



MINISTRYSAFE

PICKERINGTON CHURCH
OF THE NAZARENE
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES
MANUAL

Dear Children's Volunteer or Staff Member,

Welcome to Pickerington Church of the Nazarene!

At PNC, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for PNC volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of Pickerington Church of the Nazarene. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Manson
Pastor to Children and Their Families
Pickerington Church of the Nazarene

Pickerington Nazarene Church

Policies & Procedures for

Children's Ministries

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Overview of Pickerington Nazarene Church Safety System

Because we love children and desire to protect them, PNC requires all staff members and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

PNC policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to the Senior Pastor or the Children's Pastor. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip PNC staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, PNC requires all staff members and volunteers to complete MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training (live or online at www.MinistrySafe.com). This training will be renewed every two years.

STEP TWO: Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the PNC Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- complete the Safety Application (employees and volunteers)
- complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
- provide references to be checked (employees and volunteers)

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check

PNC requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children's or student activities or programming undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

**This policy segment is intended to clearly identify for an *inappropriate applicant* the hurdles which exist to gaining access to children or students at Pickerington Nazarene Church. In addition, the segment describes measures in place to equip other staff members and volunteers to recognize abuser characteristics and behaviors, as well as reporting requirements.*

Child Safety Policy

ABUSE TOLERANCE

PNC has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff and volunteer at PNC to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

PNC is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously.

In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Senior Pastor or the Children's Pastor

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

PNC staff members and volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all these policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Children's Ministry's positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor and the Church Board.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children, PNC staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report verbally and in writing (see form) any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to the Children's Pastor, or the Senior Pastor.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The Children's Pastor or the Senior Pastor will see that an immediate investigation is conducted in conjunction with the church's attorney. If it is determined that actual or suspected child abuse has occurred, the Children's Pastor or Senior Pastor will make a phone call to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for a more comprehensive review.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in Children's Ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at PNC. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from Pickerington Nazarene Church.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of employment of a staff member or employee. Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at PNC.

RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

The Children's Pastor, Senior Pastor, and board members will take appropriate action on behalf of the church when a report of abuse occurs.

BUILDING SAFETY

No child will ever be left unattended in the building or on the children's playground during children's ministry programming or classes. Children's Ministries staff members or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual child in any room or building behind closed doors.

After every programming event, Children's Ministries staff members and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

EMERGENCY PLAN

Appropriate fire evacuation and storm safety is posted in each classroom. The age-level ministry volunteers and leaders will direct the children and students to their predetermined areas.

PLAYGROUND/OUTSIDE POLICY

An adult must check the playground area before children go out to ensure that the area is safe for children.

On the children's playground, staff members and volunteers are to circulate, watching children during play periods, giving particular attention to the areas which are not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures).

Children are not permitted to play by the pond unless attended by an adult.

Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

CLIMBING WALL SAFETY

Parents/guardians must fill out 'Climbing Wall Rules, Regulations, Waiver and Release' form in order for their child(ren) to participate in climbing the wall (see form).

WORKER TO CHILD RATIOS

PNC is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Ministries programs. Accordingly, the following worker to child ratios will be observed:

Program	Workers	Children
Infant Nursery	2	4
Toddler Nursery	2	13
Preschool, 3 and 4 years old	2	18
Elementary	2	20

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the program supervisor or the Children's Pastor. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker to children ratios into compliance with Church policy.

All volunteers are asked to wear their identification badge (issued by the church) during any activity involving children or students.

INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS

In the case of a notable incident or accident, volunteers are required to fill out an incident/accident report. These reports are located in each classroom and should be returned to the Children's Pastor. Parents are to be notified and given a copy of the incident report when they pick up their child. The incident report will be kept on file in the church office.

ADMINISTERING FIRST AID

A first aid kit for minor injuries is located in room 202.

First, determine if the child's injuries are serious. If so, send a volunteer to get a parent. Do not leave the child unattended. If the injuries are life-threatening, call 911 immediately. If not, take the child to the first aid site and give them a "bump sponge" or band-aids.

Do not give the child medication.

When the parent comes to pick up the child, be sure to tell them what happened and give them a copy of the Incident/Accident report.

WELLNESS POLICY

Any child or student with any of the following symptoms will not be permitted into the classrooms. If any child should develop any of these symptoms while in a program, the parent or guardian shall be notified and the child will be picked up in a timely manner. Any volunteer who displays any of these symptoms should find a substitute and let the Children's Pastor know that he or she will not be able to attend.

1. Fever over 98.6 oral (Fever is associated with illness and is not associated with teething)
2. Vomiting in the last 24 hrs.
3. Diarrhea in the last 24 hrs.
4. Skin rashes or eruptions of unknown origin (impetigo, measles, chicken pox ,etc.)
5. Persistent coughing associated with respiratory infection, including cold, bronchitis, and pneumonia.
6. Pink eye that may have a colored discharge or drainage
7. Parasites, any form of lice, mites, or ringworm.

