



Children's Ministry Guidelines

Cedar Preschool and Kids Programmes

September 2018

Introduction

The Cedar Centre Anglican Church (called the 'Cedar Centre') is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children (all persons under the age of 18) who are involved in our church activities and events. These guidelines are to facilitate this occurring and to provide children's ministry programme leaders and volunteers with a guideline in their roles. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the 'Handle with Care' Child Protection Policy of the Anglican Dioceses of New Zealand.

Scope

These guidelines apply to all people who work with children in the Cedar Centre Preschool and Cedar Kids Programmes.

Implementation and Review

These guidelines are effective from September 1, 2018 as a preliminary document and will be subject to review by the Children's Programme Leader and Cedar Centre Leadership after three months in December 2018.

Children's Leaders and Volunteers

Prior to working with children our leaders and volunteers will:

- Complete a satisfactory police check and are screened by the Diocesan database
- Sign a Ministry Leader or Volunteer Role Description including the reading of and agreement to abide by the Child Protection Policy and Children's Ministry Guidelines
- Participate (as available) in Children's Ministry Health and Safety trainings

In addition the Cedar Preschool and Kids Programme leaders sign a Ministry Leader Health and Safety form where they agree to oversee the implementation of any safety plans during their programme and take general leadership in ensuring programme safety and response to any incident that may occur.

The Cedar Centre highly values the commitment of its Children's Ministry programme leaders and volunteers in the service they give to the children and families of our church. Volunteers, in

discussion with programme leaders, determine their level of availability to assist with the running of the Sunday morning programmes.

Children Participating in Cedar Preschool or Cedar Kids Programmes

A registration form should be completed by a parent/guardian for all children participating in the Cedar Preschool and Cedar Kids Programmes during the 10am Sunday Service. A weekly attendance register is maintained by the programme leaders on the Cedar Centre's database. It is accepted however that on many occasions at the Cedar Centre children arrive and participate in the programmes without a completed registration form and/or a parent/guardian with them. In these instances, the child is recorded as a visitor on the attendance register. Supervision of the child is provided by the programme leader and volunteer/s for the duration of the programme.

Supervision of Children

The Children's programme leaders and volunteers are responsible for the supervision of children during the Cedar Preschool and Kids programmes, including observing the environment and equipment for unsafe situations, removing children from potentially dangerous situations, and reporting incidents immediately.

It is the responsibility of the Children's Ministry Leader to ensure a clear message is given to children and adults if changes to the usual Sunday morning programmes are made, at the commencement of the 10am service or prior. Parents are responsible for their children up until instructed by the Vicar to leave for the children's programmes. Otherwise when children are to leave the auditorium to go to these programmes, they must meet the leader in the foyer and be counted. The leader or a volunteer must lead the group, walking in an orderly manner behind the leader, with another adult at the rear of the group. Children must be supervised during the walk and in sight at all times, especially if walking on the driveway. On arrival at the Chelsea rooms the leader must perform another head count and record those children in attendance on the Cedar Centre database and paper roll if also used.

Children are to be supervised during the programme at all times, guided by the two-adult rule described below, and are expected to remain in that programme until it ends and supervision is transferred back to the parents when children enter the auditorium. If a child is wanting to leave the programme and return to their parent/guardian in the auditorium they must be accompanied by a leader or volunteer.

The Two-Adult Rule

The Two-Adult rule states there must always be two non-related adults present when supervising one or more children and they must be in sight of each other at all times. This rule is designed for the safety of children as well as adults. It is accepted that there may be occasions when two related adults (ie – a married couple would be considered related) are teaching together, in which case there should be a third non-related adult in attendance.

Occasionally during the programme, leaders will find themselves without another adult present due to unforeseen circumstances. In these situations the programme leader or volunteer should inform the leader in other programme/room that they are on their own with the group and the doors to each room be opened to maintain visibility and access.

