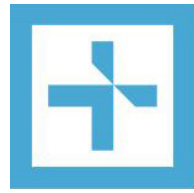




Caring Well

AUGUST 2026



**Caring
Well**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preschool Policies

— PAGE 4 —

Kids Policies

— PAGE 19 —

Student Policies

— PAGE 33 —

Addendum

— PAGE 47 —



INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Immanuel Baptist Church ("Immanuel") seeks to provide a place for all children and youth to grow in their faith and understanding of Jesus. The policies set forth below serve to address the safety and care of all children participating in programs at Immanuel. The policies seek to both prevent abuse and to inform volunteers and staff members (collectively "team members") regarding the proper course of action to follow in the case of allegations of abuse. As part of this goal, Immanuel seeks to train and equip team members to care for the children participating in its ministries and to create an environment of trust and respect. **These policies are subject to change from time to time as deemed appropriate or necessary. Limited exceptions and variations may be necessary at times to accommodate practical application based on specific situations.** It is essential that all team members read and understand these policies and procedures before serving. If you have a question about these policies and procedures, please contact the preschool director.

SECURITY POLICIES

CHECK-IN (ARRIVAL)

Upon arrival each child must check into Immanuel's computerized attendance system. This system will log the child's attendance, track any known allergies, and provide access to the emergency contact information of the child's parents or guardians. The system will print two tags with a unique security code. This 4-digit security code will be used for the verification of the parent/guardian and child at time of checkout.

- Children may not enter the classroom without a name tag.
- The first tag should be affixed to the front or back of the child; the second tag is given to the parent or guardian.
- Team members, please stress to parents/guardians the importance of keeping up with their tag so they can be matched up at checkout. This applies to all parents/guardians, no matter how long they have attended Immanuel or how well the team member knows the parent/guardian.

Offline Check-In Alternative: If for any reason the computer system or printers are down, the following is the alternative method for check-in.

- The team member overseeing registration must switch to Immanuel's handwritten system by using the following procedure:
 - The team member should retrieve the back-up written log sheets and record the following: (1) the child's first and last name; (2) a made-up 4-digit security code; (3) the room number, name, or other identifier; and (4) the initials of the team member who took the registration information.

- The team member should also retrieve an extra roll of stickers used for the printer tags and should indicate the following information on the tags: (1) the child's first and last name and (2) the same made-up 4-digit security code that was on the registration sheet. This sticker should be affixed on the front or back of the child's shirt/outfit.
- On a separate sticker, the team member must write the same 4-digit security code to create a parent/guardian sticker.
- Team members should still stress to parents/guardians the importance of keeping up with this tag so that it can be matched up with the child's tag at checkout.

Checkout (DEPARTURE)

It is extremely important Immanuel is consistent in enforcing checkout policies to ensure that every child is returned to the proper parent/guardian. Be sure to use the following procedure:

- Any individual seeking to pick up a child must be over the age of 12 and present the 4-digit security code that matches the child seeking to be picked up. Children under the age of 12 are not authorized to pick up any child but may accompany the parent/guardian to pick up their siblings.
- The team member releasing the child to an individual must look carefully at the child's tag and match the SECURITY CODE with the parent/guardian tag.
- If any parent/guardian does not have their tag, the following alternative procedure may be used to verify the individual:
 - The team member monitoring the door should contact the preschool desk team, who must approve the release of the child.
 - The preschool desk team must ask for a government-issued photo identification and must log the individual on the missing tag log with (1) their full name, (2) the unique 4-digit security code on the child's tag, (3) the parent/guardian's unique identification number (such as their driver's license number), (4) the class in which the child was located, and (5) the name of the team member who released the child to the adult.
 - If the adult's relationship to the child can be validated by a staff member through the check-in system or church database, then the preschool desk team may release the child. In the case that the relationship cannot be verified, then staff must make the decision whether or not to release the child based on the presented circumstances. When in doubt, staff should call the emergency contact information to confirm that the parent/guardian present has permission to pick up the child.
 - Before releasing the child, the preschool desk team is required to take a picture of the child with the individual to whom they released the child and should indicate who took the picture on the release sheet.

