



**lake murray**  
baptist | children

# **Policies and Procedures Manual**

Updated July 2017

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## Vision, Mission, and Values of LMBC Children's Ministry

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**Vision:** Lake Murray Children's Ministry exists to equip parents and children to grow together in the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Mission:** Lake Murray Children's Ministry is designed to love, serve and teach children from birth to 5th grade while also equipping parents to disciple their children. We believe the primary environment where a child learns to follow Jesus is in the home, and it is our desire to support parents as they pursue this biblical model of disciple-making.

**Values:** At Lake Murray Baptist Church, we expect our children to learn in a *safe, engaging, and Gospel-centered* environment.

**Safe:** All volunteers are appropriately screened via background and reference checks before joining our Children's Ministry Team. Team members ensure proper check-in and check-out procedures for all children. Health and safety policies are consistently implemented throughout the children's building.

**Engaging:** We want our children to feel motivated to learn more about Jesus through curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and varied in approach to help meet different learning styles. Our teachers should be enthusiastic in presenting the Gospel each week so that children can better absorb the truths of the Bible.

**Gospel-centered:** We believe in teaching children the "big picture" of the Bible, showing how each individual story points to our need for Christ and His glorious promise of redemption for all who believe in His saving work on the cross. Our curriculum moves chronologically through the Bible in order to give children a comprehensive understanding of God's great rescue plan for His people, beginning with creation and ending with His second coming.

Staff:

- David Sons, Next Generation Pastor - [dsons@lakemurraybaptist.org](mailto:dsons@lakemurraybaptist.org)
- Emily Leake, Director of Children's Ministry - [eleake@lakemurraybaptist.org](mailto:eleake@lakemurraybaptist.org)

## Children's Ministry Team Qualifications, Roles, & Expectations

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**Qualifications:** A Children's Ministry Team volunteer should be a member (for lead teachers) or in the membership process and in good standing with Lake Murray Baptist Church. In certain cases, exception may be made at the recommendation of the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, or Next Generation Pastor. All volunteers should demonstrate a mature spiritual walk and have a love for children with a desire to see them grow into a saving knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ. All team members should be committed to consistently abide by policies and procedures of the Children's Ministry, and actively participate in annual trainings, meetings, and communication with church staff as much as possible.

**Application:** Those interested in joining our Children's Ministry Team should complete a volunteer application (found on our website, [www.lakemurraybc.org](http://www.lakemurraybc.org)), which includes personal references and a signed authorization to obtain a criminal background check. The application must be reviewed and approved by an appropriate pastor or ministry director. Once approved, the Director of Children's Ministries will contact the applicant to discuss assignment preferences and scheduling. Once added to the roster, the volunteer should be ready to comply with all expectations for their role on the Children's Ministry Team.

### Front Desk Team:

**Role:** The Front Desk Team is the "face" of LMBC's Children's Ministry. This team welcomes families into a safe, engaging, and Gospel-centered environment each Sunday morning and assists both teachers and guests as necessary.

**Expectations:**

- Arrive to the front desk by 10:10 on your assigned Sunday.
- Ensure that each volunteer is checked in and each classroom has enough volunteers.
- Greet parents and children with a smile and guide them through the check-in process.
- Obtain a headcount of all children and volunteers in the building and give to designated usher.
- Assist volunteers and parents as needed; communicate issues to Director of Children's Ministry.
- Be available to act as a substitute in a classroom if needed on your assigned week.

### Sunday School Team (birth through 6<sup>th</sup> grade):

**Role:** Our Sunday School teachers and assistants provide a safe, engaging, and Gospel-centered environment for our children to learn about the love and grace of Christ in a developmentally appropriate manner. *The Gospel Project for Kids* curriculum is used for ages 1 through sixth grade.

**Expectations:**

- Spend time each week preparing for and praying over the next week's lesson.
- Arrive by 8:45 each Sunday to check in at the front desk and set up classroom.
- Follow the procedures and schedule posted on the classroom wall.
- Conduct the Sunday School lesson and related activities according to the curriculum guide.
- Build positive relationships with the children and families in the class.

### Kids' Worship Team (birth through 4 years):

**Role:** Our Kids' Worship Team provides a safe, engaging, and Gospel-centered environment for our youngest members during the worship service hour. *The Gospel Project Worship Hour* curriculum is used for ages 3-4 along with supplemental activities for all ages.