At the Cedar Centre we also encourage those in our youth group to serve as leaders for children in younger grades. A Youth Leader, age 14 or older, may count as an adult under the Two Adult rule but must always be accompanied by an programme leader or volunteer who is 18 years or older.

Staffing Ratios

The Cedar Centre has committed to always having a minimum of 2 adults with any group of children. This is a minimum number and may need to be adjusted depending on an activity or ability of the children. The following number of authorised ministry leaders/volunteers are required for each age group:

- Cedar Preschool ages 0-5 years Ratio: 1 leader to 5 children
- Cedar Kids ages 6 + years Ratio: 1 leader to 8 children

It is the Children's Ministry Leader and Vicar's responsibility to ensure the programmes and activities are adequately staffed. If for any reason these minimum staffing ratios are not possible the programmes or activity may be cancelled.

Access to Children

Casual visitors (ie – those who have not been authorised by the church or are not parents/guardians), should not have access to children without the presence of a ministry leader/volunteer responsible for the programme.

Check in and Check Out Procedures

Parents are responsible for their children until they are asked to leave for the start of the childrens programmes and then again when the children are returned to the auditorium at the end of the programmes. Children's programme leaders and volunteers are responsible for supervision of the children from meeting in the foyer through to return of the children to the auditorium. Each programme leader is responsible for performing a head count of children in the foyer, checking this again at the Chelsea room and completing an attendance roll, then completing another head count on return to the auditorium to ensure all children are returned to parents.

Bathroom Guidelines

Cedar Preschool and Cedar Kids use the toilets in Chelsea Room 1 if needed during the running of the programmes.

Children in the Cedar Kids programme must let the ministry leader or volunteer know they are going to the toilet and may go on their own unless they wish a friend from the group of the same gender to accompany them.

Children in Cedar Preschool who require assistance with toileting will be taken to the toilet by one of the female leaders or volunteers and toilet doors are to remain unlocked and open. Adults who are not authorised ministry leaders or volunteers of the Cedar Centre Children's Ministry should never accompany a child to the toilet unless it is their own child. It is understood that having an adult taking children to the bathroom may leave one adult alone in the room with multiple children for a short period of time.

Behaviour Management

At the Cedar Centre we see each of our children as a child of God who is to be treated with respect and care. Every child will be given positive guidance directed towards promoting positive behavior having regard to the child's stage of development. Clear rules and expectations and consistent messages about behavior (eg – listening while others speak) will be provided during the programmes.

Occasionally, children have trouble following these expectations or display disruptive or problem behavior. In these cases the following steps will be taken:

- The ministry leader or volunteer will talk with the child encouraging more appropriate behavior. For younger children the leader might attempt to re-direct the child to another activity.
- If the child continues with the problem behavior the ministry leader will give a warning to the child.
- A second warning will be provided and should the behaviour continue, the child will be removed from the activity and may be returned to the parent/guardian's supervision. Discussion with the parent/guardian regarding this should occur at the end of the church service. Unless otherwise discussed with the parent/guardian, the child will be welcomed back to the programme at the next church service.

There will be zero tolerance for behavior that is deemed out of control by the programme leaders. This will result in immediate removal of the child from the programme and returned to their parent/guardian and the behavior discussed. The Children's Ministry Leader must be notified if this occurs. The child will be welcomed back to the programme when he or she is ready and able to respect the rules and behavioural expectations of the ministry.

Physical Contact

Respect, safety and appropriate boundaries are the guiding principles for physical contact between ministry leaders and children. Each group is encouraged to have its own agreed standards of behavior.

Love and affection are part of church life and ministry and there are ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children. Examples of **positive and appropriate** forms of affection include: brief hugs or side hugs, pats on the shoulder or back, handshakes, high-fives, arm around shoulders, holding hands with young children while walking, kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children, holding hands during group prayer.

