

NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Jesus said to His disciples in Mark 10:14, "*Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.*". At Hampton Heights Baptist Church (HHBC), we are committed to opening our arms to children just as Jesus did and pursue a Christ-like love by providing a safe and nurturing environment where discipleship of children takes place. To fulfill this, HHBC offers several programs within the Nursery and Children's Ministries where love and care is shown and God's Word, the Bible, is taught. On Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, HHBC provides a Nursery for children ages 4 and under while parents or guardians may attend worship services and classes. During Sunday morning Bible Fellowship Group time (9:00 am to 10:15 am), HHBC provides BFG classes for Babies and Toddlers, K4/K5 children, and 1st through 5th grade children. On most Sunday evenings (depending on the church schedule), HHBC offers the Awana Program for children grades K4 through 5th grade. And on Wednesday evenings, HHBC offers a Children's Choir program for children grades K5 through 5th grade.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF CHILDREN IN THE NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

1. REGISTRATION AND CHECK-IN FOR BABIES TO K5 ON SUNDAY MORNINGS:

All babies, toddlers, preschoolers and K4/K5 children must be registered in order to be placed in the Babies/Toddlers Bible Fellowship Group (BFG), and K4/K5 BFG classroom, or in the Nursery during the Sunday morning Worship Service. Upon registration and every subsequent check-in time, the parent/guardian will receive a set of labels in which one is to be placed on the back of the shirt of the child and the other for the parent/guardian to keep for later pick-up. Children under the age of 16 are not allowed to drop-off children in the Nursery, Babies/Toddlers BFG and K4/K5 classrooms.

2. PICK UP FOR BABIES TO K5 ON SUNDAY MORNINGS:

Parents of children who are in the Nursery and K4/K5 area must present a pick-up ticket that was given during check-in before a child can be released from the classroom. Children under the age of 16 are not allowed to pick up children from the Nursery or Babies/Toddlers BFG, and K4/K5 BFG classrooms.

3. ALLERGIES:

Parents are asked to notify church volunteers or staff of all known allergies and other medical issues. This information is critical to the protection and safety of the child. Several allergies carry life-threatening symptoms, and proper communication is critical. Children's allergy information can be added to the child's printed name tag at registration for easy identification by volunteers. Hampton Heights Baptist Church is not considered a nut-free environment.

4. MEDICATIONS

All medications must be given by a parent or legal guardian. Volunteers are not allowed to administer medications.

5. DISCIPLINARY PROCESS FOR CHILDREN

Classroom rules and expectations are key to providing a loving and respectful environment for children to learn about God. At times, a child may have trouble following the rules or may display disruptive behavior. In these cases, the following steps will be taken to correct the behavior: The leader or volunteer will explain clearly what the problematic behavior is and how the child can correct it. The leader or volunteer may give the child up to 3 warnings if the child continues to exhibit the same problematic behavior. After the third warning, the child may be removed from the activity. In extreme cases, a member of the HHBC security team may be contacted to retrieve the parent/guardian, and the child will be turned over to the parent/guardian for the remainder of the classroom time. There is a zero tolerance for any behavior that harms or endangers any person, including the child engaging in the behavior, and that child will be immediately removed, and the parent/guardian will be contacted.

6. REGISTRATION OUTSIDE SUNDAY MORNINGS

At various Children Ministry times, such as Awana and VBS, registration is required for all children to attend. Drop-off and pick-up policies may differ, depending on the event and will be communicated to those participating prior to the event.

7. PROMOTION FOR BFG (SUNDAY MORNING)

All children will be promoted according to the following guidelines: Incoming K4 children will be promoted to the K4 and K5 BFG classroom. Incoming 1st Grade children will be promoted into the 1st through 3rd Grades BFG class. Incoming 4th Grade children will be promoted into the 4th and 5th Grades BFG class. Incoming 6th Grade children will be promoted into the HHBC Student BFG class. Promotion cutoff dates will follow the Greenville County Schools guidelines unless otherwise stated.

8. SICKNESS

Parents are asked to not bring children into the Nursery and Children's Ministry classrooms or event if they have, or have had, any of the following symptoms in the previous 24 hours: vomiting, diarrhea, elevated temperature, discolored mucus, rash, or other contagious symptoms. If a child gets sick during meeting times, the parent will be immediately contacted.

9. CLASSROOM SNACK/EATING

A standard snack of crackers and water will be provided for children in the Nursery and K4/K5 classrooms. On occasion your child may be offered food items that relate to the biblical learning activity in the curriculum. When this happens, a sign will be posted on the classroom door. Parents are expected to notify volunteers of any allergy concerns.

10. INJURIES

If a child or student is injured, the supervising volunteer must notify a church staff member. The parent/guardian must be notified of the incident. It may be necessary to contact the parent/guardian immediately after the incident, depending on the severity of the injury. A Hampton Heights Baptist Incident Report must be filled out by the Children's Director or supervising volunteer and kept confidentially on file. A follow-up to the incident will also be conducted by the Children's Director and reported on the Incident Report.

11. PERSONAL ITEMS

Children in the Nursery and K4/K5 classrooms may bring a personal item from home, but items should be labeled with the child's name before dropping off in the classroom. Children in 1st through 5th grades are asked to leave personal items at home, except in the case of special events in which parents/guardians will be notified as to what children will be allowed to bring to the event.

12. ON-CAMPUS POLICY

Unless an event dictates otherwise, parents are expected to be on campus and involved in church-related programming while preschoolers and children are in the care of Hampton Heights Baptist Church.

