

**Holy Family Episcopal Church
Fishers, Indiana**

**Childcare Policies and
Procedures Handbook**

Updated February 2024

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Childcare Ministry Introduction

This policy and procedures handbook is for the childcare staff and volunteers of young children at Holy Family Episcopal Church. This document describes the strategy, structure, and policies of the Childcare Ministry at Holy Family Episcopal Church.

Within this document, the following definitions shall apply:

- "Staff" refers to paid personnel
- "Coordinator" refers to non-paid personnel who serves as primary coordinator of the Childcare volunteers
- "Volunteer" refers to non-paid personnel (including parent volunteers)
- "Helper" refers to non-paid high school-aged youth who have completed Holy Family's Safe Church training course for youth
- "Worker" refers to all people who serve in childcare staff, volunteer, and helper roles

Childcare Ministry Vision

Our vision is to provide an environment of safety, love, and respect where children learn about the love of God; the parents feel respected and that their child is loved and well cared-for; and the workers feel valued and supported as a part of a ministry team that serves our young families.

Childcare Ministry Personnel Structure

- Director of Children's Ministry: Jolene Johnston (staff)
- Childcare Coordinator: Emily Becraft (volunteer)
- Childcare Volunteers: Adult volunteers within the parish, often parents
- Childcare Helpers: Youth (high school and older)

Childcare Policies and Procedures for Staff and Volunteers

Childcare Personnel Guidelines

1. All adult workers must successfully complete the appropriate Safe Church Module(s) (*sexual abuse prevention training*) required by the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis prior to working directly with children. This is not negotiable.
2. All adult workers must maintain their Safe Church credentials by completing refresher training every three years.
3. Youth helpers must be in high school (grades 9-12) and have completed Holy Family's Safe Church training course. *Youth are invited to volunteer in Childcare no more than once per month.*
4. All parents/guardians whose children regularly-attend Childcare are encouraged to volunteer in Childcare in order to provide enough adults in the room to keep children safe.
5. Congregation members of Holy Family who wish to volunteer are asked to wait to apply until after they have participated in church life regularly for at least six months.
6. All workers will be provided with a copy of these policies and procedures. Before working in Childcare, each worker must sign and date an agreement acknowledging that they have read and understand the policies and procedures and will abide by these policies before they can assist in any of the Childcare areas.
7. All workers must agree to serve under the direction of the Rector, the Director of Children's Ministry, and the Childcare Coordinator.
8. The Childcare Coordinator will work to encourage the volunteers as they serve. This includes making sure expectations are clearly communicated and policies and procedures are enforced.
9. Holy Family is committed to providing a safe childcare environment to families. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of children in our care as well as to the security of our equipment and facilities. For these reasons, no drug and/or alcohol use or abuse prior to or during childcare periods will be tolerated. Any Childcare worker who appears to have impaired judgement, drowsiness, or slurred speech will be required to refrain from providing childcare until permission from the Rector is given to resume.

Childcare Guidelines

1. Please consider this a ministry to our young families and an opportunity to show parents and children the love of Christ in every situation.
2. Childcare will be offered in the Godly Play and/or Nursery classrooms as needed.
3. All Childcare volunteers and staff must be in the classroom ready to receive children promptly at the start time of a church event for which Childcare care is being provided. Ideally, volunteers should arrive a few minutes before the 10 AM worship service to make sure the classroom temperature is adjusted properly and that all safety measures are in place.
4. Childcare serves infants and children through first grade. *Volunteers are permitted to bring their own children who are older than first grade with them during their childcare shift.*
5. All Childcare workers are expected stay in the Childcare area for the duration of their shift. Always let another worker know if you need to leave the area or use the restroom so that your area can be covered during your absence.
6. Have a positive and energetic attitude towards the parents and children.
7. Childcare workers should NEVER give parenting advice, opinions, or judgments about a parent's instructions or a child's attitude or behavior (or that of the parents) unless it is explicitly requested by the parents. No matter how much you disagree with the parents' parenting style, it is disrespectful to express this or ignore the parents' wishes. All parents will be shown respect and courtesy - no exceptions.
8. Everything that transpires in Childcare is confidential. This includes the emotional, physical, medical, and intellectual condition of every child and should not be discussed outside Childcare.
9. The Director of Children's Ministry will address any behavior issues with the appropriate parents.
10. If child abuse in the home is suspected, the Director of Children's Ministry and the Rector should be told in confidence. The Rector will then handle addressing the situation with the parents and/or authorities. This is a legal matter and should not be handled by a volunteer or helper.
11. No cell phone use is permitted while on duty, unless contacting a parent about an inconsolable or injured child. All other cell phone use (including texting, e-mailing, taking and posting photos of children, and any other activity on a cell phone) is prohibited. If parents need to be contacted, the Childcare Coordinator will make this decision.
12. If a parent needs to be contacted because of an inconsolable or injured child, the first contact should be a text message. If no response is received within a few minutes, an available worker should discretely find the parent in his or her classroom or from the back of the sanctuary so as to not draw attention and ask the parent to step into Childcare to calm or comfort the child.
13. Adult Childcare workers will change diapers in the manner preferred by each child's parents.
14. Friends, family, and visitors of the workers are not permitted in the Childcare rooms.

