

**Peace Lutheran Church
5590 King's Highway
King George, VA 22485**

Nursery Operations Manual (Rev. 12/31/07)

1. Mission. The Peace Lutheran Church Nursery supports parents and guardians of younger children who wish to attend worship services and educational activities at Peace Lutheran Church while simultaneously providing younger children with a safe and pleasant first impression of church life.

2. Authority.

a. Scriptural: Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:13-15.

b. Constitutional: The Nursery operates under the Board of Worship according to the Peace Lutheran Church By Laws of 20 Nov 05, Section 5.D.2.

3. Funding.

a. The annual budget of Peace Lutheran Church includes funding for both paid Nursery Attendant(s), supplies, and equipment for the Nursery.

b. The Nursery will operate at no cost to parents when operating in support of whole-church activities. (Nursery support during other activities such as weddings may be arranged on a paid or volunteer basis, but all applicable guidelines contained herein must still be observed.)

4. Scope of Service.

a. Ages: The Nursery accepts one-month-olds thru four-year-olds. Children younger than one month probably shouldn't be in the Nursery under routine circumstances unless in the company of a parent for feeding or comforting. Three and four year-olds may also attend Sunday School classes when available.

b. Staff: The Nursery usually operates with a combination of both paid and volunteer Nursery Attendants.

c. Hours: The Nursery is open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sundays, to cover both worship services and the Sunday School period. The Nursery is also open from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon on Thursdays to support the weekly Bible Study. Additional hours to support other meetings and special worship services may be arranged, in which case the availability of Nursery service will be noted in the applicable announcement.

d. Location(s): The Nursery is mainly an indoor operation in Room 120. Depending on the number of children using the Nursery, additional rooms may be needed to better accommodate the

age ranges and capabilities of the children served (infants, toddlers, walkers). Supervised use of the preschool's outdoor playground is allowed for more active three and four-year-olds when weather is permitted. No Nursery operations off of the premises of the church are provided.

5. External Regulation. The Nursery operates under religious exemption from Virginia Social Services laws, but works voluntarily to achieve full compliance with all applicable laws, including Virginia State Police background checks for all adult Nursery Attendants.

6. Staff Qualifications and Requirements. Individuals interested in becoming paid or volunteer Nursery Attendants should complete the applicable portions of the Application for Employment (Attachment 1).

a. Part Time Paid Nursery Attendant(s):

1. Age. 21 or older.
2. Education. High School graduate, with college-level courses dealing with early childhood education and development desired.
3. Training. Must be able to successfully complete First Aid and Pediatric Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation training within six months of employment.
3. Experience. At least five years experience dealing with children between the ages of one month and five years of age, with professional child care experience desired.
4. Physical Requirements. Must have the ability to multi-task, easily lift 20 pounds from floor level to shoulder level, and have the agility to interact with children on the floor.
5. Citizenship. United States citizen or resident alien eligible for employment in the United States.
6. Background Investigation. Must be able to successfully complete a Virginia State Police Criminal History Record/Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry search with no negative citations (requires photo identification).
7. References. Must be able to provide at least three positive recommendations from persons experienced with the subject in a child care provider setting.

b. Volunteer Nursery Attendants:

1. Age. 18 or older.
2. Training. Encouraged to successfully complete First Aid and Pediatric Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation training.
3. Physical Requirements. Must have the ability to multi-task, easily lift 20 pounds from floor level to shoulder level, and have the agility to interact with children on the floor.
4. Background Investigation. Must be able to successfully complete a Virginia State Police Criminal History Record/Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry search with no negative citations (requires photo identification).
5. References. Must be able to provide at least three positive recommendations.

c. Volunteer Nursery Assistants:

1. Age. 13 or older.
2. Training. Encouraged to successfully complete First Aid and Pediatric Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation training.
3. Physical Requirements. Must have the ability to multi-task, easily lift 20 pounds

from floor level to shoulder level, and have the agility to interact with children on the floor.

