

Redeemer Presbyterian Church

Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures West Side

Revised February 2014

Redeemer Presbyterian Church Office
1359 Broadway
4th Floor
NYC, NY 10018

Phone: 212.808.4460
Fax: 212.808.4465

Redeemer Presbyterian W83 Building
150 West 83rd Street
3rd and 4th Floors
NYC, NY 10024

Table of Contents

1. Ministry Staff
2. Philosophy of Redeemer Children's Ministry
 - Purpose
 - Core Values
3. Policies
 - Wellness
 - Injury and First Aid
 - Safety and Security
 - Restroom and Diapering
 - Evacuation
4. Classrooms and Ratios
5. Curriculum
6. Parent Responsibility
7. Volunteers
8. Classroom Management
9. Gospel-Based Ministry

Ministry Staff

Bethany Griffith

Director

bethany.griffith@redeemer.com

Meagan Lloyd

Elementary Coordinator, Curriculum Specialist

meagan.lloyd@redeemer.com

Ariane Durham

Preschool Coordinator

ariane.durham@redeemer.com

Regan Stevens

Nursery Coordinator

regan.stevens@redeemer.com

Laura Rogers

Administrative Coordinator

917.206.1356

laura.rogers@redeemer.com

Jenni Bounds

Volunteer Coordinator

Jenni.bounds@redeemer.com

Brent Bounds

Director—Family Ministries

212.808.4460, ext. 1350

brent@redeemer.com

Philosophy of Redeemer

Children's Ministry

The Gospel • A City • For Generations

Purpose:

The goal of the Children's Ministry at Redeemer is to encourage children to serve and renew their communities through the knowledge and application of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We work toward this goal by immersing them in scripture, teaching them how to pray and worship, and facilitating spiritual growth among a new generation in New York City.

In addition to teaching children to live Gospel-centered lives, the Children's ministry seeks to encourage & support families in their commitment to stay and engage the city by facilitating, discipling, and offering practical support to them as they apply Redeemer's values and beliefs to their families.

The Gospel

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 6:23

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not works, so that no one can boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9

A City

"Also seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."

Jeremiah 29:7

For Generations

"We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. So the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but keep his commands."

Psalms 78:4, 6-7

Policies

Wellness:

1. Children must be symptom free from the following illness without medication for 24 hours before entering the classroom:
 - Fever of 100 or higher
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - Conjunctivitis (pink eye or other eye infection)
 - Rash
 - Nasal drainage that is green or yellow
 - Sore throat
 - Open sores
 - Cold
 - Excessive coughing
 - Lice
2. If a child develops any of these symptoms while in class, the parent will be paged to pick up the child. If a parent cannot be reached via cell phone or our paging system, the child will stay outside of the class with the supervisor or greeter.
3. Security tags for children with allergies will be marked with an "A." Parents should also discuss allergies with teachers at drop-off.

Injury and First Aid:

1. We can administer *only* Band-Aids and Ice Packs.
2. For children with severe allergies requiring an epi-pen, please give it to the area supervisor.
3. If there is an injury in the classroom, the teachers and/or volunteers should immediately tell the supervisor. Any injury must be reported since some trivial injuries can turn out to be serious. The teacher must complete a Parent Communication Form as soon as possible, to be filed, and have it copied for the parent to take home.

Safety and Security

We believe that it is of utmost importance that our children are nurtured in a safe and responsible environment. We also desire that our staff and volunteers be protected from any false allegations of misconduct.

1. Each volunteer in our ministry is required to complete an application process, which includes a personal interview and background check.
2. Each volunteer is required to read and agree to follow the stipulations in this comprehensive manual regarding Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures.
3. We hold comprehensive teacher trainings to (1) ensure our volunteers understand and follow our policies and to (2) enable them to nurture our children.
4. We have a detailed security procedure for picking up a child outlined in the Parent Responsibility section of this manual.
5. There is a Two-Adult rule in place for all classrooms. This means there should *always* be two adults, at least one of whom is a woman, present while children are there. This is to protect the children from the possibility of abuse and to protect the adults from false accusations. If there is a situation in which there is only one adult, the door to the room should be *open*.
6. If there are last minute volunteers who have not been screened, they will be approved by the supervisor or greeter and placed with a volunteer or staff member who has had a background check.

Restroom and Diapering:

1. Parents are encouraged to take their toilet-trained child to the restroom prior to dropping him/her off in class.
2. Only women should take children to the restroom.
3. Only staff or the parent of a child may change diapers.
4. All diapers should be checked and changed if necessary before children are picked up.
5. Adults must wash their own hands as well as the children's hands (at a sink or with hand sanitizer) after going to the restroom or changing a diaper.
6. Staff must always attend a child who is on the changing table. Prepare ahead so that all supplies are within reach. Never leave a child alone on the table, even if just to reach for something.

