



Volunteer Handbook

VBC Children's Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Children's Ministry at Voyagers Bible Church. Our vision for VBC Kids is to equip kids and families to glorify God by loving Jesus, each other, and the world. Our goal is only achievable through the impact of people like you on the lives of these kids. God has given you a unique story and skill set and He has given you a chance to use these to display God to kids at VBC. We are so grateful that you have joined us in helping these children see how their story relates to God's Big Story (God's interaction with people since the beginning of time) and to build a life-long relationship with Jesus.

Beyond our Sunday and Wednesday worship times with the kids, we strongly believe in equipping guardians. The importance we place on the family is because this is where God places importance in developing Christians (Deut 6; Ps 78). Our VBC gathering times are incredibly important as we play a supporting role to the work God is doing in the kids through their family.

This handbook is designed to help minimize anything that would try and interfere with the presentation of who God is. Whether it is a behavioral issue, a safety concern, or anything else, we hope that the procedures and policies found within provide you with tools to use and steps to follow so that we can return to our primary goal. These procedures and policies are here for the safety of the families and for your protection. If you have any questions, please ask a VBC

Children's Ministry Staff Member. You can find their contact info below.

We are grateful for you! Our hope and prayer is that your calling to minister to kids and guardians will be a life-giving, meaningful, and a spiritually forming experience.

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Volunteer Expectations

- a. Commit to pray for the children and for yourself each week.
- b. Attend the worship service in the sanctuary regularly.
- c. Maintain a growing relationship with Jesus.
- d. Please be at your area 15 minutes before in order to gather supplies you need, receive any additional instructions for the morning and, most importantly, so guardians can drop off their kids.
- e. If you are not able to make it to your scheduled volunteer time, please let your VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member know as soon as you do so we can make other arrangements.
- f. Photo policy
Pictures of any kind of VBC Kids attendees should not be taken without guardian permission and pictures of any child for personal use is prohibited. Photos and names of children should not be uploaded to any social media without parental consent.
- g. Please do not use your cell phone when around the kids unless if it is to contact a guardian, your VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member, or to use it as a ministry tool.
- h. Please wear comfortable and modest clothing. Remember you may be sitting on the floor, playing a game, or setting an example for the kids.
- i. Voyagers Bible Church is a non-smoking campus

Classroom Guidelines

Discipline

Process-

Step One: Address the issue

- a. Redirect the child to the appropriate behavior. For example, instead of just saying “stop,” help the child know what they should be doing.
- b. If the child is not responding to correction, pull the child away from the group.
 - i. Ask the child what they did, explain the appropriate behavior to them, pray, then return to the group.
- c. Remember to be clear and loving.
- d. If you do not feel comfortable with this process, get your VBC Children’s Ministry Staff Member.

Step Two: Get your VBC Children’s Ministry Staff Member

- a. The VBC Children’s Ministry Staff Member will go through the process above with the child. If the issue persists, the leader will go to the next step.

Step Three: Get the guardian or have you VBC Children’s Ministry Staff Member get the guardian

- a. If the behavior lasts three weeks in a row, the guardian must stay with the child during the service.

Lost and Found

There are two Lost and Found Locations

1. If an item is left in the Cove it can be found in the Cove.
2. If an item is left in the Early Childhood area (including the Playground), it can be found in the hallway by the Beach House.

Children with Special Needs

For children with special needs, guardians have two options:

1. Guardians can stay with their child during the children’s service.
2. Guardians can work with the VBC Children’s Ministry to develop a plan to best accommodate the child’s needs

Safety and Procedures

Check-In

Every child who comes to VBC Kids is checked-in using our computer system located in front of the MPR. After they are checked-in, they are issued a name tag that includes the child's first and last name, the service and class attending, and any medical conditions or information guardians want you to know (e.g.: allergies). If a child has a name tag that is highlighted in black, then you need to pay particular attention to the message area on the tag for any important information pertaining to that child. If any child comes to class without a nametag, please send them to the check-in station or the late check-in station (located next to the Beach House) to obtain one. Also, please inform the guardians if the information on the tag is inaccurate so they can make changes in the system.

Each tag has a randomly generated alphanumeric code (e.g. AA1). At check in, the guardian is given a tag that contains the matching alphanumeric code. This guardian tag must be shown to the individual in charge of checking out children in each class before the parent, guardian(s), grandparent, or family friend can remove the child from the class. If the receipt is lost, then the individual picking up the child can show their driver's license and the VBC Kids Missing Nametag Form (found in each room) can be filled out before release.

