

First Baptist Church Albemarle

Child Protection Policy

Overview/General Purpose Statement

The following policy enacted by FBC Albemarle is designed to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs, activities, and worship. By implementing the following practices and policies, our goal here at FBC Albemarle is to protect the children from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff, workers and volunteers from unsubstantiated accusations that could arise.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined to provide common understanding of the language used:

Staff- Full time employees of the church are considered staff.
(Ex. Ministers, Directors, Secretaries, etc.)

Workers- Paid persons that are not employed on a full time basis.

Volunteers- any unpaid persons who are officially involved in church designated activities where they are entrusted with the care and supervision of minors.

Children- For the purposes of this specific policy a child is defined as anyone who has not reached the 6th grade. *A separate policy pertaining to students that are in grades 6-12 has been established.*

Selection of Workers and Volunteers

All persons who are interested in working with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. The following guidelines explain this process.

- 1) Application/Information sheet – All workers and volunteers are required to fill out an Application/Information form before they can be considered for a position. Applications are available from the Associate Pastor or online at FBC Albemarle's website.*
- 2) Background Checks – All workers are subject to a background check before being considered for a position.*
- 3) Confidentiality – All personal information voluntarily disclosed, as a result of the security background check or application process will be considered confidential. The Supervising Minister will keep all confidential files in a secure location.*

Classroom expectations for Workers and Volunteers

1. All teachers/volunteers/workers are expected to be in the room and ready for teaching opportunities at least 10 minutes before class is supposed to begin. Extended session volunteers should be in their rooms by 10:45 am. Wednesday night workers should be in their rooms by 5:50 pm.
2. Teachers/ Volunteers will be responsible for enlisting their own substitutes from the approved substitute list and then informing the Division Director of the change. Please do not expect the contact person, preschool committee or church staff to enlist your substitutes for you.
3. All teachers/volunteers/workers are expected to dress in an appropriate manner for working with young children. Including finding and wearing your ministry identification badge provided by the church.
4. Teachers/volunteers/workers will stay long enough to make sure the floor is clean, the lights are off, the materials and toys used during class are put away.
5. Teachers/volunteers/workers please do not invite extra helpers into the classroom. If there is a need for extra help please contact the division director.
6. Teachers/volunteers should remain in rooms until **his or her parent has picked up all children.**

Supervision of Children

The Children’s Ministry staff (workers and volunteers) is responsible for the supervision of children during ministry activities, including observing the environment and equipment for unsafe situations, removing children from potentially dangerous conditions, and reporting problems immediately. Supervision of children will be guided by the intent of the two-adult supervision rule.

Two-Person Rule

The two-Person rule states that there should be two non-related adults present when supervising one or more children. This rule is designated for the safety of minors as well as our volunteers and workers. Our goal at First Baptist Church is to maintain the two-person rule whenever possible during official church programs, services, and activities.

No matter how diligent we are in attempting to maintain a two-person rule, we recognize that there may be times when an adult will find themselves without another worker due to unforeseen circumstances. If this becomes the case please follow the following protocol:

- 1) Notify the Sunday school division director or the missions director. (Never leave a child unattended during this process.)
- 2) Remain in area that is visible to others. All of our preschool classrooms are equipped with cameras and have open window doors so they do meet this criterion.

Check In and Check Out Procedures

Parents are responsible for their child until that child has officially been checked in to childcare and once their child has been checked out of childcare regardless of the child's age. Only a child's parent or guardian may check out a child, unless a specific and prior arrangement is made or if the person has been designated on the Child Information card. (4th -5th graders may be dismissed on their own)

Due to limited space in the nursery pick-up/drop-off area, we ask that there be only one adult per child.

For the sake of consistency and to reduce stress on the children please avoid coming into the pick-up area during transitions times unless you are picking up or dropping off a child.

Upon arrive at the nursery please follow the procedures below:

Drop-off procedure

- 1) Check-in with table worker.
- 2) Fill out Information card if you do not have one on file
- 3) Receive issued pager
- 4) Take child into appropriate classroom

Dismissal procedure:

- 1) Designated adult checks in with table worker or teacher.
- 2) Return pager if one has been issued.
- 3) Move to classroom to pick up child.

Restroom Policies

Children, if able, may use the in-room restroom on their own. Children younger than 5 may be assisted, if necessary.

- 1) When helping a preschooler in the restroom, always leave the door open far enough that other workers can see in. Never shut the restroom door so as to restrict observation by the other workers.
- 2) Do not allow the children to "watch" while another child is using the restroom.
- 3) Do not send very young children into the restroom with older children. Take them in age appropriate groups.
- 4) In bathroom emergencies - Use disposable gloves when handling soiled clothing. Soiled clothing should be placed (un-rinsed) in a plastic bag and labeled with the child's name.

If a child is wearing diapers then please use the diapering stations provided in the classrooms. Make sure that all diapers are appropriately disposed of.

Physical Touch Policy

Respect, safety, and appropriate boundaries are the guiding principals for physical contact between childcare workers and children. Love and affection are part of the church

life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children. All workers, volunteers, and staff should avoid contact that is or may be threatening or inappropriate.

Discipline

The number one rule in ministry with children is that each of us is a child of God and should be treated with the kind of respect, love, and support that is expected by the commandment in scripture to love one another. However, clear rules and consistent expectations about behavior are key to effective discipline procedures. Occasionally, children have trouble following the rules or display disruptive behavior. In these cases the following steps should be taken.

- 1) Attempt to redirect children back to the activity.
- 2) Talk with child and state clearly what the problem behavior is and what the child should do instead.
- 3) If disruption continues and if age appropriate, move child to a separate area still within view of adults in classroom for a short period of time to let them gain their composure. Then invite them back into group.
- 4) If disruption continues, page parents to help deal with the situation.
- 5) At any time that you have to move into steps 3 and 4, please notify the Childcare coordinator or other supervisor.
- 6) Corporal Punishment is **NEVER** an option.

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire here at First Baptist Church to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children that attend. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- 1) Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 24 hours;
- 2) Eye or skin infections; and/or
- 3) Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Medications Policy

It is the policy of First Baptist Church not to administer either prescription or nonprescription medications to the children under our care. Medication should be administered by parents at the home.

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Any situation that falls under the exception listed above should be noted on the child's information card and communicated to Children's coordinator.

Accidental Injuries to children

In the event that a child is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

- 1) For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
- 2) For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will be summoned in addition to the Supervisor or Associate Pastor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
- 3) Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of an injury that require treatment by a medical professional.
- 4) The church's insurance company will be contacted, if appropriate.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For the purposes of this policy, "child abuse" is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child's physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- 1) Physical abuse – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as hitting, shaking, burns, and biting.
- 2) Emotional abuse – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- 3) Sexual abuse – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or inappropriate sexual activity between two children, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- 4) Neglect – depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of the children at First Baptist Church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child, this should be reported immediately to the Associate Pastor of Family Ministries for further action.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at First Baptist Church or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

- 1) The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
- 2) Proper church staff will be notified.
- 3) Incident report will be completed.
- 4) The accused party will immediately be placed on leave from working with children, pending an investigation, and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.
- 5) If appropriate, our insurance company will be notified. All pertinent information will be turned over to them at that time.

- 6) If appropriate, the civil authorities will be notified, and First Baptist church will comply with North Carolina's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law requires. First Baptist Church will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
- 7) A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.
- 8) A person found responsible of alleged abuse or misconduct will, after investigation be permanently removed from their position.