

# Nursery Policy Handbook

## Nursery Ministry

*It is our privilege at **INSERT CHURCH NAME** to provide quality nursery care for children from birth to three years of age. Our purpose is to provide a place where parents can confidently leave their children. A great deal of preparation has gone into making our nursery safe and enjoyable. The nursery ministry enables parents and others to worship and study in our church with the least amount of distractions as possible.*

*We encourage all parents to use the nursery whenever possible. Care is provided for all services. Even though children can sometimes be kept quiet in services, babies and toddlers are known for their cute antics that are a distraction to others.*

*In order to provide better care for your child, we have compiled some guidelines which are outlined in this manual. We pray you will not find these guidelines too demanding, but instead, reflective of high standards for hygiene and care. Together, we want to give quality care for any child associated with our nursery.*

## Parents

*Our nursery workers are prepared to provide the best possible care for your child. All linens, toys and equipment are cleaned regularly and each baby is given personal attention and will find warmth in the midst of our church.*

- In order to avoid confusion and provide proper care and sanitation for the children, no one is to be in the nursery at any time other than the scheduled workers and the children. (Exceptions are only, but gladly, made for nursing mothers.)
- Note: Children are only to be in the nursery when there is a nursery worker present, not just to play between services.
- Please remove child's outer clothing before placing them in the nursery. (i.e. coats, jackets, blankets, snowsuits)
- Give the child and their diaper bag to the nursery worker.
- Please remember to leave instructions on the nursery "sign-in" clipboard. Do not hesitate to be specific.
- Please notify workers if your child has any additional medical concerns besides those indicated on the child information card.

- Please avoid “visiting” your child between services. Should we need to contact you during a service; the workers will enter your child’s number on the number paging system in the sanctuary.
- When the service is over, please pick up your child as soon as possible. *No one is allowed to take a child from the nursery except the parent/guardian or other stated on the child’s information card.*
- If your child is at home with a cold, we ask that you keep him/her at home. If your child becomes ill while in the nursery, you will be notified.

### Suggestions

#### Diaper Bag

- diapers
- bottle/sipper cup, if needed
- wipes
- pacifier, if used
- bib
- extra set of clothing
- a sweater (during cold days)
- plastic bag (for accidents/wet items)

Note: Please label bottles, pacifiers and cups with child’s name or initials

#### Child’s Snacks

In most cases, depending on the number of children in the nursery, we will not be able to spoon-feed a child. Bottles and sipper cups are acceptable. Infants will be fed only what you indicate. Walkers and toddlers may be given water, and animal crackers with your permission.

### Workers

Ephesians 4:2 *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”* As you contemplate stepping into the nursery, ask God for patience, understanding and discernment to meet each one of the children’s needs.

### Check In:

- Please arrive 15 minutes before the service begins and immediately after the service, before Sunday school. The nursery is a ministry and a service in our church and promptness honors God and those to whom you are ministering.
- Please do not work if you are sick (SEE Nursery Schedule Policy for additional information regarding finding a sub).
- If no children are in the area you are scheduled to work, please check with the other areas to see if help is needed there before leaving.
- Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Please DO NOT bring hot beverages into the nursery.
- Care for the children according to their parent's instructions. Rock, sing, read and play to communicate God's love to them. Seek to devote ALL your attention to them.
- Parents are responsible to remove the child's outer clothing; coats, hats, snowsuits, etc.
- Each child's diaper should be checked and/or changed each service (SEE Diaper Changing Policy for more information).
- All workers must avoid any wrongdoing or the appearance of conduct or conversation that could be interpreted as inappropriate.
- Workers are not to be with children in secluded areas.
- When placing a baby in the crib, be careful to make certain the side rail is securely latched. Do not put any other child in that crib unless you first change the sheet. (sheets for the cribs are located in the infants nursery, in the wall cabinet that is labeled "sheets") Please indicate to other workers by flipping over the card to say "dirty".
- Please make sure anyone who enters the nurseries (including visitors) fill out the sign-in sheet and the child information card. (See Procedures for added information)
- Do not be afraid to enforce the Well Child Policy by turning away any child that may appear to be sick.

### Check Out

Before leaving, please straighten up the nursery.