ACCESS TO AREAS WHERE CHILDREN ARE PRESENT

Hallways:

- The hallways to the preschool ministry will be unlocked for drop-off and pickup 15 minutes prior to any service beginning and 5 minutes before the service is scheduled to conclude.
- At all other times, the door to the preschool ministry hallways will be locked when children are present. (Exception: One set of doors may remain open if security personnel are present).
- All doors must be kept locked if there are no security personnel present.
- Any individual in the hallways other than at drop-off and pick-up times must be a team member with a name tag, a law enforcement officer, church security personnel, or church staff.
- All hallways are monitored by security cameras.
- Immanuel will also have a team member serve as a hall monitor to provide additional surveillance.

Classrooms:

- No person is allowed to enter a preschool classroom other than a preschool team member. The only exception to this rule is to allow a parent of an 18-month-old or younger to enter a room to hand off their child, give instructions for their child, etc., as needed.
- All team members **MUST** be wearing a name tag before they are allowed to enter a room to serve.
- All classrooms are monitored by security cameras. Parents and family members of team members are not allowed in the classroom at any time, with the following noted exceptions:
 - Parents may be asked by a staff member to participate in their child's class if that child is acting out in a harmful way toward others. In those cases, to comply with the established vetting process, the parent will be required to complete a background check before taking part in class.
 - A parent from a first-time visiting family will be permitted to visit a classroom to observe that environment, with approval from staff only. The visiting parent must wear the identifying badge/name tag to do so. This is allowed for one week only without performing a background check.

PHOTOGRAPHY/SOCIAL MEDIA

Team members should seek to avoid any private conversations, whether via text message or social media, with any child. If a child reaches out via these platforms, the conversation should be recorded and never deleted and should be reported. No team member should use a platform for child interactions that allows anonymity or that automatically deletes posts or communications, such as SnapChat.

- IBCLR will utilize the photo permission waiver before using a photo/video of a minor on any of the church social media accounts.
- If team members want to personally post on their own social media accounts, we encourage team members to seek permission before posting from the parent of minors involved as well as the ministry leader in their area.
- Any post involving a minor will not identify the minor by name.

MOTHER'S DAY OUT PROCEDURES

Immanuel's Mother's Day Out (MDO) program meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year in several of the Preschool Hallway classrooms. MDO functions differently from regular Preschool programs, and therefore, has the following exceptions:

1. Name Tags- Due to the nature of the MDO program (set class roster including teachers and attendees running on set days), teachers and children attending are not required to use the check-in system to obtain a name tag. Class rosters will still be utilized in each MDO room.
2. Preschool Hallway Doors- Preschool Hallway Doors will be open from 8:45 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays for MDO Drop-Off. They will be shut at 9:15am. The doors will be re-opened from 1:45 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. for MDO Pick-Up.
3. Pick-Up Procedures- Each registered MDO family will receive an "Authorized Pick-Up" card/code with their child's name(s) at the beginning of the school year. This card/code or a photograph of the card/code must be shown at Pick-Up. There are times when someone other than the parent/guardian needs to pick up the child. In these instances, the person picking up the child must still show the card/code or a photograph of the card/code AND their names must be on file on the child's Authorized Pick-up List.
4. Naps and Monitors- Nap time is built into every MDO daily schedule. Children will nap in one of the following: a crib, a swing, on a nap mat provided by parents. All nap rooms will utilize a baby monitor with video and sound to ensure child's safety.

5. MDO teachers and substitute teachers will have completed all Immanuel's screening requirements, including but not limited to: an employment application, a current background check, a current Ministry Safe certification, a current Caring Well training.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the unlikely event of an emergency which requires an evacuation, team members shall take the following action:

General Emergency Response:

- Prior to beginning to serve at their assigned time, team members in each room should familiarize themselves with the evacuation route for the classroom they are serving in that day. The evacuation route is posted by the exit door of each room.
- Evacuate all children in the room to the location listed on the evacuation plan and take your room roster with you.
- Do not release children to parents/guardians in the middle of an evacuation. Instead, remind parents/guardians that they can walk with you. You can recruit parents/guardians to assist you in the evacuation of the room. Inform them that you cannot release a child until you have arrived at your designated location.
- Once evacuated, please wait for further instructions from preschool staff before releasing any children to a parent/guardian.
- Please always stay with your group. Do not leave to go get your own children, to obtain first aid, or for any other reason. First aid will be brought to you if needed.
- Release children using the checkout policy only after you have been given permission to dismiss by a staff member. All parents/guardians must have their parent tag. Remind parents that they can walk with you, but that you cannot release a child until you have arrived at your designated location and received permission to dismiss.