DISCIPLINE

It is the Pickerington Nazarene Church policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, staff members and volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

- 1) Verbally redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- 2) If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is meeting (avoid being alone with the child).
- 3) Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason he/she was removed from the larger group and discuss situation with parents when the child is picked-up.

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the Children's Pastor.

BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES

Nursery children

Because nursery children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:

Diapering

- 1) Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- 2) Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- 3) Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in nursery will be recorded on the registration cards (“Seth Adams has a medicine in the bag for rash.”)
- 4) Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
- 5) Children should be changed on changing stations only.

Toilet training

- 1) No child will be forced to toilet train.
- 2) When children are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open.
- 3) Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- 5) Parents should be consulted on each child’s progress in the toilet training process before leaving the child with volunteers or staff members. Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in the nursery will be recorded on the registration card (“Bobby can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go.”).
- 6) Children should be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children.
- 7) “Accidents” should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available from in the children’s area, if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.

School age children

School age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. (However, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities.) Staff members and volunteers should never take a child alone to the restroom.

If a staff member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another worker is not available to accompany, he/she should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance and a parent is not able to be present, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing their activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.

Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

Special needs

Parents will offer instruction to staff members or volunteers to change the diapers of special needs individuals. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change all special needs individuals.

INTOXICANTS

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any PNC facility, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children.

MEDICATION

Medication may be given to a child by a staff member or volunteer with a doctor's prescription. The medication must be in the original packaging, including over the counter medication. The only exceptions to this policy are diaper ointment/medication and insect bite cream, after a parent information sheet is signed by a parent or guardian.

NUDITY

Staff members and volunteers in Pickerington Nazarene Church Children's Ministries should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the Children's Pastor concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in Pickerington Nazarene Church Ministry program. Another adult who has completed the PNC application and screening process should always be present.

OFF CAMPUS POLICY

Parental permission slips and/or medical releases must be signed for all children and students and are to be kept with the leader.

If staying overnight, male and female participants must sleep in separate areas.

TRANSPORTATION

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:

1. Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
2. Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
3. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving PNC vans, or vehicles owned or rented by PNC, unless in an emergency.
4. No drivers under age 25 may drive PNC owned or rented vehicles.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents who leave a child in the care of PNC staff members and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Children's Ministries programs.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at PNC. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs at PNC will be required to complete the PNC volunteer application and screening process.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

PNC is committed to protecting children in its care. To this end, PNC has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Children's Ministries while protecting children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Children's Ministries programs:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and children are important for children's development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the Children's Pastor or the Senior Pastor.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or children's staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
5. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in Children's Ministries must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
6. Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
7. Children's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
8. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to the Children's Pastor or the Senior Pastor.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children, and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the program.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS

Staff members and volunteers in Children's Ministries at PNC are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children.

TOBACCO USE

PNC requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of children or their parents, or during PNC activities or programs. PNC is a tobacco-free facility.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. PNC staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

DISCOVERY ZONE DROP-OFF AND DISMISSALL POLICIES

At any time that a child has been entrusted to PNC staff members or volunteers, the Church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

Nursery Check-In/Pick-up

Parents/guardians must fill out label and attach stickers to appropriate belongings.

The label contains a number that will be assigned to each child and will be used if attention is needed by the parent or guardian. The number will be displayed on the screen in the main worship center.

Parents will be given a “pick-up” stub and will need to present that to the assigned nursery worker upon pick-up.

Children’s Ministries staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child.

In the event that staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact their immediate supervisor or the Children’s Pastor before releasing the child.

Elementary Children

Parents will check in their child(ren) at the center kiosk located in the Activity Center.

A badge will be printed including the child’s name and a “pick-up” stub for the parent to keep to return upon pick-up.

Children must wear their printed badge. Parents will drop off their child(ren) to the age appropriate classroom and pick up at the same location unless otherwise directed.

Children’s Ministries staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child.

In the event that staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact their immediate supervisor or the Children’s Pastor before releasing the child.

Policies and Procedures
Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Pickerington Nazarene Church Children's Ministries Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at PNC.whether as an employee, volunteer, or in any other capacity.

I understand the manual may be modified from time to time, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Pickerington Nazarene Church. I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my employment, voluntary service, or other participation PNC at any time (if possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor). I further understand that my employment, voluntary service, or other participation is at will and can be terminated or rejected by PNC, with or without notice, for any reason or no reason at all.

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this manual in no way express or imply a contractual relationship, whether employment or in any other capacity, between me and Pickerington Nazarene Church.

I acknowledge that PNC has the right to engage in investigations relating to my employment, volunteer service, or other participation. I understand that during or after any such investigations I may be suspended or terminated from participation in the Children's Ministry. I understand that investigations into my employment, volunteer service, or other participation could effect my reputation or standing in the community or could otherwise cause me harm. I further understand that I have no right to have such investigation conducted in a confidential nature. I expressly waive any and all claims that I might have against PNC, its officers, directors, pastoral staff, staff members, board members, attorneys, investigators, or other employees relating to such investigations.

I acknowledge receipt of Pickerington Nazarene Church Children's Ministries Policies and Procedures Manual.

Dated

Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