13. OPEN DOOR POLICY FOR VISITING FAMILIES

A new environment can create a sense of anxiousness for new and visiting children. Therefore, we welcome any parent/guardian to visit their child's classroom during the initial visit. However, a visiting parent is not considered a volunteer, but merely an observer, and at least two HHBC-approved volunteers must be present in the classroom during the visit.

14. CHILDREN'S BAPTISM POLICY

Children wanting to be baptized must have celebrated their 5th birthday, expressed a genuine understanding of the salvation process, be able to communicate personal details related to their salvation transformation, have made a profession of faith, and along with the parent/guardian has spoken with a HHBC staff member. This policy is provided to ensure adequate maturity and a genuine understanding of the salvation process.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEERS IN THE NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

15. PROCESS FOR BECOMING A NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S VOLUNTEER

Those desiring to serve in the Nursery and Children's Ministry and who are at least 18 years of age will follow a 3 step process which will include: 1. Wait a period of six months after joining Hampton Heights as a member, 2. Must complete a Confidential Volunteer Application for the Nursery and Children's Ministry found on the church's website, and 3. Must submit to a Criminal Background Check. *Hampton Heights reserves the right to grant or deny anyone desiring to serve in those respective ministries.*

16. VOLUNTEERING IN THE NURSERY

There must be at least two HHBC volunteer-approved adults serving in the Nursery at all church weekly meeting times (Sunday morning, Wednesday evening, and most Sunday evening). At least one female volunteer must be present in the nursery and no close family members can serve on the same Nursery Team (e.g. husband and wife, siblings, cousins), unless there is a third unrelated, HHBC-approved volunteer present. Also, if a volunteer is not able to serve for their scheduled time, they must, as soon as possible, either make arrangements for another HHBC-approved volunteer to cover and notify the Nursery Coordinator/Children's Director, or they may notify the Nursery Coordinator/ Children's Director of the need to find coverage so that arrangements can be made.

17. TEACHER/LEADERSHIP/VOLUNTEER TRAINING

All Nursery and Children's Ministry volunteers will be required, after becoming approved to serve, to complete sexual awareness training before participating in those programs and are also asked to make every effort to attend training opportunities whenever those opportunities are available.

18. PARENT SERVICE POLICY

Members who are parents of children in the Nursery are asked and expected to serve on a rotation schedule in the Nursery during church meeting times once the six-month grace period has passed and completion of a Confidential Volunteer Application and Criminal Background check.

19. VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION

Volunteers are expected to always provide reasonable supervision and quality care of the children. Children in the Nursery or Children's Ministry should always be accompanied by two volunteers when out of the classroom (e.g. Playground, Family Life Center, etc.) Volunteers are not permitted to take children outside church grounds without the permission of church staff and the parents.

20. VISIBILITY

Volunteers should maintain full visibility to a classroom entrance while with children. (No closed windowless doors, hidden corners, etc.)

21. RESTROOMS

Children grade K5 and younger may be escorted by a female volunteer to the restroom. The volunteer must remain just outside the door and listen for the child in the restroom. The volunteer may enter the restroom to help the child, but only if the child needs assistance and the restroom door and the stall door remains open. Children grades 1st through 5th may walk to the restroom with a volunteer but must ask an adult volunteer for permission before leaving.

22. MANDATORY REPORTING

The Nursery and Children's Ministry of Hampton Heights Baptist Church is considered a mandatory reporting agency. Our staff and volunteers are required by South Carolina state law to report all cases, or suspected cases, of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse and neglect occur when a child is mistreated, resulting in injury or risk of harm.

The abuse can be physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual.

If a volunteer observes any indication of abuse involving a child or is given any indication of such abuse in discussions with a child, they must contact a Hampton Heights staff member to obtain instructions on how to report it to the appropriate state agency.

Each volunteer is expected to be alert to situations when other adults or workers come into contact with children in the church's care. If a volunteer observes any individual (e.g. parent, sibling, co-volunteer) interacting in an abusive manner with a child or student, he/she is expected to immediately contact a staff member.

23. PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

No volunteer may take pictures or video of any child involved in HHBC Nursery and Children's Ministry programs without consent of the parent/guardian. HHBC and volunteers may not post any pictures or video of children on social media and websites without permission of the parent/guardian.

24. OLDER CHILDREN AND STUDENTS IN THE NURSERY

Older children and students (ages 5 to 17) may be allowed in the Nursery during Sunday morning worship service times but must be with an accompanying parent (HHBC-approved volunteer) who is serving in the Nursery at their specified time.

25. BIBLICAL TEACHING

All Nursery and Children's volunteers will teach Biblical truth using age-suitable foundational principles that allow children to learn in both small and large group-age appropriate environments. Children of HHBC will be taught key biblical concepts that God is our Creator (Gen. 1:1), that all people are sinful and separated from a holy God (Rom. 3:23), that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on a cross to save people from their sins (John 3:16) and was raised from the dead three days later and is now in

Heaven interceding for all believers (1 Cor. 15:3-4), that salvation and an eternal relationship with God comes when a person confesses their sinfulness to Him and turns from their sins, turning instead by faith to Jesus to save them from their sins (Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:1-10), and that it is the Holy Spirit who indwells in the new believer (1 Cor. 3:16) and brings about a life of transformation (Gal. 5:22-23). Along with the Bible, BFG teachers will use the provided Gospel Project curriculum and Awana volunteers will utilize the Awana handbooks to teach these truths to children and students.