

Salina Street Church Nursery/Preschool Policy and Procedures

Our Mission

The goal of the church Nursery and Preschool is to provide a safe and caring environment for babies and toddlers, ensure that children's church times are happy times, and to provide a foundation for their developing faith. Our intention is to minister to the needs of all children and provide them with a caring community of believers where all may be nurtured in a Christ-like and loving manner.

The church Nursery needs to be a clean, organized, attractive, and welcoming place for children. While babies will not remember what they did in the Nursery, they will develop attitudes about coming to church. Nurseries also affect how parents feel about a church. Both of these first impressions can last a long time.

The Basics

Nursery Age Guidelines

- For health reasons, children must be at least 3 months to be signed into the Nursery. Infants under 3 months old must be in the care of their parent or guardian at all times.
- Toddlers will be cared for in the Nursery until they are two and half, at which time they will be under the supervision of the Preschool staff. ** Some children may not be ready for the structure of the Preschool curriculum by this age. In those cases, parental and teacher discretion should be used to determine whether the child should remain in the Nursery for an extended period of time.*
- We have two preschool classes, a class for kids 2 ½ to 3 years old, and a class for 4 and 5 year olds. We encourage children 31 months and over to join the beginning of our worship service. At the break, parents may then sign their child(ren) into Sunday school. If you feel that your child is not ready to sit in service at this age, you are free to check them in to the nursery at the beginning of service.

Nursery Hours

A Nursery is provided for infants and toddlers under 30 months during the church service. The Nursery will open 10 minutes prior to the beginning of the church service and will promptly close 15 minutes after the event is over.

Nursery Scheduling

Initially, it is the responsibility of the Nursery Coordinator to secure the proper staff for worship services. However, if a volunteer is unable to cover their scheduled shift, it is their responsibility to find a substitute from the approved list to fill in for them. Please notify the Nursery Coordinator by phone or e-mail about any changes in the schedule.

Equipment/Supplies

- Necessary equipment, such as swings, rocking chairs, toys, etc., will be purchased and/or

maintained by the church; however, donations of gently used furniture or toys are accepted and appreciated.

- If a donation cannot be used, the Nursery Coordinator may donate the item(s) to another non-profit establishment (e.g. Lifecare, Salvation Army, etc.) or consign the item(s) and utilize the money made on the consignment to benefit the Nursery.
- To reduce the risk of accidental poisoning, cleaning supplies other than antibacterial wipes and hand sanitizer will be stored in the cleaning bin outside of the children's area.
- ALL cleaning supplies should be kept out of reach of the children at all times.
- When a purchase must be made (diapers, wipes, hand cleaner, etc.), Nursery volunteers should communicate the need to the Nursery Coordinator by filling out the form attached to the lid of the nursery supply bin. The children's coordinator for that week will check the form after service and restock as needed. If you are in need of a supply immediately, contact your coordinator for the week.

Adult /Child Ratios

Every effort needs to be made to keep the ratio of one worker to every six children (12 months to 5 years), and one worker to every three infants (3-12 months). We also require that at least two workers be on duty at all times. Under no circumstances should the children be left alone for ANY amount of time. Caregivers are required to directly supervise children by sight AND hearing at all times - even while they are sleeping.

VOLUNTEER INFO

Our volunteers are awesome! A thriving, vital Nursery ministry requires a lot of dedicated volunteers. To keep up with church growth, all volunteers need to be in one accord with the direction and purpose of the ministry.

Scheduling

- Our Nursery volunteers consist of parents, youth and other members of our church family. We ask that parents be regular attendees at Salina Street Church prior to volunteering. If you would like to volunteer, and have not yet been contacted, please let us know by talking with our Children's Coordinator. The assigned schedule will be posted on the church calendar at www.salinastreetchurch.com, and a reminder email will be sent prior to your week of service.

Safety

- All volunteers will be required to attend a training session on our policies and procedures and complete a background check form before working in the Nursery.

Volunteer Dress Code

- Jeans, slacks and dresses are considered proper attire for Nursery volunteers. Please do not wear inappropriate or suggestive attire while working in the Nursery (e.g. short-shorts, mini-skirts, revealing tops, etc.). Remember, you will be down on the floor playing with these kiddos.

A Day In The Life of a Nursery Volunteer

Arrive Early to the Nursery

Arrive at least 20 minutes before the service start time. Put on your nametag so that you are clearly identifiable as a Nursery volunteer.

