



Providence Kids
POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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1. PROVIDENCE KIDS CULTURE

Mission Statement: Growing kids up in the gospel.

Values: Partnering with parents to make disciples of Jesus Christ through gospel-centered worship, gospel-centered community, and gospel-centered service.

Verse: “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*” (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)

2. VOLUNTEERS

A. Qualifications & Requirements

- All Room Directors and teachers must be members of Providence Church. Assistants may be regular attenders and should be approved by a Providence Church staff member before serving.
- All volunteers must voluntarily submit to the full onboarding process, which includes background checks that will be reviewed by the PK Director and, when deemed necessary, by a Providence pastor. Providence Church utilizes and relies upon a third-party service provider to run these security background checks.
- All volunteers must be at least 13 years old. All volunteers in the Nursery must be at least 21 years old.
- Room Directors attend biannual meetings and volunteers attend annual meetings. These meetings are important times to be encouraged and equipped for effective ministry.

B. Onboarding

Because we desire to protect children involved in our ministry, Providence Church requires all volunteers working with children to complete the following onboarding and vetting process. There are no exceptions to this process and no steps to be skipped.

ONBOARDING (ADULT AGE 18+)

1. **Application.** Applicant fills out the online PK volunteer application. The PK Director will review the application and give approval for moving forward. Application can be found [here](#).
2. **Background Check.** Each applicant will receive a form via email for permission to run a background check. Once an applicant has given approval, the PK Director will run and review the background check.
3. **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training.** The applicant will receive access to an online [Sexual Abuse Awareness Training video](#), and quiz. After viewing all required content, and completing the quiz with a passing score, the PK Director will receive an email stating the applicant has completed this training.
4. **Policy Training.** The applicant will receive an online form to read through all of the PK policies and procedures. They will be asked to sign off that they have read through and will adhere to any and all policies.
5. **Classroom Training.** The PK Director will coordinate with the applicant to schedule an on-site classroom-specific training with the appropriate Room Director.

6. **Approved Volunteer.** Once each of the 5 above steps have been completed, confirmed by the PK Director, the applicant becomes an approved PK volunteer and can be placed on the schedule to start serving with kids.

ONBOARDING (YOUTH AGE 13-17)

1. **Application.** Applicant fills out the online PK youth volunteer application. The PK Director will review the application and give approval for moving forward. Application can be found [here](#).
2. **Background Check.** Volunteers under the age of 18 do not receive a background check.
3. **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training.** Parents of youth volunteers are required to go over issues of sexual abuse awareness on their own (see our [recommended discussion sheet](#)). The PK Director will confirm with the youth volunteer that these issues have been discussed.
4. **Policy Training.** The applicant will receive an online form to read through all of the PK policies and procedures. They will be asked to sign off that they have read and will adhere to any and all policies. Parents will also be asked to sign off that they read through the policies and procedures with their youth.
5. **Classroom Training.** The PK Director will train all youth volunteers.
6. **Approved Volunteer.** Once each of the 5 above steps have been completed, confirmed by the PK Director, the applicant becomes an approved PK volunteer and can be placed on the schedule to start serving with kids.

C. Roles & Responsibilities

PK DIRECTOR

- **Administrator:** Communications, supplies, materials, background checks, and curriculum.
- **Coordinator:** Volunteers, Sunday operations including PK check-in and Assembly worship.
- **Leader:** Vision casting and Building relationships
- Handles any escalated issues that arise with children, parents, or volunteers.

SITE COORDINATOR

- Coordinate with the PK security guard
- Set up rooms for daily lesson and snack
- A brief meeting with volunteers before service
- Execute policy and procedure on Sunday
- Be on call for classroom and parental needs

ROOM DIRECTOR

- A Room Director is also one of the Teachers.
- Meet biannually with the PK Director and other Room Directors.
- Mentor and pray for volunteers and PK.
- Support volunteers and hold quarterly meetings.
- Ensure classroom is orderly. Let PK Director know if standard classroom items are needed.
- Serve in your room if a sub cannot be found.
- Report any concerns or suggestions to the PK Director.
- Talk to PK Director about recurring discipline issues.