Evacuation:

1. If the fire alarm sounds while parents are in the service, they must follow the evacuation instructions out of the auditorium. Parents flooding the childcare area will cause congestion and prevent the children from being able to safely evacuate the building.
2. All volunteers/supervisors/teachers are aware of the plan to follow in case of an emergency. The supervisors will be responsible for getting everyone out of the building and helping people to follow the evacuation plans in their designated areas.
3. In the event of an emergency, the W83 building evacuation plan for infants and children from the 3rd and 4th floors is as follows:
 - Ambulatory Children – Deputy Fire Wardens and assistants will evacuate children via stairwell “B” and out onto the west 83 street sidewalk. Staff and Children will then proceed in a calm, organized manner to the rendezvous location at ORGANIC AVENUE on Amsterdam Avenue and 82 Street. Communication will be made by 2 way radio between children’s ministry staff to establish progress and status.
 - Infants –Infants will be evacuated via stairwell “B” and placed in infant evacuation carts that are stored in the lobby stroller room. Infants and staff will then proceed to the rendezvous location at ORGANIC AVENUE on Amsterdam Avenue and 82nd street. Communication will be made by 2 way radio between children’s ministry staff to establish progress and status.
 - Parents will pick up their children at Amsterdam Avenue and 82 Street. Parents should not go to children’s floors.
 - Evacuating staff and volunteers will NOT return to the Ministry center until an all clear has been transmitted by the fire department or the fire safety staff.
 - Make sure that no one is left in the areas where you are serving. CLOSE THE DOORS as you exit rooms, but do not lock them. Move briskly to outside evacuation areas.
 - Accounting for children: Teachers will have attendance sheets with them. Teachers and Children’s Ministry staff should check attendance at Amsterdam and West 82nd Street.

Classrooms and Ratios

The Children's Ministry has classes available for the following ages:

Nursery: Infants through young 3's

Preschool: 3 years through Pre-K

Elementary: Kindergarten through 4th Grade

Childcare for Infants through Pre-K is located on the 3rd floor. It opens 30 min prior to each service. Elementary age children sit in the service with their parents until dismissed to their classes on the 4th floor (9:30am and 11:30am) or 3rd floor (5:00pm).

The welcome and check-in areas are located on the first floor lobby and the 3rd floor. Parents must check in their children prior to leaving them in a classroom.

Our classes adhere to promotional markers and ratios, as follows:

Class	Promotional Marker	Adult:Child Ratio
Infants/Crawlers (Yellow)	Developmental	1:3
Walkers (Green, Teal)	Developmental	1:4
Two's (Red, Orange)	The month after turning 2	1:5
Three's (Blue, Purple)	When 3 years by Dec. 31 st	1:6
Pre-K	When 4 years by Dec. 31 st	1:6
Elementary	Grade Level	

Because we want to provide the best care for your child, we closely monitor the adult-child ratio in each classroom. Should a classroom go over the appropriate ration, the supervisor or greeter will ask parents to volunteer. On occasion, a classroom may be closed.

Generally, we promote children the first Sunday after Labor Day in September, with the exception of infant, walkers, and two's classes.

Curriculum

“From infancy you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

2 Timothy 3:15

Nursery

Young children learn best by doing! The Redeemer nursery curriculum is centered around a character, the Basket Lady, who visits nursery classes each week and teaches core concepts in a tangible way. In every lesson, she teaches children that the Bible is God’s Word, that God made them, and that God loves them. Children are encouraged to explore items each week from her Basket, such as furry plush animals or squirmy fishies, and to move around in the bodies God made for them. Through singing and stories, the Basket Lady opens little hearts and minds to knowing and loving God.

Fall: God Made Everything

Focuses on God's creation, as described in Genesis 1, including nature, animals, and people.

Winter: God Gave Us Jesus

Focuses on the nativity story, familiarizing your child with Jesus, his parents, and where he was born.

Spring: God Made Everything

This segment presents how vast and varied God's creation is.

Summer: God Made Families

These lessons illustrate that all of God's creatures, from ducks to cats to babies, are all part of families.