Absences and Issue Reporting

1. If a worker is unable to serve in Childcare on any assigned week, he/she should contact other workers on the schedule to find a replacement and let the Childcare Coordinator know of the change.
2. If a worker is unable to secure a replacement, he/she should contact the Childcare Coordinator as soon as possible who will attempt to find someone to cover the shift.
3. If the Childcare volunteer is absent and no replacement is found, a sign will be displayed that Childcare is closed for that day. The sign up information will also be displayed to encourage more volunteers to participate.
4. If a staff member or volunteer has concerns with a parent/guardian who refuses to comply with the policies and procedures or has any other issue, the Director of Children's Ministry and the Rector should be contacted to handle the issue.
5. If parents/guardians have concerns about how they were treated, whether their instructions were followed, or how their child was cared for, they should contact the Director of Children's Ministry and/or the Rector.

Safety and Security

Creating an environment where parents feel comfortable leaving their children is one of our highest priorities.

1. Every door in the Children's Ministry Area has a window in it (except the bathroom which is for privacy). Under no circumstances should any of these windows ever be covered in such a way as to obscure a direct view into the classroom or Childcare.
2. Security doors separating access to the Children's Ministry Area may be locked. However, under no circumstances should the door to the Childcare rooms or other classrooms be locked while Childcare is being provided.
3. In the event of an intruder, Childcare volunteers will lock the Childcare doors and cover all windows until an all-clear signal is given by the appropriate authorities. A key ring is available in the left Nursery drawer. It has one key to the classroom doors and a smaller key that operates the heat/AC controls and the bathroom paper towel dispenser.
4. A sign-in sheet of children will be kept and updated each day that Childcare care is provided. This is a valuable piece of information in the event of an evacuation.
5. Workers will not toss or throw children in the air when playing with them.
6. Workers will not lift a baby or toddler up by holding their hands and lifting their arms in the air as this can cause shoulder dislocation in many children.
7. Workers will only hold one infant or child at a time.
8. Workers will not poke, prod, or tickle children. Many children do not like this and cannot communicate their dislike to an adult. This is also a direct violation of the Safe Church policy.
9. Workers will place an infant on his/her back in the crib (unless otherwise instructed by the infant's parent).
10. Children should not be taken out of the Childcare rooms for any reason during their time of care, except in the case of an emergency. A crying baby that needs to be calmed may be

walked in the hallways outside the Childcare area but still within the secure Children's Ministry area.

11. For special events when childcare is provided to many children, we will separate children into similar age groups and provide appropriate activities to keep them occupied and safe.
12. Every effort will be made to maintain a safe ratio of adults to children.

Parents are Primary

1. It is important that Childcare supports children in the best manner possible to offer parents the opportunity to worship without concern for the safety and comfort of their children.
2. If parents have requested that they are to be notified if their child is upset, then we will do so. Otherwise, as long as children are content or can be re-engaged, parents will not be notified.
3. In order to ease separation anxiety, Childcare workers will engage children in activities and play by getting down to eye-level with them while moving them away from the door after arrival.
4. If a worker believes parents should be notified for any reason, he/she will contact the Childcare Coordinator who will then communicate with parents.

