



Children's Policy Manual
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Article One, Family Ministry Overview

Section 1. Ministry Divisions

Clause 1. The Family Ministry of Mount Vernon Baptist Church (hereby the Church) consists of three departments with one mission, and a unified curriculum scope and sequence:

- a) Preschool Ministry (newborn to kindergarten)
- b) Elementary Ministry (1st through 6th grade)
- c) Youth (7th through 12th grade)

Clause 2. While there are three divisions, we have one mission, one vision, and one unified curriculum.

Section 2. Mission & Old Testament Foundations

Ultimately, we want to glorify God in everything we do. Our mission explains how we seek to reach that end. This mission can be expressed in five core values. Each value is integral to what we are striving to accomplish.

Clause 1 Value one: Partnering with Parents

We recognize that parents are primarily responsible for teaching biblical truths to their children. Therefore we partner with parents by providing support and encouragement (Ephesians 6:4).

Clause 2. Value two: Teaching the Whole Bible

All Scripture has been inspired by God (2 Tim 1:16-17). Therefore we will make the whole counsel of Scripture known to children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). To teach the whole Bible is to teach Christ since the gospel is at the heart of every text. (Luke 24:27; Romans 1:16-17; Colossians 1:28). In addition we shall teach them that the glory of God is the chief end of their lives (Isaiah 43:7; Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 2:12).

Clause 3. Value three: Relying on the Holy Spirit

Our children need our prayers. God works through His Word and His Spirit. Therefore we plead with God to regenerate the hearts of our children, at a young age, through the teaching of his Word and praying for the children while relying on the Holy Spirit to regenerate their hearts through the Faithful teaching of His Word (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 2:4-10).

Clause 4. Value Four: Modeling the Christian Life

Our children are best served when they see models of Christian living. We aim to live faithfully before them, modeling how Christians are called to respond to God, love one another, and minister to the world around us (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1).

Clause 5. Value Five: Stewarding Children and Families

It is a great privilege to minister to children and families. God has, for a season, put them in our care. We see this as a stewardship that must not be taken lightly (1 Corinthians 4:1-2; Acts 20:35).

Section 3. Vision for Ministry to Children & Families:

The following Old and New Testament passages are foundational in our desire to see the next generation raised to understand and follow Jesus Christ. It is instructive that the Hebrew saints thought not merely in terms of individuals, but in terms of generations. We are aiming, therefore, for “Generations of Godliness.” Not only that, but these texts emphasize the need for parents to pass along what they have learned to the next generation. Our vision is to see entire families equipped to do just that.

Clause 1. *One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. (Psalm 145:4-7)*

Clause 2. *He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. (Psalm 78:5-7)*

Clause 3. *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)*

Clause 4. *And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me... (Matthew 18:2-5)*

Article Two, Child-Worker Protection Policy Overview

Section 1. Terms Defined

Clause 1. *Workers*: those assigned responsibility for children during any regularly scheduled service time, or any church sponsored ministry event, including chaperons for off campus events.

Clause 2. *Teachers*: carries the same responsibility as a worker but additionally is responsible to teach from an assigned curriculum.

Clause 3. *Caregivers*: a general title that applies to all who are supervising children at any given time. This may include, but is not limited to, workers, teachers, supervisors, and other staffed positions.

Clause 4. *Supervisor*: a volunteer worker or staff person who is the first point of contact for a teacher or worker. This individual is responsible for immediate supervision of a group, i.e. preschool, elementary, or youth teachers, Sunday or Wednesday childcare workers, etc.

Clause 5. *Children's Ministry Director*: A full time staff person who provides direct oversight for the Preschool and Elementary ministries.

Clause 6. *Elder Supervisor*: An elder who provides pastoral oversight to the Children's Ministry Director and attends to pastoral issues in the preschool and elementary ministries.

Section 2. General Guidelines

Unless otherwise noted, these policies apply to the entire Family Ministry (0-12th grade). The children's physical safety and well-being are of utmost concern, therefore we shall:

Clause 1. screen all workers;

Clause 2. require initial training for all workers, and additional training as needed when policies and procedures are updated;

Clause 3. utilize child check-in/check-out policies for Preschool and Elementary Ministry;

Clause 4. Schedule worker:child ratios that optimize safety (see Article 7, Section 2);

Clause 5. equip each area with a first aid kit and inform parent/guardians of any injury or problems related to their child;

Clause 6. educate our workers how to recognize child abuse and reporting any known or suspected abuse to the authorities and/or church officials;

Clause 7. adhere to a "well child" health policy for admittance to preschool and elementary classes and routinely sanitize toys, tables, etc. in preschool areas;

Clause 8. adhere to a policy of at least two-workers per room, one of whom shall be a woman; and ensure that workers are not in isolated settings with children.

