Volunteers applications
- Visitor registration forms and info sheets

The bin at the check-in table will contain extra supplies and the first aid kit.

#### **4.2.8.2 CLASSROOM SUPPLY BINS (ONE IN EACH CLASSROOM)**

Each room will have a supply bin. In this bin will be:

- Pens/scissors/office supplies
- Hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, Kleenex, paper towels,
- Crayons, markers (for preschool and elementary school age only)
- Offering box (for preschool and elementary school age only)
- Diaper bag tags, baby wipes, gloves (Infants only)
- Snack supplies (pre-school and infants only)

**Please inform the lead on your Room Clean-Up Checklists if you need more copies/supplies of any of the above.**

#### **4.2.9 DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Teachers must go over the rules and expectations of the classroom EVERY SUNDAY. We will try to have the basic rules posted in each class. The kids need to know what we expect. Do not ignore misbehavior. We expect obedience in every way - in action and in their hearts! Don't forget to praise the children who are doing it right!! Make sure you use positive reinforcement with the kids who have been struggling too. As soon as you see them making the right choice, notice it and praise them.

We believe an environment of safety should be maintained in the classroom. When a child is disobedient (blatantly or passively), aggressive or provoking in behavior, the safe and caring atmosphere of the classroom is threatened. If a child is behaving in this manner, try the following techniques:

If a child is acting disobediently or disturbing the classroom, your goal is to change the behavior.

Be Prompt—Speak to the child directly.

Be Clear—Inform the child of the inappropriate behavior and share the desired classroom behavior.

Be Firm—Let the student know the consequences of wrong behavior and what will happen if continued.

Be Consistent—This helps your class know the boundaries.

Avoid Threats—This helps your class know you are serious.

Here are some specific ways to deal with misbehavior.

- Inappropriate Physical Behavior - Immediately isolate the child from the situation.
  - 1st time (if not a chronic problem) - Put them in time out or call the Lead (judge by level of severity)
  - 2nd time (if not a chronic problem) - Put them in time out or call the Lead (judge by level of severity)
  - 3rd time - Call the Lead who will get the parents.
  - For a child who is chronically physical, the parent will need to sit in with the child in the classroom until the situation is under control. The Teacher and the Lead will define this.
- Disobedience - Remember that disobedience can be blatant or it can be passive. Both are just as serious on a heart level and therefore should be dealt with in the same way.
  - 1st time - Warning
  - 2nd time - Time Out
  - 3rd time - Time Out or call the Lead
  - 4th Time - Call the Lead
  - For a child who is chronically disobedient, the parent will need to sit in with the child in the classroom until the situation is under control. The Teacher and the Lead will define this.
- Disrespectful language or mean spirit towards an adult - Same as Disobedience
- Disrespectful language or mean spirit to a peer - Same as Disobedience, but make sure you talk through the situation with both children. Role Playing works well in teaching them the correct way to speak with/to one another

Time Out (taking away a privilege such as craft time or game time might be more effective as the kids get older...Teachers will need to decide the most effective means in each situation)

- Before you walk away, make sure they understand why they are there.
- Explain that they cannot talk or get up until you come back and get them.
- When you return, walk back through the situation. Ask them how they should have handled it instead. If they don't know, then help them figure it out. Have them apologize to you for disobeying and/or being disrespectful and to any other classmate that is appropriate. Have them say, "Will you forgive me?" Have the other party say, "Yes, I forgive you". A high 5 or a hug is always good for reconciliation. Explain how God wants us to treat each other. Make sure there is reconciliation and restoration.

If you have any additional questions or concerns or a specific situation you need to talk through, please let the Lead know as soon as it is appropriate.

**Discipline takes time and energy, but it is right and good and in the end will save you time and energy in your classroom.** Let's all be on the same page with these things so that we can spend more time talking about Him and having fun together!

The Teacher should be aware of and initiate all discipline. Teachers should support and help to implement the discipline, such as sitting with a child. **If a child has been disciplined, the situation must be addressed with the parent.**

It is important to enlist the support of the parent in helping a child develop self-control and an obedient heart. Present the situation in a non-threatening way. "Today we have been working with Johnny on sitting still during the teaching time. We would like you to talk with him about it." Do not let children participate in horseplay or physically/verbally hurt other children in your classroom.

#### **4.2.10 ROOM RATIOS**

To ensure quality of teacher-student interaction and security of our learning environment, we have an adult/child ratio in each room. These are the recommended room ratios we strive to maintain in our classrooms.

Infants 3:1  
Pre-School 6:1  
Elementary School 9:1

#### **4.3 ATTENDANCE**

We track our volunteers and children's attendance through a database each week.

