



# Ministry Handbook

# WVBC Children's Ministry Mission Statement & A Letter To Our Volunteers

West View's mission statement is, "We are here for you!" West View Kids is committed to carrying out the Mission Statement of the church by guiding and discipling children to help them have a relationship with God. We strive to supplement the family in reaching kids and helping them become fully devoted followers of Christ.

*Dear West View Kids Volunteer,*

*Thank you for your willingness to serve the kids at West View Baptist Church (WVBC). You are valued and very much appreciated. We know your time is valuable and we appreciate your service and dedication to reaching the kids of Paragould for Jesus!*

*Our desire is to see children become fully devoted to Jesus and with these Core Values in place we believe they can experience a relationship with God: Children Need Jesus, Children Need Fellowship, Children Are The Next Generation Of Believers, Children Leave Legacies, and Children Need A Safe And Nurturing Environment.*

*This handbook of policies and procedures is designed to protect not only our children but also our volunteers. These policies will be strictly enforced. Please take the time to know and observe the policies listed in this handbook. Once you have read through this handbook, please provide your signature on the "Kids Ministry Handbook Acknowledgment Form" page and return the signed document to the Children's Director.*

*Thank you for partnering with us in Children's Ministry. We are thankful for you!*

*Sincerely, Katie Yarbrough*

*WVBC Children's Director*

## Section 1: Introduction

This handbook exists to provide policies and procedures for the employees and volunteers who work in Children's Ministry at WVBC. Occasionally, changes will be made to the policies and procedures without prior written or oral notice. The visions and values are consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message doctrine, which can be found at <https://bfm.sbc.net>

### Our Core Values

**Children Need Jesus:** We will show the importance of having a true relationship with Jesus through prayer, reading the Bible, and sharing the Gospel with others. We strive to select the most relevant curriculum to teach children about the Bible. Our teachers will make the effort to help children understand how they can apply God's Word to their lives. We believe the Bible is not an old manuscript, but it is the Living Word of God! We teach kids how He can change and impact their lives.

**Children Need Fellowship:** We believe people can't grow spiritually together unless they are growing relationally. The same statement applies to children. We will stress the importance of making learning the Bible fun by ensuring the children are engaging with one another in large and small group activities.

**Children are the Next Generation of Believers:** We will engage relationally and spiritually with the children of the future by creating a trusting environment. We should be people of integrity and do the right thing even when we don't think the kids are watching. We will equip the children and advance them towards their next step in their walk with Christ.

**Children Leave Legacies:** Children in our ministry today, impact and shape the children in our ministry tomorrow. It is important that we help shape and build Godly leaders who will leave an impact on the future children of our ministry and more importantly, our church and beyond!

**Children Need a Safe & Nurturing Environment:** We value the safety of all children. We will strive to make every aspect of children's ministry as safe as possible. We will strive to continue to increase security measures and stay up to date on procedures in order to create a loving and nurturing environment for children.

## Ten Standards of Excellence for a Volunteer

### 1. Christian

Our ultimate goal is to lead kids to Christ and then help them to grow in their faith. Therefore, our volunteers should have a personal relationship with Christ themselves. If you are unsure about where you stand in your relationship with God, do not hesitate to talk to one of the staff at West View.

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life.

### 2. Regular Attendee

We define a regular attendee as someone who has attended our church and has been involved at West View for at least six months. Not only the Children's ministry functions, but also the regular worship services, other church events, and/or fellowship groups.

**Hebrews 10:25** Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

### 3. Encouraging in Speech

Our words should be encouraging, uplifting, and positive. There should be no insults, cut-downs, gossip, slander, or any talk that might cause hurt, especially in the presence of children. Humor should reflect a walk with God.

**Colossians 4:6** Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

**I Peter 4:11** If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.

**Matthew 12:36** But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.

### 4. An Example of Christian Character

Because workers in our Children's Ministry should be examples and a positive influence on the children to whom they minister, they should refrain from activities that do not glorify or honor God, and in "gray areas" should be sensitive to the convictions of others in both their actions and conversation. In your personal life you should be committed to Bible study, prayer, and Christ-like living.

**Titus 2:6-7** Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

## **5. Responsible in Leadership**

This involves attending meetings and training, or communicating when unavailable. Please don't plan events without informing the Children's Director. Give respect to church procedures by following them.

**I Peter 2:17** Show proper respect to everyone; Love the brotherhood of believers.

## **6. Faithful in Commitments Made**

When you give your word, keep it. If you say you will do something, or be somewhere, follow through on it. If something happens that prevents that follow-through, communicate so that those affected can take necessary action.