**Expectations:**

- Arrive by 10:15 each Sunday to check in at the front desk and proceed to assigned classroom.
- Communicate with Sunday School teachers to obtain necessary information about the class.
- Enthusiastically, creatively, and lovingly engage with children throughout the hour.
- Follow the procedures and schedule posted on the classroom wall.
- Match parent and child security tag numbers before dismissing each child.
- Ensure that items are returned to their proper spot and the room is left clean and neat.

## Wednesday Night Team (birth through 6<sup>th</sup> grade):

**Role:** The Wednesday Night team provides a safe, engaging, and Gospel-centered environment for children enrolled in our program. This team assists children in learning biblical truths and Scripture memorization through both large and small group learning times. We use curriculum from both the WMU and Sojourn Kids (Northstar Catechism), along with supplemental activities as appropriate.

**Expectations:**

- Arrive by 6:15 each Wednesday to check in at the front desk and proceed to assigned classroom.
- Follow the procedures and schedule for your class.
- Conduct the lesson and related activities according to the curriculum guide.
- Build positive relationships with the children and families in the class.
- Ensure that items are returned to their proper spot and the room is left clean and neat.

## Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures

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### Security:

**Check In/Out:** All children who attend any church event should be checked in by a parent/guardian through our Planning Center Online Check-Ins system. On Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, two stickers will be printed – one for the child's back and one for the parent to keep. Preschoolers (birth-4 years old) must be picked up by a parent/adult guardian at the classroom door with a matching security id. Primary students (kindergarten-2<sup>nd</sup> grade) must be picked up by a parent/adult guardian or sibling 13+ years old at the classroom door with a matching security id. Elementary students (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade) may be picked up downstairs in the lobby or (with parental permission) released to another appropriate location after 10:10 a.m. on Sundays or 7:30 on Wednesdays.

All children attending drop off programs should check in via Planning Center before proceeding to their assigned area. Grade level folders/binders contain information for each child about the adults approved for pickup. At dismissal, leaders should ensure that each child is released only to one of these adults. IDs should be checked as necessary. Any adult not on the approved list should be sent to the front desk, where a member of the event's leadership team will contact a parent/guardian to approve dismissal.

All volunteers should check in at the front desk (or appropriate location) at least 15 minutes prior to each service/event before proceeding to their classroom. Adult and youth volunteers should wear a name tag to identify them as approved workers during their assigned service time.

**Building:** Teachers and families should enter the children's building through the main doors, which will be unlocked during check-in and check-out times. These doors will automatically lock during service/event hours and parents will be let in by the Front Desk Team members or security team members as appropriate. Side doors and exterior classroom doors will remain locked at all times. Key fobs are available for any teachers taking their class outside to the playground.

**Volunteers:** Any person age 18 or above who works with children in any capacity will be required to complete a background check before serving. Two or more volunteers should be present with children at all times. In cases where one adult must be left with the class, the door should remain open and the adult should request another volunteer to join them if possible. Male volunteers may not change diapers, and bathroom doors will remain open any time an adult is with a child. Youth

helpers who are not listed on the Kids' Worship rotation (children of volunteers) must stay with a parent at all times and may play with children, but should not "handle" them or be left alone with them at any time.

## Health & Safety:

*Child Abuse Protection:* Volunteers should avoid the appearance of impropriety, such as sitting older children on laps, kissing, embracing, etc. Do not force affection on any child. SC Law 63-7-310 defines all clergy as mandated reporters of any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Any signs of abuse or neglect should be reported to the Director of Children's Ministries or appropriate ministry supervisor, who will conduct a Minimal Facts Interview and then alert their direct supervisor, and law enforcement as appropriate. All allegations will be investigated, and appropriate action taken. Conversations regarding any allegations should be strictly limited to church staff, who will alert volunteers/parents on a need to know basis only. Confidentiality related to the person making the report will be maintained according to SC Law 63-7-330 and the LMBC Confidentiality Agreement. More detailed information can be found in the Lake Murray Baptist Church Protection Policy for Minors.

*Emergency Procedures:* Evacuation and emergency plans are located near the door of each classroom/area in the children's building. An emergency crib is located in the infant nursery next to the exterior exit door and is designed to hold all babies and roll out during an emergency evacuation. In the event of an emergency, all assigned Children's Ministry Team members as well as the Director of Children's Ministry should help ensure the proper evacuation or lockdown of all children as appropriate.