Article Three, Protecting Children Before They Arrive

Section 1. Teacher & Worker Requirements

To ensure safe and quality care, all workers shall meet the following criteria in order to work with our children:

Clause 1. Be a member in good standing at the church and approved by the Children's Ministry Director.

Clause 2. Have successfully completed the background authorization and have been recommended by appropriate staff after reference and screening checks are satisfactorily completed. If there are any reservations about a worker's suitability to work with children, the elders shall be consulted. The privilege to work with children may be denied if it is in the best interest of the congregation as a whole. In such an event, the person shall be encouraged to participate in a more suitable ministry of service.

Clause 3. Have completed the orientation session. Further training sessions may be required as needed.

Clause 4. Never be alone with a child. For Preschool and Elementary Ministry, there must be two approved adult workers in each classroom at all times, one of whom shall be a woman.

Clause 5. Never serve exclusively with a spouse or relative. When there are only two workers in a class, they may not be husband wife pairs, or other family relations (father, daughter, etc.).

Clause 6. Be eighteen years of age or older. The Children's Ministry Director may approve children ages eleven to seventeen (11-17) to help in the preschool with two authorized adult workers. These approved children are not considered workers when calculating the worker/child ratio.

Article Four, Parent/Guardian/Child Requirements

Section 1. Parental/Guardian Presence

Preschool and Elementary children shall have a parent or guardian on site during regularly scheduled classes and activities.

Section 2. Forms

Clause 1. To ensure safe and quality care, parents/guardians with children participating in MVBC activities shall complete the following forms:

a) Family Registration Form. Each child who regularly attends MVBC shall complete a Family Registration Form. This form shall be updated yearly and also whenever a change in a child's, or the family's status occurs (change of parent/guardian, new allergy, new baby, new address, etc.).

b) Visitor Information Form. Visitors to the Preschool and Elementary Ministry shall complete a Visitor Information Sheet when checking in at the appropriate desk. This card shall be replaced by the Family Registration Form once a visitor chooses to become a regular attendee, though not necessarily a church member.

c) Weekly Sign-in Form. Parents/guardians shall sign their child/children in on the sign-in sheet by the classroom door. They shall list any pertinent information (especially medical conditions and allergies of which workers should be aware of, as well as bottle, nap, diaper, restroom instructions) each time a child is checked in.

d) Children's Ministry Child Release Form. Parents/guardians, who are members of MVBC, may make prior arrangements with the Elementary Sunday School Coordinator to check their child(ren) in/out of classrooms and/or activities without parental/guardian signature. To do this members shall fill out the Children's Ministry Child Release Form, which is available at the Elementary Desk. This form authorizes a child in 5th-6th grade to check him or herself in and out without a parental/guardian signature.

e) Special Event Permission and Release Form. Parents/guardians whose children participate in a special event (an overnight function or a function which is not a part of the regular preschool, elementary or youth ministries) shall have completed a Special Event Permission and Release Form for each special event. This form provides medical, emergency contact information and addresses liability issues.

Article Five, Protecting Children As They Arrive and Depart

Section 1. Sign In

Any parent who would like his/her child to participate in a preschool or elementary ministry activity shall sign the child in to the appropriate classroom when he/she arrives, granting permission for the child to participate. Workers shall be ready to receive children 15 minutes prior to the start of any session.

Section 2. Medical Services/Allergies

The sign-in process (visitor form, registration form, and sign-in sheet) shall authorize the church to secure medical services for the child in the event of accident or injury if the parents or legal guardians are unavailable. The parent should also use this opportunity to note any allergies or special needs the child may have.

Section 3. Hall Monitors

When available, hall monitors shall be present Sunday morning, and Kingdom Kids (Wed PM) to assist teachers with check in/check out and restroom procedures. Hall Monitors are qualified workers who shall also provide extra security and assistance during activities and events.

Section 4. Staffing

For the safety and protection of our children it is important for the classrooms to be properly staffed at all times in accordance with posted worker:child ratios (see Article 7, Section 2).