Preschool

The Preschool (ages 3 through Pre-K) uses David C. Cook's TruWonder curriculum. TruWonder reveals the wonder of who God is to preschool children, allowing them to explore, discover, respond, and be blessed in an interactive environment. Lessons focus on the Big God Story and allow children to learn God's entire story, with a different emphasis each year. The goal of TruWonder is for children to understand they not only play a part in this incredible story, but are also part of a much larger faith community of past, present, and future believers. The curriculum is divided into two main components: worship and small group time. During our large group worship time (Wonder Worship), preschoolers will be introduced to the Bible as one complete story about God's love and redemption through Jesus Christ. The children will explore how they too are a meaningful part of God's wonderful story. They will then have small group time, providing an opportunity to build relationships-- with peers and leaders-- as they apply and reflect on the lessons through art, activities, and prayer.

Elementary

Elementary students will be using David C. Cook’s TruWonder curriculum (Kindergarten) and TruStory curriculum (1st-4th Grade) this year. It is intended to reveal the truth of who God is to school-aged children. It encourages them to celebrate and respond in an interactive environment. Each lesson focuses on the Big God Story. This framework helps children understand that God’s story not only spans the entire Bible, it even includes them! Each week they will experience one part of the Big God Story through worship, teaching, activities, and prayer. The goal of TruStory is for children to understand that they are a part of the faith community of past, present, and future believers. It is our prayer and deepest desire that the Lord would use this series to help your kids go deeper into God’s Word, to grow in the Gospel of Christ, and then be able to share the joy and love they have received from God with others!

Parent Responsibility

For the safety and well-being of your child, please adhere to the policies and procedures that are outlined in this entire manual.

Alerts and Requests

1. If your child has any allergies or special conditions, please explain them to the staff member or volunteer leading your child's class. For allergies, make sure that a note about the allergy has been made in the check-in account. If the allergy is correctly notated in the system, an "A" will appear on the printed name tag.
2. Alert the teachers if your child is potty training. Please take potty-trained children to the restroom before dropping them off in class.
3. We welcome parents to spend up to 3 weeks acclimating their children to the class. Once your child feels comfortable, we encourage you to leave your child in class so that you may enjoy the service.
4. It is often most beneficial to quickly drop off your child, as this reduces separation anxiety and helps the child more quickly adjust to the classroom.
5. Drop off your child at the door rather than entering the classroom. This reduces confusion and crowding in the hall.
6. Whenever possible, allow one parent to drop off and pick up your child in order to prevent crowding in the hallway.
7. Only parents with a security tag are granted access to the hallway.

Items you Bring

1. Label all of your child's belongings, including diaper bags, cups, bottles, pacifiers, etc.
2. Please leave all toys and dolls at home as they can get lost or cause other children to be upset.
3. All bottles must be *pre-mixed*. Nursery workers are not allowed to mix formula for health and sanitation reasons.

Tags

1. Every parent is required to create a profile for their family on our computer system. This system generates our name tags.
2. Every parent must print off a name tag for their child and its corresponding security tag prior to entering the childcare area. This is a security measure to prevent unauthorized people from accessing children.
3. Once the name tag is printed, affix it to the child's back. Parents should retain the security tag portion as it is required for admittance to the hallway and pick up. This security number may also be used to page parents in the sanctuary if their child is in need of extra attention in the nursery.

Security for Child Pick Up

1. As mentioned above, each child receives a name tag and security tag prior to Sunday School. Parents must retain the security tag portion. It allows parents to access the 3rd and 4th floor hallways and to pick up their children from class. No adult can pick up a child without the corresponding security tag without direct consent and supervision of the greeter or a supervisor.

Volunteering

1. We encourage parents to volunteer in our classes. We request that all parents volunteer in class at least 3 times per year.
2. When you volunteer, please sign in on the ipad when you check in your child.

Volunteers

Requirements to Serve

1. Each volunteer in our ministry is required to complete an application process, which includes a personal interview and background check.
2. We hold comprehensive teacher trainings to (1) ensure our volunteers understand and follow our policies and to (2) enable them to nurture our children.
3. Youth must be at least 12 years old to work in the nursery with a parent, and 15 without a parent, through permission of the supervisor and classroom teacher.
4. In the event that there are last minute volunteers who have not been screened, they will be approved by the supervisor or greeter and placed with a volunteer or staff member who has had a background check.
5. Volunteers are entrusted to teach the children of Redeemer about the Gospel. We ask that volunteers commit themselves to the responsibility of building a strong, spiritual foundation in the hearts of the children.

