

# Christ Community Church

## Policies and Procedures



August 2022

Welcome to Christ Community Church!

At Christ Community Church we want to Exalt Christ, Equip all people to grow in their faith in God, and Engage with our Community. In all we say, do, and think, we want to show Christ's love and point to God's amazing grace.

Children are a gift from God and are a priority in our church, and we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously.

The Policies and Procedures in this handbook are intended to facilitate a safe, abuse-free, and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus; to protect our volunteers and staff; and to give clarity to all members and visitors.

No abusive behavior of any kind is allowed. All Policies and Procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced. All violations will be reported.

Only in emergency situations where physical health is at risk or in CCC Session pre-approved exceptions will deviation from these Policies and Procedures be allowed. All exceptions will be documented.

Please feel free to contact us with any comments or concerns about this handbook, or the safety of our children. We are here to serve you any way we can!

Sincerely,

Peter Bartuska – Pastor

Bonnie Sturgis – Director of Community Discipleship

Tom Lubben – Youth Ministry Director, Worship Director

Marianne Maarsingh – Children's Ministry Director

# Policies & Procedures for CCC Children’s Ministry

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# Overview of Christ Community Church's Safety System

We love children and it is our desire to care and protect them. Therefore, Christ Community Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete **FOUR SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placements begin. Minor volunteers working with children have to complete step 2a, 2b and step 3.

## **STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training**

All staff members and volunteers of Christ Community Church should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in grooming <sup>1</sup> child for (sexual) abuse <sup>2</sup>.

In order to equip Christ Community Church staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Christ Community Church requires all staff members and volunteers to complete MinistrySafe's Sexual Abuse Awareness Training (live or online at [www.MinistrySafe.com](http://www.MinistrySafe.com)). This training will be renewed every two years.

## **STEP TWO: Screening Process**

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete a Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- a. complete an Employment Application (employees only)
- b. complete the Safety Application (employees and volunteers)
- c. complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
- d. provide references to be checked (employees and volunteers)

## **STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures**

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

## **STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check**

Christ Community Church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children's or student activities or programming undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required. Individuals who have committed sexually oriented or sex-related crimes may not serve in any area providing services to children or minors. In addition, certain other past criminal acts *may* preclude an applicant from serving minors. It is our goal to renew the background check every 5 years.

# Volunteer Policies

## **VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS**

A volunteer must attend Christ Community Church for at least six months before being eligible to serve in volunteer positions providing access to children, students, or vulnerable populations. Membership of at least one year is required to be eligible to teach a class. At least one adult will be present in the classroom during any activity. Middle and High school students may volunteer in the classroom if approved by the Children's Ministry Director.

All volunteers must be trained in the goals and vision for the Children's Ministry, the Policies and Procedures, and emergency protocols.

All volunteers will receive a Volunteer Handbook with Child Development Information, the Diapering Guidelines, Volunteer Expectations, Cleaning Guidelines, Children's Ministry Vision, and contact information of the Children's Ministry Director.

Only adults are allowed to handle newborns (0-6 months). Volunteers aged 18 and under are not allowed to handle newborns (0-6 months), unless the parents ask the minors to do so. Volunteers aged 18 and under are only allowed to handle 7-24 months old while seated.

At least one working cell phone must be in the classroom at all times.

## **VOLUNTEER SHIFT**

All volunteers are responsible for providing a Christ-centered, safe, loving, and positive environment.

One adult volunteer will be assigned by the Children's Ministry Director to be the classroom leader.

Teachers and volunteers must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start time of the activity and report to the Children's Ministry Director.

At the end of the activity and when all children are picked up, all volunteers are required to clean-up the classroom (see the Volunteer Handbook for the Cleaning

Guidelines). The classroom leader is responsible for leaving the classroom clean, safe, and in its original state. The classroom leader dismisses all volunteers.

## **INTOXICANTS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any facility of Christ Community Church, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children.

## **TOBACCO USE**

Christ Community Church requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of children or their parents, or during any activities or programs. Christ Community Church is a tobacco-free facility.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the program.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIAL**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children.

## **NUDITY**

Staff members and volunteers should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e., changing clothes during a pool party, weekend, or overnight retreat, etc.), staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the Pastor concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

# Child Safety Measures

## TWO VOLUNTEER (ADULT) RULE

Two trained, screened volunteers should always supervise children. It is our goal to have at least two adults in all classrooms. When only one adult is available, a minor (Middle School Student or older) can be an assistant to meet this requirement.