VOLUNTEER

- Understand and support the culture of PK.
- Know and pray for each child and family in your class regularly.
- Commit to teach in your classroom on a 5-week rotation for one year.
- Find their own subs when needed.
- Contact Room Director with questions.
- Must wear a nametag when serving.
- Please arrive at church by 3:20pm to be present at the briefing/prayer time (3:25pm) and then be in your classroom by 3:30pm to greet the kids and parents. Being on time helps things run smoothly.
- Check children out after service.
- Follow schedule and guidelines in your classroom.
- Prepare for and teach the lesson in an engaging way.
- Participate in Assembly.
- Change diapers (Nursery and Toddler) and oversee restroom breaks.
- Make sure the classroom is clean and supplies are returned to the correct boxes and placed by the door for the clean-up crew.
- Discipline children following the PK Discipline Guidelines.
- Fill out minor injury reports.
- Explain classroom information to new visitors.

YOUTH VOLUNTEER

- Understand and support the culture of PK.
- Know and pray for each child and family in your class regularly.
- Commit to teach in your classroom on a 5-week rotation for one year.
- Find their own subs when needed.
- Must wear a nametag when serving.
- Please arrive at church by 3:20pm to be present at the briefing/prayer time (3:25pm) and then be in your classroom by 3:30pm to greet the kids and parents. Being on time helps things run smoothly.
- Follow schedule and guidelines in your classroom.
- Prepare for and teach the lesson in an engaging way.
- Participate in Assembly.
- Make sure the classroom is clean and supplies are returned to the correct boxes and placed by the door for the clean-up crew.

D. Finding a Sub

In the event you cannot serve in your room during your designated week, it is YOUR responsibility to find a sub to take your place. Make sure you reach out well in advance and make plans to switch with another approved PK volunteer. Once you have identified someone to serve in your place, please contact your Room Director and let them know who will be serving in your absence.

E. Preparation

LESSON PLANNING

Please read the overview first and then the lesson in its entirety before your day to serve. It is beneficial to the children and you to give yourself enough time to think through the lesson. This is important content!

The lesson content is not optional, but the presentation is. There will be a lesson plan, presentation supplies, and craft supplies provided each week; however, you are the Teacher. If you have another

craft or presentation material you would like to use that coordinates with the lesson for your week, you have liberty to do so.

PRAYER

Please commit to pray regularly for Providence Kids outside of class. During class you will have a prayer time with the children.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Your ministry in Providence Kids is a participation in the work of God in a child's life. A volunteer who understands this will work differently than one who views his/her role as merely babysitting. You are helping to lay a foundation that will bear fruit throughout a child's life even reaching to the next generation.

F. Youth Volunteers (Age 13-17)

GUIDELINES

- May serve as an Assistant in any room except Nursery.
- Only 1 youth may serve in any particular classroom.

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS CAN:

- Play with the children.
- Model appropriate participation in activities such as listening to the Bible story, participating in Assembly, etc.
- Help remind children of the lesson or Assembly rules.
- Ask an adult volunteer to intervene if discipline is needed for a child.
- Help children line up and help them get from place to place.
- Help pass out supplies and snack.
- Assist with crafts, activities and lessons.
- Help clean up.

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS CANNOT:

- Accept children into or release them from the classroom.
- Take a child to the restroom alone.
- Discipline children beyond a verbal reminder to follow the rules.
- Be alone with children.
- "Rough-house" with the children.
- Bring their friends to the classroom.

3. SAFETY

A. Check-In and Check-Out

CHECK-IN

- All children will get checked in using one of the check-in stations in the 2nd floor lobby by check-in volunteers. Check-in starts at 3:35pm.
- Check-in officially closes at 4:05pm to allow everyone to get to the sanctuary on time and to help our classrooms run smoothly. In general, those who arrive with their kids after 4:05 should take them with them to the sanctuary. However, grace and discernment should be exercised by all, especially with newcomers.