Prepare the Room

1. Check the room for orderliness
2. Set out nametags/masking tape with permanent markers for putting names on juice cups, etc.
3. Set out toys and lessons/crafts for children, as appropriate for their age
4. Have all diaper changing materials ready for use
5. Prepare snack food and drink
6. Wash hands

Greeting Children and Parents

Smile! One of the Nursery workers should warmly greet the children and their parents while the other worker(s) should involve the children in appropriate play and activities. The greeter also needs to make sure the parents have signed in their child(ren) and given any special instructions. Nametags should be placed on each child's back, as well as on any belongings that they brought with them. Once labeled, sippy cups and diaper bags should be placed in cubbies or up on the shelf out of reach. See the section on Parent Communication for more info.

Begin your class!

Be ready to be blessed by playing with and teaching the children, and interacting with them during fun activities!

Parent Communication and Resources

Every parent wants to know that their child is being cared for in a safe, nurturing environment while they are away. Communication with each parent as they drop off and pick up their children is essential, both for regular attendees and for visitors. Please see the parent Q&A sheet at the end of this document for this information.

General Policies and Discipline

Inconsolable Children - Workers will make every effort to engage unhappy children in play or rock them. Unless otherwise directed by the parent, if a child is inconsolable (15 minutes of non-stop crying), the parents should be notified immediately. This policy will help to fortify the trust between our parents and our Nursery staff. The parent may be called or sent a text via the provided cell phone number or a volunteer worker should be sent to get the parent. The child should NOT be taken directly to the parent, unless the parent has requested that the Nursery workers do so.

Discipline – The safety of all of the children in the Nursery room must be maintained. No throwing, hitting, biting, or kicking can be allowed (also, see Safety Procedures). If children express this behavior, remind them in a kind voice of the appropriate behavior that you expect and remove them from the source of the conflict. If the behavior continues, it is appropriate to place them in a time-out chair for no more than one minute for each year of their age. Under no circumstances shall a worker yell or use physical force (or the threat of physical force). If a child is unmanageable after efforts have been made to correct the situation, then contact either the Nursery Coordinator or the parent. If a parent wishes to correct their own child, then they need to do so out of the Nursery rooms.

Confidentiality – It is expressly understood that any gossip is strictly forbidden. All information about the children in our program and their families shall remain confidential, unless it is determined that harm may come to the child and in that event, the Nursery Coordinator should be notified immediately and actions will be taken in line with the church procedures.

Legal Issues

Cases of Suspected Child Abuse: Nursery worker should report to the Nursery Coordinator who will then notify an Elder. Appropriate actions will be determined and steps taken in line with church procedures.

Accusations of Worker Misconduct: Nursery worker should report to Nursery Coordinator who will then notify an Elder. Appropriate actions will be determined and steps taken in line with church procedures.

Natural Disasters and Weather-related Emergencies:

Fire: Based on the location and severity of the fire, the safest route of exit will be determined by the senior Nursery worker. The two potential routes are:

Out through the Sunday School room Exit door to the Softball field, or

Out through the game room door and around building to the softball field

Parents should meet their children on the softball field, checking in with the Nursery workers, so that each child is accounted for and safely delivered to their parents.

Accidents: If a serious injury occurs, an Accident Report Form needs to be filled out by the attending Nursery worker and given to the Nursery Coordinator. A First Aid kit is located in the Nursery supply bin.

Nursery Health and Safety Policies

The Nursery should be the cleanest room in the Church, which is for the safety and health of both the children and workers. The guidelines below will help to facilitate this.

Health:

Healthy babies only! See attached list for symptoms/illnesses that are not allowed in the Nursery.

An identical list will be posted on the Nursery sign-in table for easy reference. A child that is visibly ill should immediately be taken, in the care of a Nursery worker, to their parent.

Diapers need to be checked hourly and soiled diapers need to be changed immediately. Small plastic bags will be provided for soiled diapers, to contain odor and germs. Hand sanitizer should be used by all volunteers after changing diapers and before handling infants.

Due to possible allergies, snacks given cannot contain nuts or food dye. Be sure and check the child information sheet for other possible allergies of each child.

No stuffed animals or cloth toys, as these harbor germs. Only those toys and books that can be wiped down properly after use may be kept in the Nursery.

Safety:

Babies and toddlers must be signed in and out of the Nursery by a parent or guardian.

Children must be seated while eating or drinking.

Children must be kept in the Nursery at all times. Exceptions will be made for brief potty breaks, or for supervised play on the playground, always under the supervision of a Nursery/Preschool Worker.

An easy rule-of-thumb is to always leave a space cleaner than you found it. If all volunteers strove to do this, our Nursery would be the cleanest place anywhere!