**I Corinthians 4:2** Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

## **7. Pure in Relationships**

No teacher or volunteer is EVER to be alone with one child, especially in a restroom or outside of a program. This is for your own protection as well as that of the church, and especially for the children.

**Ephesians 5:3** But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity...because these are improper for God's holy people.

## **8. Respectful of Authority**

In word, action, and attitude.

**Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

## **9. In Partnership with Parents**

The spiritual upbringing of children belongs first to the parents. The church's role is to supplement the training in the home. Seek their input, listen to their concerns. Never side with a child against a parent or contradict a parent in front of a child. You are on the parents' team. If you have a concern about a parent or home situation, talk to the Children's Director immediately.

**Proverbs 22:6** Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

## **10. Teachable in Spirit**

This may be the most important trait of any volunteer who is seeking to serve the Lord! We all have weaknesses, but if we remain teachable, there is always hope. We must be willing to listen to constructive criticism and prayerfully consider the input of others. We do not need to always agree, but if we fail to listen we hurt only ourselves and rob ourselves of another chance to grow.

**Proverbs 13:10** Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.

**Proverbs 19:20** Listen to advice and accept instruction and in the end you will be wise.

## **Section 2: Ministry Overview**

### **Nursery Ministry**

We provide a safe and fun learning environment for children, birth through 1 year old. We believe that children of all ages have the ability to learn about God. It may be as simple as God loves you, but they can and will learn about His Word. We provide nursery care every Sunday morning service and occasional events. This allows parents and guardians the opportunity to study the Bible while their loved one is in good care.

### **Preschool Ministry**

Preschool is all children 2 years old up to Kindergarten. All preschoolers have their own LifeGroup created to meet their educational needs. Children's church and extended session is provided for preschoolers during the a.m. worship service.

### **Sunday Morning Small Group**

We provide small group classes for all first through sixth graders during the small group hour at 9am. This is an exciting time for children to fellowship and worship God.

### **Sunday Night Worship**

Sunday night we provide children's worship from 5-6pm while parents attend small Groups, and 6-7pm during Church Service. Children will worship and dig deeper into their Sunday morning lesson.

### **Special Events**

#### **Vacation Bible School-VBS**

Every year we host VBS at our church. The theme changes every time but God's truths never do. This is a ministry for children from first through sixth grade. Preschool and below must have a parent volunteering to participate. It's a weeklong event of crafts, music, food, games, and Bible study.

#### **Competitive Bible Drills**

The church has the privilege of training any fourth through sixth grade boys or girls who are interested in competing in bible drills. The kids learn multiple bible verses, key passages, and all the books of the bible. There are three events in which children may compete. We have a church, regional and state bible drill. Children have to score a certain number before moving on to the next event.

**Children's Camps**

Every year we have summer camp. Summer camp is for children who have completed the third through sixth grades. It is typically four to five days long and covers a wide variety of spiritual disciplines.

**Children's Outings**

The church will provide multiple outings throughout the year. Kids can sign up when these are available. These outings will typically consist of a bus ride (with sponsors and adult volunteers) to help the kids engage in fellowship outside of church. We might go to a pumpkin patch, a park, skating, etc. The parents will always be notified to allow kids the opportunity to sign up.

## **Section 3: Children's Ministry Structure**

### **Service Coordinator**

There is a service coordinator for every weekly event that takes place. There will be one for preschool and one for the children's department. The service coordinator's job is to assist the teachers working during the service. If any problems arise, contact the service coordinator and the coordinator will contact the Children's Director if needed.

### **Appeals**

Care should be taken to direct comments, complaints, or suggestions to the appropriate person, keeping the biblical procedure outlined in Matthew 14 in mind. Never complain about someone to others—that is gossip. Always go directly to the source and seek understanding first, the restoration of the relationship or situation. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, please feel free to then contact the Children's Director. We are always open to your ideas, questions, or concerns. Unity does not equal agreeing, it means ministering in love.

### **Volunteer Qualifications**

- a. All volunteers should be members and regular attendees of the church for at least six months before being appointed to any leadership position in the Children's Ministry.
- b. All volunteers must be 18 years of age or older unless working under the supervision of an adult who has met the qualifications in these policies.
- c. All volunteers in our Children's Ministry must have a current signed application on file with the church.