CHECK-OUT

- Volunteers must stand at the door and collect the parent's sticker when parents come to pick up their child.
- The teacher must verify the child's name on the parent's sticker before allowing the child to be checked out.

B. Classroom Capacity

Each classroom has a maximum capacity based on room size, the number of volunteers, and the number of children in attendance. Any children that arrive after the maximum capacity has been reached will need to attend service with their parents in the sanctuary.

C. Age-Appropriate Classrooms

Children of Providence members should attend their age-appropriate class. Visitors who wish to have siblings attend the same class will be given a 3-week transition period before being asked to check their children in to their appropriate class.

D. Facility

We are stewards, not owners, of all that God has given us. In addition, we are leasers, not owners, of our building on Sundays. In light of this, please take care of, and encourage the children to respect, the space and materials available to us. A few guidelines include:

- Cover the table with the plastic liner (found in the materials box) before completing an activity that could be messy (washable paints, watercolors, and glitter glue are a few examples).
- Do not attach anything to the walls with staples and use tape sparingly, being careful not to pull paint off of the walls.
- Children should pick up any toys, puzzles, or books and return them to the location where they were found.
- Help straighten the classroom before leaving.
- Do not put open food containers back into the classroom boxes.

E. Snacks

Here are a few helpful guidelines to follow when it comes to snacks:

- There is no official snack time in the Nursery; however, puffs provided in the classroom bin or a sippy cup/small snack provided by the parent can be used to soothe children. Let parents know that there is seating available for a parent to come feed the child if necessary. Be sure to check the child's nametag to ensure no allergies before providing a snack.
- There will be an allergy free snack in all classrooms.
- It is the parent's responsibility to notify Teachers of any allergies or dietary restrictions. Please remember to look on the child's nametag for allergies and to always ask new visitors when they check the child into class.
- Offer children hand sanitizer when they enter the room. Make sure that parents approve of using hand sanitizer.
- Serve snack on a paper towel or napkin.
- Children may have a second serving if there is enough time.
- Snack should not be eaten during Assembly, the lesson, or the in the Community Room.

F. Medical Issues

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

When confronted with a medical emergency please do the following:

- If the child's condition appears serious or life threatening, call 911 immediately. Tell them what happened and where they can find you (Central Christian Church, 1110 Guadalupe St).
- Send another volunteer to get the parents.
- Make sure someone from the Providence Kids team remains with the child having the medical problem until the parents arrive.

MINOR INJURIES

First Aid Kits are located in each classroom. An injury report should be filled out each time a child sustains an injury, even if it is minor. The teacher that witnessed the injury should objectively and factually recount what happened (e.g. —Johnny fell off the slide on the playground and scraped his knee.) List any first aid or other attention given (e.g. —lots of hugs, Band-Aid, ice pack) in the appropriate space. The name and contact information (phone number or e-mail) of the volunteer that observed the injury should be listed on the injury report. Please also fill out a short description of the incident on the injury report document in your Classroom Binder.

At check-out, the parent should be given a copy of the injury report and be told about the incident by the Teacher. The Teacher should determine whether a follow-up call is appropriate based upon the seriousness of the injury.

INFECTION CONTROL

A child should not be accepted into the classroom if he or she is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- A fever within the previous 24 hours.
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the previous 24 hours.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or other eye infection.

If a volunteer has a question about accepting a child into the classroom, the volunteer should send another volunteer to locate a Providence Kids Room Director or Pastor to determine how to handle the situation.

ILLNESS

If a child becomes ill while under the supervision of PK, a volunteer should be sent to notify the parent(s) in worship. A volunteer should keep the child isolated from the other children until the parents arrive.

MEDICATIONS

Medications may only be given to children by their parent or guardian.

G. Fire Emergency

FIRE EXIT PROCEDURE

Please remain calm. Follow the procedures for getting everyone out of the building quickly. There are multiple exits at Central Christian Church, so be aware of the nearest exit to your particular classroom.