Classroom Check-in and Check-out

1. All children who participate in Childcare at Holy Family must have a registration form on file. This form is the same as the one used for Sunday school and can be provided if it has not yet been completed. This form should be updated by parents as this information changes. This information will be available to Childcare workers as needed and otherwise kept confidential.
2. Upon entering Childcare, parents will be asked to sign in their child or children on the clipboard. Sign-in information collected will include the child's name, the parent's cell phone number, special needs or instructions, and the time they arrive at Childcare. This information will be available to Childcare workers during that childcare period.
3. On Sunday mornings, Childcare care will be provided from 10 AM through the offering of Peace, which usually occurs between 10:30-10:40 AM. Parents of infants are asked to retrieve their children from the Childcare rooms. Older students will be walked to the Narthex area to rejoin their parents in the sanctuary for the rest of the 10 AM worship service.
4. Workers must make every effort to follow parents' instructions, unless the instructions violate a policy or procedure. If their request violates a policy or procedure, parents should be told respectfully and kindly that we will not be able to fulfill their request (and why) at the time they drop off their children so they have the opportunity to decide how they want to proceed.
5. We will use parents' cell phones to contact them during church activities if they are needed. For this reason, parents are asked to place their cell phones on vibrate so they do not disturb others.
6. All children's belongings must have name identification (diaper bags, cups, etc.)

7. A parent or adult guardian listed on the sign-in sheet must pick up the child and sign them out. Children will not be released to siblings, relatives, or other adults not listed on the sign-in sheet.

Disciplinary Policy

1. Always maintain a Christ-like attitude when instructing children, and model the love and respect you are asking children to show you and others. As a Childcare worker, your goal is to engage children relationally, which will give you an opportunity to influence their lives.
2. Children are often disruptive because they either crave attention, are bored, or are confused.
 - a. Don't reinforce misbehavior with too much attention; briefly address it and move on. Create a positive culture by proactively giving attention to positive behaviors.
 - b. Fuzzy rules and no consequences are a guarantee for misbehavior. Set clear expectations and consequences and enforce them fairly and consistently.
3. **Physical punishment is absolutely forbidden** for all Childcare workers, including parents who serve in a room with their own children. Parents are not allowed to scold or physically punish their own children during their time as volunteers in Childcare as this is upsetting to other children in the room.
4. Disruptive behavior should always be handled in the room, not in isolation with the worker and a child alone. Never humiliate a child in front of others or in private.
5. The only discipline allowed in Childcare is time-out which should be limited to the age of the child (for example, 2 minutes for a 2-year-old). **Scolding, harsh words, and physical punishment of any kind are forbidden.**
6. If a child needs correction, it should be done in a firm, but calm tone and should address only the behavior ("no hitting") and never the character of the child ("bad boy"). Also, tell the child the behavior you want to see when giving correction ("no hitting, please use your words to say what you want").
7. When it is evident that you have an extreme case that cannot be handled by using time-out, parents should be contacted by a Childcare Coordinator. Volunteers and helpers are not permitted to contact parents without the consent of the Childcare Coordinator or the Director of Children's Ministry.

Diaper Changing and Bathroom Trips

1. Parents of infants should supply diapers, wipes, a burp pad, and a change of clothing for their children each time they drop them off. Holy Family will supply extra diapers and wipes as backup.
2. Workers will check periodically for wet or soiled diapers.
3. Workers will have a child's diaper bag, diaper, and all materials at the changing table prior to laying the child down for a change. A child should never be left alone while on the changing table -- not even for a second.
4. Rubber gloves, wet wipes, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing surface spray are to be provided at each diaper-changing table for the safety of the child and the worker.

5. Only apply powder, lotion, or medicated cream if provided in the child's bag and with the parent's permission/instruction.
6. Keep all items (cleaners, wipes, etc.) out of the reach of children.
7. At the end of your shift, all dirty diapers must be removed from the Childcare rooms and placed in the dumpster in the Northeast corner of the parking lot for the purpose of keeping odor contained.
8. The changing table will be covered with a removable pad that is cleaned between uses to prevent germs from spreading.
9. There will be a limited supply of extra clothing and diapers for children who arrive without the proper supplies. Please ask parents to wash and return any clothing used for their children.
10. For toddlers, we have a bathroom with a potty seat in Childcare. An adult will walk children to the bathroom. The door can remain propped open slightly to provide privacy to the child while allowing the volunteer to supervise or assist as needed.
11. Potty training activities may be done with children whose parents have approved such activities for their child. Do not attempt to potty-train a child without the parents' consent.

Food and Drinks

1. Parents must provide bottle feeding and nap instructions if necessary during the Childcare period.
2. Parents must label all bottles and sippy cups with the child's name. Labels are provided if necessary.
3. Bottles may only be fed to babies by adult Childcare workers according to the instructions given by the parents. If a child becomes inconsolable, his or her parent should be contacted before feeding the child at an unscheduled time.
4. Holy Family does NOT provide formula, bottles, or baby food for infants.
5. Meals and snacks will NOT be fed to toddlers and children, even if parents provide the food. Childcare workers do not have the ability to feed children and continue to supervise the other children safely. Children should be fed at home before entering Childcare.