Scheduling

1. Volunteers will communicate with the area supervisor concerning the schedule.
2. Once the schedule is set by the area supervisor, any changes should be made by switching with another team member and notifying the area supervisor as soon as possible. Team members' contact information is supplied by the supervisor.
3. In case of an emergency that causes the volunteer to run late or be unable to serve, it is imperative to call or text the area supervisor.
4. When a volunteer is no longer able to serve with the Children's Ministry, 4 weeks notice is needed to find a replacement. Area supervisors should then communicate this change to the Volunteer Coordinator.

General

1. Volunteers must be knowledgeable about and adhere to applicable policies and procedures in this manual.
2. Volunteers are not permitted to have any personal drink (other than water) or food during class.
3. Personal belongings must remain off of the floor and out of reach of children.
4. Phones are to be on vibrate and may not be used in the classroom except in the case of an emergency.
5. Any special treats or activities involving food outside of the scheduled curriculum must be approved by the area supervisor.

Arrival and Setup

1. Arrive a minimum of 30 minutes before the service begins, and sooner if preparation is required. *Please be on time.* Punctuality is required and excessive tardiness will not be tolerated as it compromises the quality of programming for the children. Please remember that tardiness has a domino effect, involving supervisors, fellow teachers, children, and families.
2. Sign in via iPad upon arrival and take your name tag from the check-in desk.
3. Wash your hands before setting up the room.
4. Set out any materials needed for class, as provided by area supervisor.
5. Ensure that all tables are wiped clean and toys and supplies are put away neatly in their proper places prior to leaving the room. Notice that there are labels indicating where all toys and supplies are to be stored.

Snacks

1. All children's hands must be washed prior to eating a snack.
2. A light snack is provided for children in the Walkers and Two's classes. It usually consists of teddy grahams, goldfish, or cheddar bunnies and water.
3. Before handing children snacks, ensure they do not have allergies.
4. Children may have snacks and drinks only when they are seated. Children are not allowed to walk around with snacks or cups due to allergy and sanitation reasons.
5. Cups should be promptly removed once each child has finished.
6. All bottles must be *pre-mixed*. Nursery workers are not allowed to mix formula for health and sanitation reasons.

Class Time

1. Anyone not wearing an approved name tag is not permitted to enter the classroom. *If there is a problem, or you feel uncomfortable asking someone if they are approved, see the supervisor.*
2. One volunteer should welcome children and take attendance while the other engages the other children.
3. Be particularly aware of children with allergies and check all nametags for any indication of allergies or other special needs. Ask parents for further clarification.
4. Review the classroom rules with the children every week. (Refer to Classroom Management section for details.)
5. Whenever possible, sit on the floor with children to interact with them. Being on their eye level helps gain and maintain their attention.
6. Remain in the classroom at all times unless you are leaving to take a child to the restroom.
7. Enjoy being with the kids! Remember that this is not babysitting, but ministering to these children and guiding them closer to the Lord.

Departure Procedures

1. Children must be wearing a printed name tag to enter the classroom. If a child arrives without a name tag, send the parent and child back to the check-in area.
2. When a parent arrives, ask for the child's security tag before releasing the child. *This is imperative: do not release a child without having the security tag.*
3. Match the child's name tag with the security tag sticker, affix them to the roster, and turn in rosters and name tags to the supervisor after the service.
4. After all children have been picked up, tidy your classroom and return your nametag and lanyard to the check-in area.
5. Pick up a free sermon voucher, or register for weekly MP3 sermon downloads.

Classroom Management Policies

Classroom Rules:

1. Obey the Teacher
2. Listen
3. Respect Others
4. Keep your Hands and Feet to yourself

Proactive Steps for helping Children in the Classroom:

1. Communicate the rules at the beginning of class every Sunday.
2. Make eye contact when speaking to the child.
3. Catch the child being *good*. Use positive reinforcement.
4. Have the child repeat what you have asked them to do.
5. Try to redirect the child if they are doing something they shouldn't be doing.
6. Discipline should always be given in love, not in anger.

Preventative Actions

1. Create a loving, caring atmosphere.
2. Establish and communicate realistic expectations for children.
3. Focus on positive actions.
4. Be fair and consistent with children.

Aggressive Behavior

1. Biting, hitting, pushing, scratching, or pulling is considered aggressive behavior.
2. If a child displays any of these behaviors, he or she will be removed from the class and the parent will be notified.

Discipline Steps:

1. Verbal Warning: If possible, *whisper* to the child in order to not draw attention away from the teaching and onto the inappropriate behavior.
2. Remove and Set Apart: Remove the child from the rest of the class. Have him or her sit in a different area of the classroom for a set amount of time or until the child is ready to participate cooperatively.
3. Note Home:
 - Use the Parent Communication forms in your classroom. Fill it out and bring it to the front desk for a copy to be made. Give the original form to the parent.
 - Once a parent communication form is sent home, we will work together with the parents to decide what the best next steps are for the child.