Why it is important

1. Check-in- This is important primarily so we are sure that we are releasing the child to the right person. This is especially important if the parents are going through a custody dispute. Though we may have released a child to their guardian, we may not have released the child to the guardian with custody.
2. Check-Out- Kids are under our supervision until they are released to their guardian. Collecting the nametag from the child and the guardian tag from the guardian allows us to demonstrate that supervision has been given back to the guardian.

No one-on-one

- i. A volunteer cannot be alone with a child under ANY circumstances. This is for the safety of the child and for your protection.
- ii. If it is the case that there is only one child in your group (e.g. the last child during pick-up), stand in the doorway or hallway while the child remains in the room or have the child join another nearby class while you wait for the guardian in that child's assigned classroom.

Bathroom Policy

Early Childhood

1. One volunteer is not allowed to take one child by themselves to the restroom. It is recommended that a group goes together to the restroom in order to avoid one-on-one time. Please get assistance from your VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member if you are not able to comply.
2. Junior Helpers are not permitted to take kids to the bathroom without an adult helper present.

Elementary

1. Children may use the restroom by themselves. It is the role of the volunteer to check to make sure the restroom does not have an adult in the restroom in order to avoid one-on-one time.
2. Leaders will walk kids to the restroom or watch them from the hallway two at a time.

Recommended Ratios

- i. Infants: 3 children to 1 volunteer
- ii. Toddlers: 4 children to 1 volunteer
- iii. 2/3 year olds: 5 children to 1 volunteer
- iv. 4/5 year olds: 7 children to 1 volunteer
- v. Elementary: 7 children to 1 volunteer

Guardians in the classroom

- i. Guardians are allowed to be in the classroom with their child to observe and help their child get adjusted. Sometimes, however, this is not the best practice for the child. If the child is not engaging due to the presence of the guardians, encourage the guardian to attend the worship service in the sanctuary. Ask your VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member to have this conversation if needed.
- ii. Any guardian who is in the classroom for more than three weeks will be required to fill out a background check.

Biting Policy

- i. Biting is a natural stage in a child's development. Toddlers may bite as a way to express their feelings in a way that feels natural to them without having developed language capabilities.
- ii. Procedure
 1. Interrupt the biting with a firm, "No, we do not bite people."
 2. Comfort the child that was bit.
 3. Volunteers will remove the child that bit from the situation and re-direct to something else. Volunteers should remain calm and not overreact.
 4. Notify your VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member so guardians of both children can be notified.
 5. If this happens again, follow the discipline procedures on page 3.

Missing Child Policy

In the event that a child should go missing from your care, contact a VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member. The staff member will notify our Security Team immediately and begin the protocol for search.

Major Injuries

- i. Remain calm and call 911.
- ii. Have someone contact the closest paid staff member. They will call Security for you.
- iii. Call the guardian(s).
- iv. Do not move the injured child, and never leave the child unattended.
- v. Clear the area and move other children into a surrounding area with supervision.
- vi. Document your actions in an Incident Report including your signature, the date, time, symptoms, actions taken, and by whom. Document as many details as possible, and have the guardian(s) sign the report. Ask the guardian(s) if they would like a copy of the report.

First Aid

- i. First Aid kits are available in every room.
- ii. If a child sustains a minor injury, you may only clean and apply a cold compress and/or bandage. Please keep in mind that we are not authorized to dispense any over the counter or prescription medications, including ointments or creams.

Vomit and Urine

- i. Never touch bodily fluids.
- ii. Contact a VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member.
- iii. Move other people out of the area.
- iv. Call guardian(s) to remove the child out of the classroom.

Allergies

- i. Allergies can be life-threatening. Please be observant if a child has an allergy and/or allergic reaction.
- ii. If a child has an allergy noted on their registration tag, please ask the guardian for additional information regarding the allergy and if special instructions are needed.

EpiPens

- i. If a child should require the use of an EpiPen during an allergic reaction, please contact the paid staff member in your department and call 911 immediately.
- ii. Complete an Injury Report, document as many details as possible, and have guardian(s) sign. Ask the guardian if they would like a copy of the report.

