

Policy for Children & Youth Ministries at Cornerstone

Kids @ Cornerstone

1. Introduction

These policies for the running of a children's program for 4-12-year-olds on Sundays at Cornerstone Church come under the Cornerstone Church Trust Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Taken together, they outline our approach to safe ministry at Cornerstone. The goal is to protect children and volunteers whilst running great ministries for children and allowing parents/guardians to benefit from the church's teaching.

All people involved in this ministry on a regular basis will be required to have signed that they have read the following information before commencing work.

2. Description of Ministry and Leaders

2.1 Description

Kids @ Cornerstone is the Sunday ministry at Cornerstone Church for children aged 4-12 years old.

The children meet together at the beginning of the Sunday program before breaking apart for age-appropriate teaching.

2.2 Leaders

- Ministry Coordinator – responsible for all children's work policies and scheduling of volunteers
- Ministry Supervisor – responsible for individual sessions and has oversight over the children, Leaders, Support and Helpers. The Supervisor reports to the Ministry Coordinator.
- Leader and Trainee Leader – Responsible for the control and safety of children placed in their care. Reports to and assists the supervisor.
- Support Leader – Responsible for assisting the supervisor and leaders. Reports to the supervisor.

All Leaders must be approved before commencing work. They will wear their lanyard to indicate this.

Other adults may visit the classes to observe but must not be left alone with children without an approved Leader being present. The Ministry Supervisor must approve of adults visiting

classes and note who visited the Ministry Coordinator.

2.3 Ratios

One Children's Worker is needed for every 8 children, with a minimum of 2 needed at all times. In the case of using more than one classroom for the program, there will always be a minimum of two Children's Workers in each room.

These ratios do not take into consideration children with special needs (such as Down syndrome, autism). The ratio for these children will need to be decided on an individual basis by the Cornerstone Children's Ministry Coordinator, in consultation with the parent or guardian of the child.

2.4 Use of Helpers

It is understood that for practical purposes it will be necessary from time to time to have help from other people to fill in for absentees at late notice or, for example, provide extra assistance on a busy day.

These people will be working either in the presence of or under the direct supervision of a kids supervisor so they will not be expected to have undergone Police Vetting.

Children's Work approval must be obtained if:

- they are rostered more than four times in a year OR
- their task involves being alone or unsupervised for more than just a very brief time

3. General Guidelines

Apart from unforeseen emergencies, Leaders must not be alone with a child. There must always be at least two adults present at all times. Careful planning needs to ensure this. If needed, Leaders are to contact other Leaders for more help. This can make things difficult at times but it is necessary for the safety of children, Leaders and Helpers.

Children's Workers must keep their physical contact with the children to an appropriate level.

4. Bathroom policy

As the age group for this ministry is from 4 to 12 years old most will be able to use the bathroom unaided.

Toileting procedures will be at the discretion of the Ministry Supervisor in accordance with safe practice principles.

5. Communication with Parents

All children will be signed in by a parent/guardian and become the responsibility of those running the program. As part of this process, the parent will provide a contact cell phone number. Any communication needing to be made with the parent/guardian will either be by texting or by a Leader being sent to talk to the parent/guardian directly.

The children will be returned to the main service by the Leaders at the end of the program. The time this happened will be recorded, at which point the safety of the child(ren) is the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

6. Managing of Complaints

Any complaints received in relation to the program or the Children's Workers are to be referred to the Ministry Coordinator as soon as possible. If it pertains to abuse, then the Abuse Reporting Procedure will be followed.

7. Responding to Incidents

All incidents must be recorded in the Incident Register and the Ministry Coordinator to be informed. Cornerstone will ensure there is a first aid kit on site. First aid will be administered by an adult with a current first-aid certificate. At the direction of the Ministry Coordinator, parents will be informed of any incidents in a timely fashion appropriate to the severity of the incident.

If the fire alarm sounds at any point everyone will evacuate the building and assemble at the dedicated assembly point for the venue. The Ministry Supervisor or appointed Leader will bring the child register to mark off that all children are present.

8. Recognising and Reporting Health Concerns

If a Leader has any significant concerns about the health of a child, including suspected abuse, this must be referred to the Ministry Coordinator as soon as possible.

9. Confidentiality and Privacy

At all times, appropriate levels of privacy and confidentiality must be maintained in line with the Privacy Act.

9.1 Photographing and Filming of Children

Leaders and helpers are not to take photographs of children on their phones or personal cameras. Photographs are only to be taken by people appointed by the Cornerstone Children's Ministry Coordinator.

Revisions

Date	Status	Comment
15 March 2021	Approved	Changes approved as proposed below
15 March 2021	Proposed	Minor changes proposed
21 August 2017	Approved	Minor changes and clarifications
1 August 2016	Approved	Changes approved as proposed below
27 June 2016	Proposed	Minor changes proposed
23 March 2015	Approved	Minor changes made
23 February 2015	Approved	Full policy revision
21 July 2014	Adopted as draft	Amendments made
29 April 2013	Approved	New document

I, _____ agree to work within the policy framework outlined above. If I have any questions about this policy I will make contact with the Ministry Coordinator.

Signed _____ Date ____ / ____ / ____