Tornado Procedure:

- Everyone in the building should move quickly to a classroom or hallway where there are no windows.
- Team members should take their room roster with them if they move locations.
- Have the older children line up along the wall kneeling with their hands on their heads.

Lost Child Procedure:

In the event you notice a child is missing, immediately alert preschool staff or the preschool desk team and church security. Please give a description of the child (what was he/she is wearing, color of hair, name).

Lockdown Procedure:

Should a lockdown be deemed necessary, no children will be allowed to be picked up or dropped off during this time. Everyone will stay in their classrooms with their door shut, and locked where possible. Any kids on the outdoor playground should also be gathered and directed to their designated rooms. The main entrance/exit doors to preschool area and playground door will be locked. We will remain in this mode until a team member comes to the classroom to inform us the lockdown is over and to resume normal operating procedures. Do not open the door for anyone other than law enforcement or team members, and only when safe to do so.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

“THE RULE OF 2” (BUT 3 IS BETTER!)

Immanuel’s “Rule of 2” states that there must always be two adults present when supervising one or more children. This rule is non-negotiable and is designed for the safety of children as well as adults. Planning ahead will help avoid the potential of being alone with one or more children. The purpose of “The Rule of 2” is to make sure the actions of any one team member are known to at least one other team member and to encourage team members to support each other in ministry.

Compliance to “The Rule of 2” includes the following:

- There must always be two approved adult team members present when supervising one or more children.
- The adults generally must not be related family members (a married couple would be considered “related”). If two related adults are teaching together, a third team member must generally be present. If a third team member is not available, the two related adults may work together so long as there are cameras present in the classroom.
- Adults should be always in sight of each other.
- If an adult needs to step out of the room at any time (i.e., bathroom, urgent call, to take medicine, etc.) please ask a hall monitor to step into your classroom.

VISIBILITY & SECURITY

It is important that all interaction between children and team members happens in a location where others can observe what is going on for safety and accountability purposes. **At no time** should a child and team member be behind a closed door with no visibility to others.

Most, if not all, areas where children and team members are present on the Immanuel campus are equipped with video surveillance equipment. As a team member you acknowledge that you are being recorded for safety and security purposes. This is done for the protection of both children and team members.

DIAPER POLICY

Only female team leaders may change a diaper in the preschool. Team leaders should never change a diaper without another team member in the room and should never leave a child unattended on the changing table. Children should only have their diapers changed in the changing stations.

When changing a diaper, a team member must cover the changing station with a disposable liner and get a new diaper. The team member should then clean the child, dispose of the soiled diaper into the trash, and replace with a new diaper. Diaper rash cream, gripe drops, and teething gel, if these items are provided by the parent, may be applied by a team member. Team members should wash their hands both before and after changing a diaper and should clean the changing table.

RESTROOM POLICY

When possible, children should use a single classroom restroom if it is available. Once a child alerts a team member that he/she needs to use the restroom, the team member should check the restroom first to make sure that it is free of other adults before allowing the child to enter. As needed, assist young children with their clothing in an open doorway before they go into the bathroom, but give them the opportunity to do as much of this for themselves as possible. The team member should remain outside of the restroom with the door almost closed until the child is finished using the restroom.

If a team member is needed to help a child using the restroom, or a child requires a change of clothes, has special needs or in any way requires extra assistance, the team member shall leave the door to the restroom open and inform the other team member of the facts surrounding the assistance needed. Remember, the two adult rule applies.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or windows in the classroom walls. Classroom doors should never be locked while people are inside the room, except to protect children from walking out, or in case of an imminent threat during lockdown. Team members should be observable at all times.

APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Physical Contact

Immanuel is committed to protecting children in its care and recognizes that appropriate touch is part of a positive, nurturing environment in a healthy preschool ministry. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by Immanuel leaders.

Physical contact in any form should be above reproach. The personal behavior of team members must always foster trust. Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected, except in cases where the child's safety or the safety of others is in question.

Using good judgment, the following are appropriate ways to touch kids:

- An arm around the shoulder.
- Walking hand in hand when needed to ensure safety or efficiency in moving a group to a different location.
- Short congratulatory or greeting side hugs.
- A brief, assuring pat on the upper back or shoulder.
- Handshakes, high-fives, first bumps, and knuckles.
- Redirect a child's attention: Get down to their eye level and point to your chin.
- For children under 3 years of age, the team member may have a child sit in their lap, as needed, in a rocking chair or on the floor. Always make sure you are holding any child sitting in your lap, so they do not fall out of your lap.
- For children aged 3 years or older, use discretion to determine instances where it is necessary to hold a child in your lap in an effort to comfort or console.