### **Application Process**

- a. Complete Application: A Children's Ministry application is available from the church office. Every volunteer in the Children's Ministry must complete and turn in.
- b. Background Checks: Security background checks for persons 18 years and older will be conducted. The results will be reviewed by authorized church staff.
- c. Confidentiality: All personal information voluntarily disclosed, the result of the security background check, or the refusal of any person to participate in a program or activity in lieu of such disclosure requirements will be considered confidential. The results of the background check will be reviewed only by authorized church staff, who will determine if further review should be done.
- d. Storage of Confidential Records: The Director will maintain a secure facility in the church office for all ministry applications. The results from the security background checks will be stored electronically off site. Volunteers' profiles and backgrounds check may require update from time to time, but only if the worker is still a current volunteer. Only authorized personnel will have access to these files.
- e. Volunteers are reviewed on a regular basis for re-appointment to their current or new positions

- f. All volunteers must have the approval of the Children's Director before being placed in any position of ministry to children.
- g. Volunteers who are not approved for working with children for one reason or another will be graciously assisted in finding another place of ministry in the church.

### **Volunteer Identification**

- a. All volunteers must wear the appropriate identification whenever serving in our Children's Ministry. Please make this a high priority.
- b. If you forget or lose your identification, please go to the check in station and request another badge.
- c. Do not allow unauthorized individuals into your classroom or trust children to their care. Please direct them to your Service Coordinator or Children's Director.

## **Classroom Policies and Guidelines**

### **1. Illness**

We have a well-child policy. We do not provide care for ill children. If a child is ill, that child should not be accepted into the classroom. If a child is already in the classroom and you notice signs or symptoms of illness, get your service coordinator. We may need to page the parent to come and remove the child from the classroom. These guidelines are for the protection of all of our children. If you are uncomfortable enforcing these guidelines, call for your service coordinator.

If you notice a child with any of these symptoms, have your service coordinator make a decision about whether the child can go into class

- Fever (Temperature > 100 unless from a noncontagious source. Example: teething, ear infection)
- Cough/congestion in presence of fever as stated above
- Vomiting and /or diarrhea in last 24 hours
- A rash of any unknown or contagious origin

### **2. Inconsolable**

It is normal for a child to be upset when his/her parent leaves, especially if that child is new to our fellowship. It takes some children weeks or even months to fully adjust. If the child cries, the sooner the parent leaves, the sooner the child will begin to adjust. If the child is inconsolable for an extended period of time, the Director may page the parent. Before the child sees the parent, the service coordinator will meet the parent in the hall to discuss what they would like to do. In some instances, the parent and service coordinator may decide that leaving the child in class is the best course of action.

### **3. Disobedience**

Discipline is not meant to be punishment. Instead, it is a time for teaching—the very kind of teaching Jesus did with His disciples. Teaching of this kind is two-fold: first, to immediately stop inappropriate behavior; second, to help the child find another, more appropriate way to behave. Here are some procedures for guiding behavior.

- Prevent problems before they occur—the best way to avoid trouble is to stop it before it happens.
- Set clear limits. Use the word “no” as little as possible because it does not teach the child appropriate behavior. Instead, give the child information. For example, “We do not bite Timmy.” Save the word “no” for dangerous situations.
- Instruct behavior. Briefly describe appropriate actions.

- Redirect behavior. Try offering the child another activity.
- Offer a choice. When you say, “You may play with the truck or the car. Which one do you want?”, you are giving the child a choice.
- Acknowledge feelings. Use the words “I see...” often. Show the child that you understand.
- Talk through the problems. Here is a good example: “Ryan wants the truck. Timmy wants the truck. What can we do? Here is another truck. Which one would you like, Ryan?”
- If you have tried redirection and talking through the problems without success, then it is time to call in the service coordinator. It is the service coordinator’s responsibility to talk with the children’s pastor about behavioral issues. The children’s pastor will then talk to the parents in a private setting.

A few tips to keep in mind:

1. Acknowledge a child’s good behavior.
2. Talk about the action and not the child’s personality.
3. Remember that 70% of communication is non-verbal.
4. When addressing a child’s behavior, always lower your voice.
5. Realize that a child’s behavior may simply be a cry for your attention.
6. Avoid hurrying a child. A hurried child is usually a frustrated child.
7. Pray!