NURSERY ROOMS

Promptly ask the PK security guard and other adult volunteers to help carry babies. There is also direct access from the Nursery to the sanctuary (to get more adults to help if necessary). Use the

nearest and safest of the 4 downstairs exits. Gather the children in a group with adult volunteers and wait for the parents outside/away from the building. Only allow a baby to be checked out when you collect the parent's label for that child.

ALL OTHER ROOMS

Walk out with toddlers in a group. One adult should be in the front. The teacher should be the last one out to make sure no one was left behind. All other classes should walk in a single file line down the stairs with volunteers in front and back of lines. (**Note: There is an emergency exit in room 220 [the Assembly room], but use this exit ONLY IF NECESSARY, because it leads to an external staircase.*)

H. Security Guards

There are two security guards on site each Sunday: a uniformed police officer with Travis County is stationed in the entrance to the sanctuary and a male Providence volunteer is stationed at the bottom of the first floor stairs of the PK wing. The PK security guard is there to ensure that no unauthorized person(s) goes up the stairs alone while kids are in classrooms. Reach out to him if you need help for any reason.

I. Safety Awareness

Staff members and volunteers should continually be aware of their surroundings, looking for possible threats to the safety of the children under their supervision. If there is a safety risk, remove yourself and the children in your care from that situation. In addition, if a staff member or security guard is present, notify those persons immediately.

J. 9-1-1

If a staff member or volunteer encounters an emergency that is not addressed in these safety standards, or if the staff member or volunteer is not sure how to proceed, he or she should call 9-1-1, tell them the situation, and give their address and exact location.

4. ABUSE

A. Zero Tolerance

Providence Church has a zero tolerance for abuse. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer in our children's ministry to act in the best interest of all children under our care.

In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations.

- When abuse is suspected, staff and volunteers must report as soon as possible to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (www.dfps.state.tx.us). They should also make the PK Director and a pastor aware.
- If no abuse is suspected, but volunteers observe other inappropriate behavior (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling), the volunteer must report it to the PK Director immediately.
- The PK Director will report to pastors and elders as appropriate.

B. Enforcement of Policies

Staff members and volunteers in supervisory positions must diligently enforce all policies. A violation of these policies is grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of Providence pastors.

C. Consequences of Violation

Any person accused of committing any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in ministry to children. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement, Child Protective agencies, or the church.

Any person found to have violated this policy may be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming involving children or minors. If the person is an employee, such conduct may result in termination of employment.

Failure to report a policy violation is grounds for termination of an employee. Volunteers who fail to report a policy violation may be restricted from participation in any future activities involving children or students at Providence.

D. Reporting

All members, visitors, staff, and volunteers are advised that Providence Church has a zero tolerance for abuse in our church programs. The church desires to provide a safe and 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 Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible that a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Please report 'grooming' behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to the PK Director, such that the church may take appropriate action to safeguard children in the program.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Under Texas law, *every adult* is a mandatory reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect. If you reasonably suspect that a child is being (or has been) physically, sexually, or emotionally abused or neglected by someone (including a peer), a report must occur.

A report should be made to: The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Hotline (1-800-252-5400), OR the local police department, OR child protective agency in the county.

The person making a report must identify, if known:

- The name and address of the child,
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, and
- Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged abuse or neglect.

A staff member or volunteer who is not serving in a professional capacity *may* report to the PK Director and allow them to assist in making the appropriate report to law enforcement agencies.

****In no way is any provision in this policy meant to discourage any staff member or volunteer from personally reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect to appropriate law enforcement agencies.***

REPORTS MADE BY PROFESSIONALS

A *professional* who has cause to believe that a child has been *or may be* abused or neglected must make a report no later than 48 hours after the professional first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected, and may not delegate to or rely upon another person to make the report.

Under Texas law, a “professional” includes any individual who is licensed or certified by the state, and who, in the normal course of his or her duties for which a license is required, has direct contact with children.

Professionals include:

- Teachers or daycare employees,
- Nurses, doctors, or employees of a clinic or health-care facility that provides reproductive services,
- Juvenile probation officers or juvenile detention or correctional officers.

