

Nursery Policies

1) General Operation

The nursery will be open for all regularly scheduled organizational meetings and worship services of the church. Extended Session (child care during regular Morning Worship) is available for children ages birth through the time that children are promoted into the Preschool 4's Sunday school class.

2) Special Events

For special events (i.e. Sunday school fellowships, association functions) the nursery is available for children ages birth through kindergarten. If necessary, childcare will be available for children grades 1-6, but arrangements must be made with the Nursery Coordinator.

To reserve the nursery for special events, a written request must be submitted at least one week in advance on the Valley Grove Activity Form with a list of the children's names and ages. There must be at least four children needing care in order for the nursery to be reserved for special events. When the special events are located outside of the church facilities, parents must sign a Consent, Waiver, and Release Form in the event that emergency medical care is necessary.

3) Enlistment of Workers

Volunteers who work with minors must be 18 years old or older. Individuals whose ages range from 13 to 17 may assist in supervising minors. All applicants who wish to volunteer or work with an activity or event with a minor must first contact the activity supervisor or Pastor. In addition, all workers (whether volunteer or compensated) must submit to a background check, including parents who wish to supervise their children. All workers, volunteer and compensated, must be actively involved at VGBC.

Any person wishing to serve with children ages birth through 18 years will not be allowed to serve if there was any prior offense involving abuse, where the individual:

- was convicted
- was placed on regular or deferred adjudication
- agreed to any kind of pre-trial plea bargain
- pled guilty
- pled nolo contendere or not contest

There will be no exception to this rule, regardless of when the individual's conversion experience occurred. They may however, be allowed to work in other areas of service with the approval of the Pastor or Minister of Education.

VGBC is dedicated to swift and responsible action when any allegations are made. These actions include reporting allegations to the proper local and state authorities.

4) Reporting Hierarchy

The Church will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Anyone who has been the object of sexual harassment should immediately report the incident to a member of the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will investigate all complaints promptly and in a confidential manner. If it concluded that harassment has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, to be determined by the Personnel Committee, will be taken.

Sexual misconduct will not be tolerated at the Church. It is inappropriate for any staff member to engage in sexual relations with any person other than their spouse. All accusations of sexual misconduct will immediately be reported to the chairman of the Personnel Committee. Any such accusation will be treated as serious and immediately investigated. That investigation will be confidential to protect the people involved.

Child abuse is against the law. Accusations of child abuse will be immediately reported to Child Protective Services, telephone 1-800-252-5400. All accusations will be treated as serious and confidential.

Note: Valley Grove officials should be informed, but the legal aspects of reporting supersede Valley Grove's hierarchy.

5) Gun Safety or Unsafe Person or Persons

In the event of a gun threat or the presence of an unsafe person or persons outside of the building, all classes are to immediately evacuate to the Children's Building and stay away from all windows. In the event of a gun threat inside the building, all teachers are to immediately lock their classroom doors, gathering all of the children as far away from the windows as possible, turning tables on their sides and sitting the children behind them. All teachers and children are to remain there until given permission to return to class or to unlock classroom doors by the police, or other authority.

6) Preventative Safety

Teachers and teacher's aides should be conscious of their class environment at all times, attempting to locate all possible points of danger. In keeping with this prevention, electrical plug covers should be checked daily. Any additional plug covers needed should be reported to the Nursery Coordinator. All plug covers should be replaced immediately after using an electrical appliance.

All teacher supplies used that could pose a threat to children should also be kept out of reach. These items could include but are not limited to: hot glue guns, scissors, sticky tack, glue, pens, pencils, etc.

7) Discipline Policy

Discipline in the classroom is the responsibility of the paid worker. In the event a discipline problem persists with a child, a Discipline Form should be completed, approved by the Nursery Coordinator, and sent home with the child. Any discussion concerning a child's behavior is to be done in private and is to involve only the paid worker and the child's parent(s) or guardian(s). If he or she wishes, a paid worker or the parent(s) or guardian(s) may ask the Nursery Coordinator or Pastor to be present during this conference.

VGBC holds to the mandate that, "discipline and guidance are consistent, and are based on an understanding of individual needs and development, and promote self-discipline and acceptable behavior."

The teacher may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive, concise statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There shall be no harsh, cruel, or unusual punishment/treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training.
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child.
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument.
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth.
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet with the door closed.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Instead, alternative forms of discipline, as outlined below, must be utilized.

- Discipline should be relevant to the behavior involved.
- Children should be held firmly if their behavior will harm themselves or others.
- Children should be redirected by stating alternatives when their behavior is unacceptable.
- Children should be helped to understand why their conduct is unacceptable and what is acceptable in a given situation.

In order to sometimes avert discipline problems:

- Children should have good behavior recognized and encouraged
- Children should be taught by example through the use of fair and consistent rules.

- Children should be supervised by people showing a genuine attitude of understanding and firmness.
- Children should be given clear directions and guidance on the child's level of understanding.

8) Child Abuse Definitions and Responsibilities

Abuse is the physical, mental or sexual mistreatment, neglect of the health and welfare, or the exposure to any unreasonable risk of a child, including the failure to help, remove or prevent a child from being subjected to abuse. The word child is defined as anyone between the ages of birth and 18 years.

- Physical abuse includes but is not limited to: striking, shoving, shaking or hitting a child, even if it is intended as discipline. It also includes a child being left in a situation where the child could be exposed to physical injury.
- Mental abuse includes but is not limited to: subjection to regular humiliation, yelling at, being ignored or blamed for things beyond their control.
- Sexual abuse includes but is not limited to: direct sexual contact such as intercourse, other genital contact or touching but also includes being made to watch sexual acts, look at an adult's genitals, pornography or its production.

9) Reporting Child Abuse

Any person supervising any child is responsible for the immediate report of any perceived "inappropriate behavior" to their immediate area appropriate supervisor.

10) Worker Education

VGBC requires and will provide training to all volunteer and compensated workers education and training that is designed to better equip workers to protect the children at VGBC. Training will include discipline techniques, safety, basic first aid, child abuse recognition and how to report abuse and other subjects as necessary.

11) Two Person Rule

As often as practical, a minimum of two (2) adults, compensated or volunteer, must be present at all VGBC sponsored programs and activities where any children ages birth through **12** years are present. A reasonable ratio of adults will be maintained in each situation involving the supervision of preschoolers, children and youth.

**Note: A married couple working together shall be considered as only one approved adult. In such a situation, at least one other approved adult must be present to meet the requirement of the two person rule.*

If the two person rule is unachievable for a VGBC sponsored program or activity:

- All parents must be notified of the deviation and that parent must sign a parental consent for each child participating in the program or activity.

12) Workers Time Off

Because of the part time nature of the nursery positions, time off should only be taken in case of illness or emergency. In the case of a pre-arranged event that is unavoidable, a verbal request should be obtained from the Nursery Coordinator at least two weeks in advance. In case of sudden illness or emergency, the Nursery Coordinator should be called at home. If the Nursery Coordinator is unavailable, workers should contact the VGBC office at 965-5195.