If misbehavior continues:

1. The teacher should seek the assistance of a service coordinator. The student should be taken just outside the classroom and asked to state the offense and the desired behavior. A warning should be given that if the misbehavior continues, the parent will be paged.
2. If after returning to class the student continues to misbehave, the parent should be paged to address the child’s behavior. In some instances, the parent may be asked to remove the child from class.
3. Because children have short memories from week to week, it may be necessary to repeat steps outlined above. Always give the child a “clean slate” when he/she returns to class after discipline. Do not hold a grudge; take just as long as last time to discipline.
4. Ultimately a child will not be permitted to disrupt a class continually. In time, and after much positive effort, a child may be removed from a classroom due to misbehavior, but only after the service coordinator and possibly the Children’s Director approve this measure. It is a last resort, but it will be used when absolutely necessary.

We are challenged by Scripture to keep our standards of discipline high. For that reason, we will always tell our parents if we have to speak to a child for disobedience in the classroom.

**Never spank or strike a child in class.** Correction is the responsibility and privilege of the parents, who should lovingly correct their own children. Never embarrass the child or allow the parent to do so. Do not condemn the child but address the behavior. Remember to point them to the right way. God's Word is our guide and our standard. *Train up a child in the way he should go...* **Proverbs 22**

**NOTE:** If your own child needs such discipline, it is to be done in private, never within a program. Observers may not know it is your child.

#### **4. Teacher/Student Ratios**

We will try to maintain the following teacher/student ratios. However, at all times there will be a minimum of two adults in a classroom.

Nursery:	(0-12 months)	1:2
	(1-2 year olds)	1:2
Preschool:	(3-5 years)	1:8
	Kindergarten	1:10
Elementary	(1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> grade)	1:15

If the ratio continuously exceeds these limits, a new class may need to be formed to ensure the safety and quality of the education for each child.

Classrooms and teaching areas should never be locked while in use. Lights should remain on at all times unless a video is being played. Please inform your service coordinator ahead of time if you are planning to show a video.

#### **5. Visible Ministry Policy**

1. As stated in the standards of excellence, no worker is ever to be alone with a child.
2. At least two workers should be present in the teaching environment at all times.
3. If a child arrives early, the parent must stay until a second worker is present.
4. When holding a private talk with a child, especially of the opposite sex, be sure to sit in view of an open door.

#### **6. Physical Contact**

Physical contact and affection are important to a child's physical and emotional development. It is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. The following guidelines are acceptable forms of contact:

1. An arm around the shoulder
2. Walking hand-in-hand to and from places for safety
3. Brief side hugs
4. Pat on the back or shoulder

5. Handshakes, high fives, knuckles

**Leaders should NEVER:**

1. Be alone with a child
2. Never touch a child in anger or disgust
3. Never touch a child in a way that could be sexually suggestive
4. Never touch a child between the navel and knee
5. Never touch a child's private parts
6. No lap sitting (ages 3 and up)

Do not ever force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. We must respect a child's wish to not be touched, except in an event where the child's safety is at risk or the safety of others.

**7. Restroom Policies**

1. Never be alone with a child in a restroom
2. Make sure there are no adults in the restroom prior to letting the child enter the restroom
3. Adults may assist the child with their clothing in an open doorway. Help the child but allow them to do as much on their own as possible
4. If a child needs assistance, another volunteer must be present
5. Do not allow the children to "watch" while another child is using the restroom.
6. Do not send very young children into the restroom with older children. Take them in age appropriate groups.
7. In bathroom emergencies—**2 year olds and younger**—Use disposable gloves when handling soiled clothing. Soiled clothing should be placed in a plastic bag and labeled with the child's name. **3 years old and up**—Teacher/ helpers may not change the child unless a diaper bag with extra clothes has been given to the teacher. No bag? The parent must be paged. The child, if capable, may change him/herself if necessary.

**8. Diaper Changing Policies**

1. Only a female leader may change a diaper
2. Diapers can only be changed in the presence of another leader
3. Use a clean diaper from the child's diaper bag
4. Put latex gloves on before changing a child's diaper
5. Discard gloves and diaper into a sealed trash bag
6. Wash your hands before and after changing a child's diaper
7. Clean the changing table with disinfectant spray

# Kids Ministry Handbook Acknowledgement Form

*I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the policies and procedures listed in this handbook. I understand that by failing to read and sign this handbook, I forfeit the opportunity to serve in the Children's Ministry (ages Nursery-6th Grade) at West View Baptist Church. West View Baptist Church reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation with West View any volunteer or employee who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child. West View Baptist Church also reserves the right to dismiss or exclude from serving with minors any volunteer who has been accused of child abuse of any kind.*

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*Signature*

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*Date*

