

PCC policies and procedures

Basic Security

Worker approval and Identification

All children's ministry team members must have proper identification at all times while they are in the PCCKids area. Every team member should be checked in and wearing their name tag sticker at all times.

No one is allowed in any area of PCCKids unless they are picking up/checking out a child, they are a Children's ministry team member, or they are PCC staff or church leadership. All of our team members must have a completed background check on file. If you see someone attempting to enter the area who you are unfamiliar with, please approach them and find out who they are. Ask politely if there is anything you can do to help them, or if they are looking for someone or something. Under no circumstances should you let them into an area where the kids are, unless they have a good reason (team member, parent/grandparent dropping off or picking up their child) or have proper identification.

Two Worker Policy

It is our goal that a minimum of two workers will be in attendance at all times when minors are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during a class session. All of our youth classrooms have windowed doors that allow full view of the classroom at all times. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity, with the exception of a counseling appointment. All offices in our building used for counseling must have windowed doors.

Check-in/Check-out Procedures

Minors in 8th grade and younger, participating in our programs, are required to check in at our centralized check-in location.

- At check-in, each child will be recorded as present and given an adhesive name tag to place on their clothing. The tag includes first name, grade level, and pick-up ticket number.
- At check-in, parents/guardians will be given a second tag with just the alpha numeric pick-up code on it. These are unique and different every week.
- To check-out a child, parents/guardians must present their ticket at their child's class location, before their child can be released to them.

Minors in 4th grade and older may check themselves in and go directly to their specified class location. They will be released at the end of class to locate their parents.

Criminal Background Check

A national criminal background check is required for all employees and team members over the age of 18, who:

- participate in any of our programs relating to minors;
- will be involved in overnight activities with minors;
- are involved in one-on-one mentorship of minors;
- have occasional one-on-one contact with minors;
- are involved in the transportation of minors;

Before a background check is run, prospective volunteers will be asked to sign a form authorizing PCC to run the check. The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in confidence on file at PCC, and renewed every 2 years. Students under the age of 18 will not need to complete the criminal background check form, but must work under the supervision of a screened adult.

Mandatory Reporting

All staff and children's team members of PCC are considered mandatory reporters responsible to follow state regulations in reporting child abuse, which state that any suspected abuse needs to be reported immediately to the Children and Family Minister, who will then be responsible for reporting it to the state.

Restroom Guidelines

- Minors under Kindergarten age should be escorted to the restroom in groups and should never be taken alone.
- Workers should inspect the restrooms to make sure they are not occupied by an adult, before allowing children (of any age) to enter.
- Workers should remain outside the restroom until all children (of any age) are finished and escort them back to class.
- If a child needs assistance while in the restroom, a worker should first make an effort to find another worker to accompany them inside. If none are available, one adult worker may enter the restroom, making sure the outside door and the restroom stall door are both propped open while helping the child.
- Children in Kindergarten and older do not need an escort to the restroom, but classroom teachers will be encouraged to schedule bathroom breaks during the lesson time to ensure that kids will not be wandering the hallways alone. The on-duty hall monitor will ensure that these children return to their class once finished in the restroom.

Transporting Minors

The following safety rules are designed for each church sponsored trip or activity requiring the use of vehicles, whether church-provided or privately owned vehicles. It is the ministry leader and driver(s) responsibility to ensure the following rules are followed:

- Student-driven vehicles will NOT be allowed as official church transportation.
- All adult drivers including parents, staff, etc. MUST complete a background screen.
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times.
- No hazardous, disruptive activity or noise will be permitted while the vehicle is moving.
- All passengers must follow the driver's requests.
- Safety is the priority on every trip.

PCC classroom policy and discipline

Guideline for Discipline

PCC believes that the staff and team members must, “Train up a child in the way he should go” (Prov 22:6) with love and caring concern.

- PCC will not use corporal punishment (i.e. spanking, slapping, etc.) or discipline through humiliation. If a minor needs correction, privileges will be taken away.
- An age appropriate “time-out” away from the activity in progress (in general, one minute per year of child) will be given. If the problem persists, the parent/guardian must be contacted. All minors shall be disciplined in the same manner, as appropriate.
- Children who exhibit aggressive tendencies such as biting, teasing, bullying etc. will be closely watched. It is our commitment to assist parents/guardians in working on the cause of the behavior instead of the symptom. In the event habitual aggression is displayed, parents/guardians will be notified to develop a plan of action for dealing with the behavior.

These basic behavioral guidelines are set to encourage respect for team members and ministry staff involved in the children’s ministry.

- Boundary setting and options are the domain of the teachers.
- Make no threats.
- Do not withhold snacks for behavior control.
- It is acceptable for a minor to choose not to participate. However, the minor must remain under adult supervision.
- Do not leave a minor alone outside the classroom, or in another room. Do not leave a minor alone with one worker.

Nursery and Preschool

Discipline is tricky with these little ones, and very limited for those under the age of 2 or 3. For behavior problems, there is no hitting, kicking, or biting allowed. You may warn a child once before notifying a parent or responsible party. If, after one warning is given, the child is still acting out, please notify the Hall Monitor or Children and Family Minister, who will then notify the parent to come pick up their child. **You may not use physical force in any way to discipline a child!** Do not spank, demean, yell or raise your voice at a child at any time. As much as possible, follow the same three over-arching guidelines as in Elementary.

Elementary

In the Elementary children's area, there are three basic over-arching rules which all children need to follow. There are many specific rules and guidelines that will fall under each of these umbrellas, which is determined at the discretion of Children's ministry team members.