### Well Child Policy

In order to protect all the children in the nursery, please do not leave a child who appears ill. Some signs of illness in children include:

- any degree of fever
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- questionable skin rash
- cloudy or colored runny nose (green/yellow)
- unusual fatigue or irritability
- Eye/ear infections

- cough that is deep or congested

## Feeding Policy

### Infants

- Bottle fed babies are to be given their bottles according to their parents' instructions. Please make sure the bottle is labeled.
- We do not give food to the younger babies, unless instructed by the parents.
- Workers are to watch that babies do not "borrow" each others cups, bottles or pacifiers.

### Walkers / 2's & 3's

- Check sign in sheet before feeding the children. Some children have food allergies!
- Make sure all cups are labeled.
- A worker should always supervise the children while they are eating.
- Workers are to watch that toddlers do not "borrow" each others cups, bottles or pacifiers. (Extra cups are located in the 2's & 3's nursery cupboard)

## Security Procedures

- A child information card will be filled out for each child.
- Parents will fill out the "sign-in" sheet every week. This allows parents to write out any special instructions in the comment space provided. Direct your full attention to caring for the children. Follow closely to the parent's instructions. Do not assume you know better.
- We use the number I.D. tag system for security. One numbered I.D. tag will be given to the parent/guardian, and an identical one will be put on the child's bag. A label with the child's name and number will be put on the child.
- Be sure that everything in that child's box is labeled.
- A child will only be released to the parent/guardian with the I.D. tag!
- If a parent/guardian loses the I.D. tag, the following procedure must be carried out:
  1. Send parent/guardian back to look for the I.D. tag.
  2. If the tag still can not be found please notify the nursery coordinator so another one can be made.

## Worker/Child Ratios

- In the infant nursery the ratio is 1 worker to 2 children
- In the walker nursery the ratio is 1 worker to 3 children
- In the 2's & 3's nursery the ratio is 1 worker to 4 children

- If the worker/child ratio has been exceeded, the following procedure must be carried out: Graciously ask parents to wait while we get additional workers. (This is for the safety of the children.)

Note: There should always be at least 2 workers in each nursery. (This is for the safety of the children and also can eliminate any security problems)

### Injury Procedures

1. In case of a minor injury, a first aid kit is available in each nursery.
  - If there is an open wound, carefully wash the wound, and apply a bandage if necessary.
  - If a baby has fallen or has been dropped, comfort him, and examine him/her for injury. Place a cold compress on any emerging bumps.
2. If medical assistance is needed, use the following procedures:
  - Call 911 if the injury is life threatening. (There is a phone located in the 2's & 3's nursery)
  - Enter 99 on the number paging system (located in the 2's & 3's nursery next to the phone). This will alert the head usher and also a medical professional.
  - The head usher will notify parents immediately.
3. If a child has been bitten:
  - Immediately wash the wound with soap and water, and then apply a cold compress.
4. If a worker suspects any abuse: (Keep it confidential and SEE Abuse Policy for further information).

Note: Always remember to tell parents when they pick up their child if any injury occurs. Notify the parents of all children involved in the situation that occurred.

### Abuse Prevention Policy

Selecting and screening policies for children and youth workers

All workers must be members or regular attendees in good standing of RBC. The CE committee must approve all nursery workers, leaders of children's church or SS classes upon recommendation by either pastors or SS superintendent.

All applicants will complete a formal application process:

1. Complete and return the "screening form" (at the back of this handbook) to the church office.
- The CE committee is responsible for background/reference check if necessary for all
2. workers including a criminal record check for new members (or members of less than 5-years) which would also include regular attendees.

3. Receive a copy of the church policy to read.
4. Any worker that has been convicted of child abuse will be disqualified from working with children at RBC.
5. All files will be kept confidential and available to members of the pastoral staff only.

### Report

1. Report any suspicious or questionable behavior to the senior pastor or youth pastor.
2. Use common sense before reporting.
3. A written report must be submitted to the senior pastor ASAP. This will become a permanent file.

