

Ministry of the Nursery

PURPOSE: The nursery supports parents by providing for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of young children during worship services and other scheduled events.

We are called as the church to receive, nurture and treasure each child as gift from God and to give high priority to the quality of planning for children and the preparation and support of those who minister with them. We are called to love, shelter, protect and defend children within our community, to nurture and support families in caring for their children, acting in the children's best interest.

Nursery Availability:

Sunday during the 10:30 am service for ages 0-3 years

Sunday during the 5:00 pm service for ages 0-3 years

Wednesday evening 6:30-8:30pm for age 0-fifth grade

Parents and guardians may leave a child in the nursery **ONLY** to attend a St. James' Episcopal Church sponsored activity. The nursery is not available for St. James' events which take place off campus.

The nursery space is only available for scheduled nursery care by St. James' nursery caregivers and will remain locked at other times.

General Information:

All nursery caregivers and children two and above will wear a mask unless they do not have the ability to remove their own mask.

The maximum numbers of individuals, which includes 2 caregivers, any children of caregivers, and children being cared for in the nursery, is 8.

There will be a person on-site who is Safeguarded and trained in current nursery procedures who could step into the nursery if a caregiver is not able to come or becomes ill while working.

As a Covid precaution, we strive to have one caregiver and up to four children remain on each side of the nursery, with younger children on the younger children side as much as possible. The dutch door top half will remain open during nursery care. Children will play and have their snack on the side of the nursery they are in.

At this time, parents will enter the nursery only to help a child transition. Parents who would like a space for their small child to move around during the service, but who do not want to leave their child in the nursery, will be encouraged to use the quiet play area in the sanctuary. Changing tables are available in the men's and women's restrooms for diapering needs by parents.

Parent Responsibilities:

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. We count it as great privilege to partner with parents in laying a foundation for faith in their children's lives.

Parents can help us by:

- Becoming familiar with the nursery procedures and policies.
- Remembering that each policy and guideline is based on a desire to provide a safe, secure learning environment for your child. Please ask the Nursery Coordinator to discuss any policy that you do not understand.
- Filling out the required Registration Form.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures:

Children are dropped off outside of the nursery. At the time of drop off, you will be asked to sign your child in. If your child has any allergies, is potty-training or has special needs, please note that on the sign-in form. On the form, you will verify that you have screened your child for Covid related symptoms or other illness prior to their arrival in the nursery.

Parents should include the following supplies for their children in a diaper bag:

- Bottle or sippy-cup (labeled with your child's name)
- Diapers and wipes
- Soother (pacifier, blanket)
- Change of clothes

Please check diaper bags regularly to ensure there are proper supplies. If you forget these supplies for your child, we have items available for use.

We prefer that you DO NOT bring the following items:

- Medicine of any kind. (If your child needs medication at all, it MUST be administered by the parent/guardian)
- Personal toys
- Meals or snacks other than bottles and baby food

After sign-in, please hand your child to the nursery worker. To ensure that all children stay inside the nursery and to reduce exposure, we ask that parents do not enter the nursery- except as noted below.

We want your child to feel comfortable in the room, so if your child is having separation anxiety or difficulty transitioning, you will be asked to enter the nursery to assist with your child. After your child is content, however, we will ask you to exit the nursery. The staff will text-message parents during the service if you are needed.

Upon arrival in the nursery, children will wash their hands or be assisted in handwashing if too young to do on their own.

When the service has ended, please arrive promptly to pick up your child. You will need to sign your child out, by placing your initials in the sign-out box on the sign-in sheet. Once you have signed your child out, the nursery workers will bring your child to the door with your child's diaper bag. We will only release children to their parents/guardians or individuals preapproved by parents on the Registration Form. Older siblings may not pick up younger siblings.

Snacks

We will provide a light snack, generally animal crackers or goldfish, during nursery care. If your child has a food allergy or special need related to food, please provide this information on the Registration Form and notify the Nursery Coordinator.

Incident/Accident Policy

We strive to keep your child as safe as possible. However, if your child is in some type of incident/accident, we will contact you in a timely manner. An incident report will be completed by the worker(s) who witnessed the event and then given to the Nursery Coordinator. The Nursery Coordinator will follow up with the parent/guardian of each child involved.