****By Texas law, communications with a minister regarding suspected child abuse or neglect are not privileged and must be reported to authorities.***

ADULT TO ADULT DISCLOSURES

In addition, a staff member or volunteer must make a report if he or she has cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child, and the staff member or volunteer determines in good faith that disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child.

E. Responding to a Child Reporting Abuse

When a child shares an incident of physical or sexual abuse, the following guidelines should be followed to best ensure the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of the persons involved:

- Show the child your care for them by listening attentively and carefully. Show them by your words, eye contact, and body language that the reported incident does not change your view of them.
- Never communicate to a child that you will keep something secret.
- Find a public area to talk that is also far enough away that the child knows that only you can hear what they are sharing with you.
- Let the child know that you are taking this matter seriously, and that you will take the appropriate steps to ensure they are not hurt in the future.

F. Reporting Other Issues

If at any time you become aware of a child that is experiencing or contributing to destructive or otherwise concerning behavior or health issues (self-harm, threats of hurting others, anxiety, depression, bullying, eating disorders, etc.), please let the parent and PK Director know as soon as you are reasonably able.

5. CURRICULUM & SCHEDULE

The Gospel Project® for Kids immerses kids and preschoolers in the gospel through every story, theological concept, and call to mission from Genesis to Revelation. Each week, The Gospel Project brings these stories to life through video, music, activities, and more. Over the course of three years, participants will journey from Genesis to Revelation and discover how God's plan of redemption unfolds throughout Scripture and still today, compelling them to join the mission of God.

With The Gospel Project, our children will be immersed in the gospel through:

1. **Christ-centered Study** that helps participants understand how all Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, gives testimony to Jesus Christ.

2. **Chronological Study Plan** that shows how the Bible is not just a collection of stories, but one unified story-God's story of redemption.
3. **Missional Application** that examines how the gospel encourages and empowers us to be mission driven.
4. **Essential Doctrines** that help participants grasp the theological truths and central themes of the Christian faith.

Classroom Schedule: Please make every effort to adhere to the schedule. It will help the children know what to expect, provide a consistent routine for the teachers, and help parents feel at ease knowing what their children are doing during the service.

6. INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Building strong, healthy and interpersonal relationships between children and leaders is foundational to our PK ministry at Providence Church. The policies below are designed to free our volunteers and staff to pursue healthy relationships with children while trying to accomplish three goals:

- Keeping these relationships above reproach.
- Reducing the possibility of a false accusation of abuse.
- Modeling proper relationships to children.

A. The Rule of Two

Staff and volunteers must always follow “the rule of two” when interacting with children. There should always be at least one other adult within eyeshot at all times. Ideally, this second person will be a staff member or an approved PK ministry volunteer. An adult should **never** be alone with a child during a PK ministry event. Additionally, staff will schedule at least two unrelated persons to be serving together whenever reasonably possible.

B. One-on-One Interactions

If a child wishes to talk privately with a staff member or volunteer, these conversations must happen in a public area far enough away from others that no one else can hear, but where all actions can be observed. Ideally, the “public area” will be in a place where the Rule of Two can still be followed. If a volunteer plans to have a one-on-one meeting with a child in a public venue that is not in the context of a ministry event, prior permission must be given by the parent. At no time are one-on-one meetings with the opposite gender allowed.

C. Interacting with Children of the Opposite Gender

Staff members and volunteers should not participate in one-on-one interactions with children of the opposite gender. This guideline should be followed in person, through text message or phone call, and on social media. If a child of the opposite gender approaches a volunteer for a one-on-one interaction, the volunteer should quickly seek to add another person to the conversation.

D. Transportation

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when ministry workers are involved in the transportation of children:

- Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place must be avoided. Avoid transportation circumstances that leave only *one child* in transport.
- Avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.

- No cell phones may be utilized by the driver *while driving*, unless in an emergency.

E. Supervision of Children

Only parents or guardians, approved PK 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, the Site Coordinator or PK security guard should be notified immediately.