*Fire:* Volunteers should evacuate everyone in immediate danger, pull the fire alarm and use a portable fire extinguisher if possible. The Front Desk Team should close all doors and windows and check restrooms for children, then go to the parking lot to help account for all children and adults. If possible, take the first aid kit and an iPad with that day's attendance information. Classroom volunteers should evacuate according to their classroom evacuation route and take their blue/red attendance folder with them outside to help account for children and contact parents/conduct dismissal as necessary.

*Tornado:* If the weather alarm sounds, teachers should take all children to their assigned area via their classroom's evacuation route and close the doors around them. Preschool children should be placed under a table or covered by volunteers to protect their heads. Elementary children should pull their knees to their chests, duck their heads, and cover their heads with their hands. Volunteers should help children remain quiet and in the appropriate position until further instructions are given by church staff.

*Illness & Injury:* We ask that parents and volunteers follow the Childcare Exclusion Policy published by DHEC. This includes, but is not limited to, fever, vomiting, and diarrhea within the last 24 hours, as well as communicable skin conditions and flu-like illness. More information can be found at <http://www.scdhec.gov/Health/ChildTeenHealth/ChildcareExclusion/>.

Children that appear to be ill may be brought to the front desk and parents may be asked to pick up the child at the discretion of the Director of Children's Ministry. If your child becomes ill during the week, and may have had contact with other children at church, please contact the Director so that proper precautions (extra cleaning, notifying other parents as necessary, etc.) can be taken.

If an injury occurs while under our care, team members will provide basic first aid (Band-Aids, ice pack, alcohol wipe) and notify parents upon pickup. First aid supplies can be found behind the front

desk, in the cabinets underneath the TV. For injuries requiring more than basic first aid, parents will be notified immediately and appropriate action will be taken. An Incident Report will be completed for any injury requiring medical attention.

Teacher-Child Ratios: We follow ratios recommended by SCDSS for licensed childcare centers.

Child's Age	Staff-to-Child Ratios
Birth to one year	1:5
One to two years	1:6
Two to three years	1:8
Three to four years	1:12
Four to five years	1:17
Five to six years	1:20
Six to twelve years	1:23

Toys/Cleaning: All toys, equipment, and furniture that come into contact with children's mouths are sanitized weekly using the Clorox bleach/water solution recommended by South Carolina's DHEC. Solution recipe and cleaning supplies are located inside cabinets above the sink in the infant, one-, and two-year-old classrooms. Any toy that is broken, of poor quality, or not age-appropriate will be removed from the classroom during periodic inspections by the Director of Children's Ministries. Extra batteries for toys are located in the Children's Ministry Resource Room.

### Classroom Procedures:

Attendance: A volunteer from each classroom should take attendance in the provided folder and return it to the front desk at the end of the hour. In the event of an evacuation, teachers should take their folder outside and use the roster to determine who is present, absent, or needs to be located, and obtain contact information to locate parents and dismiss children as appropriate.

Wednesday night attendance information is kept in each age/grade level's folder. A leader from each class should keep the folders with them throughout the evening.

Bathroom/Diapering: Volunteers should wear latex gloves when changing diapers or assisting young children in the bathroom. Afterwards, changing pads should be sprayed and wiped down with Clorox water (solution recipe posted near diaper changing areas) and the volunteer should wash their hands with soap and warm water. Children using the restroom should be guided to wash their hands with soap and water. Children in the 3-year-old classroom who are not potty-trained may be taken to the 2-year-old class for a diaper change as necessary.

Volunteers should change each child's diaper at least once on Sunday mornings and take children to the bathroom at least once during Sunday School and Kids' Worship. Extra diapers and wipes are available at each diaper changing station. Bathroom doors should remain open at all times. Volunteers should remain in the doorway of the bathroom as much as possible and any assistance given to a child should be given with both the child and teacher in full view. Parents are encouraged to take their children to the bathroom before check-in to minimize the amount of children needing to take individual bathroom trips alone with a volunteer.

Cribs: Clean sheets should be placed in cribs at the beginning of each Sunday morning, and put in the hamper after use. Infant room Sunday School teachers are responsible for washing sheets and bringing them back to church.

Curriculum: Curriculum guides, activity pages, and other relevant teaching resources are available in each classroom, and an extra leader guide for each age level is available at the front desk for substitutes. Some lessons may be emailed to teachers prior to their teaching date if appropriate. Supplies for learning activities and crafts are available in the Children's Ministry Resource Room. Teachers can place a request for additional needed supplies with the Director of Children's Ministry, and they will be provided as appropriate.

Discipline: We strive to create a safe, loving, engaging environment that will minimize behavior issues. However, if a child is struggling to respect others or their surroundings, the teachers will follow the "3 Rs" –

*Remind*: A gentle reminder of classroom expectations will be given to the child, and they will be redirected as appropriate.