The following are actions a team member should **NEVER** take:

- Never touch a child in anger or disgust.
- Never touch a child in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between team members and children should be positive and uplifting. Immanuel team members should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children. Team members should not show favoritism, give gifts, or look for alone time with children.

To this end, team leaders should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, team leaders are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children or speaking disrespectfully or maliciously of other people. Finally, team members should not make sexually provocative or degrading comments or make inappropriate or risqué jokes.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Classroom Discipline: We will use love and kindness when dealing with disciplinary issues within preschool classrooms. Here are some tips:

- Redirection - In most cases, you can positively redirect a child's attention to another activity or behavior.
- In some cases, it may be necessary to temporarily remove a child from a situation. Team members will sit with and offer emotional comfort and assistance until the child is ready to appropriately come back to play times or learning times. If they are unable to calm down or return to activities, please ask preschool staff for assistance. Remember, the team member should not be alone or isolated with the child.
- Positive Reinforcement - It is important to consistently reinforce positive behavior with smiles, encouraging words, and from time to time, stickers, or other rewards. This should be applied consistently to all children, and no child should receive isolated rewards or gifts.
- In cases of biting or when a child seriously harms another child, please remove the aggressor child from the room and contact preschool staff.
- For more severe and/or persistent disciplinary situations, the staff will meet to discuss steps to take with families whose child persistently endangers others or themselves.
- For team members whose own children are involved in the ministry, during the time you are serving you should only use these same disciplinary policies with your children when you are on campus or at church activities.

Inappropriate forms of discipline:

- Do not spank.
- Do not use sarcasm or ridicule.
- Do not discipline the child in front of others.
- Do not use any forms of timeout involving isolation.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Never be alone with a child.
- Never leave children unattended.
- No medication of any kind will be given to children by any team member. The only exception to this rule is an EpiPen during a medical emergency, and application of diaper rash cream or gripe drops.
- Follow the "Immanuel Rule of 2" – A minimum of two adults should always be present in any room, except in the event of an emergency; we strive to have 3 adults present if two of the adults in the classroom are related.
- Classroom doors should remain open at all times, unless the door is outfitted with a full window. For classrooms that have Dutch or half doors, the top portion will remain open at all times.
- Avoid physical contacts with children that could in anyway be misconstrued as inappropriate.
- Never prop a bottle in bed with a child. All children are to be held and loved on while given a bottle.
- Check on sleeping children at least every 10 minutes, unless a baby monitor with sound and video is being utilized.
- After a child has been placed in a baby bed, no other child should be placed in that bed unless it has been disinfected and new sheets put on the bed.

Buggies/strollers – When pushing children around in a buggy/stroller, make sure all kids are buckled into their seats. The buggies may be pushed in the kids and preschool areas. If accompanied by two certified team members, the buggies may also be pushed around other floors of the church so long as this is communicated to the Pre-School Desk worker and team members have a cell phone with them.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

WHEN TO CALL 911

Call 911 if the following emergencies occur:

- A child begins choking.
- A child is knocked unconscious or suffers a serious injury.
- A child starts to have serious trouble breathing, especially if the child seems to be having an allergic reaction and is in distress.
- If there is a fire, serious security issue, or act of violence.

In the event of a potentially life-threatening illness or injury, any adult has authority to immediately call 911. In non-life-threatening instances, immediately report any medical needs or concerns to the preschool staff and desk team. Those notified will contact the Immanuel Security Team to decide if 911 should be called. In addition, the staff/desk team will contact the parent/guardian to advise them of the situation.

The team member should remain calm and divert the attention of the other children. The injured or sick person should be kept quiet and still to the extent feasible. Do not attempt to move a severely injured person unless he or she is in imminent danger.

Regardless of severity, any medical needs or concerns should be reported immediately to preschool staff. After the incident is under control, the team member involved should fill out an Incident Report (discussed below) and submit it to the Executive Pastor and preschool staff.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

If an injury as outlined below occurs, contact preschool staff immediately:

- Any injury that leaves a visible mark.
- Any injury where there is bleeding.
- Any occurrence that involves an allergy alert child ingesting an allergen.
- Any occurrence that leaves the child crying for an extended period, even if there is no visible injury.
- Any injury that leaves a child limping or dazed.
- Any injury where a child is complaining of pain more than five minutes after the accident occurred.