Section 5. Departure

Clause 1. Parent/Guardians shall pick up their children no later than ten minutes after the conclusion of the session.

Clause 2. Workers cannot leave a classroom until all children have been picked up if doing so would leave that class with less than two adults, one of whom shall be a woman.

Article Six, Check-in/Check-out Procedures

Section 1. General Preschool & Elementary Check-in

Clause 1. Members, regular attendees and visitors shall check in each child at a classroom door, using the sign in form.

Clause 2. Workers shall provide a nametag for each child.

Clause 3. Visitors shall be directed to check in at the main preschool ministry desk, fill out a visitor form, receive their child's nametag and parent security tag (for Preschool only).

Clause 4. At check-out, workers shall bring the child to the door and release him/her to the parent/guardian.

Clause 5. If any doubt exists regarding who may claim any child, the appropriate supervisor or elder shall be notified to make proper identification before the child is released.

Clause 6. In the event of an emergency that would result in neither parent/guardian being able to sign out the child at the end of a session, the child shall be released to the care of a parentally approved guardian or an elder, who shall then determine the best course of action.

Section 2. Preschool-Specific Check-in

Clause 1. Parents/guardians must list on the weekly sign-in form any pertinent information (especially medical conditions and allergies, medical alerts, special needs, as well as bottle, nap, diaper, and bathroom instructions.) Critical information must also be noted on the visitor information form and/or the Family Registration form.

Clause 2. If a child has allergies the child's nametag shall be marked with a red sticker dot with specific allergies noted on the back of the tag.

Clause 3. All parents/guardians shall receive a pager so that they may be paged during a service.

Clause 4. A visiting child shall be given a nametag, and the parent shall receive a security tag. If the child has an allergy a red sticker dot will be affixed to indicate allergies, with allergens noted on the back.

Clause 5. All parents/guardians must have a security tag in their possession upon leaving the preschool, which shall be used for claiming children at the end of the service. A child shall only be released to an adult, picking him or her up, who is in possession of the security tag.

Clause 6. At check-out, parents/guardians of preschool children shall present their security tag by sliding it under the closed classroom door and knocking. The worker shall bring child(ren) and his or her belongings to the door. Only parents or an authorized adult may pick up the children.

Section 3. Elementary-Specific Check-in

Parent/guardians who are members of MVBC may make prior arrangements with the Elementary Sunday School Coordinator to check their child(ren) in/out of classrooms and/or activities without a parental signature. In order to check in/check out a child without a signature, parent/guardians who are members shall fill out the Children's Ministry Child Release Form, which is available on the Elementary hallway. This form authorizes a child in 5th-6th grade to check in/check out on his/her own without a parental signature. For elementary children under 5th grade, this form can authorize a designated older sibling, at least 14 years of age, to drop off and pick up a child at the end of a session.

Section 4. Youth Check-in/Checkout

Parent/guardians may drop off and/or pick up as desired but youth are permitted to arrive to class alone. Roll is taken, but there is no formal sign-in process.

Section 5. Divorce/Separation/Custody/Visitation

Clause 1. In a situation with divorced or separated parents/guardians, the worker, unless otherwise notified, shall release the child to the parent who

brought the child(ren). If the unauthorized divorced parent attempts to check the child(ren) out, the teacher or caregiver shall contact the supervisor, who may in turn contact the police and ask for their presence. The supervisor shall ask the police to wait until all necessary parties are present before releasing the child(ren) to the police, or to the parent/guardian approved by the police.

Clause 2. Should a parent come in with a court order for visitation/custody demanding that we release the child(ren) to him/her, the police must also be present and we shall still release the child(ren) into police custody.

Clause 3. In either circumstance, the workers shall also immediately contact the Children's Ministry Director who will in turn contact the Elder Supervisor as well as the parent who first brought the child to church.

Article Seven, Protecting Children While They Are In Our Care

Section 1. Reducing isolation

Clause 1. For the Preschool and Elementary Ministry, two qualified workers (two adults 18 or older) shall be present in each classroom at all times. One caregiver shall be an adult female. Children 11-17 may assist, but only when working with two authorized adults.

Clause 2. Parents shall not leave children if there is only one worker in the classroom.

Clause 3. All rooms shall have open doors (full or half) or windows in doors to ensure visibility.

Clause 4. For Youth Ministry, two qualified workers (18 or older) shall be present at all times.