After each shift, Nursery workers must wipe down ALL toys and hard surfaces (chairs, tables, changing table, etc.) with the provided antibacterial wipes.

Nursery Activities

Basic Infant Care

- Infants are in the earliest stage of development, and in order to foster this development, infants should not be restricted to one area (piece of equipment) or activity for long periods of time. Activities such as swings, lying/playing on blankets or mats on the floor, and looking at books and toys are acceptable and encouraged.
- Do not stand and hold more than one infant at a time. It is a much better solution to place them on a mat on the floor and join them.
- Infants will be held during bottle feedings.
- When warming baby bottles, always remember to check the temperature of the milk prior to feeding the baby! Follow individual parent instructions on Nursery Care Card for feedings.
- SIDS prevention: When placing babies in the cribs, they are to be placed on their backs (unless instructed otherwise by the child's parent on the Nursery Care Card).

What Can I Do With Toddlers?

A flexible schedule will be provided for toddlers that are ready to be engaged in group activities. All

activities for children will be developmentally and age appropriate. The children should be involved in these activities and games for the largest percentage of time that they are in the Nursery. Children will be encouraged to participate in these activities by the Nursery workers. A loose structure in the Nursery will give the children a sense of stability and eventually make for a smoother transition into the Preschool class.

Snacks

During a designated snack time, appropriate snacks will be provided to all children over 18 months. Children under 18 months should only be given snacks sent by their parent. Do not give a child's snacks brought from home to another child. Snacks will only be given at the tables and while the child is seated. Children shall also be given their personal drinking cups only while they are seated, and removed when they are finished drinking. This is important to maintain the cleanliness of the Nursery, prevent choking, and to prevent the accidental sharing of germs.

Salina Street Church Nursery Health Guidelines

In order to provide a safe, healthy environment for all our children, we ask that parents keep their baby or toddler with them anytime he or she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

Fever of 100° or above within the previous twenty-four hours

Vomiting and/or diarrhea within the previous twenty-four hours

Any symptom of childhood diseases such as scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox or whooping cough

Any unexplained rash

Any skin infection

Pink eye and other eye infections

Head lice (children should be free of all nits)

Severe or persistent cough

Runny nose with any colored discharge OR persistent runny nose with additional viral symptoms (e.g. cough, sore throat, atypical irritability)

If a child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the drug for at least twenty-four hours before coming back to the Nursery.

To prevent accidental overdoses or other problems, Nursery workers are not permitted under any circumstance to administer medication. General first aid, such as applying band-aids to minor scrapes, is obviously permitted.

A child that becomes visibly ill during their time in the Nursery will immediately be taken, in the care of a Nursery worker, to their parent.

Thank you for your cooperation and willingness to preserve the health of the children at Salina Street Church!

A Note to Parents:
Salina Street Nursery and Preschool
Infants through 5 years

WELCOME to Salina Street Church Nursery! The Nursery's main goal is to provide a safe, loving, Christian environment for your little one to learn and play while you worship. Please be sure to fill out the Nursery Care Card when signing your child into the Nursery each week. This allows us to keep up with the needs of each individual child and provide a more comfortable environment for everyone!

PARENT Q&A:

What **ages** may be signed into the Nursery? *Ages 3 – 30 months.*

What **ages** may be signed into the Preschool? *We have two preschool classes, a class for kids 2 ½ to 3 years old, and a class for 4 and 5 year olds. We encourage children 31 months and over to join the beginning of our worship service. At the break, parents may then sign their child(ren) into Sunday school. If you feel that your child is not ready to sit in service at this age, you are free to check them in to the nursery at the beginning of service.*

Where is your church **Nursery located**? *And will my child remain in the Nursery at all times? After entering the Sunday School building, turn right and go straight down the hallway to the Nursery sign-in area. Children will remain in the Nursery at all times, with exceptions for potty breaks and supervised playground time.*

What is the **sign-in/sign-out** procedure? *All children must be signed in by their parent. No child will be allowed to leave the Nursery except in the care of their parent.*

May/Should I come to **check on my child**? *While it isn't necessary, all new and visiting parents are encouraged to "peek in" during the 3-minute break in the service. This sets parents' minds at ease and gives Nursery workers a chance to express any questions or concerns that they may have with a new child.*

If there is a problem, how will you **locate me**? *Parents are urged to put their cell phone number on the sign-in sheet and switch their phone to "vibrate." In the event that they are needed, the attending Nursery worker will call or text them immediately.*