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, the staff or team member should contact the parent and/or guardian.

INCIDENT REPORTS

When to fill out an incident report:

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, the team member must complete an Incident Report and fill out completely each and every time a child is injured; damage to property occurred; a security issue arose; a mandated reporter call is made; or any other related issue has taken place: When in doubt – fill it out.

- **The Incident Report needs to be filled out by the person who administers first aid and a team member(s) who witnessed the incident.**
- **Record all details as soon as possible.**
- **Parents/guardians of any child who has been involved in an incident should be notified.**

Completion of Incident Reports:

- **All Incident Reports must be turned into the preschool ministry director by the end of the day on the date of the incident. All reports will then be given to the church administrator.**

If requested, a copy of the report may be provided to the parent/guardian of the child involved. If the report contains names of other minor children, the copy provided shall be redacted to protect the privacy of the other children involved.

NO MEDICATION POLICY

No prescription or oral medication, with exception of an EpiPen during a life-threatening reaction, may be administered by team members. In the event of a life-threatening reaction, the EpiPen may be administered by an IBC team member.

The parent/guardian of the child must administer all other medication, both oral and topical (with exception of the following if provided by the parent/guardian: diaper rash cream, gripe drops, and teething gel).

Team members are prohibited from opening or taking medication while in the classroom. If medication is needed, the team member must leave the classroom to take medication.

CHILDREN AND VOLUNTEER HEALTH POLICY

Children who show any visible signs of illness should not be allowed into the classroom. When addressing this with parents/guardians, assure them that we want their child to come back as soon as they are feeling better. If any illness is discovered after a child is in the classroom, remove the child from the room and ask preschool staff to locate the parents/guardians.

While in class, should a child begin to exhibit any of the following symptoms or shows other signs of illness, contact preschool staff to evaluate the child. Symptoms due to allergies will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Has tested positive for COVID-19, flu, RSV, etc.
- Vomiting or diarrhea (even associated with teething or medication).
- Common cold from onset through one week.
- Sore throat.
- Constant cough or croup.
- Colored mucus (runny nose that is not clear).
- Any unexplained rash.
- Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo, or any open sores that leak fluid/blood.
- Pink eye or other eye infections.
- Cloudy or green runny nose.
- Any communicable disease.
- Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits.

If a parent/guardian tells you that his or her child has exposed the class to a contagious disease (e.g. measles, chicken pox, COVID-19, etc.) please contact the preschool ministry director (who will advise the Executive Pastor) to handle the situation. Do not alarm other parents or children. The circumstances will be fully investigated, and preschool staff will be responsible for notifying other parents.

ALLERGIES

Always check the child's name tag or class roster for the allergy note. Please be aware of all allergies in your classroom. If snacks are served, children will only be served the snack provided in the room, or provided by their parents.

CHILD ABUSE AND PROTECTION POLICY

What is child abuse/neglect?

According to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, “child abuse and neglect” means, at a minimum, “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.”

Arkansas law prohibits child maltreatment—or abuse and neglect. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, or abandonment by the caretaker of a child.

- **Neglect** – Arkansas law defines neglect to include but not be limited to (1) failure to prevent abuse; (2) failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment for the child’s well-being; (3) failure to take action to protect the child from abandonment, abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or neglect; and (4) failure to properly supervise a child, which creates a dangerous situation.
- **Abuse** – Arkansas law defines abuse to include but not be limited to (1) extreme or repeated cruelty to a child; (2) conduct creating a threat of death or impairment; (3) injury to a child’s intellectual, emotional, or psychological development; (4) any non-accidental physical injury; and (5) any intentional acts, such as throwing, striking, shaking, burning, biting, or cutting a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Arkansas law defines sexual abuse to include: (1) sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact; (2) attempted sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact; (3) forcing or encouraging the watching of pornography; (4) forcing, permitting, or encouraging the watching of live sexual activity; (5) forcing the listening to a phone sex line; (6) an act of voyeurism; or (7) solicitation of sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact. Sexual abuse also includes grooming, which means to knowingly disseminate to a child a visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit content with the purpose to entice, induce, or groom the child to engage in the sexual intercourse, sexually explicit conduct, or deviate sexual activity.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

It is essential that Immanuel create a culture where child abuse prevention is discussed, addressed, and monitored. All team members who come to learn of any occurrence of neglect or abuse or who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to neglect or abuse should follow the steps below.