Section 2. Child-to-Caregiver Ratios

In addition to having a minimum of two workers present, the following ratios are maintained during the three, regularly-scheduled weekly meetings of the church:

Clause 1. Children ages birth-1: 1 worker for every 3-4 children

Clause 2. Children ages 2-3: 1 worker for every 5-6 children

Clause 3. Children ages 4-6: 1 worker for every 8 children

Clause 4. Children age 7 and up: 1 worker for every 12 children

Section 3. Restroom Procedures

Clause 1. Preschool: Parent/guardians are asked to take their children to the restroom prior to class.

Clause 2. All children and workers using or assisting in the restroom shall wash hands with soap and water when finished.

Clause 3. Workers shall wear gloves when assisting children (nursery age only) with anything other than clothing.

Clause 4. When assistance is needed in the restroom, children shall be assisted by women only.

Clause 5. Elementary: Children shall be sent to the appropriate restroom on their own. Normally, a hall monitor shall be available for supervision outside the restroom, as needed.

Clause 6. Youth: Children shall use the appropriate restroom on their own. No caregiver or other child shall accompany him/her.

Section 4. Appropriate Discipline

Clause 1. All workers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. Workers shall set and maintain high standards, thus modeling the goodness of God and godly authority. We expect children (beginning with the 1's) to begin learning to listen during story time, to share with each other, to take turns and to treat others with respect. We expect workers to be obeyed.

Clause 2. For Preschool and Elementary Ministry specifically, this atmosphere shall be maintained by the following guidelines:

- a) being well-prepared and praying for the children.
- b) giving brief yet firm directions.
- c) directing children, proactively and positively, towards acceptable activities.
- d) reminding the children of appropriate biblical truths that will direct them and teaching honor and respect for authorities.
- e) workers shall discuss appropriate consequences for behavior with parents as they partner to direct the child.

Clause 3. Workers shall never yell at, spank, or hit a child. If behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the discipline measures above, the parent and Preschool or Elementary Coordinator shall be notified. In addition, parent/guardians shall be informed of any significant or on-going incidents

Clause 4. Youth are expected to show respect toward their peers and those in authority over them. Any youth who displays rude or disrespectful behavior shall be given a verbal warning/admonition. If the behavior continues, the youth shall be asked to leave and the parent/guardians shall be notified. An elder will be called if necessary.

Clause 5. At no time shall weapons, alcohol, illegal or unauthorized drugs, tobacco products, or inappropriate literature, pictures, music or videos be allowed (this includes digital literature and images). Any child possessing such items shall be removed from the room and the parent/guardians will be notified. An

elder shall be called if necessary. While cell phones are allowed, youth may only use them for emergency purposes during class. All other electronic devices are prohibited during class time.

Section 5. Physical Touch Policy (Caregiver-to Child)

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or of showing godly love and care, it can also be easily misinterpreted. The following policy is therefore in place, because we would afford no opportunity for the Gospel or our workers to be compromised in this area:

Clause 1. Always remain in open sight of other adults.

Clause 2. Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting in laps, diapering, assisting in the restroom, etc.) will not be appropriate for grade school children.

Clause 3. In the preschool, men may not change diapers except for their own children, and only females shall take children to the restroom and/or assist in the restroom.

Clause 4. Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 through pre-K. In some situations, a man will need to limit physical contact more than a woman in the same situation, especially when working with older children.

Clause 5. All workers shall refrain from the following activities during scheduled class times: roughhousing, wrestling, or giving shoulder or piggyback rides.

Clause 6. All workers shall use care and discernment when hugging a child. Brief side-hugs when greeting or comforting a child are generally appropriate. Prolonged, frequent, or frontal hugs are not appropriate. In older classes, workers shall not initiate hugs, particularly towards children of the opposite sex; if an older child initiates a hug, the worker shall redirect them to a more appropriate contact, such as a brief side hug or a gentle "high-five," etc.

Clause 7. All workers shall only touch children in "safe" areas and for brief times, with no rubbing or massaging. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of a child's head. A worker shall never touch a child on or near any region that is considered private or personal, unless changing diapers or assisting nursery children in the restroom. A worker shall never touch a child out of frustration or anger.

Section 6. Physical Touch Policy (Child-to Child)

Clause 1. No male and female under 18 shall ever be alone together. To encourage compliance and to protect our children from being in isolated areas of

the church, the doors to the Elementary Ministry Area and the Youth Area shall remain locked, except during normally scheduled class times.