1. Respect others

The golden rule applies here. Things like calling names, physical acts (hitting, biting, etc.) and things like that should be discouraged. A good guideline to follow is "keep your hands to yourself."

2. Respect yourself

We want children to have a healthy view of themselves. They also shouldn't attempt things that might cause them bodily harm.

3. Respect PCCKids

The children shouldn't attempt to break things, or deface church property. Encourage children to use the toys, facilities and games with respect and without damaging equipment.

Should a child fail to follow any of these rules or guidelines, use a 3-strike system to discipline them.

- 1st offense: verbally tell the child that they have 1 strike. Let them know if they get to three, their parent will be notified and they will be sent out of the children's area to sit with them.
- 2nd offense: verbally tell the child again, they now have 2 strikes. Have them sit off to the side just outside of the classroom and notify the Hall Monitor. The teacher or hall monitor will talk with them, to see what the issue is and possibly help resolve it. At the discretion of the teachers and/or Children and Family Minister, the child can resume classroom activities.
- 3rd offense: verbally tell the child that they've now received a 3rd strike. Notify the Hall Monitor or Children and Family Minister and have them sit off to the side until the parent can be notified to come and pick them up.

Wellness Guidelines

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all the children participating in Plainview Church of Christ programs. This policy is intended to cover a broad spectrum of communicable diseases, including, but not limited to; COVID-19, chicken pox, flu, hepatitis, conjunctivitis, colds, as well as HIV and AIDS.

- Minors with any type of communicable disease (such as viral infections) that are producing active symptoms of coughing, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, green or yellow runny nose, eye infection (etc.) should not be admitted into any of the PCC Ministry areas.
- Minors with open skin lesions or other open wounds should not be admitted unless the wound is suitably bandaged; volunteers wearing protective gloves should immediately bandage any open wounds suffered during church activities.
- Protective gloves and disinfectants are kept readily available. If accidental contact with bodily fluids occurs, wash contaminated area immediately.
- If a minor begins to present any of the above symptoms while already in PCC care, he/she should be separated from the other children, and the parent or guardian contacted immediately.

Sick Child Policy

In an effort to provide a healthy environment, we ask all parents to keep children at home when any of the following symptoms are observed:

- *Vomiting
- *Excessive coughing
- *Questionable rash
- *Green or yellow runny nose
- *Diarrhea
- *Discharge in or around the eyes
- *Any communicable disease
- *Fever
- *Positive test for COVID-19, or close contact with a positive COVID-19 test

If a child becomes ill during service, the parent or responsible party must be notified immediately. A child must be free of any of these symptoms for at least 24 hours in order to be admitted into any part of the children's area. For the protection of every child, and to ensure we can find a substitute in a reasonable amount of time, we ask that all children's workers follow these same guidelines.

Medical Procedures

Typically an injury can be treated with a little loving attention, a cool cloth, a little first aid cream and a band-aid. Be sure you know where the first aid kit is located in each classroom. Whenever you treat a child, please complete a "Parent Notification Card" found near the first aid kit. Be sure to talk to the Children and Family Minister and then to the parent on their arrival letting them know how it happened and how the incident was treated. Keep in mind we are NOT authorized to dispense any over the counter or prescription medications. In the event a child needs more attention than we can provide, the parent must be notified. Exceptions to the medication policy are:

- Parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions) can make arrangements with the Children and Family Minister to administer medication in the event of an emergency.
- Minors that participate in over-night events can obtain written parental permission for PCC personnel to administer over-the-counter or prescription medication.

Serious injuries involving broken bones, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness or other serious bodily injury should be treated as follows:

Stay calm and keep children and the injured person as calm as possible. Contact the Children and Family minister, either in person or via text message. Speak calmly and assure the child. Do NOT move the injured child, and do not leave them. The Children and Family Minister will contact the parents and advise them of the child's situation and procedure being followed. Get doctor/hospital preference from the parents. A staff member will follow up with the parents as needed. All team members involved in the emergency should write up an "Injury Report" detailing what happened immediately follow the emergency. Only if the child needs immediate medical attention should you call 911. If you do call, be sure to notify a PCC staff member and the Children and Family Minister as soon as possible.

Physical contact guidelines

Nursery and Preschool

Physical contact should be limited to when a child enters the classroom, leaves the classroom or is in need of comfort. Contact can be rocking, patting the back, carrying, or talking to the child. Children under the age of 2 should be held firmly and over a padded area. NEVER swing or shake a child. NEVER lift a child by the arms or legs. NEVER handle a child roughly.

Elementary children K-6th grade

Physical contact with children should be minimal and only in the presence of others adults. Appropriate touching should be limited to handshakes, high fives, “knuckles,” brief side hugs or brief touch on the shoulder. Two team members need to be present in all closed area circumstances. Windows on doors should never be obstructed. Team members may not have children sit on their lap unless to comfort and ONLY in the presence of another team member.

Nursery rooms and room usage

Infants and 2's rooms

- Toys - Please place any toys that are used orally in the “To be cleaned” bin. All other toys should be ready for use.
- Diapers - All babies age 4-23 months must be changed by a parent or gaurdian. All BMs must be changed immediately.
- Snacks - Please limit snacks to what the Children’s Ministry department provides. Be especially mindful of allergies! Only use marked bottles and cups, to ensure the right drink for each child. Breast milk must be clearly marked with both the mother and the child’s first and last name, done by the mother.