4. References. Must be able to provide at least three positive recommendations.

7. Nursery Operating Procedures.

a. Child Safety: The physical and emotional safety of the children in the Nursery is the Attendants' primary responsibility. Consistent adherence to these procedures by both paid and volunteer staff not only protects the children in the Nursery, but also protects the Nursery staff from misunderstanding, suspicion, and accusation. While no list can be all-inclusive, the following points are considered worthy of review. ***Items in bold italics are considered primary rules of child safety.***

b. Staffing: ***To the maximum extent possible, the Nursery will be staffed by at least two scheduled adult Attendants at all times.*** When more than six children are present in the Nursery, consider asking for additional volunteer Attendants or Assistants in the worship service, depending on the age range/needs of the children (generally, one adult to three infants, one adult to four toddlers, and one adult to six children three years and older). ***At no time should a single Attendant or Assistant be left alone in private with a child.*** In general, the Nursery should be occupied only by scheduled Attendants, Assistants, and dropped-off children. The Nursery should not be allowed to become a gathering place for other people of any age.

c. Opening: The scheduled Nursery Attendant should unlock the hallway door to the Nursery and perform a quick inspection for cleanliness, room temperature, working order of all fixtures, and absence of any obvious hazards such as choking hazards, spiders, etc. ***Any object that can fit through a toilet paper tube is a choking hazard and should not be left accessible to children in the Nursery.*** If the Attendant does not use a cellular phone, then the telephone in the left drawer should be plugged in to the wall jack and checked for a dial tone. When ready to receive children, the Nursery Attendant should inform the Pastor and Worship Assistants and remind them to summon the Nursery children for the Children's Sermon.

d. Drop-Off: Parents dropping off children should complete Drop Off/Pick Up Record (Attachment 2) with the child's name, age, dropped off by, time dropped off, contact method, time picked up, and any allergies or special conditions that the attendant needs to be aware of. (Parents should be encouraged to complete an Allergy Action Plan (Attachment 3) for each child with allergies. Allergy Action Plans should be reviewed and initialed (or rewritten) every six months.) All dropped off baby supplies and equipment should be labeled with the family name and placed on a cubby hole shelf.

Note: It is common for children entering the Nursery to suffer momentary separation anxiety. Parents should be encouraged to settle their child in the Nursery, check his/her diaper or offer a chance to use the bathroom, then simply tell the child "good-bye" and promptly exit the Nursery. It is common for a child to cry at this point, but normally the child will calm down in just a few minutes. If a child continues to be upset for 10 minutes (or sooner by parent's request) with no sign of calming down, a Nursery staff member should summon the parent back to the Nursery. ***Parents are encouraged to peek in the window of the Nursery at any time to check on their child.*** Parents should not leave the grounds of the church while their child is in the Nursery.

e. Sickness: Children with obvious fevers or other illness described below should not be admitted to the Nursery:

1. Fever >100° Fahrenheit by ear (an ear thermometer is available next to the first aid kit in the left cabinet above the sink)
2. Diarrhea
3. Vomiting
4. Persistent cough, sneezing, or noisy/labored breathing
5. Runny nose with green or yellow mucus discharge
6. Any other signs of active infection (wounds, boils, ringworm, conjunctivitis (pink-eye), impetigo, measles, chicken pox)

Parents are asked to ensure their children are free of the above symptoms for at least 24 hours before bringing them to the Nursery. Should any of these signs or symptoms develop or be discovered while the child is in the Nursery, the parent/guardian will be summoned immediately.

f. Medications: ***No medications will be accepted for or administered to children.*** Parents should keep all medications in their own possession.

g. Food and Drink: The Nursery will provide generally non-allergenic snack items (plain Cheerios, Goldfish, Graham Crackers, juice, water) for children. With the exception of clearly labeled bottles of milk or formula, ***parents and children should not bring in snacks from outside*** due to the possibility of triggering allergic responses in other children (as well as the social difficulty of ensuring equitable distribution of food items among all children). ***Peanuts/peanut products should not be brought into the Nursery at any time.*** The Nursery will not prepare heated meals for children. Soft drinks, regardless of containers, are discouraged in the Nursery. Any hot beverages (coffee, tea) should be in non-breakable containers with lids. Large containers of hot beverages (i.e., coffee pots) are not allowed in the Nursery.

h. Sanitation: Children should be encouraged to wash their hands upon arrival at the Nursery, prior to eating or drinking, and after all bathroom visits. Nursery Attendants will wear gloves when assisting children in the bathroom. ***The door to the bathroom will remain partially open to allow an unobstructed view by a second adult attendant outside the bathroom.*** All gear and furniture, including cubby holes, will be wiped down with a disinfectant wipe after each Nursery session. All cloth items will be single-use only, regardless of apparent soiling, and washed between uses. Soft and porous toys such as Teddy Bears are discouraged in the Nursery.