Sick Child Policy

- i. If a child in your area becomes ill beyond or more serious than what has already been covered:
 1. Keep the child from intimate contact with other children and staff. Remove and sanitize toys and other items they may have put into their mouth.
 2. WASH HANDS!
 3. Contact your VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member who will contact the guardian(s).
 4. Continue to observe the child for new or worsening symptoms.
 5. If the child does not respond to you, is having trouble breathing, or is having a seizure, call 911 and contact Security Team using the walkie-talkie found in every Children's Ministry room.
 6. Document your actions in an Incident Report including date, time, symptoms, actions taken, by whom, and be sure to add your signature.

Emergency Procedures

Fire:

Step 1: Fire Alarm Sounds

- a. When you hear the alarm, or if you see fire in your room, evacuate to your designated location in an orderly manner. Take every alarm seriously. There are no false alarms.

Step 2: Building Evacuation to Designated Location (Located on map in classroom)

- a. Teachers and students will then evacuate the building according to the location located in the Classroom Evacuation Map.
- b. TAKE ROSTERS WITH YOU TO MAKE SURE THE NUMBER OF KIDS YOU HAVE PRESENT MATCHES YOUR ROSTER.
- c. A guardian may pick up their child outdoors only if rooms cannot be reentered. Otherwise, checkout will continue as normal back inside the classroom.

Step 3: Return to Class Upon Approval by Children's Pastor

- a. The Children's Pastor will check the rooms, and then give approval once rooms are clear for occupancy.

Earthquake:

Step 1: Drop, Cover, and Hold On Drill

- a. Perform Drop, Cover, and Hold On. DROP to the ground, take COVER by getting under a sturdy piece of furniture, and HOLD ON until the shaking stops. If there is not a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms, and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- b. Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture.
- c. Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside.
- d. DO NOT use the elevator.

Step 2: Building Evacuation to Designated Location (Located on map in classroom) Follow the same procedure as the Fire Evacuation section

Step 3: Return to Class upon Approval by Children's Pastor

- a. The Children's Pastor will check the rooms and then give approval once rooms are clear for occupancy.

Intruder and Lock Down

- i. Every classroom, VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member, and security team member has a walkie-talkie in case of an emergency.
- ii. One main use of the walkie-talkie is for the purpose of informing the Children's Ministry if there is someone on campus who should not be or is presenting a threat to the kids.
- iii. If you notice someone who might fit this description, call for the Security Team on the walkie-talkie. They will walk you through what information they need and what steps to take, but remember to remain calm at all times.
- iv. If someone matches this description, the Security team will say "LOCKDOWN" over the walkie-talkie. This means:
 1. Lock the Door
 2. Turn off the Lights
 3. Remain Quiet and out of sight from the windows
 4. Silence any cell phones
- v. The walkie-talkies are set to the correct channel and no action is required to listen. If you are required to talk on them (which, unless prompted or needed to provide important information, it is probably best to not talk over them), press the button on the side to speak. After you press the button, speak clearly into the walkie-talkie and release the button when done.

Child Abuse

Reporting Child Abuse

1. Any volunteer or paid staff who has reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected MUST follow the following guidelines:
 - a. All VBC Children's Volunteers are Mandatory Reporters. This means you are required by law to inform your VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member if you suspect any form of child abuse.
 - b. The VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member will assess the situation.
 - c. If a report is deemed necessary, the Children's Pastor will file the report with Child Protective Services.

Procedure Following the Suspicion of Misconduct

1. In the case of any accusation of abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behavior by a VBC Children's Ministry Staff Member or Volunteer, the following actions will be taken:
 - a. Immediate removal of the volunteer/staff person from their position of responsibility, pending investigation by the Children's Pastor.
 - b. Immediate steps will be taken to seek counsel, assistance, and/or help for the victim(s).

Guidelines to Providing a Safe Environment:

1. Men are not permitted to change diapers or take girls into the bathroom. If anyone (woman or man) takes a child to the bathroom, they are to provide as much privacy for the child as possible. Volunteers may only enter a restroom stall when it is absolutely necessary to assist the child, and the door must remain ajar.
2. Classroom doors must remain unlocked when activities are occurring.
3. Use proper judgment when having physical contact with a child. Touching and/or hugging should be done in the presence of another adult in an open classroom. Avoid tickling.

Thank you again. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the VBC Children's Ministry Staff.