Clause 2. No inappropriate touching of any kind shall be accepted (i.e., no physical display of affection.)

Clause 3. Fighting shall not be tolerated and any child participating in violent action shall be dismissed from class and placed into his or her parent's care. An elder will be called if necessary.

Article Eight, Food/Drink Policy

Section 1. Food Allergies

Preschool and Elementary Ministry, parent/guardians shall provide written notice (via the yearly updated Family Ministry Registration Form) to MVBC concerning any allergy conditions their child(ren) may have and shall provide immediate notice to the Church regarding any changes in these allergies.

Section 2. Church Provided Snacks & Allergies

Clause 1. Parents shall note on the Preschool sign in form any food allergies the child has, and if they prefer to provide their own snacks.

Clause 2. Member's and regular visitor's children with allergies are to have their nametags marked with a red sticker dot with allergies listed on the backside of the tag.

Clause 3. Workers shall always check the children's nametags and/or the classroom sign-in sheet before serving a snack/drink to the children. The only snacks that may be served in the preschool are those provided by the preschool or those brought by parent/guardians for children with allergies.

Clause 4. Teachers in Preschool and Elementary Ministries shall check with the appropriate coordinator prior to giving any non-church provided snacks/treats to the children (special occasions, celebrations, teacher treats, etc.)

Article 9, Well Child Policy and Universal Precautions

Section 1. Communicable Diseases

Clause 1. The Church is dedicated to preventing the spread of communicable diseases among children and workers. Parent/guardians and workers shall, therefore, be familiar with and abide by the Well Child Policy and Universal Precautions.

Clause 2. Workers have the right to refuse a child on the basis of symptoms as listed in the Well Child Policy. In addition, the Church reserves the right to request clearance by a family physician before allowing a child to return to care.

Clause 3. A child in the Preschool or Elementary Ministry shall not be placed in care when any of the following exist:

a) Fever higher than 100 degrees (orally) or 99 degrees (axillary).

(Note: children shall be free of a fever for 24 hours after a contagious disease before coming back to church.)

b) Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

c) Any colored nasal discharge

d) Sore throat

e) Productive (wet) cough or croupy (barking) cough

d) Any unexplained rash, or open skin lesion

e) Any skin infection--boils, ringworm, impetigo, etc.

f) Any eye infection or drainage

g) Any communicable disease or infestation (such as lice)

h) Looks or acts unusually tired, pale, irritable or restless

Section 2. Sick Children/Response

Clause 1. Children who appear ill while in care shall be removed from class and placed with a caregiver while the parent is located.

Clause 2. If a child contracts a serious communicable illness (such as meningitis) and has been in contact with other children while at the Church, parent/guardians have the responsibility to notify the appropriate supervisor, so that other parent/guardians may be notified, as necessary.

Clause 3. Neither workers nor church staff shall give any medication to any child, with the exception of supervisor/workers who have been instructed by a parent of a highly allergic child in the need for and use of an Epi-pen.

Clause 4. Parent/guardians of children with special needs shall contact the Children's Ministry Director before signing the child into class in order to make appropriate accommodations.

Clause 5. Because there is no foolproof way to determine who may be a carrier of an infectious disease, we shall employ universal precautions in dealing with all human body fluids and items coming into contact with them. By treating all bodily fluids as if they are infected, any infections or contaminants can be avoided at all times, providing a safer and healthier environment for workers and children alike. In order to comply with Universal Precautions workers shall:

a) always wear disposable gloves (latex or vinyl) when dealing with any bodily fluids.

b) use Body Fluid Kits for any accidents involving bodily fluids (e.g., vomit, blood spills, large urine accidents, etc.) Kits shall be located on each floor and within the nursery; instructions are included in kits. Gloves must be used.

- c) blot urine with paper towels, and spray area thoroughly with bleach solution or approved sanitizer to sanitize and dispose of paper towels in covered garbage can.
- d) wash/sanitize hands before and after any contact with bodily fluids, including wiping noses, changing diapers, cleaning vomit or restroom accidents, and treating blood spills.
- e) treat all soiled linens (i.e. sheets, clothing, burp cloths) as potential infectious agents.
- f) remove toys that children have mouthed from the general play area, until washed in hot soapy water and disinfected with bleach solution or approved sanitizer.
- g) at the end of the session, disinfect the room (toys, changing tables, tables, highchairs, etc.) with sanitizer solution and allow to air dry. Disinfected toys may be placed back on shelves and lids on toy boxes shall remain open.