Wellness Policy

1. For the protection of all children and workers, neither children nor workers with any of the following symptoms will be admitted into Childcare:
 - Fever or cough within the last 24 hours
 - Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
 - Untreated pink eye or other eye infection
 - Symptoms of childhood diseases – chicken pox, fifth disease, hand foot and mouth disease, etc.
 - Sore throat
 - Any communicable disease including COVID-19

- Croup
 - Common cold, including colored runny nose
 - Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits
2. We expect children and workers to be free of these symptoms for 24 hours prior to coming back to Childcare. In the event that Childcare workers suspect a child is sick or does not meet the standards of the Wellness Policy, they should contact the Childcare Coordinator who will communicate with the parents. An ill child may not stay in Childcare.

Medications

1. Childcare workers WILL NOT administer any medication except in life-threatening situations when there is not enough time for a parent to come to the room to administer it.
2. In a situation where a child has a known potentially life-threatening condition and medication for which may need to be given, a Medication Authorization form should be completed and signed by the parent.

Accidents and Incidents

1. In the event a child is injured or injures another child (and the incident leaves a mark or bump or worse), the Director of Children's Ministry should be notified by the Childcare Coordinator. She will contact both sets of parents and file an Incident Report. Incident reports will be kept in a locked file in the church office. Suspected abuse of any type may be reported confidentially to the Childcare Coordinator, Director of Children's Ministry, or Rector without fear of retribution.
2. A basic first-aid kit is kept in the left drawer in the Nursery. In the event of an emergency, Childcare workers should call 911, render first aid, secure the scene, and contact the Director of Children's Ministry or any other paid staff member to help manage the situation.
3. Fire escape and evacuation routes are posted in each room, and Childcare workers will follow evacuation procedures.

Evacuation Procedures

Fire or other emergency (non-weather related): Children will be evacuated via the outside door next to the Childcare. Workers will take all children to the picnic shelter in order to stay out of the way of emergency vehicles entering the property. The shelter is where parents may pick up their children by signing them out with a Childcare worker. In the event that the shelter cannot be accessed safely, workers will take children to the far end of the parking lot near the red barn shed.

Weather emergencies: Children in the Nursery or Godly Play Room will gather in the Godly Play Room. This is one of the more central areas in the building; it has no windows and therefore may offer the most protection.

1. All evacuation plans are posted near each classroom's door.
2. In the event of an evacuation, the sign-in sheet will be picked up by Childcare workers and taken to the designated assembly area with the children.
3. Infants will be placed in the rolling crib for transportation to the designated evacuation area. Workers will calmly but quickly organize the children for evacuation. If necessary, Childcare workers will carry toddlers to the designated assembly area in order to facilitate a quicker evacuation.
4. It is very important that Childcare workers closely follow the instructions given by the Director of Children's Ministry or any other staff member. The calm reaction of Childcare workers will be comforting to children and their parents.
5. Doors will be left open after each room has been evacuated so that designated emergency personnel can clear the room.

Room Cleanliness

1. Furnishings and toys in Childcare are age-appropriate, have no sharp edges, nor have loose parts. Broken toys are discarded and/or replaced.
2. Walls, counters, shelves, drawers, cabinets, tables and floors are free of clutter and *cleaned up after each day that Childcare is used*. All supplies are put away at the end of each day that Childcare is used. This is done by all workers as a team effort at the end of each day.
3. Toys that have been used are sprayed with sanitizer or wiped down with Clorox wipes *at the end of each day that Childcare is used*. This is done by all workers as a team effort.
4. Bedding is covered with receiving blankets and changed after each child to prevent germs from spreading to other children.
5. Stuffed toys are NOT permitted in the Childcare. This is to prevent the spread of germs on toys that cannot be properly sanitized. This includes stuffed toys brought from home. All stuffed toys must remain in the hallway with other personal belongings such as coats and bags.
6. The crib mattress will be covered with an individual blanket for each child. Soiled bedding will be washed after use. All other bedding will be washed monthly by Childcare workers using dye-free, unscented, liquid laundry detergent.
7. In Childcare, toys and teethers placed in a child's mouth will be placed in a bin labeled "Wash Me" after that child is done playing with it. The Childcare Coordinators are responsible to make sure that the toys and teethers in this bin are sanitized each week.
8. Cleaned toys and teethers will be returned to their appropriate storage locations, and workers must be sure that children are only given toys from these areas.
9. Childcare workers' personal belongings (diaper bags, purses, etc.) will be kept in a cabinet or on a high countertop in the Childcare rooms during the entire volunteer shift. Personal cell phones may be kept on the counter out of the reach of children and will only be used to contact parents in the event of an emergency.

