

# Faith Community Church Parent Handbook for the Nursery Ministry

## Philosophy of Nursery Ministry

The nursery ministry at Faith Community Church has two purposes:

*To serve the church body by enabling parents of young children to be fed by the Word of God and to minister to others, and  
Minister to young children by providing a Christ-centered, safe, nurturing, and loving environment.*

We hope that the nursery ministry will encourage the active participation of parents in worship, Sunday school, and other activities. It is our desire that the children be cared for physically in the nursery by providing a safe, clean and nurturing environment. We also hope that each child will grow spiritually as they learn to feel secure with adults who share the love of God with them and pray for them.

# Basic Nursery Operations

## Who is the nursery for?

The nursery is available for children from infancy until they reach four years of age. Nursery is available during Sunday morning services, Sunday School, Wednesday evening services, and sometimes during specially scheduled events. Children are always welcome to participate in worship services, and parents should not hesitate to have children under the age of four participate in the worship service with them. The church offers an “overflow” room for most services which is a great place to train children for sitting in the service.

## Who works in the nursery?

Caregivers working in Nursery Ministry at Faith Community Church are women fourteen and older who enjoy being with children, have been trained in nursery duties and have complied with our Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy, completed an abuse prevention video training, and are church members or has been active in church participation for at least six months.

## How is the nursery kept safe?

Nursery procedures have been designed to keep the health and well-being of children a top priority. When both volunteers and parents follow nursery procedures correctly, we can assure the safest possible environment for the children. By following the guidelines in this handbook, you are partnering with the nursery in creating the safest possible arrangements for your child, so read closely!

## If there is a question...

If you have any questions while at church please see the nursery coordinator who is checking in children at the sign-in table by the nursery door. For all other questions or concerns, please contact the nursery director, Whitney Standlea, at 816-217-4674 or [standlea@gmail.com](mailto:standlea@gmail.com).

# Checking in an out

## Before arriving

Parents are responsible for all of the following prior to arriving at the nursery:

- Label children’s items (diaper bag, coats, cups, bottles, pacifiers, special snacks)
- Preparing formula or bottle if needed
- Determining that child is healthy (see “Healthy Children” section)

## Sunday drop-off procedure

Parents are to wait in line at the nursery check in door with their child. PARENTS ARE NOT TO OPEN THE SECOND NURSERY DOOR. The nursery coordinator will check children in to the nursery by writing any special notes, assigning a pager, writing a name tag for each child, and providing a cubby for children’s belongings.

Please check your children's diapers or take them to the restroom prior to sending them to the nursery.

Parents should not enter the nursery unless it is necessary to assist a child in going to the restroom, change a diaper, or feed an infant. When fathers need to enter the nursery, please ask permission from the nursery coordinator in advance as there are sometimes nursing mothers in the room.

*The less traffic that comes in to the nursery, the easier it is to calm anxious children and prevent children from sneaking out of the nursery. We greatly appreciate your assistance in trying to minimize traffic in the nursery for the safety of the children.*

Before leaving parents should make sure that they have notified the nursery coordinator of any special needs, and make sure that they have received a pager.

PLEASE NOTE: Parents are not to leave the church at anytime after dropping off a child in the nursery.

## **Sunday pick-up procedure**

To pick-up a child, parents must return the pager that was checked out to them when the child was dropped off. This ensures that children are only removed from the nursery by their caretakers. Parents should wait in line at the nursery door to pick up a child. The nursery coordinator will take the pager, gather the child's belongings and bring the child to the door. Parents are encouraged to make sure they have all belongings before leaving the nursery, and to be sure to pick up children promptly after the service is over.

## **Wednesday Evening check-in and check-out**

On Wednesday evenings parents are to place a name tag on their child and sign-in on the sign in sheet by the door. No pagers are issued on Wednesday evenings. Notify nursery workers of any special concerns. Parents may enter the nursery to pick up their children after the service is over. Please be sure to pick up children promptly after the service is over. Sometimes other church programs such as AWANA last longer than the service time. Parents still need to pick up their children from the nursery when the service time is out.

# **Special Concerns in the Nursery**

## **Food and Drink**

Infants will be fed formula, milk, juice or water as provided by parents in plastic bottles. Only plastic bottles clearly labeled with the child's name are to be brought to the nursery. Please indicate the time the bottle is to be given when the child is signed in.

The nursery will provide a cup of water for children anytime that snacks are served. Children will be fed a snack if they are able to pull up to standing. If your child is able to pull to standing but you would not like them to have a snack, please remind the door coordinator when dropping off your child.

Snacks provided are usually goldfish, cheerios, animal crackers, or chocolate animal crackers. Snacks are typically served during the Sunday school hour and sometimes on Wednesday nights. ALWAYS REMIND THE DOOR COORDINATOR OF FOOD ALLERGIES when dropping off your child. If the parent would like the child to refrain from snack time, please indicate that under special instructions on the sign in sheet.

If you need to bring a special snack in the nursery for your child, please have it labeled and give instructions when dropping off the child. Because there are numerous kids to watch who would also like to partake of other children's snacks, we ask that you only bring special snacks for your child if absolutely necessary. Feeding all of the children the same snacks during the designated snack time increases the efficiency and safety of the snack environment.