#### **4.4 ILLNESS**

In order to protect all the children, *Grove Kids* volunteers shall not accept a child who has any signs and symptoms of illness such as:

- Consistent cloudy or yellow/green nasal drainage
- Sore Throat
- Drainage from ears or sore ears (signs of an ear infection)
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool in the last 24 hours)
- Vomiting (within the last 24 hours)
- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher (currently or within last 24 hours)
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or any discharge around the eye
- Any unexplained rash
- Exposed open skin wounds or skin infections
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Head lice
- Severe coughing, difficult/rapid breathing or wheezing
- Any symptom of childhood disease such as but not limited to: measles, mumps, pertussis, RSV, or chicken pox.

If any of these symptoms arise while a child is in a classroom, isolate the child from his/her peers and notify the Lead on duty who will contact the parent/guardian through the parent paging system.

If the illness involves any kind of bodily fluid, call the security person immediately who will contact the custodian to take the appropriate measures to clean it up.

Children being treated with antibiotics should be on the drug for at least 48 hours before coming to the children's ministry. If you have any questions, please check with the *Grove Kids* Lead on duty; the Lead's decision will be final. For the welfare of all, parents are strongly encouraged not to bring sick children to *Grove Kids*.

Any toy or item used by a child who develops signs of illness while in *Grove Kids* must be disinfected before being reintroduced to other children.

Medication cannot be given to a child by any volunteer at any time. Diaper rash products are acceptable.

Use receiving blankets in the infant nursery. Infant swings & exersaucers have fabric seats. Place a fresh receiving blanket down before inserting each child to keep germ transmission and soiled fabric to a minimum.

#### **4.5 DIAPER CHANGING POLICY**

ONLY FEMALE ADULTS ARE TO CHANGE DIAPERS...Never male adults or Jr.Helpers. In order to maintain a healthy environment, the following procedures should be followed when changing diapers:

Gather supplies and ready the changing area before placing child on the changing pad.

Disposable gloves are available for use, but are not required.

Never leave a child unattended on the changing table.

Pray a blessing over children as you clean them up.

Once child has on a clean diaper, place the "Changed with Love" sticker on the front of the diaper and fasten the child's clothing.

Dispose of the pad paper and place the soiled diaper in a diaper sack to be thrown away.

Remove and dispose of gloves.

Wipe pad with disinfecting wipe after each use.

Disinfect hands after each change.

#### **4.6 INJURIES**

If a child has a life-threatening injury or illness, immediately call 911. Then call the Lead.

If a child is injured, immediately administer first-aid. If you are unsure what to do, contact the Lead who will contact the first aid volunteer/nurse on call.

A first-aid kit is located at the check in table.

An "Ouch Report" should be filled out any time general first-aid is administered to a child. The teacher attending to the child should make two copies. One copy will go to the parents. The other copy should be turned in by the teacher with their checklist. Copies of the Ouch Report are in the Log book for each room.

If it is a serious injury, the teacher attending to the child should fill out an "Incident Report Form". This form is kept on file at the church. Copies of this form are in the Log Book for each room.

#### **4.7 EDUCATION & GUIDANCE**

Do not just sit and watch the children. Get involved with them! Play with them. Make the most of every opportunity you have with these children. Teach them about God as the Creator, the Savior, and the Helper. We are here to provide much more than a babysitting service. We are intentional about communicating the love of Christ in various ways with each child who is entrusted to our care.

Pray for the children and with the children! Show them how to have a personal relationship with



the Lord.

#### **4.8 CLOSING THE CLASSROOM**

After all children have been checked out, go through the specific Room Clean-Up Checklist in your Log Book. Check off items as you finish. The teacher should then turn in this completed checklist each week to the check-in table when they check out. Make sure to note if there are any supply needs and/or notes to make the Lead aware of. Remember, we need to be good stewards of this facility and leave it in better shape than we found it. **Closing the classroom is the responsibility of all workers in the classroom, not just the Teacher.**

### **5 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

#### **5.1 SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES**

All classes should follow the procedures posted on the inside of the classroom right next to the door.

#### **5.2 FIRE ALARM AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

Infant: Place babies 4 to 6 to a port-a-crib. Place the youngest children in port-a-cribs. Have the other children hold onto the evacuation rope. Take the logbook with you. Do a headcount as you leave the room. Exit the room quickly and calmly. Follow the evacuation route posted in your classroom. Do a headcount again. Keep the class together. Parents will come to your area to reconnect if a return to the building is not possible. Have parents sign their child out before you allow them to take their child. Check-in security volunteers will help you in this process.

Pre-school -5<sup>th</sup> grade: Have children hold onto the evacuation rope located in your room. Take the logbook with you, and do a headcount as you leave the room. Exit the room. Follow the evacuation route posted in your classroom. Do a headcount again. Keep the class together. Parents will come to your area to reconnect if a return to the building is not possible. Have parents sign their child out before you allow them to take their child.