Childcare Ministry Volunteer Application

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____ Date application was submitted: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Preferred phone: _____ Alternate phone: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Relationship: _____ Preferred phone: _____

PREVIOUS CHILDCARE OR TEACHING EXPERIENCE

<u>Church/Organization</u>	<u>Duties</u>	<u>Age Group/Grade</u>	<u>Dates</u>

Are you currently certified in First Aid/CPR? Yes No

Are you 18 years of age or older? Yes No

How long have you attended Holy Family? _____

Did you attend any other church(es) before Holy Family? If yes, where? _____

The following questions are personal and sensitive in nature. For the safety of our children and volunteers we must ask them.

Have you ever been accused of sexual improprieties with children? Yes No

Have you ever been found guilty of sexual improprieties with children? Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of, or plead guilty to, any other crimes? Yes No

Please explain any "Yes" answers: _____

I authorize any churches listed in this application to give you any information that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with children in Holy Family Childcare. I release all such references from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluation to you, and I waive my right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf. Should this application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Bylaws and Childcare Policies and Procedures of Holy Family Episcopal Church. If, at any time, I am out of compliance with any of these, I agree to withdraw or be withdrawn from my volunteer position. The information contained in the Childcare Ministry Volunteer Application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

Date

Safe Church completion date _____

Childcare Worker Acknowledgement of Receipt

The Childcare Policies and Procedures Handbook contains important information about the Childcare at Holy Family Episcopal Church, and I understand that I should consult the Director of Children's Ministry regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into this relationship with Holy Family voluntarily and understand that there is no specified length of volunteer status. Accordingly, either the church or I can terminate the relationship at will, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

Since the policies and procedures described herein are subject to change at any time, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. All such changes will generally be communicated through emails and personal contact, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. The Director of Children's Ministry and Childcare Coordinator has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

I have had an opportunity to read the handbook, and I understand that I may ask the Childcare Coordinator or Director of Children's Ministry any questions I might have concerning the handbook. I accept the terms of the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this handbook, and any revisions made to it. I further agree that if I continue as a Childcare worker at Holy Family following any modifications to the handbook, I thereby accept and agree to such changes.

I have received a copy of the Childcare Policies and Procedures Handbook on the date listed below. I understand that I am expected to read the entire handbook and comply with all policies and procedures. Additionally, I will sign two copies of this Acknowledgment of Receipt, retain one copy for myself, and return one copy to the Director of Children's Ministry on the date specified. I understand that this form will be retained in a secure office personnel file.

Signature of Childcare Worker

Date

Childcare Worker's Name – *Printed*

Signature of Parent (*if Childcare worker is a youth*)

Date

Holy Family Episcopal Church Representative

Date

Medication Authorization and Administration Form

Child's name: _____

Street address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Preferred phone: _____ Alternate phone: _____

Parent's Name(s): _____

Doctor's Name: _____ Doctor's Phone: _____

I hereby request and authorize Holy Family Childcare personnel to administer medication as directed below.

Parent or Guardian (*signature*)

Date

Received by Holy Family Childcare Coordinator (*signature*)

Date

.....

You are hereby directed to give _____ (*name of child*) his/her medication _____ (*name of medication*) in the following manner: _____ (*dosage*) at _____ (*time*).

Possible Side Effects: _____

Doctor's Signature (*prescription medications only*)

Date

Phone

Holy Family Childcare Incident Report

Individual(s) involved: _____

Location of incident: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Type of incident:

Possible risk of abuse (*submit form directly to Childcare Coordinator, Director of Children's Ministry, or Rector*)

.....
 Safe Church policy violation with a child or youth

Injury

Behavior violation

Other concern: _____

**Copy of this report will be given to all parties involved in the incident.*

Describe the situation: What happened, where it happened, when it happened, who was involved, who was present, who was notified? If reported to state authorities or the Diocese, what was their recommendation? Attach additional sheets if needed.

Has this situation ever occurred previously? Attach additional sheets if needed.

What is the follow-up plan? Does anyone else need to be notified? Will the situation need to be monitored? Attach additional sheets if needed.

Submitted by the following Childcare volunteer: (*Please print*)

Telephone number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Holy Family Episcopal Church Evacuation Map – Childcare Ministry