Children should not be left unsupervised while participating in ministry programs. Staff members and volunteers are expected to provide supervision of all ministry activities according to The Rule of Two and according to the age group volunteer-to-child ratio.

The following volunteer-to-child ratios should be observed:

- Children under one year of age – one adult for every two children (1:2)
- Children one year of age – one adult for every three children (1:3)
- Children two and three years of age – one adult for every four children (1:4)
- Children four years of age – one adult for every five children (1:5)
- Children five, six and seven years of age – one adult for every six children (1:6)
- Children eight, nine and ten years of age – one adult for every ten children (1:10)

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the Site Coordinator. The Site Coordinator will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker-to-children ratios into compliance with Church policy.

F. Diaper Changing & Restrooms

- A female volunteer must change diapers/pull-ups. Two volunteers must be in the room during a diaper/pull-up change.
- Please check the Instruction Form to make sure parents give permission to change diapers. If they do not, please get the parent if there is a dirty diaper.
- Please change in designated changing areas.
- Please use the vinyl diaper pad for changing.
- Please use gloves for dirty diapers.
- Please use hand sanitizer in between every diaper change.
- Please wipe the diaper pad with a sanitizer wipe in between every diaper change.
- Place used diaper/pull-up and wipes in one of the small trash bags before discarding in the trashcan.

Only a FEMALE volunteer is allowed to take any child to the restroom. Kids in the Toddler class must use the restroom one at a time directly across the hall and be accompanied by a female teacher/assistant. The Rule of Two must still be followed.

G. Physical Contact

The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all staff members and volunteers in our PK ministry in order to ensure a positive and nurturing environment that is also above reproach.

In all circumstances, all physical contact must be initiated by the child, and should be in response to the child's need for comfort, encouragement, or affection. Physical contact should not be based on the staff member or volunteer's need.

A child must never be forced into any type of physical contact. His or her preference to not be touched must be respected.

See below for guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions with children of all ages.

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS

- Side hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- High-fives
- Fist-bumps
- Arms around shoulders
- Hand holding during prayer with more than two people

INAPPROPRIATE PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS

- Full frontal hugs***
- Kissing
- Wrestling
- Piggy back rides
- Tickling
- Allowing a child to cling to your leg
- Any type of massage
- Touching the bottom, chest, or genital area
- Any form of unwanted physical affection
- Lap sitting* ***
- Picking up children* ***
- Hand holding** ***

**Lap sitting and picking up children are appropriate actions for children three years old and younger.*

***Hand holding is appropriate for children four years old and younger when escorting them to a new location. It is also appropriate when during prayer with more than two people.*

****Full frontal hugs, lap sitting, picking up children, and hand holding are appropriate for children with special needs of all ages if initiated by the child or recommended by the parent or special needs ministry staff.*

AVOID THE FOLLOWING INTERACTIONS:

- Never touch a child in anger or disgust.
- Never touch in a manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive.
- Avoid touching a child between the naval and knees.
- Never touch a child's private parts (with exception of diaper changing procedures).
- Never place hands beneath a child's clothing to play, rub, or comfort.

H. Verbal Interactions

Verbal interactions between staff and volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. Staff and volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Staff and volunteers also should not swear in the presence of children, and should use discretion when talking about past sins to a child.

See below for guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions with children of all ages.

APPROPRIATE VERBAL INTERACTIONS

- Positive reinforcement of behavior
- Appropriate jokes
- Encouragement
- Praise
- Complementing character

INAPPROPRIATE VERBAL INTERACTIONS

- Name calling
- Discussing past sexual encounters
- Secrets
- Cursing
- Off-color jokes
- Shaming
- Belittling
- Derogatory remarks
- Harsh language

I. Written Communication

Any written communication through mail, postcards, email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, or any social media site must be done with prior parent approval. If the volunteer or staff member does not know if the parent approves of communicating with their child in this way, the communication should not happen.

