

# Nursery Guidelines and Procedures Handbook

*St. Peter's Episcopal Church Nursery Handbook- Updated April 4, 2022*

## **Purpose of the Nursery**

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

## **Policy**

St. Peter's Episcopal Church provides these guidelines to give children the best possible care. It is our desire to protect the health and safety of the children, families, attendants, and all who enter our church for worship and/or events.

*Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." – Matthew 19:14*

## **Welcome**

Welcome to the St. Peter's Episcopal Church Nursery! We are excited to have the opportunity to share in the care and growth of your child. We realize that our role is an important one in your child's life, and we will strive to fulfill that role to the best of our abilities. We are called as the church to receive, nurture, and treasure each child as a gift from God and to give high priority to the quality of planning for children and the preparation and support of those who minister to them. We are called to love, shelter, protect, and defend children within our community, and to nurture and support families in caring for children. We hope this handbook will be both helpful and informative. Please read it thoroughly and keep it handy for future reference. Copies are available in the nursery, as well as online at: [www.saintpeterssav.org](http://www.saintpeterssav.org)

## **Worship Services**

The nursery is available during the 10:15 AM Sunday service, year-round, from 10 AM - 11:35 AM Sunday Services (more nursery times can be arranged as demand increases):

8:00 AM - Holy Eucharist, spoken Rite II

9:00 AM - Seasonal Formation Hour (during school year)

10:15 AM - Holy Eucharist, Rite II with traditional music

11:30 AM - Seasonal Forums (during school year)

## **Nursery Information**

As a church family, we believe all the children who attend St. Peter's are "ours," and we treat them as such. The nursery is available to anyone in attendance of the 10:15 service, and other church sponsored events as indicated. It is offered for children from infancy through 4 years of age. Parents and guardians may leave a child in the nursery ONLY in order to attend a St. Peter's Episcopal Church-sponsored activity.

# Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. We count it as a 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.
- Asking the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister to discuss any policy that you do not understand.
- Filling out the required Registration Form.
- Encouraging your children in their walk with Christ.

## **Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures**

At the time of drop off, you will be asked to sign your child in. If your child has any allergies, please note that on the sign-in form. After sign-in, please hand your child to the Nursery Attendant. To ensure that all children stay inside the nursery, we ask that parents not enter the nursery with this exception. 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. When the service has ended, please arrive promptly to pick up your child. You will 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 Attendants will bring your child to the door with your child's diaper bag. We will only release children to their parents/guardians or individuals pre-approved by parents on the Family Registration Form. Older siblings may not pick up younger siblings.

## **Snacks**

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 Attendant, Coordinator and/or Children's Minister. Parents are NOT encouraged to bring snacks for their children. Snacks will be provided if needed.

## **Potty-Training/Special Needs**

Please describe any special needs and/or provide additional instructions on the Family Registration Form. Also, please inform the nursery staff if your child is in the process of potty training so that we can better assist your child.

## **Childrens' Supplies**

Parents should include the following supplies for their children in a small diaper bag or other bag that will fit easily on the nursery hooks.

- Bottle or sippy-cup (labeled with your child's name)
- Diapers, baby wipes, soother (burp cloths, 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, except Epipens. If your child needs medication, it MUST be administered by the parent/guardian.
- Personal toys
- Sick children! No sick children will be admitted into the nursery for the health of others
- It is often difficult to track down the items that personally belong to your child, especially if they are not labeled and resemble the nursery supply. Therefore, please label these items!

### **Safety and Security Policies Security Systems**

Because the safety of each child is so important, we have implemented a new security system. Parents are to complete a Family Registration Form and leave it with the Nursery Attendants to have on file for each child who will utilize the nursery. **This registration form includes contact information, allergies, and special needs.** Each guest to our nursery will need to fill out a Guest Nursery Registration Form during the child's first visit to the nursery. So that we can notify parents to come pick up their children during the service if necessary, we ask parents to indicate a preferred cell phone number that we can use to reach them. Only the parent/guardian or an authorized person listed on the registration form will be allowed to pick up the child from the nursery.

### **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 and/or Children's Minister. The Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister will follow up with the parent/guardian of each child involved.

### **First Aid Kit**

A **First Aid Kit** is available in each classroom at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. General first aid can be administered by Nursery Attendants as needed, but if your child needs medication it MUST be administered by the parent/guardian.