*Remove*: If the behavior persists, the child will be removed from the situation. This can include redirecting the child to another area for play, implementing a brief time-out from circle time or table time, and lastly, removal from the classroom. If a child is removed from the classroom entirely, they should be brought to the front desk so that the Director of Children's Ministry can be notified (Registration Team members can leave a note when the Director is not present). The teacher should communicate with parents any time a child is removed from the classroom. The Director/Next Generation Pastor will be available to participate in these conversations as appropriate, and the situation will be documented.

*Restoration*: After the situation has been appropriately handled, teachers and staff should work together with parents and the child towards full restoration so the child can successfully rejoin the classroom environment. We expect all classroom teachers to demonstrate gentleness, forgiveness, and grace by accepting the child back into class without any grudges or gossip about their behavior with other adults.

Aggressive behavior such as biting, kicking, hitting, or spitting will cause immediate removal from the group and parents will be notified upon pickup, or sooner if necessary. Repeated aggressive behaviors will require a meeting between staff, teachers, and parents to determine an appropriate plan of action, which may include a parent attending class with the child for a given amount of time. Incident reports will be completed for any aggressive behavior that causes an injury.

Feeding: Parents are welcome to bring bottles, baby food, and snacks for infants and toddlers to be given during any time the nursery is open. Snacks will be provided during Sunday School only, and on Wednesday nights if it is part of the curriculum. If a child needs a snack outside of these times, parents should speak with both the Director of Children's Ministries and the child's teacher, and accommodations will be made as appropriate. Children with food allergies will have a notification on their name tags. Gluten-free, dairy-free, and nut-free snacks are available and should be provided for all children in a classroom with one of these allergies.

Opened snack items should be sealed inside a Ziploc bag and placed either in the classroom cabinet/closet or back in the snack supply closet when finished. Brooms and dust pans are available in classrooms and the snack supply closet to clean up crumbs, and tables should be wiped down after use. Water pitchers should be emptied and returned to the snack closet along with extra cups, napkins, plates, etc.



Promotion: Children ages 0-2 are transferred to the next class based on both age and development. One year olds should be walking steadily and able to participate in class activities (snack, walking to playground, etc.) before moving up to the toddler room. Two year olds should be able to participate in a short circle time and basic crafts/coloring before moving up to the two year old room. We will also consider “best fit” for each child based on class size and the developmental “culture” of the group (ie, a young one-year-old may not be promoted to a class with mostly older one-year-olds unless there is a need to balance out class sizes). Children ages 3-4 are placed and promoted according to their birthday (must be 3 or 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup>), and elementary students are placed and promoted according to their academic grade level. Promotion Sunday occurs in August, either the week before or after the first day of school.

Scheduling: Planning Center Services is the online/app system used to schedule all Children’s Ministry Team members. Sunday School and Wednesday Night Team members are expected to be present each week with few exceptions, so no reminder emails will be sent out. Kids’ Worship Team members serve on a 6-week rotation, and a reminder email will be sent out each Monday for the upcoming week. Team members should respond *no later than Wednesday* to allow church staff an appropriate amount of time to plan accordingly.

*Planned absences:* Sunday School and Wednesday Night Team members who have an upcoming absence may either schedule the absence through their Planning Center Online profile (blackout dates – doing this will notify the Director of the absence) or by contacting the Director of Children’s Ministries via email/phone. This should be done as far in advance as possible to allow adequate time to reserve substitutes. Kids’ Worship volunteers should look at the rotation schedule and schedule a switch with someone else from the team, then alert the Director of Children’s Ministries of the change. All schedule changes will be updated through Planning Center, so volunteers should refer to that schedule as the most accurate.

*Emergency absences:* In the event of a last minute illness or emergency, please call, text, or email the Director of Children’s Ministry. An approved substitute will be recruited to fill in, but please be aware that you may be asked to fill in on a different date for the person who took the last minute vacancy. Last minute call-outs should be made *no later than 8:30 on Sunday morning and noon on Wednesday; sooner if possible.*

*Substitutes:* Anyone who fulfills the aforementioned qualifications for a Children’s Ministry Team member may serve as a substitute. Teachers should communicate teaching plans with the substitute for all planned absences. Extra curriculum guides are available at the front desk for substitutes to use. The Director of Children’s Ministries and/or Front Desk Team members will assist substitutes in procuring any materials they need for their scheduled class.