Being alone with an individual child in any room or during any ministry program is to be avoided. If one supervising adult must leave a group of children, another volunteer, employee, or Safety Team member must be notified so that the 'Two Adult Rule' can be followed.

If two individuals serving in a room are related to one another, it is our goal to have a third unrelated volunteer or staff member be present.

In the unusual event of being with a single child, the child must be taken to a room where other people are present or be in a location that is easily observed by others. (Example: if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present.)

After every ministry event, ensure that every room, area, and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

## WORKER TO CHILDREN RATIOS

Christ Community is committed to providing adequate supervision in the Children's Ministry programs. Accordingly, at Christ Community Church the minimum requirement of the worker to child ratio is as follows:

Program	Workers	Children
Little Lambs (infant – 2-year-olds)	2	6
Explorers (3-year-olds – kindergarten)	2	10
Arrows (1 <sup>st</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade)	2	18
VBS	2	20

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the Children's Ministry Director. The Children's Ministry Director will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to bring worker-child ratios into compliance with our policy.

## **CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT**

At any time that a child has been entrusted to Christ Community Church Staff or volunteers, Church Community Church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

## **Equipping U**

Upon arrival for Equipping U, each child must be signed in on the Welcome Sheet (available in the classroom, see Volunteer Handbook for sample). Volunteers must always check with the parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians for any allergy the child may have.

When new children come to class, the parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians, will receive a 'Pick Up Card'. This card is necessary to pick up the child. It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child. If the child and parents are regular attenders and known by the teachers, a 'Pick Up Card' is not mandatory.

When someone other than the people who dropped off the child will be picking up the child, they must notify the volunteers before leaving the child in the program. Parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians, must remain on campus while their child is in the classroom.

Belongings (bag, car seat) of the child will be labeled with the name of the child.

When the parent(s) or the representative who is allowed to pick up the new child, must present the 'Pick Up Card' when they pick up the child. In the event the 'Pick Up Card' cannot be presented, the Children's Ministry Director must be notified where proper identification must be shown to a staff member before the child is released. (Have the child stay in the classroom; the parent may pick up the child once cleared). If staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact the Children's Ministry Director before releasing the child.

Minor older siblings are not allowed to pick up younger siblings.

Each child must be signed out on the Welcome Sheet.



## **Worship Service and Kids Church**

We encourage all families to bring their children into the Worship Service for the first part of the service. All children will be dismissed for Kids Church after Spotlight.

Parents must check their child in on the Welcome Sheet in the classroom. Teachers must check with the parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians for any allergy the child may have.

When new children come to class, parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians, will receive a 'Pick Up Card' that is necessary to pick up the child. It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child. If the child and parents are regular attenders and known by the teachers, a 'Pick Up Card' is not mandatory.

When someone other than the people who dropped off the child will be picking up the child, they must notify the volunteers before leaving the child in the program. Parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians, must remain on campus while their child is in the classroom.

Belongings (bag, car seat) of the child will be labeled with the name of the child.

Parent(s) or the representative who is allowed to pick up the new child, must present the 'Pick Up Card' when they pick up the child. In the event the 'Pick Up Card' cannot be presented, the Children's Ministry Director must be notified where proper identification must be shown to a staff member before the child is released. (Have the child stay in the classroom; the parent may pick up the child once cleared). If staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact the Children's Ministry Director before releasing the child.

Minor older siblings are not allowed to pick up younger siblings.

Each child must be signed out on the Welcome Sheet. Parents can check their child out after the Worship Service has ended, or during the last song (so their children can be in the Worship Service for the benediction).

## **Other activities**

Upon arrival, each child must be signed in on the Welcome Sheet (available in the classroom, see Volunteer Handbook for sample). Volunteers must always check with

the parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians for any allergy the child may have.

When new children attend class, parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians, will receive a 'Pick Up Card' that is necessary to pick up the child. It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child. If the child and parents are regular attenders and known by the teachers, a 'Pick Up Card' is not mandatory.

When someone other than the people who dropped off the child will be picking up the child, they must notify the volunteers before leaving the child in the program. Parent(s), legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians, must remain on campus while their child is in the classroom.