Article Ten, Child Abuse Response Plan

Section 1. Reporting Abuse

Clause 1. In Georgia, all persons are required to report incidents of child abuse, (with the exception that clergy are not required to disclose privileged communications [O.C.G.A. section 24-9-22]), though they will normally fall into "mandatory reporter" status as "child service organization personnel." As such, workers are to report to the supervisor any instances in which the caregiver suspects that abuse has occurred. Therefore, in the event of suspected child abuse (sexual, physical, or emotional), MVBC workers shall adhere to the following policies:

- a) The supervisor shall notify the Children's Ministry Director;
- b) The Children's Ministry Director shall notify child protective services, (DFACS report line in Fulton County at 404-699-4399) and notify the Elder Supervisor.
- c) The Elder Supervisor shall notify MVBC's insurance carrier and seek legal counsel.

Clause 2. If there is a "questionable behavior" offense, (e.g., flirtations, shoulder massages, etc.) the appropriate supervisor shall be notified who shall in turn notify the Children's Ministry Director in order to address the individual with questionable behavior. The Elder supervisor shall address pastorally sensitive situations.

Clause 3. In the event of a "major" offense, (e.g., the caregiver observing actual sexual or physical abuse/or noticing peculiar abrasions, lacerations, etc.) the witness shall call 911 immediately to report the abuse and to get an immediate police presence. The witness shall also contact the immediate supervisor who will contact the Children's Ministry Director and Elder supervisor. The police shall be contacted in order to:

- a) make sure any evidence is documented in order to prove abuse or clear the accused of wrongdoing.
- b) prevent the accused from becoming hostile or violent.
- c) contact a specialized detective if necessary.

Clause 4. The worker witnessing the abuse shall be present to provide a statement to the authorities as necessary.

Clause 5. The Elder Supervisor shall notify MVBC's insurance carrier and seek legal counsel.

Section 2. Caring Response

Whether the offense is "questionable" or "major" the Children's Ministry Director and the Elder Supervisor shall work to provide a caring response. Therefore:

Clause 1. Every allegation shall be taken seriously.

Clause 2. Proper procedures shall be diligently and exhaustively followed.

Clause 3. The victim and victim's family shall be assured that the Church desires to extend care and support in whatever way possible.

Clause 4. Situations shall be handled forthrightly with due respect for all parties' privacy and confidentiality.

Section 3. Documentation

The supervisor shall document the allegation with the assistance of the worker who noticed the offense. This documentation shall include:

Clause 1. The name, age, gender and address of the victim.

Clause 2. The name, age, gender and address of the alleged perpetrator.

Clause 3. The nature of the offense (e.g., physical, emotional, and/or sexual misconduct) alleged to have occurred.

Clause 4. How many times the alleged misconduct occurred. The date(s) and location(s) of the incident(s).

Clause 5. The relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator.

Clause 6. Other evidence, where appropriate, that supports the allegation (eyewitnesses, medical exams, confessions, etc.).

Section 4. Confidentiality

Until a legal conclusion is reached, the Church, as well as the witness caregiver, shall maintain strict confidentiality concerning all information, including the facts of the incident, the identity of the victim, and the identity of the alleged perpetrator.

Section 5. Church Discipline

In the event that a member of MVBC has been found either guilty by the state or in a state of unrepentant sin, the elders shall recommend to the congregation, in accordance with the MVBC Constitution, church discipline including excommunication.

Article Eleven, Emergencies

Section 1. Calling 911

In an emergency situation (security, fire, medical situations needing police, fire department, doctor, ER, and/or EMS, etc.) the appropriate supervisor shall call 911.

Section 2. Accidents and First Aid:

Clause 1. The Children's Ministry is equipped with basic first aid kits and a defibrillator (with illustrated instructions) is located outside the gym opposite the Elementary Hallway.

Clause 2. In the event of life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services (911) shall be called first, then the parent/guardians shall be notified immediately. The appropriate supervisor shall assist in summoning available medical assistance and parent/guardians.

Clause 3. Workers shall complete a child injury report for all injuries, whether minor or major.

Clause 4. Neither workers nor church staff shall give any medication to any child, with the exception of staff/teachers who have been instructed by a parent of a highly allergic child in the need for, and use of, an Epi-pen.