J. Gift Giving

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from giving special gifts to any individual child. Special occasions or special accomplishments should receive group acknowledgement and can easily be rewarded with group recognition.

7. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

A. Open Door Policy

There is an open invitation for parents to observe any program or activity in which their children are involved. Parents who desire to participate in leading these programs, to interact with children other than their own, or to have continuous and ongoing presence in their child's programs will be required to complete our full volunteer onboarding process.

B. Contacting Parents

Parents who leave their children in the care of staff and volunteers of Providence Church will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem.

C. Release of Children

Providence Church is responsible for releasing children in their care to the correct parent, legal guardian, or other person designated by parents or legal guardians. It is presumed that the person who drops off a child has the authority to pick up that child. In the event that staff or volunteers are uncertain if they should release a child, they should immediately contact the Site Coordinator or a staff member before releasing that child.

8. STAFF & VOLUNTEER CONDUCT

A. Intoxicants & Tobacco Products

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while working with children at Providence Church. Additionally, staff and volunteers are asked to abstain from the possession or use of tobacco products while interacting with parents or children at Providence.

B. Sexually Oriented Conversations & Materials

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children. If a PK lesson or sermon addresses human sexuality issues relating to purity, dating, and/or sex, the lessons will convey the church's views on this topic. Staff and volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented visual materials, including magazines, cards, videos, pictures, and electronic content on a phone or computer in the presence of children at Providence.

C. Sexual Conduct

Providence Church affirms that God created sex for use within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. We ask that volunteers refrain from the following:

- Pre-marital sex
- Homosexual acts
- Pornography
- Masturbation
- Extra-marital affairs

D. Living with Persons of the Opposite Gender

Unmarried staff members or volunteers should not live with other unmarried persons of the opposite sex. While this is not a sinful act, it is not living above reproach and can confuse children as to what it looks like to walk in purity before marriage.

E. Cell Phone Use

Staff and volunteers are expected to refrain from use of cell phones while participating in Providence Kids. Our attention should be focused on the children in our care. The only exceptions include contacting a Site Coordinator or a parent for help.

F. Social Media Use

Staff and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that their social media presence is above reproach. If a volunteer's social media presence includes images or statements that could give the impression that he or she is not living a life above reproach, he or she may be asked by a staff member to take it down.

We also ask that staff and volunteers refrain from posting pictures or comments about individual children onto social media out of respect for their privacy and the privacy of their family. If there is a story or quote from a child that you would like to share, please use generic terms. For example, "Today, a 2nd grade boy in my small group said..."

Pictures or comments about groups of children are acceptable, as long as no individual child's identity can be discerned. This is extremely important, as some parents have chosen to keep their child's picture off social media, and **foster parents are bound by law to keep their child's picture off the**

internet. When in doubt as to whether or not it is appropriate to post a picture or comment, it is best to refrain.

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from being social media “friends” (or the equivalent) with any child or student at Providence. All social media interaction and connection with children and students should go through the parent.

G. Consequences of Breaking Policies

Working with children is a privilege, not a right. These policies exist to aid in our ability to minister to children, and to protect our staff, volunteers, parents and children at Providence Church.

Any failure to abide by these policies will be addressed by the PK Director and/or a pastor. Depending on the severity of the infraction, a volunteer may either be given a warning or asked to immediately stop volunteering with the ministry. Repeated violation of any of these policies will result in removal from Providence Kids.

9. CLASSROOM OBJECTIVES

0 – 35 months

Cause: My gospel cause is to share with my friends and to be helpful to my teachers.

Community: I know church is a safe place and I feel loved when I am at church. My teachers model the gospel to me.

Content: I know Jesus loves me and God keeps His promises.

3 & 4 year olds

Cause: My gospel cause is being a kind friend by sharing, asking forgiveness when I sin, and forgiving my friends when they sin against me. I can be helpful to my teachers.

Community: I know church is a safe place and I feel loved when I am at church. My teachers model the gospel to me. I respect others and they respect me.

Content: I know I am sinful and need Jesus. Jesus loves me through the cross.