Will **snacks** be served? *There will be a designated snack time. A light snack is provided for children age 18 months to 5 years. Due to concerns over allergies and choking hazards, parents of children under 18 months should plan to pack a small snack for their child. If your child is unaccustomed to drinking from a regular cup, please provide a filled sippy cup at check-in.*

How can I identify **Nursery workers**? *All Nursery workers will wear a nametag.*

What should I pack in my child's **diaper bag**? *Besides snack items (ages infant-18 months) and a sippy cup, each child will need diapers/pull-ups, wipes, and a complete change of clothes inside their bag. Please have a clean diaper on your child at drop off; this will help our Nursery staff tremendously!*

*Parents are encouraged to use our changing table. * Please do not send toys with your child, as this can be very distracting from preschool lessons, and causes confusion when sorting toys.*

SICK POLICY: A child must be free from illness for 24 hours before they may attend the Nursery. We ask parents to respect this policy and keep their child either at home or with them in church when appropriate. Please see the Sickness Policy Sheet posted at the check-in table for help with specific questions. Thank you for your commitment to keeping our kids healthy and safe.

ALLERGIES/MEDICAL CONCERNS: Please make sure that your child's allergies and/or medical concerns are listed on their Nursery Care Card and alert a Nursery staff member to read the card with extra care.

We are always looking for ways to improve, so please tell us any comments or concerns that you may have. Your input will impact the future of the Nursery and our church!
If you have further questions or would like to be a rotating parent volunteer,
please contact Sara Altuna at 512.497.5886.

THANK YOU for your cooperation and may this ministry allow you
to focus on and enjoy your time of Worship!

Accident Information Form

Teacher: Please fill in ALL information, then sign and date. Obtain a parent signature when the child is picked up. Once the form is signed by the parent, please make a copy. The original should be filed with the church (see the shaded box at the bottom of the form); the copy must be sent home with the parent.

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Service time: _____ Room: _____

Brief Description of Accident:

Action Taken:

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

SHADED BOX FOR CHURCH COPY ONLY

Department Head Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date given to church secretary: _____

Secretary initials: _____

Diaper Changing Procedure

1. Use changing table to change all diapers.
2. Wear latex gloves.
3. Place a disposable bag or changing pad cover under the child.
4. Place the soiled diaper in the plastic bag, tie bag, and place in the trash can.
5. Clean hands with wipes and hand sanitizer.
6. Wipe down changing pad with disinfectant wipes.

Bathroom Policy

1. An adult will remain with the child while in the bathroom.
2. The door will remain open at all times.
3. With permission and if needed, the adult will assist child.
 4. The adult will see that both their own hands and the child's hands are properly washed when finished.

NURSERY REGISTRATION FORM

All children must have a Nursery Registration Form on file with us for health and safety reasons.

All information provided on the form will be kept confidential by Salina Street Church.

Please fill out a separate Form for each child; if an update is required during the year, a new form may be requested from a member of our Nursery staff and dropped off at our sign-in table.

Thank you!

Child's Name: _____

Age: _____ DOB: _____

Parent(s) Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____

Email: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

Allergies / Medical Concerns: _____

Other Concerns: _____

If your child has a security object, please list it here.

We need help getting to know your child – what are his/her favorite activities and toys?

SALINA STREET CHURCH NURSERY

Staff Member/Volunteer Agreement Form

A safe, loving Nursery starts with the people who staff it! Please read the following action items and indicate your agreement by signing and returning the form to the Nursery Coordinator.

I will arrive 10-15 minutes prior to my scheduled Nursery shift (nursery opens 10 minutes before the beginning of service) and remain in the Nursery until all children are signed out, up to 15 minutes after service closing.

In the event that I am not able to work my scheduled shift I will notify the Nursery coordinator and then take responsibility for finding a substitute from the approved list of Nursery workers.

I will remain within sight and hearing of the children under my care at all times, even when they are sleeping. I will insure that all children remain in the Nursery at all times, with exceptions for supervised potty breaks or scheduled playground time, and are signed in and out by the appropriate parent or guardian.

I will wear appropriate attire while tending children in the Nursery and Preschool.

I will maintain the cleanliness of the children and the Nursery facilities during my scheduled shift.

I will complete a background check form and attend any mandatory training sessions, as much as I am able.

I have read and will abide by ALL of the General Policies and Discipline policies and procedures.

I will proactively communicate questions or concerns to parents or the Nursery Coordinator, as needed.

I have read and understand the Nursery Care Manual. I agree to follow all of the policies and procedures to the best of my ability.

SIGNATURE _____

SIGNATURE DATE _____

NAME (PRINT) _____

** Thank you for your service and dedication to the children of our church! **