Section 3. Weather-Related Emergencies:

Clause 1. In the event of a tornado or severe weather alert, everyone in Preschool to Youth ministries shall move into the ground floor interior hallways.

Clause 2. The Preschool shall move to the Bridal hallway, the Elementary students shall stay on the Elementary hall, and the Youth shall move to the hallway by the gym between both side exits.

Clause 3. All doors must be closed to prevent injuries from exterior window damage.

Clause 4. Children shall be checked out to the care of their parent/guardians as quickly as possible, under the direction of the supervisor on

duty. Until then, workers shall keep children seated on the floor and as quiet as possible.

Section 4. Fire/Emergency Evacuation

Clause 1. In the event of a fire and/or fire alarm, 911 shall be called and all persons shall immediately evacuate the building.

Clause 2. Parent/guardians shall not report to the Preschool or Elementary wings in case of an immediate all-church evacuation. Workers & teachers shall get children to safety, and parent/guardians may claim their children once they can be checked out in an orderly fashion.

Clause 3. Fire evacuation signs are located in every room. All workers shall be familiar with evacuation routes.

Section 5. Lock-Down Procedures

Clause 1. Any person appearing suspicious or out-of-place shall be reported to the appropriate supervisor on duty.

Clause 2. The appropriate supervisor shall call 911 and give the nature of the threat.

Clause 3. If shots have been fired the supervisor shall tell police we have an "Active Shooter." Police nationwide are trained specifically to respond to an active shooter. The Supervisor shall inform responders of the general location of the shooter within the building.

Clause 4. Wherever possible, a supervisor shall close/lock the appropriate security doors (in the Preschool the doors by the main Preschool counter and at the farthest end of the hall, and in the Elementary hallway, the entry doors shall be closed and locked.

Clause 5. Children shall lie or sit on the classroom floor away from the door, or a designated area, and be kept calm and quiet. If possible, workers shall barricade doors with furniture and/or heavy objects. The children and caregivers shall remain in place until a supervisor, elder, or police instruct them to come out.

Clause 6. Classroom lights shall be turned off.

Clause 7. The immediate supervisor shall decide whether evacuation to an outside area or to another part of the building is necessary. Evacuation shall be executed only if the threat is far enough away for the children to safely exit. In the event that evacuation appears to be the safest option, the children shall be directed to the appropriate fire exit and seek security away from the building.

Article Twelve, Other Important Policies

Section 1. Lost and Found

Lost and found items shall be kept for a reasonable length of time at the Preschool and Elementary desks before being taken to the Lost and Found closet by the church office.

Section 2. Field Trips and Transportation Guidelines

Clause 1. All children participating in any church event, activity, and/or trip off of the church premises shall have a current year's completed **Children & Family Ministry General Permission-Medical Release Form** on file.

Clause 2. In addition, any child participating in any overnight activity whether at or away from the church, shall have a completed **Special Event Permission and Release Form** which the chaperones shall have in their possession during the event.

Clause 3. Children whose parent/guardians are not members and receive rides to and from church, from church members, shall submit an additional form, the **Transportation Liability Waiver Form**.

Section 3. Play Areas

Clause 1. When children are playing together in the church or on the front lawn or when they are playing and not church-organized supervision is provided, they shall be under the supervision of their parent/guardians.

Clause 2. Children are not permitted to run through the church unsupervised. In order to protect the elderly in the church and reduce risk that comes from isolation, children shall be instructed to walk in the hallways and remain in supervised areas. Parent/guardians shall take responsibility for their own children during these times.

Section 4. Childcare for Special Events:

Clause 1. Special events are defined as any one-time event or on-going meeting where church facilities are used outside of the regular Sunday and Wednesday corporate gatherings. This includes, but is not limited to Bible studies, choir practice, weddings, etc. Anyone wishing to arrange childcare for a special event shall consult with the church administrator and comply with the existing church policies in place for childcare.

Clause 2. Individual groups meeting in private homes are responsible for making their own childcare arrangements independent of formal church involvement. The church's guidelines are commended to such groups, but these groups are not bound by them. Each group bears the responsibility of overseeing the care of their own children.

Clause 3. Parties using church facilities for non-church sponsored events do so at their own risk and are responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for children. The Church is not liable for incidents occurring at non-church sponsored activities.

Acknowledgements

Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville, KY has graciously allowed Mount Vernon to use their Children's Policy Manual as a template.