- If the child is in immediate danger or if there is an emergency, call security or 911.
- If there is potential for immediate contact between the alleged offender and the victim, take any steps necessary to create distance and call security or 911. After securing the victim’s safety in the moment, the team member with knowledge of the incident of abuse should call the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-482-5964**. This report must happen immediately. The team member should be specific about concerns and provide the child’s name, the alleged offender’s name, and details about the abuse.
- Once the team member makes the report to the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member will receive a report number and should then immediately provide this number along with a completed incident report to the Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor and the Director of Finance & Administration.
 - The team member must also report the incident to the Caring Well Pastor and/or Caring Well Director and the Caring Well Chairperson.
 - If the team member informs a pastor or ministry leader that he/she has not yet called the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member should immediately call the hotline with a pastor or ministry leader present for the call.
- After a report of neglect or abuse has been submitted, the pastor/director or ministry leader must immediately send the incident report to the Caring Well Team for further review and any needed actions.

The investigation of any allegations of neglect or abuse is the responsibility of the proper authorities. Team members or any other persons at Immanuel should not conduct their own investigation into any claims of abuse or neglect. Immanuel will cooperate fully with an investigation by local, state, or federal authorities.

Confidentiality

Except to comply with this policy and applicable law, or to cooperate with any official investigation of the incident, team members with personal knowledge of the suspected neglect or abuse should be mindful of the sensitive nature of the matter and should keep such matters confidential. Team members should not reveal the identity of the victim except when necessary. Any requests for information directed to team members by individuals outside of the official investigation (e.g., requests from the media) should be directed to the ministry leader or Executive Pastor.

Reporting Other Policy Violations or Inappropriate Behavior

There may be instances where a team member observes violations of this policy or other inappropriate behavior that is concerning but does not qualify as neglect or abuse as defined above. In addition, a team member may observe or be aware of inappropriate behavior by another team member with another adult, such as that team member making sexual related comments or jokes or having inappropriate physical contact with another adult while serving at Immanuel.

If you are subjected to any conduct that you believe violates this policy or witness any such inappropriate conduct that does not qualify as child neglect or abuse, you must promptly speak to, write, or otherwise contact your preschool staff or, if the conduct involves staff, then contact the Executive Pastor within 5 days of the offending conduct.

Your complaint should be as detailed as possible, including the names of all individuals involved and any witnesses. Immanuel will directly and thoroughly investigate the facts and circumstances of all claims of inappropriate behavior or will refer the investigation to the proper professionals and will take prompt corrective action, if appropriate.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Immanuel will neither condone nor tolerate:

- Infliction of bodily injury upon any child or physically or sexually abusive behavior towards a child.
- Physical neglect of children, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to church activities.
- Emotional mistreatment of children, including verbal
- Abuse and/or verbal attacks.

Removal of Those Accused of Wrongdoing

Immanuel reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation with an Immanuel member who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child or is currently under investigation for such wrongdoing.

SCREENING AND PLACEMENT

Screening

Each potential team member (whether volunteer or employee) must be a member of the church and known for at least six months before he or she is eligible to apply for a team member position. Once an individual meets these initial criteria, he/she will take the following steps:

- Each potential team member will fill out an online application.
- Once the online application is received, it will be reviewed and approved by the respective minister or director.
- A formal state and federal background check will be conducted on the potential team member. This background check will be consistent with our current process, which includes a signed consent form. All background check information will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. Immanuel will comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding background checks.
- For screening of paid staff members, Immanuel will contact those entities / individuals listed by the applicant as former employers or supervisors to verify that the information presented on the application is accurate.
- The publicly available postings on the potential team member's social media accounts will be checked by the respective staff member. In an era in which most people have a social media presence, it is wise to review an applicant's social media history for red flags or any content that could indicate improper behavior.
- Upon approval of the application and an approved background check, an in-person interview will be scheduled and conducted by the respective ministry leader. It will be a face-to-face interview. If a question has arisen with the applicant's background check or application, it will be discussed during the interview. Immanuel will also take this time to educate the applicant about the ministry and to inform the applicant of the child protection policies in place.
- For applicants under the age of 15, Immanuel will require additional references given that a background check will not be able to be conducted. The Executive Pastor, director, or assigned volunteer coordinator will contact the character references provided by a potential volunteer applicant to ask the appropriate applicant screening questions.