First Aid Kit

A First Aid Kit is available in the nursery. General first aid can be administered by nursery workers as needed, but if your child needs medication it MUST be administered by the parent/guardian.

Illness

To prevent the spread of viruses and infectious illnesses the following policies will be enforced. You will be notified immediately to come pick up your children should they become ill in the nursery. Medication will not be administered by any of the nursery staff. Should your child develop an infectious illness after a session in the nursery, please contact the Nursery Coordinator immediately.

Children who show signs of illness should be kept at home. According to the Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics, a child should not be taken from home when any of the following exists, or if the child has had symptoms of the following within the previous 24 hours:

- Fever greater than 101 degrees
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

- Any of the symptoms of the usual childhood diseases such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough

Children should also be kept at home who show signs of any other illness, including but not limited to:

- Strep Throat
- Head Lice
- Covid
- Pink Eye
- Undiagnosed Rashes or Sores
- On-going Cough
- Runny Nose and Watery Eyes

Nursery Caregivers

It is a priority to recruit and maintain nursery workers who will provide loving, responsible, and developmentally appropriate care for all children staying in the nursery. Should you, as a parent, have questions or concerns regarding care given, please contact the Nursery Coordinator.

Caregiver to Children Ratios

Safeguarding God's Children policies of the Diocese of Texas states that two Safeguarded adults be present at all times when caring for children, and the ratio of children in care to the number of caregivers depends on the age and the number of children. Currently, the maximum number of individuals who may be in the nursery is 8, including caregivers, the children of caregivers, and children in care.

The Nursery Coordinator will be responsible for making sure a backup caregiver is available on site to fill in if a caregiver is unable to come in or feels ill while on duty. If two Safeguarded caregivers are not present, the nursery will be unavailable.

Screening Procedure

We require all nursery caregivers who work with children to go through a screening process that includes an application form, reference checks and a criminal/child abuse background check. Nursery caregivers take part in 3 hours of Safeguarding God's Children training prior to beginning employment and do First Aid/CPR training.

For nursery caregivers:

Duties Prior to Service Time

- Nursery caregivers are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated to prevent the spread of Covid. Individuals unable to be vaccinated need to request an accommodation in writing.
- Screen yourself for illness, including Covid symptoms, prior to arrival. Staff and children should stay home if they are sick or if they have tested positive for or are showing symptoms of COVID-19. If unable to come to work, notify the Nursery Coordinator as soon as possible.
- On Sunday, arrive at 10:00am to prepare the nursery for the 10:30 service; arrive at 4:30pm to prepare the nursery for the 5:00pm service; on Wednesday, arrive at 6:00pm to prepare the nursery for the 6:30pm activities.
- Fill out your time card found in the nursery notebook as you arrive. Punctuality is extremely important, as there is preparation to do before children arrive in the nursery.
- Wash your hands thoroughly upon entering the nursery. Make sure you are wearing a mask. Masks are available for adults and children if needed.
- Turn on the air purifier and adjust the thermostat to a comfortable temperature (never below 70 degrees).
- Place sterilized toys that have been air drying back on the appropriate shelves.
- Be sure that the "Soiled Toys Bin" is accessible and ready for use. Any toys that have children's bodily fluids such as saliva on them will be placed in this bin after children use them. Do not put water in the bin while children are present.

Check-In Procedure *note: Parents are to remain outside the nursery*

At 10:15 on Sunday morning, 4:45 on Sunday evening and 6:15 on Wednesday, open the nursery.

- As the parent/guardian comes to the nursery door, step to the door to welcome them and have him or her sign their child in on the sign-in sheet while remaining outside the nursery. Be sure all categories on the sign-in sheet are completed. If new to the nursery or if they haven't completed a registration form, have them fill one out prior to the child entering the nursery.
- Place the child's diaper bag in the appropriate area.
- Once the child is signed in, have the parent hand his or her child to you or allow walkers to enter. Make sure children two and above wear a mask. Have child wash hands, either at the sink, in the restroom or by wiping child's hand with a wet wipe. Direct them to the side of the nursery they will be in.