Belongings (bag, car seat) of the child will be labeled with the name of the child.

Parent(s) or the representative who is allowed to pick up the new child, must present the 'Pick Up Card' when they pick up the child. In the event the 'Pick Up Card' cannot be presented, the Children's Ministry Director must be notified where proper identification must be shown to a staff member before the child is released. (Have the child stay in the classroom; the parent may pick up the child once cleared). If staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact the Children's Ministry Director before releasing the child.

Minor older siblings are not allowed to pick up younger siblings.

Each child must be signed out on the Welcome Sheet.

# Supervision of the Children's Ministry Area

## **BUILDING SAFETY**

To provide a safe environment for each age-group, every classroom is equipped with furniture and toys that are age appropriate and meet safety requirements.

Every ministry supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the ministry program area is monitored during programming serving children. This includes unobserved monitoring of staff members, volunteers, and children. No child will ever be left unattended in a ministry area.

There is a safety camera in each classroom.

## **PLAYGROUNDS**

On the playground, no child will ever be left unattended during regular programming, classes, or activities. Leaders of the group must remember to circulate around the playground, watching children during play periods and giving particular attention to areas not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures).

When any two children play together in an unseen or less easily viewed area, they should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

A safety camera will be used to monitor the playground.

## **SUPERVISION**

Only parents (dropping off children), screened ministry volunteers, church staff members, and children are allowed in areas where ministry to children is occurring. All other adults should be asked for identification and immediately escorted out of the area. If questions or concerns arise related to any person in the area, a ministry supervisor or Safety team member should be notified immediately.

# **Classroom Policies**

## **COMFORTING A CHILD**

If a child cannot be consoled within 10 minutes after the parent(s) leaves the classroom, the parent(s) should be called (unless parent(s) give different instructions).

## **CLASSROOM USE**

Permission from Church Staff is required for any classroom use.

- The Little Lambs Classroom is designed for babies from birth till 2-year-old. Children over the age of 3 are only allowed in the Little Lambs Classroom when special permission is given by the Children's Ministry Director.
- The Explorer Classroom is designed for children from 3-year-old through kindergarten.
- The Arrows Classroom is designed for children from 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Strollers are not allowed in the classrooms.

## **FOOD**

The consumption of food is only allowed with the parents' permission.

Volunteers must be informed about any food allergy the child has. When a child has any kind of food allergy, volunteers must know what to do in case of an allergic reaction and immediately contact the parents.

# **Parental Involvement**

## **PARENTAL CONTACT**

Parents who leave a child in the care of staff members and volunteers of Christ Community Church during church services or activities will be called if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in a Children's Ministry program or activity. Parent Contact information will be registered on the Welcome Sheet upon arrival.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are encouraged to visit any activity and programs in which their child is involved at Christ Community Church. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs at Christ Community Church will be required to complete the volunteer application and screening process (see the Safety Steps on page 3).

# Interaction with Children

## VERBAL INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. All staff members and volunteers at Christ Community Church should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

## ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in any program of Christ Community Church. If a talk with a child alone is needed, it must be done in the hallway or a highly visible area and have another adult who has completed the Safety Steps (page 3) be present.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT

Christ Community Church is committed to protecting children in its care. To this end, Christ Community Church has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment while protecting children.

The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in our Children's Ministry:

- Side hugs, pats on the shoulder, sitting side by side, high fives, fist bumps, special handshakes, carrying a small child on the hip are examples of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and children. These are important for children's development and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Inappropriate touching (for example full frontal hugs, playing with hair, any touch that is unwanted by the child, any abusive touch, tapping a child's clothed bottom) and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to the Pastor or the Children's Ministry Director.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or children's staff members and volunteers. It

- is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in Children's Ministries must always foster trust. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
  - Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
  - Children's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
  - Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to the Pastor or the Children's Ministry Director.

# Health Policies

## SICK/WELL

In general children with the following symptoms should not be dropped off in their classroom:

- A fever (>100.4F) within the last 48 hours
- Diarrhea within the last 48 hours
- Vomiting within the last 48 hours
- Runny nose with green/yellow discharge
- Eye or skin infections
- Symptoms of any infectious or communicable disease.

When a child becomes ill in the classroom, parents will be called to pick up their child immediately.

## MEDICATION

Medication of any kind, including 'over the counter' drugs, will not be administered to any child during a Children's Ministry program or activity. If medication needs to be administered, the parents will be called.