#### **5.3 MISSING CHILD**

If a child is missing, the teacher should IMMEDIATELY call the Lead and tell them. They should leave the classroom with their phone and begin looking for the child. All other volunteers should remain in the classroom and continue as normal. The Lead will decide when and if other people or the child's parents need to be notified. The parent's must be told about the incident when they pick their child up.

### **6 CHILD ABUSE TRAINING**

All workers are required to complete the mandatory child abuse awareness training once their background check is complete within a timely manner.

#### **6.1 KEY REMINDERS**

- **Kinds of abuse:**
  - physical (injuries that are not accidental including: beatings, burns, bruises, bites, welts, strangulation, broken bones, or death)
  - neglect (may include not giving food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, supervision, medicine)
  - emotional (ignoring; terrorizing; corrupting; criticizing; little to no love, guidance or support)
  - sexual (assault or exploitation)
- **It is important when working with children to:**
  - Not lose perspective: a child's behavior must be seen in the context of his or her age rather than interpreted using adult standards.
  - Consider what is normal: Weigh what you have observed or what has been reported to you with what you know about normal development for children. Does the behavior suggest knowledge or acts that are not age-appropriate? Does it seem relatively innocent? When two children are involved, does it appear consensual or forced? Who initiated the activity?

- Is it likely that one or both children could be victims: are they exhibiting behavior that would suggest they are victims of adult-to-child or child-on-child abuse?
- Provide guidance: even if the behavior is deemed exploratory or typical, children need guidance. Stop the behavior, pull all children involved aside and explain why it is not appropriate in this setting, answer questions to help eliminate the confusion, and work with the children to develop social skills that are more appropriate. It's up to adults to teach children what is appropriate and what is not.
- Involve the family in making recommendations: depending on the severity of the situation, a casual conversation with the parent or significant family member at pick-up may be all that is necessary if behavior is deemed exploratory or typical (document guidance given to child and conversation with their parent to turn into the Lead).
- If you suspect abuse – NOTIFY THE LEAD IMMEDIATELY. They will handle further contact with the situation and instruct you with how to continue. DO NOT TALK TO OTHER WORKERS ABOUT IT. This is a very privately guarded part of a child's life and gossiping to others is violating the child's privacy and is a sin. If you suspect abuse – DOCUMENT EVERYTHING!! Turn all documentation into appropriate Lead.
- **DO NOT INTERVIEW/ QUESTION THE CHILD**. This is the job of professionals. Your only job is to observe and report.
- Follow up: continue to observe and work closely with children to help ensure that incidents do not continue. DOCUMENT EVERYTHING. Keep in continual communication with appropriate Children's Ministry leadership. Turn all documentation into appropriate Lead.

## 6.2 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

- Immediately notify the appropriate Lead. They will instruct you with how to proceed.
- If the behavior is disruptive to the class, remove the child(ren) from the activities. Do not draw attention to such behavior. Keep the rest of the class' attention away from the situation and continue the morning as normal.
- DO NOT INTERVIEW/ QUESTION THE CHILD
- DOCUMENT EVERYTHING
  - Is it within the classroom or from home?
  - Who is involved? Who is the abuser and who is the victim?
  - What behavior prompted you to suspect abuse?
  - What constructive guidance did you give the child on appropriate behavior?
  - When did you contact the Lead? (Time, date, text/call, etc.)
- DO NOT SPEAK TO OTHER WORKERS ABOUT IT; ONLY TO THE APPROPRIATE LEAD
  - Do not share "because you are worried," as a "prayer request," in order "to warn others of the behavior." This is gossip and is a sin. If other workers need to be informed of the situation, a Lead will communicate the necessary information.

## 6.3 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SHOWING AFFECTION TO CHILDREN:

- The "Guardian" Standard: imagine the child's parent/guardian walking into the room at any moment. If they were to walk into the room, you should NEVER feel uncomfortable with what you are doing. Above and beyond the guardian - KING JESUS CHRIST IS ALWAYS IN THE ROOM, ALWAYS WATCHING. He will hold you accountable (Matthew 18:6). We are to live above reproach in all of our

interactions.

- Child Initiated: do not force affectionate behavior on a child. Certainly be warm and friendly, but never force a hug or force them to sit on your lap. Be sensitive to their personal bubble; do not invade their privacy.
- Gentle Limits: be contentious of how much affection a child is giving; there are many ways to move on to another activity without making the child feel rejected. For instance, after a minute of hand holding or lap sitting, ask the child to sit next to you, distract the child with something to do, or encourage him or her to return to the interrupted activity.
- Have a witness: this is built into the structure of the classroom, but always be aware of this. ALWAYS HAVE TWO WORKERS PRESENT – NO EXCEPTIONS. Always keep at least one female worker present.