Self Evaluation

1. Pay attention to how you feel
 - If you are stressed, children will sense that. Try to focus on the present moment and the children in front of you rather than outside stresses and circumstances.
 - We only have about an hour with these kids each week to give them our all and teach them about the depth of God's love for them, which we can demonstrate through our actions and our undivided attention.
 - Take a minute away if needed.
2. If you are struggling with a child, pass him or her off to another staff member or volunteer. You are never alone in the classroom, so let those around you help you through the difficult moments.
3. Arrive prepared for the morning, in heart and mind. Arriving on time enables you to have time to prepare for the morning (and get that divine energy juice we call coffee...)

Positive Classroom Management and Discipline

1. Praise the Positive and reward good behavior.

Children often learn by modeling behavior. So try, for example “I love the way Sarah is sitting quietly with her hands in her lap. Great job!” The other children will follow quickly in hopes of being praised in the same way. Praising kids rewards good behavior and reinforces it for the entire class. You may also use rewards, such as: obedient children are the first to receive snack or art supplies.

2. Explain the rules of the class every week.

Children do well when they know what is expected of them. Keep the classroom structure similar from week to week. Having a predictable routine helps kids cope with an environment and understand appropriate behavior.

3. Be assertive: Say what you mean and do what you say.

Children need to know what consequences will follow for disobedience. When children know the consequences ahead of time, they are likely to deal with them with less arguing and complaining. It is best to order your classroom around what you have said you are going to do. You are the teacher. Be firm in giving instructions and following through with what you say. *You should never yell at a child.* Speak on their level. Look at them in the eye and make sure they are listening to what you say. If appropriate, have them repeat back what you just said. Do not discipline a child from across the room: go to the child and pull them aside. *Do not* let kids tell you what to do. You must be in control.

4. Make things fun!

Instead of going into things like clean up time with a negative approach, such as “I’m so sorry, but we have to put toys away now...” try addressing it with a positive spin like “OK, kids, I have a mission for you: do you think we can have all of these toys put away in two minutes?” Or, singing the clean-up song is a fun way to begin and encourage a clean-up routine. Don’t offer too many activity choices for kids. Switch out the toys so kids do not become bored.

5. Talk to a child who is crying.

Engage an upset child with something of interest. Talk to them in a way that distracts them from thinking about their parents and *avoid* saying that Mommy is coming. If absolutely necessary, you can remind them that Mommy and Daddy will come back soon, but do not make that the point of your conversation. For children who are likely to cry, ask their parents about how to best soothe them.

6. Incorporate the Gospel when you are disciplining a child.

Focus on God's love for the child and your love for the child. Be specific as you explain that you want him or her to follow directions, be kind to friends, participate, etc. Talk to the child about how it pleases the Lord when we obey Him. Remember that discipline should always be given in love, not in anger.

“For these commands are a lamp, teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way of life.”

Proverbs 6:23

A Summary of the Gospel of Jesus

1. God is the Sovereign Creator of all things
2. God created people for His glory.
3. God is Holy and Righteous.
4. Man is sinful.
5. God is just and is right to punish sin.
6. God is merciful. He is kind to undeserving sinners.
7. Jesus is God's Holy and Righteous son.
8. God put our punishment on Jesus.
9. God offers the free gift of salvation to those who repent and believe in Jesus.
10. Those who trust in Jesus will live to please Him and will receive the promise of Eternal Life—Enjoying God forever in Heaven.

From *Children Desiring God*, Children's Leadership Conference 2007

“Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous,
that He might bring us to God.”

1 Peter 3:18

Gospel-Centered vs. Morality Centered Teaching

Morality Based	Gospel Based
You must try for Jesus	You must trust in Jesus
What you do	What Christ has done for you
Obedience because of obligation/duty	Obedience because of gratitude/love
You are the hero of the story	God is the hero of the story
The story is about you	The story is about Jesus
Aims primarily at action	Aims primarily at the Heart
Stays small with the story	Appeals to the big story of Redemption

Yancey C. Arrington, Gospel-Centered Curriculum

Our volunteers are a valuable part of our ministry. Volunteers are always needed. If you are not currently serving in the Children's Ministry and would like to be, please contact the Children's Ministry Staff.

The information in this manual should help you understand our role in ministering to your child. If you have any questions, please contact our Director, Bethany Griffith. We welcome you to the Children's Ministry at Redeemer Presbyterian Church!