General Procedures

Respiratory Etiquette and Hand Hygiene

- Staff and children should cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.
- If soap and water are not readily available, staff and children (over age 2) can use [hand sanitizer](#) that contains at least 60% alcohol. Make sure all surfaces of hands are covered and that hands are rubbed together until they feel dry. Hand sanitizers should be stored up, away, and out of sight of children and should be used only with adult supervision for children under age 6 years.
- Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone. After assisting children with handwashing or helping them put on or adjust their mask, staff should also wash their hands.
- All children and staff should wash their hands with soap and water at the following key times:
 - Arrival to the nursery
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - Before and after eating or handling food or feeding children
 - Before and after helping a child put on or adjust their mask
 - Before and after diapering a child
 - After using the bathroom or after helping a child use the bathroom
 - After having contact with body fluids
 - After handling garbage

Holding, Washing, or Feeding a Child

It is important that you comfort crying, sad, or anxious infants and toddlers and they often need to be held. To the extent possible when holding, washing, or feeding young children, protect yourself by:

- Washing your hands frequently.
- Wash your hands, neck, and anywhere you have been touched by a child's body fluids.
- Avoid touching your eyes while holding, washing, or feeding a child.
- If body fluids get on the child's clothes, change them right away, whenever possible, and then your hands should be rewashed.
- Wash your hands before and after handling infant bottles prepared at home or in the nursery.

Diapering

- Use Centers for Disease Control diapering procedure found at the end of this document.

Wearing Masks

- Everyone 2 years and older should wear a mask covering their mouth and nose when around people who do not live in their household, except when eating or sleeping.

- A mask is NOT a substitute for physical distancing. **Masks should still be worn in addition to physical distancing.** Wearing a mask is especially important indoors and when physical distancing is difficult to implement or maintain while providing care to young children.
- After touching or removing your mask, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Other Items

- Prevent babies from sharing bottles/cups and pacifiers. Be sure to keep these items in the child's bag when not in use.
- If you think a child is sick, text the child's parent or guardian to pick them up. Inform the Nursery Coordinator.
- See that each baby's diaper is checked at least once during the time you are on duty. If a child is potty-training, ask that child at least once if he or she needs to use the potty. Assist the potty-training child as needed.
- If a child becomes frustrated or aggressive, redirect that child's attention to another toy or activity. If that does not solve the problem, text the parent/guardian to pick the child up.
- Do not permit children of any age to climb on chairs and tables.
- Report any incidents/accidents to the Nursery Coordinator and fill out an incident/accident form. Notify the parent/guardian when he/she comes to pick up the child and have him/her sign the form before leaving with the child. If an incident/accident has caused the child to become inconsolable, please text the parent/guardian. The Nursery Coordinator will follow up with the parents of the child(ren) involved.
- Check for allergies prior to snack time. Have children eat at tables.

Playground Usage

The main playground is not available on Sundays but can be used on Wednesday evenings. The far playground closest to the woods (for 5 years and above) is not available for use at this time, nor is the deck as it is part of the school.

Please leave a note on the nursery door to indicate that children have gone to the playground. Take the first aid kit and the sign in sheet with you so you have access to parents' phone numbers if needed.

Keep the playground gates closed while on the playground.

The main playground climbing structure is for use by children ages two and above. Please do not allow younger children on the structure but take them to one of the smaller fenced in areas with play structures for younger children.

If a child needs to use the restroom while on the playground, both caregivers and all children will need to return to the nursery for the restroom. Children may not remain with one caregiver.

At the end of playground time, have children return any bikes, toys etc. to their original spots.
Upon return to the nursery, have everyone wash their hands.

Check-Out Procedure

- When the parents/guardians arrive at the nursery door, have them sign their children out by initialing the proper space on the sign-in sheet.
- Talk with each parent/guardian. If any accidents or incidents occurred in the nursery, be sure to complete in incident form and have the parents of the children involved sign the form.
- Once a child is signed out and all necessary paperwork is complete, hand the child with his/her diaper bag to the child's parent/guardian.

Closing procedures

- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated through contact or other body fluids (in the "soiled toys" bin) are to be cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, and sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry.
- Wipe all tables, counters, sinks, flush handle and doorknobs with disinfectant wipes. If visibly dirty, clean first with soap and water then disinfect.
- Tidy toys on shelves as needed.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional procedures for cleaning or disinfection.
- Set aside any used pack and play sheets to be laundered and replace with a clean sheet.
- If the floor is messy, sweep or vacuum.
- Adjust the air conditioner to 78 degrees and turn off the air purifier.
- Sign out on your time card.
- Turn out the lights and close the doors as you leave.