i. Crib Use: Prior to placing an infant in a crib, the Attendant should check that the mattress is firm and flat and that the crib sheet covers the mattress snugly (if the sheet comes off easily when pulled at the corners or sides, it should not be used). Large and bulky blankets or pillows should not be used in the crib. The crib should not be placed under a window or near any curtains or cords. ***Always put infants to bed on their backs.***

j. Television: No commercial television will be displayed in the Nursery. In general, the use, display, or promotion of media characters is discouraged.

k. Smoking: ***Smoking is not allowed anywhere near the Nursery.***

l. Glass. Glass containers (including older-style baby bottles) and toys are not allowed in the Nursery.

m. Privacy: In general, all information provided for the care of children should not be distributed outside of the Nursery, including children's names or parents' phone numbers. Photographs of children will not be taken while in the Nursery.

n. If Nursery children are allowed outside, they should generally be confined to the area of the preschool playground. ***Attendants should be sure to wipe down playground equipment before first use, and inspect the equipment and grounds for insects and small animals.*** Note that some playground equipment may not be suitable for some Nursery-age children.

o. Disciplinary Procedures: The behavior of Nursery-age children is best controlled by a combination of proper environmental preparation; the availability of a variety of wholesome, age-appropriate toys and activities; and vigorous affirmation of desirable behaviors. If a child chooses not to engage in appropriate play activities or becomes unruly and unresponsive to suggestions, the Nursery Attendant should encourage the child to "make better choices." (This wording is suggested in order to foster a consistent approach among different Nursery Attendants and Assistants.)

Should the child persist in misbehaving, the Nursery Attendant should seat him or her in a timeout chair, using one of the wooden chairs placed by the closet door, facing the center of the room. When the child agrees to "make better choices," he or she should be allowed to re-join play activity. At this point the Nursery Attendant should be especially alert to reinforce positive behavior.

If the child continues to misbehave, the child's parent or guardian should be summoned to pick him or her up.

At no time will a child be physically forced into any location or position unless necessary for the safety of the child or other children, nor will any child be struck in any way at any time.

p. Safe Interaction Guidelines: Do express love and caring in appropriate ways:

1. Bending down to the child's eye level and speaking kindly and listening to them carefully,
2. Taking the child's hand and leading them to an activity,
3. Putting an arm around the shoulders of a child who needs comforting or quieting,
4. Taking both of the child's hands as you say, "You did such a good job!" or "I am so glad to see you!",
5. Patting a child on the head, hand, shoulder, or back to affirm them,
6. Holding a child by the shoulders or hands to keep their attention while you redirect behavior.

Avoid:

1. Kissing a child or coaxing a child to kiss or hug you or anybody else,
2. Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit (except when assisting a child in the bathroom in the presence of another adult),
3. Repeatedly carrying older children or having them on your lap.

q. Emergency Procedures (In all emergencies, Nursery Attendants should consider calling 911 as appropriate for the particular situation):

Fire: In the event of a fire, ensure the alarm (next to the exterior door) is sounded and then:

1. Take the current sign-in sheet,
2. Close the internal hallway door (leave unlocked),
3. Turn off lights,
4. Close the external window,
5. Lead or carry all Nursery children to the rally point on the far side of the preschool playground fence, leaving the external door unlocked,
6. Return children to parental custody.

Note: In the event of a fire alarm, the large metal fire doors between the education wing, the Narthex, and the sanctuary can be expected to automatically close. It is therefore imperative to exit the building only through the exterior door of the Nursery, or alternatively, through the exterior doors across the hall in the education wing.

Tornado:

1. Take the current sign-in sheet,
2. Lead or carry children into the Nursery restroom,
3. Come out when the tornado threat has passed.

Violent Intruder:

[Response plan exists but is not promulgated to the public.]

r. Pick-Up: *Children may be released to a parent, guardian, or other recognized relative over the age of 13.* Note the pick-up time in the Drop-Off/Pick-Up Record.

s. Closing: The Nursery Attendant will turn off all battery-operated toys, wipe down all contact surfaces with disinfectant wipes, put all used linens in the hamper regardless of visible soiling, close and lock the window and doors, and ensure all trash cans are emptied to the receptacles behind the building. Nursery Attendants are encouraged to wipe down the fold-down baby changing stations in the front and rear men's and women's restrooms, checking to make sure an adequate number of disposable covers are available in each station.