## FIRST AID

In each children's classroom a complete First Aid kit is available. This kit is located in the check-in cabinet. The Safety Team is available for extensive medical assistance.

## ACCIDENT REPORT

In the event a child has a minor accident while checked in for a Children's Ministry program or activity, an Accident Report Card (available in the classrooms and as a sample in the Volunteer Handbook) will be filled out by the classroom leader to notify the parents when they pick up their child. The Children's Ministry Director will be notified of the accident.

In the event a child has a major incident or accident while checked in for a Children's Ministry program or activity, the parents, the Safety Team, and the Children's Ministry Director will be notified immediately.



# Restroom and Diapering Policies

## DIAPERING

Only adult female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex. Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers. Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.

Children should be changed on changing stations only. Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.

Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in nursery will be recorded on the Welcome Sheet (For example: "Seth Adams has a medicine in the bag for rash.")

## TOILET TRAINING

No child will be forced to toilet train.

Only adult female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.

Parents should be consulted on each child's progress in the toilet training process before leaving the child with volunteers or staff members. Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in the nursery will be recorded on the Welcome Sheet (For example: "Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go.").

When children are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open. Children will be encouraged to do all they can for themselves, giving them the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms. Children should be assisted in washing their hands and straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children.

"Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available in the cabinets in the classroom if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.

## RESTROOM USE IN CHILDREN'S CLASSROOM

**LITTLE LAMBS** (infant – 2-year-old) and **EXPLORERS** (3-year-old – Kindergarten)

When restroom use by any child is required, the restroom adjacent to the classroom must be used. Only one child is allowed to be in the restroom at a time.

All students must be accompanied to the restroom by an adult female leader. A single staff member or volunteer is not allowed to take a lone child to the restroom.

Children will be encouraged to do all they can for themselves, giving them the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities.

If a child requires immediate assistance, the exterior bathroom door must be left open when entering the bathroom area. Volunteers will verbally try to assist the child in completing his or her toileting activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. If assistance is needed, seek out another worker to accompany you. If another worker is not available, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask what assistance is needed. Do not enter the restroom.

Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

#### ARROWS (1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Graders)

When restroom use by any child is required, the restroom adjacent to the classroom must be used. Only one child is allowed to be in the restroom at a time.

All students must be accompanied to the restroom by an adult female leader or by a peer from the sex when using the bathroom adjacent to the classroom. A single staff member or volunteer is not allowed to take a lone child to the restroom.

Children will be encouraged to do all they can for themselves, giving them the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities.

If a child requires immediate assistance, the exterior bathroom door must be left open when entering the bathroom area. Volunteers will verbally try to assist the child in completing his or her toileting activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. If assistance is needed, seek out another worker to accompany you. If another worker is not available, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask what assistance is needed. Do not enter the restroom.

Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

Be aware if a student repeatedly asks to use the restroom and stays there for unusual periods of time. Report this behavior to the Children's Ministry Director if it occurs.

## **ADULT RESTROOM USE IN CHILDREN'S CLASSROOM**

No adults are allowed to use or occupy a bathroom in use by children. Adults should use the adult restrooms and not the children's restrooms that are adjacent to the classrooms.

No volunteer OF ANY AGE should enter or occupy a bathroom while children are using it. When no child is present, adults (and young volunteers) are allowed in a bathroom (one at a time) so long as there is another adult at the doorway keeping any child from entering.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Parents will offer instruction to staff members or volunteers to change the diapers of individuals with special needs. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change the diapers of all individuals with special needs. If someone with special needs requires assistance using the restroom, a special needs volunteer may assist them in the restroom.

# Disciplinary Policies

## DISCIPLINE

No form of physical discipline is acceptable. Using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children is prohibited by any Staff Member, volunteer, member, or visitor. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children.

When a child is misbehaving, volunteers are encouraged to follow these steps:

1. Go to the child and calmly ask him or her to stop the behavior. (Most children respond immediately and correct the behavior.) Give a warning and remind the child of class expectations and redirect to a positive behavior. Do this individually, when possible, try not to single out a specific child in a large group setting. (When working with younger children, some physical redirection may be necessary: for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child who is hitting another.)
2. If the child repeats the action, guide them to a quiet place – separate from the other children – for a short but designated period of time. Stay within sight of others and avoid being alone (or unseen) with the child.

Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the separation, and a clear explanation of your expectations. (For example: “Terry, you didn’t stop hitting Kelly when I asked you to, so it was necessary for me to separate you from the group.”)

3. After a 3rd time, refer to the Children’s Ministry Director. The Children’s Ministry Director may inform a parent or guardian, who may be asked to become involved in redirecting misbehavior.

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported to the Children’s Ministry Director.

## BULLYING

Verbal, physical, or emotional bullying will not be accepted in any activity or program of Christ Community Church. At the first sign of bullying in any form, act decisively, and inform the Children’s Ministry Director.

The Children’s Ministry Director will take the following steps:

1. *First Offense:* Confirm that the child who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. Issue a warning to the child and a general reminder to the

group that this kind of interaction is wrong. No one will be embarrassed or chastised.

2. *Second Offense:* Confirm that the child who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. Pull the offending child(ren) from the group (in a seen or supervised location) and discuss the inappropriate interaction or behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals. Let the child know that the parents will be informed about the child's behavior and that the next step is communication with the pastor. No child will be singled out in front of the group.
3. *Third Offense:* Confirm that the child who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. Pull the offending child(ren) from the group (in a seen or supervised location). Contact the parents and pastor and decide on the course of action.

# Child Safety Policies

## ABUSE TOLERANCE

Christ Community Church has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at Christ Community Church to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

## ENFORCEMENT OF POLICY

In order to maintain a safe environment for all children, the Church Staff, all volunteers, and all the members of Christ Community Church must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. The Session of Christ Community Church and the Church Staff are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Policies and Procedures.

## REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY

All questions or concerns related to violation of the Policies and Procedures of Christ Community Church should be directed to an immediate supervisor in the ministry area, Pastor Peter Bartuska (Senior Pastor) or Marianne Maarsingh (Children's Ministry Director). All violations will be taken seriously. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Session.

## REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

In the event staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e., policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) it is their responsibility to immediately report their observations to Pastor Peter Bartuska (Senior Pastor) or Marianne Maarsingh (Children's Ministry Director).

Christ Community Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this Policy and State law, to the Session and the Sheriff Department of Palm Beach County (561-688 3400), Child Protective Services (1-800-962 2873), or other appropriate agency.

## REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

Christ Community Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. If staff, volunteers, or any person observe any grooming, abuse, or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to

immediately report their observations to Pastor Peter Bartuska (Senior Pastor) or Marianne Maarsingh (Children's Ministry Director).

Any report of inappropriate behavior or suspicions of abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) or neglect will be taken very seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services or criminal law enforcement.

## **REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT**

We report all suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of children to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).

In Florida any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare is a **mandatory reporter**. § 39.201(1)(a), **Florida Statutes** (see [www.myflfamilies.com](http://www.myflfamilies.com) for more information).

***When in doubt, report.***

**Abuse Hotline: 1-800-962-2873**

**Or online:** <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>

*NO PERMISSION IS NEEDED from Christ Community Church before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the Child Abuse Hotline.*

## **CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION**

Any violations of the Policies and Procedures are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from a position in our Children's Ministry – for both volunteers and staff members.

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in Christ Community Church's Children's Ministry. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students, or vulnerable populations at Christ Community Church. If

the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from Christ Community Church.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination (employee) or removal (volunteer). Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students, or vulnerable populations at Christ Community Church.

## **ABUSE DISCLOSURES**

Because children and adult survivors are reluctant to disclose abuse, Christ Community Church acknowledges that survivors who choose to do so need their community's utmost support. Tips about how to respond when a child discloses about abuse can be found in the Volunteer Handbook.



# Safety Team

## SAFETY TEAM

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for all, Christ Community Church has a Safety Team.

The purpose of the Safety Team is to contribute to the safety of all members, families, and visitors of Christ Community Church, and to give help in a (medical) emergency. This team will give care and is an extra safeguard for participants in any ministry activity against emotional, physical, or sexual abuse.

During any activity the Safety Team can be contacted by intern radio to help with a practical need in a (medical) emergency.

## COMPOSITION

The Safety Team is comprised of the following members:

- the Pastor
- deacons
- volunteers.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The Safety Team is charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing the Policies and Procedures of Christ Community Church related to children's safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Children's Ministry programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the Session of Christ Community Church regarding safety issues.
4. Give (medical) help in case of emergency.