### Response Plan

- The immediate response committee shall be formed immediately, if it is deemed
1. necessary. This committee will include the senior pastor, youth pastor, and an attorney ex officio.
  2. An attorney's advice will be sought for guidance on reporting the allegation to the insurance company, civil authorities and the parents or guardians.
  3. An attorney's advice will be sought on what should be said to the congregation and media.

### Diaper Changing Policy

- Check and change a child's diaper if it is wet, soiled, or if the child seems fussy.
- Always refer to the "sign-in" sheet before changing a diaper. Some parents may have specific requests.
- Please make certain diapers are not constricting.
- Always use the diapers and wipes provided by the parent in the diaper bag. (if the parent forgot we do have diapers available)
- Utilize the changing pads to cover the changing area with each diaper changed. Dispose of both the changing pad and diaper after each change.
- Place soiled disposable diapers in the provided diaper genie. Other disposable diapers along with the changing pad may be placed in the basket. If the child has cloth diapers, be sure to take care of them appropriately.
- Be sure to use the sanitizer available and clean the changing area after each diaper change.
- Never leave a child unattended on the changing table.

### Bathroom Assistance:

- No men or boys may take children to the bathroom.
- Only women 18 years or older may assist children to the bathroom.

## Discipline Policy

*If a child is in need of discipline, follow these simple steps:*

1. Redirect the child to a different activity.
2. Redirect and use a gentle, but authoritative verbal correction.
3. If an overly aggressive behavior continues:
  - Page the parents even if it means interrupting them during a church service.
  - If the child comes back in and the behavior still continues, they will be gently asked to refrain from using the nursery until behavior improves.

Note: Never strike a child or grab them roughly. Always show firmness with love and kindness.

*This policy is in place for the safety and protection of all our children. Thank you for your cooperation.*

Please minister and to discipline the children with “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” - Gal. 5:22

## Emergency Situations

### Fire Alarm

- If a fire alarm sounds, assume the danger is real and prepare to evacuate immediately!
- DO NOT accept any offers of outside help! The adult/child ratios are in place so that we may adequately handle evacuations. If a parent comes to the nursery, explain the policy, and invite them to walk out of the building with you. This policy is in place so that we have an accurate account of all the children.

### Infants

1. Each worker is to carry two babies.
2. Everyone should go directly to the designated meeting place. (parking lot , near the pole barn)
3. One worker needs to make sure that they take the “sign-in” sheet outside.  
After everyone’s outside the workers should check the “sign-in” sheet to make sure that
4. all babies are out. Only then will the workers be able to release the babies to the parent/guardian.

### Walkers / 2’s & 3’s

1. Workers should attach evacuation straps to each child. (evacuation straps located in the walkers nursery)
2. Everyone should go directly to the designated meeting place. (parking lot, near the pole

barn)

3. One worker needs to make sure that they take the “sign-in” sheet outside.

After everyone’s outside the workers should check the “sign-in” sheet to make sure that

4. all children are out. Only then will the workers be able to release the children to the parent/guardian.

### Tornado

- Watch: If there is tornado watch during the service, the nursery workers will stay with the children until the parents/guardian arrive to pick them up.
- Warning: If a tornado warning is issued, go directly to the inner hallway, and sit down. The workers should check the sign-in sheet to make sure that all the children are present. Only then will the room leader be able to release the children to the parent/guardian.

Note: Once the child is released to the parent/guardian in any situation, the child becomes the responsibly of the parent/guardian.

### Workers

- Remember to stay calm, confident and reassuring given any emergency situation.
- If a child appears to be missing be sure to notify the proper authorities.

### Nursery Schedule

- The nursery schedule is made monthly and we ask you to mark your personal calendar ahead for the date and time you are scheduled.
- If you are unable to serve on the date or time you are scheduled, please trade with someone else on the schedule or call the scheduling coordinator for a sub list. Be sure the person with whom you are trading clearly knows the date and time. [It is the responsibility of the worker, not the scheduling coordinator, to find a replacement].
- Keep your copy of the schedule for reference in case someone asks you to trade.
- Do not bring your children in to work with you unless they are on the schedule or, obviously, of nursery age.
- Young people must be at least 13 years of age and accompanied by a parent or adult to serve as workers.
- Please direct any questions and or concerns to the scheduling coordinator and nursery coordinator