The following forms of affection are considered **inappropriate** with children in the ministry: lengthy embraces, kisses, touching bottoms or genital areas other than for toileting of young children, showing affection in isolated areas such as bathrooms, wrestling with children, tickling children, any type of massage or touch that might be construed as sexual.

Any concerns should be discussed with the Childrens Programme Leader or Vicar.

Communication outside Sunday Programmes

All communication with children attending the Cedar Preschool and Cedar Kids programmes outside the Sunday morning service should be through the parents and only by the Programme Leaders when related to the programmes.

Incidents or Accidents

Ministry leaders or volunteers will provide appropriate First Aid as required to children for minor injuries (eg: small cuts or scrapes). For any First Aid beyond minor requirements, the leader or volunteer who is First Aid trained will provide appropriate intervention which may include ringing emergency services. The parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

An incident form must be completed for any accidents where First Aid is provided or any Near Misses/Incidents that could have resulted in an accident and injury.

Emergencies

Children's programme leaders and volunteers should be prepared to protect children in the case of emergencies. For the following:

Serious Injury: Programme leaders to call 111 for Emergency Services and have the child's parent/guardian and the Children's Ministry Leader notified immediately.

Fire: Follow evacuation procedure from Chelsea Rooms to designated meeting area in driveway with attendance roll taken and completed to ensure all children and adults are present.

Earthquake: Follow the 'Drop, Cover, Hold' Procedure under tables if possible and remain until shaking has passed.

Threats of Violence: Programme leaders should call 111 for Emergency Services in cases of suspected criminal or dangerous activities on the church grounds or near the ministry activities. Leaders may need to lock doors and windows to the Chelsea Rooms and keep children down and out of sight if possible until the threat has ceased.

An incident form must be completed for any of the above emergencies.

Responding to and Reporting Suspected Abuse

The Anglican Dioceses of New Zealand take child protection and safety seriously and subsequently have a child protection policy - 'Handle with Care' - in place to ensure children in our parishes receive the highest standard of care. As a parish of the Auckland Anglican Diocese, the Cedar Centre is committed to adhering to and implementing this policy. The policy is available on the Cedar Centre Webpage for viewing and is discussed during Children's Ministry Health and Safety Trainings for leaders and volunteers commencing service in the Children's Ministry.

Our Children's programme leaders and volunteers complete a police check (repeated every two years), undergo training in relation to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm, and agree to adhere to the Child Protection Policy 'Handle with Care' and Cedar Centre Guidelines for Children's Ministry.

The Cedar Centre has also implemented the Child Safe Safety Management System as part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe environment and safe activities.

Cedar Centre is committed to mandatory reporting of all matters of abuse and has a process for this if a situation is suspected or arises. Any suspected child abuse will be taken seriously and handled in an appropriate manner that ensures the child's safety in accordance with our child protection policy.

Any concerns that a child may have been abused should be reported immediately to the Children's Ministry Leader and/or the Vicar. The Children's Ministry Leader in consultation with the Vicar and People's Warden will assess whether there is reasonable grounds for contacting the police or Oranga Tamariki. An Incident Form must be completed by the volunteer or leader reporting the suspected abuse in conjunction with the Children's Ministry Leader and Vicar.

Programme Curriculum and Activities

Programme curriculums should always be age appropriate and determined by the programme leader in consultation with the Children's Ministry Leader. A Risk Assessment and Management (RAMS) Form must be completed annually for the Sunday morning programmes. Additional RAMS Forms should be completed for activities other than the usual Sunday morning programmes or if going off-site.

Photographs, Videos and Social Media

Photographs or videos of the children attending the Cedar Preschool or Kids programmes should only be taken by Leaders and only of those children whose parent/guardian has given consent for on the child's registration form. Photographs or videos may be displayed on the Cedar Preschool or Cedar Kids closed group Facebook pages or the church webpage or displayed either physically or electronically at the Cedar Centre.

Any multimedia shown during the programmes (eg: dvds, youtube, photographs) must be age, language and content appropriate.