# Emergencies

## **FIRE**

In the event of a fire the fire alarm will go off. Teachers and the teacher assistant(s) have the responsibility to guide ALL children in a calm but brisk manner to the nearest safe exit.

When teachers are notified of a fire, they:

1. gather ALL children.
2. take the Emergency Box (located in the sign-in cabinet in the blue bag), Welcome Sheet, and portable radio.
3. take their own cell phone.
4. line ALL children up. Carry Little Lambs who are not able to walk and let walkers and Explorers hold the orange rope. Arrows will walk in line.
5. will lead the group to a safe place (teacher in the front, assistant teacher at the end of the line).
6. turn of the lights and close the doors once everyone has exited the classroom.
7. walk calm but briskly towards the nearest safe exit, preferably the Southwest corner of the playground.
8. make sure ALL children are present.
9. children will never be left unattended in the building or on the playground.
10. pray with the children.
11. adjust the volume on the radio so it can be heard well.
12. follow the instructions of the Safety Team.
13. wait until the situation is safe and parents can pick up their children.

## **SEVERE WEATHER**

In the event of severe weather, teachers and the teacher assistant(s) have the responsibility to guide ALL children in a calm but brisk manner to a location and away from any windows.

When teachers are notified of a severe weather warning, they:

1. gather ALL children.
2. take the Emergency Box (located in the sign-in cabinet in the blue bag), Welcome Sheet, and portable radio.
3. take their own cell phone.
4. line ALL children up. Carry Little Lambs who are not able to walk and let walkers and Explorers hold the orange rope. Arrows walk in line
5. take their students to the Women's Restroom across the classrooms to take shelter.
6. turn of the lights and close the doors once everyone has exited the classroom.
7. will lead the group (teacher in the front, the assistant teacher at the end of the line).
8. make sure ALL children are present.

9. encourage all children to sit on the floor with their backs against a wall/cabinet and have them cover their heads with their hands.
10. pray with the children.
11. follow the instructions of the Safety Team.
12. wait until the situation is safe and parents can pick up their children.
13. will never leave the children unattended in the building.

## **THREAT**

In the event of a threat where a lockdown is necessary, teachers and the teacher assistant(s) have the responsibility to guide ALL children in a calm but brisk manner to a safe hiding location and away from any windows.

When teachers are notified of a threat, they:

1. gather ALL children.
2. take the Emergency Box (located in the sign-in cabinet in the blue bag), Welcome Sheet, and portable radio.
3. take their own cell phone.
4. lead ALL children to the restroom area. Little Lambs and Explorers will hide with the teachers in the bathroom and hallway between the 2 classrooms. Arrows will hide in the restroom adjacent to their classroom. If the bathrooms are not safe, hide in the supplies closet in the classrooms.
5. will have the teacher assistant turn off the lights, close, and lock the door. The teacher assistant will join the group and close the restroom door.
6. make sure ALL children are present.
7. silence cell phones and turn the volume of the radio very low. Call 911.
8. encourage all children in a loving, calm way to be quiet.
9. pray with the children.
10. follow the instructions of the Safety Team.
11. wait until they are notified the situation is safe and parents can pick up their children.
12. will never leave children unattended in the building.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

In the event of a medical emergency, one volunteer must give first aid to the injured. In the meantime, the other volunteer is required to contact the Safety Team (radio) or call 911, contact the parents. Volunteers must take care of ALL children in the classroom.

# Transportation Policies

When Staff members or volunteers need to provide transportation for children, the following guidelines must be strictly observed for the safety of the children:

- Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving unless in an emergency.

## Definitions

1. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.
2. Abuse is the non-accidental injury that one person inflicts on another. Abuse can be physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual and is prohibited.

# **Policies and Procedures**

## **Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement**

*This page is to be signed, detached, and delivered to the Children's Ministry Director.*

I have received and read a copy of the Policies and Procedures of Christ Community Church's Children's Ministry and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at Christ Community Church.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Christ Community Church.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my employment or voluntary service at Christ Community Church at any time (If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between me and Christ Community Church. If applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no monetary compensation for hours worked.

I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

I acknowledge receipt of Christ Community Church's Policies and Procedures Handbook.

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Date

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Staff Member or Teacher's name (please print)

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Staff Member or Teacher's signature