### **Illness & Health Policies**

Children are very susceptible to any and every "bug" that comes along. Despite our best efforts, the spread of these germs can run rampant in the nursery. Therefore, to prevent the spread of Covid-19, colds, flu, and ear infections, 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 disease following a session in the nursery, please contact the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister 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 or any of the symptoms of the usual childhood diseases such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough or Covid-19.

- Children should also be kept at home who show signs of any other illness, including but not limited to:
  - Strep Throat
  - Head Lice
  - Pink Eye
  - Undiagnosed Rashes or Sores
  - On-going Cough
  - Runny Nose and Watery Eyes
  - Trouble breathing, wheezing

### **Handbook Agreement**

Each time you sign your child into the nursery, you are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. If you have any questions or concerns about anything included in the handbook, please let the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister know so that your questions may be answered and your views regarding these policies can be reviewed and considered. The handbook will be revised periodically to reflect the childcare needs of our parish. New copies of this handbook will be made available after any revision and will be located in the **Nursery**. To ensure these policies are implemented, the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister will provide training opportunities to familiarize the Attendants with these policies and special procedures. The Nursery Attendants are responsible for the day-to-day observance and implementation of these policies.

### **Thank You**

St. Peter's Episcopal Church's Vestry, clergy, families and nursery staff appreciates all the hard work of our church family. By working together, we will make our nursery a fun and safe environment for our children.

### **Questions? Comments?**

Please contact St. Peter's Episcopal Church's Nursery Coordinator/Children's Minister, Betsey Bass, at 912-598-7242 or the Rector, The Rev. Kelly Steele, or [ksteele@saintpeterssav.org](mailto:ksteele@saintpeterssav.org).

## **Nursery Attendants' Procedures and Policies**

- The Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister, in conjunction with the Priest-In-Charge or Rector, is responsible for determining the suitability of professional Nursery Attendants to care for our children. It is a priority to recruit and maintain Nursery Attendants 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 and/or Children's Minister.
- How Many Caregivers Do We Need?
  - The Safe Church Policy of the Episcopal Church states that two unrelated adults must be present at all times when caring for children. If you find the nursery understaffed, please contact the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister or Rector immediately. Substitutes will be located to provide support to the Nursery Attendants.

- Screening Procedures
  - We require all volunteers and staff members who regularly work with children to go through a screening process that includes an application form and a criminal/child abuse background check. Nursery Attendants are also required to complete 3 hours of [Safe Church training](#) within 60 days of their start date, as well as CPR certification.
- Volunteer Opportunities
  - We are not accepting volunteers for Nursery at this time so we can ensure highest levels of care by professionals passionate about caring for children. However, if you are interested in participating in our Nursery Program, please fill out a Nursery Attendant Application or contact the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister for more details.
- Scheduling
  - To ensure the Nursery is adequately staffed at all times, a nursery schedule will be provided to all Nursery Attendants. Please alert the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister to any scheduling conflicts as soon as possible, ideally one month beforehand. If you cannot serve on your scheduled Sunday, please make arrangements yourself to switch shifts with someone on the nursery schedule and alert the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister.
- Nursery Attendant Duties Prior to Service Time
  - Arrive at **10-30 minutes ahead of the "event" start, or 9:45-10 AM**, to open the nursery at 10:05 AM for the typical 10:15 AM service on Sundays. Certain services like Christmas and Easter, when there are a lot of visitors possibly inquiring about the nursery, will need more lead time for Nursery care, so please arrive 25-30 minutes ahead of the service. A typical Sunday would only require a 10 minute set up before 10:15 AM services, **Nursery closes at 11:35 AM** and your shift ends at 11:45 AM - 12 PM, depending on arrival time. The same 10-30 minute "rule" would apply to other events as needed, with 10-20 minutes left after the nursery closes for clean up procedures.
  - Wash your hands thoroughly before entering the nursery.
  - Be sure that the **"Dirty Toys Bin"** is accessible and ready, to be cleaned after the children leave for the day. Leave the toys to air dry, for the next shift to put away when they arrive.