Note: Children must never be left in the Nursery, nor the Nursery be left unlocked, without qualified adult Nursery Attendant supervision. This is important to avoid the accidental introduction of small articles (such as jewelry or the cap of a pen) that can become choking hazards, as well as the inadvertent introduction of allergenic materials to the Nursery. Something as routine as peanut butter smeared on a table top can threaten the life of an allergic child.

8. Inclement Weather Policy.

a. In the event of inclement weather or other disruption, the Nursery Attendants (both paid and volunteer) scheduled for a particular event at the church should decide for themselves whether they can safely reach the church. If there is any doubt, concern for personal safety should guide the decision. If a decision is made NOT to come to the church, then, if possible, a call should be made

to the principal celebrant for the event (usually the Pastor) and any other scheduled Nursery team members, informing them of the decision.

b. Regardless of the weather, if a Paid Nursery Attendant arrives at the church to support an event for which Nursery services were scheduled, then she/he will be paid for the entire length of the scheduled event, regardless of the number of children using the Nursery. In situations such as these, the Paid Nursery Attendant is expected to apply herself/himself to tasks such as organizing and inventorying consumables, deep-cleaning selected toys and furniture, and familiarizing with Nursery equipment. She/he may also offer to assist other members of the church or preschool staff as appropriate for a period of time not to exceed the originally scheduled Nursery service time.

c. If an event for which Nursery services were scheduled is cancelled with less than 24 hours notice, then a Paid Nursery Attendant will have the option of not coming to the church (and not being paid), or coming to the church and applying herself/himself to the types of tasks described above.

d. In the event that weather becomes inclement after arriving at the church, Nursery Attendants (paid or volunteer) should not leave the Nursery until all children have been picked up.

9. Comments and Suggestions. Comments and suggestions concerning the safety and efficiency of the Peace Lutheran Church Nursery are encouraged. These may be offered to any adult Nursery Attendant, the Chair of the Board of Worship, or the Pastor, or via e-mail to Nursery@PeaceLutheranKGVA.org.

10. Complaint Procedures. [TBD - Efforts are underway to research the consensus view concerning the proper handling of complaints, including the possibility of child maltreatment of any type by any party. This portion of the Nursery Operations Manual will include specific complaint procedures, including a defined response to complaints.]

**Application for Employment
Peace Lutheran Church Nursery Attendant**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Physical Address: _____

Home Telephone Number: _____

Mobile Telephone Number: _____

In case of emergency, please contact : _____

Education: Please provide proof of high school graduation or equivalent. Evidence of further courses dealing with early childhood education and development will assist in evaluating your application and establishing equitable compensation.

Experience: On a separate sheet of paper, please describe your experience dealing with children between the ages of one month and five years of age, including all professional child care experience.

References: Please provide names, addresses, e-mail addresses if available, and phone numbers of persons who can verify the experience claimed above.

Completion of the following additional forms will be required prior to permanent employment:

1. Virginia State Police form SP-230, Criminal History Check/Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry Search Form (requires valid photo-identification)
2. U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification (requires proof of identity and employment eligibility)

By signing this application for employment, I hereby agree to provide the data required by the above forms and consent to Peace Lutheran Church obtaining this data as governed by the Code of Virginia. I further acknowledge receipt of a written copy of the current version of the Peace Lutheran Church Nursery Operations Manual and agree to abide by the provisions of that manual to the best of my ability.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Witnessed: _____

Date: _____

Allergy Action Plan

Child's Name: _____

Allergic to: _____

DOB: _____ Asthma? Yes _____ No _____

Typical symptoms of child's allergic response:

TREATMENT

Action to be taken immediately:

Emergency medications must be in original containers and show child's name, dosage, and physician's name as well as the name of the medication.

EMERGENCY CALLS

1. Call 911

2. Call Parent: _____

3. Call Physician: Dr. _____

at _____

I give permission for Nursery Attendants to administer emergency medication to my child according to the information I have provided above.

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Reviewed: _____

Reviewed: _____