5 & 6 year olds

Cause: My gospel cause is to show compassion because all people matter.

Community: I can confess my sins to my friends and teachers. When I have conflict with a friend I can forgive. I can love others by encouraging and honoring them.

Content: The Bible is my source for what’s true in the world. It’s the story of God loving his creation and never giving up on us.

7 & 8 year olds

Cause: My gospel cause is being a kind friend by sharing, asking forgiveness when I sin, and forgiving my friends when they sin against me. I can be helpful to my teachers.

Community: I know church is a safe place and I feel loved when I am at church. My teachers model the gospel to me. I respect others and they respect me.

Content: I know I am sinful and need Jesus. Jesus loves me through the cross.

10. DISCIPLINE

Toddler Classes

Take advantage of any opportunity to model right behavior. Children in the toddler rooms and Nursery have a Play and Model time. This is a time for an adult volunteer to model right behavior with toys so that the children can see how to behave. Children often learn more from being shown how to act than from being told how to act. Always acknowledge and reinforce positive behavior. If a child is misbehaving, then redirect them to play elsewhere. If the child commits an act that is harmful to other children like hitting or biting, then separate the child from the other children and pray for them:

“__[NAME]__, I am so sad to see you __[list the particular behavior]__. Jesus loves you no matter what you do, but He wants you love others. Let’s say we are sorry and pray that Jesus will help us.”

If the child is continually showing disobedience, hitting, biting, or other disruptive behavior, please discuss the behavior with the parents at check-out. If the matter is more urgent, contact the parent during church. When you speak with the parent, simply say something like:

“I just wanted you to know that __[NAME]__ had an issue with (list the particular behavior) today. I thought you would want to know about it. Let us know if there is anything we can do to come alongside you and make Providence Kids the best experience possible for __[NAME]__.”

If the problem continues, please contact your Room Director.

PreK-3rd Grade

Again, take advantage of any opportunity to model right behavior. Children learn a lot from being shown how to act, sometimes more than from being told how to act. If a child is acting inappropriately or is disrupting the classroom or Assembly time, please take the following steps:

1. Verbal Warning or Eye Contact: Briefly ask the child to correct the behavior or make eye-contact with them if you are in the middle of a lesson. If the behavior persists, you should first take them aside to talk:

- Get down on the child’s level. Express that you care about them and that you want them to have a good experience in class, but that you also want them to love and respect the other kids and the teachers in the class.
- Your tone should be firm, yet positive and loving. Do not sound frustrated or angry. Do not initiate physical contact with the child unless someone’s safety is at risk.
- Be specific about the behavior that concerns you (i.e. disobeying instructions; verbally or physically mistreating others; interrupting the class or distracting others; etc.).
- Ask them if there is anything wrong that is causing the behavior (i.e. they are upset in some way, etc.).
- If all seems normal, then ask them not to continue the behavior that concerns you. Express your expectations clearly. Tell them that if they continue in the behavior, the next step will be to speak with their parents.
- Pray for the child.

2. Talk to the Parents: If the behavior continues, contact the parent in church (or speak with a parent after church if the matter is not urgent). When you speak to the parent, simply say something like:

“I just wanted you to know that __[NAME]__ had an issue with (list the particular behavior) today. I thought you would want to know about it. Let us know if there is anything we can do to come alongside you and make Providence Kids the best experience possible for __[NAME]__.”

The parents are the primary disciplers of their children, so it's always good to be honest with them and bring them into the process. Also, this will show the child that you respect the authority of his or her parent.

3. Contact Leadership: If you see that a child or multiple children are having a consistent problem in a particular area, please contact your Room Director or Site Coordinator.

11. ISSUES & FEEDBACK

If you are experiencing an issue, conflict, or you have some helpful feedback on an area of PK, start by letting your Room Director know. The Room Director will determine if the issue or feedback is something that needs to be addressed by the Site Coordinator, PK Director, or pastors. Providence leadership is always open to any ideas, questions, or concerns in the pursuit of bettering the ministry to our children.