### **Check-In Procedures for Nursery**

- **\*note: Parents are to remain *outside* the nursery\***
- As the parent/guardian comes to the nursery door, have him or her sign their child in on the sign-in sheet. Be sure all categories on the sign-in sheet are completed.
- Once the child is signed in, have the parent hand his or her child to you.
- Place the diaper bag on the countertop. Note: We need to keep children's personal items separated in order to decrease the spread of germs and to ensure the correct items go home with the correct child.
- ***Have the parent/guardian fill out a [Registration Form](#) every time they visit!***

### **General Procedures for Nursery Attendants**

- Check in and out with the clipboard in the office, note any incident reports or needed supplies with a sticky note to the Children's Minister (Betsey) or the Rector (Kelly)

- Put away any toys cleaned from the “dirty toys bin” from last shift!
- Wash your hands after each diaper change and after wiping a runny nose.
- 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, inform the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister and refer to the “Illness” section of this handbook.
- When stock is running low in any area, please mark the item on the Nursery Supply List and let the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister and Parish Administrator know as soon as possible.
- Check a child’s diaper bag for diapers and wipes before using the nursery-provided items.
- 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 in the bathroom internal to the Nursery.
- 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 babies or toddlers to climb on chairs and tables.
- Report any incidents/accidents to the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister, and fill out an **incident/accident form**, located in the storage cabinets. 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 and/or Children's Minister will follow up with the parents of the child(ren) involved.
- Check Allergy Alerts prior to snack time.
- Place children in snack table seats and wipe their hands with baby wipes. Disperse small amounts of the snack at a time. When the children are finished with their snacks, wipe their hands with baby wipes, and clean the table with a disinfecting wipe.
- Toy Cleaning Policy
  - All nursery toys will be cleaned weekly to avoid spreading germs. Nursery volunteers will remove “mouthed” or “chewed-on” toys by placing them in the “Dirty Toys Bin.” Before these toys are used again, they will be disinfected with a bleach solution. Be sure children do not remove/play with toys out of the “Dirty Toys Bin.” Bulk cleaning is to be done quarterly.
- Parent/Guardian Communication
  - Parents want to hear about their children. They need to know if there were a problem, such as excessive fussiness, a slight accident such (a bump or a fall), or if you noticed any signs of illness. They also need to hear about the good things that happened while they were away from their children such as: were the children happy and smiling; did they tell you that they had to go potty; did they drink all their bottles; etc. Telling parents these things helps them to feel secure about leaving their children with you. It tells them you really do care about their children.

### **Check Out Procedures**

- 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 about how the child enjoyed the time.

- 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.

#### After Service Time Procedures for Nursery Attendants

- After all the children have been picked up by their parents/guardians:
  - Return all toys and books to the shelves.
  - Wipe all counters and table surfaces with disinfectant wipes.
  - Spray any toys in the "Dirty Toys Bin" with bleach solution and leave them out to air-dry
  - Mark any needed supplies on the **Nursery Supply List** and email to the Nursery Coordinator or Children's Minister and Parish Administrator.
  - Vacuum the floor to clean up any snack debris.
  - If an exterior door to the playground were opened, make sure it gets locked and latched.
  - After the room is completely clean, turn off the lights and close the hallway door as you leave.

#### **More Information Special Event Policy**

All requests for childcare at special events should be submitted in writing to the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister and Attendants at least a month in advance. The Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister must know the number of children anticipated for each activity as well as the ages of the children so that an adequate number of workers can be scheduled. If there are any changes to the event, the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister must be informed as soon as possible. If the parish-sponsored event is not located at the parish, parents must provide emergency phone numbers to the care-givers.

#### **Handbook Agreement**

Each time someone signs their child into the nursery, they are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. If you have any questions or concerns about anything included in the handbook, please let the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister know so that your questions may be answered and your views regarding these policies can be reviewed and considered. The handbook will be revised periodically to reflect the childcare needs of our parish. New copies of this handbook will be made available after any revision and will be located in the **Nursery**. To ensure these policies are implemented, the Nursery Coordinator and/or Children's Minister will provide training opportunities to familiarize the Attendants with these policies and special procedures. The Nursery Attendants are responsible for the day-to-day observance and implementation of these policies.

#### **Thank You**

St. Peter's Episcopal Church's Vestry, clergy, families and nursery staff appreciates all the hard work of our church family. By working together, we will make our nursery a fun and safe environment for our children.

#### **Questions? Comments?**

Please contact St. Peter's Episcopal Church's Nursery Coordinator/Children's Minister, Betsey Bass, at 912-598-7242 or the Rector, The Rev. Kelly Steele, or [ksteele@saintpeterssav.org](mailto:ksteele@saintpeterssav.org) .