**Medications cannot be given by nursery personnel. Medications are not to be put in the child's bottle.**

\* Mothers who wish to bottle feed their child may do so in the nursery or may request nursery workers to feed the child.

\* Mothers who are nursing may do so in the nursery or sleeping rooms at anytime.

## **Sleeping Babies**

Parents are welcome to use the sleeping closets in the first nursery room to feed or rock their children. Children are also welcome to sleep in these rooms. Always check a child in with the nursery prior to leaving a child in one of these rooms.

The changing table drawers contain blankets to be used in the pak-n-plays for any sleeping babies in the nursery. When clean sheets and blankets are placed in a pak-n-play, a small sign will be laid on top that reads "These sheets are clean!" Whenever a child is placed in the pak-n-play, please remove the sign and hang it on the hook above. Used sheets and blankets should be placed in the basket that is located in the corner behind the changing table area. If the sheets in the pak-n-play do not have a "clean sheet" sign laying on them, please get new clean blankets from the changing table area before laying the child down.

## **Potty Training**

Potty training children can be taken to the restroom located in the nursery. We encourage you to take your child to the restroom prior to leaving them in the nursery. Also, please remind workers at drop off if your child is potty training and needs to be reminded to use the restroom.

## **Healthy Children**

It is important for the children and the workers in the nursery to keep the threat of disease to a minimum. Parents should observe the following policy when dropping off children in the nursery. Please do not bring sick children or children who appear to be sick to the nursery. If any of the following symptoms exist, children should not attend the nursery:

- Flu
- Any unexplained rash
- Common Cold
- Chest Congestion
- Persistent Cough
- Sore Throat
- Head Lice

- Any skin infections
- Pink eye or other eye infections
- Fever within the last 24 hours

If the child is taking antibiotics, they should have received treatment for at least 48 hours before coming to the nursery, even if the symptoms are no longer present. Our nursery policy prohibits caregivers from administering any medication.

If the child develops an infectious disease (chicken pox, etc.) after they have been in the nursery, please contact the church office or Nursery Coordinator so that we may notify other parents of their children's exposure.

## **Problems with children and pager use**

Parents are to be paged to the nursery in the following events:

- If the child continues to cry and efforts to comfort them fail beyond ten minutes or if the child is crying inconsolably. (*Some children left in our care may tend to cry, but then are easily distracted within a few minutes. Nursery workers will attempt to distract the child with a toy or allow them to be by themselves as they examine their new surroundings.*)
- In the rare case of an accident or injury
- If the child becomes ill while in the nursery
- If a behavior problem develops that requires the parent's attention or immediate action.
- If the parent has indicated that they would like to be contacted for feeding purposes.

## **Behavioral Expectations**

There are two expectations for children in the nursery: They must behave in a way that does not harm themselves and others, and they must obey the directives of the nursery workers.

FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF TWO: Children under the age of two will be redirected from disobedient or destructive behavior. If a child persists, the parent will be paged.

FOR CHILDREN OVER THE AGE OF TWO: If a child is disobedient or hurting other children, nursery workers may ask the child to sit quietly for a short amount of time in a chair that is in site of the nursery worker to regain control. Nursery workers may also speak with the child about his behavior and show him the proper way to respond or treat others. Parents are expected to encourage their children to follow directions given by the caregiver. The parent will be contacted if a child refuses to comply with the caregiver's direction or is continually putting other children in danger.

## **Sunday School and Service Transitions**

Upon turning four, children are to attend worship services with their parents and attend Sunday School during the Sunday School hour. Learning to sit successfully for the worship service is a difficult but attainable skill that requires a lot of training from parents. Parents in need of resources and ideas for preparing their children for this should feel free to ask for assistance from others in the church. If in need of resources, the nursery ministry has recommendations on hand, and a few are listed at the end of this section.

Three-year-olds are welcome in the nursery, but are also allowed to attend the Three & Four-Year-Old Sunday School Class. While three-year-olds are welcome in this classroom, several developmental stages need to be considered prior to moving a child into the Sunday School setting. Some children will be ready for advancement near the age of three, while others may not be ready until close to age four. Key areas of development for moving to the Sunday School room are:

- Being completely potty trained
- Able to listen and follow instructions from other adults
- Able to sit still in a group setting for approximately 15 minutes
- Capable of doing simple crafts and activities

If you need any assistance in evaluating your child's readiness for Sunday School, don't hesitate to ask.

*Resources:*

General parenting recommendation: *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp

Resource for a Biblical perspective and practical principles on children and worship: "The Family Together in God's Presence" by John and Noel Piper online at [www.desiringGod.org](http://www.desiringGod.org)

## Summary for Parents:

Here are some key points to remember:

- **Always notify the nursery worker about any important information or changes in information regarding your child. (Potty training, diaper rash, food allergies, etc.)**
- **Refrain from bringing ill children to the nursery. If in doubt, apply the Golden Rule.**
- **Wait at the door to check children in and out of the nursery.**
- **Always keep track of your pager and have it with you to pick up your child.**