Training & Placement:

- After successful completion of the screening process, and before beginning any training, the team member must review and sign this policy and any others related to his/her area of ministry. This is to demonstrate their understanding of an agreement to Immanuel's policies and procedures.
- All volunteers must complete Ministry Safe and Caring Well training and quizzes.
- Upon completion of training, the team member will be placed in their new role.

Recertification of Volunteers:

- Ministries will train all team members once a year. The team members must attend recertification training, or if they are unable to attend, they must review the material given at these trainings by video or other provided means.
- Team members must sign a background check authorization every two years, at the time a new background check is performed.

GENERAL SAFETY REMINDERS

- **Never be alone with a child.**
- **Never leave children unattended.**
- **No medication of any kind will be given to children by any team member. The only exception to this rule is an EpiPen during a medical emergency, and application of diaper rash cream or gripe drops.**
- **Follow the "Immanuel Rule of 2" – A minimum of two adults should always be present in any room, except in the event of an emergency; we strive to have 3 adults present if two of the adults in the classroom are related.**
- **Classroom doors should remain open at all times, unless the door is outfitted with a full window. For classrooms that have Dutch or half doors, the top portion will remain open at all times.**
- **Avoid physical contacts with children that could in anyway be misconstrued as inappropriate.**
- **Under the age 15 rule – see screening and placement section for screening guidelines.**

- **Never prop a bottle in bed with a child. All children are to be held and loved on while given a bottle.**
- **Check on sleeping children at least every 10 minutes, unless a baby monitor with sound and video is being utilized.**
- **After a child has been placed in a baby bed, no other child should be placed in that bed unless it has been disinfected and new sheets put on the bed.**
- **Buggies/strollers – When pushing children around in a buggy/stroller, make sure all kids are buckled into their seats. The buggies may be pushed in the kids and preschool areas. If accompanied by two certified team members, the buggies may also be pushed around other floors of the church so long as this is communicated to the Pre-School Desk worker and team members have a cell phone with them.**



INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Immanuel Baptist Church (“Immanuel”) seeks to provide a place for all children and youth to grow in their faith and understanding of Jesus. The policies set forth below serve to address the safety and care of all children participating in programs at Immanuel. The policies seek to both prevent abuse and to inform volunteers and staff members (collectively “team members”) regarding the proper course of action to follow in the case of allegations of abuse. As part of this goal, Immanuel seeks to train and equip team members to care for the children participating in its ministries and to create an environment of trust and respect. **These policies are subject to change from time to time as deemed appropriate or necessary. Limited exceptions and variations may be necessary at times to accommodate practical application based on specific situations.** It is essential that all team members read and understand these policies and procedures before serving. If you have a question about these policies and procedures, please contact the kids ministry director.

SECURITY POLICIES

CHECK-IN (ARRIVAL)

Upon arrival each child must check into Immanuel’s computerized attendance system. This system will log the child’s attendance, track any known allergies, and provide access to the emergency contact information of the child’s parents or guardians. The system will print two tags with a unique security code. This 4-digit security code will be used for the verification of the parent/guardian and child at time of checkout.

- Children may not enter the classroom without a name tag.
- The first tag should be affixed to the front or back of the child; the second tag is given to the parent or guardian.
- Team members, please stress to parents/guardians the importance of keeping up with their tag so they can be matched up at checkout. This applies to all parents/guardians, no matter how long they have attended Immanuel or how well the team member knows the parent/guardian.

Offline Check-In Alternative: If for any reason the computer system or printers are down, the following is the alternative method for check-in.

- The team member overseeing registration must switch to Immanuel’s handwritten system by using the following procedure:
 - The team member should retrieve the back-up written log sheets and record the following: (1) the child’s first and last name; (2) a made-up 4-digit security code; (3) the room number, name, or other identifier; and (4) the initials of the team member who took the registration information.
 - The team member should also retrieve an extra roll of stickers used for the printer tags and should indicate the following information on the tags: (1) the child’s first and last name and (2) the same made-up 4-digit security code that was on the registration sheet. This sticker should be affixed on the front or back of the child’s shirt/outfit.
 - On a separate sticker, the team member must write the same 4-digit security code to create a parent/guardian sticker.
- Team members should still stress to parents/guardians the importance of keeping up with this tag so that it can be matched up with the child’s tag at checkout.

Checkot (DEPARTURE)

It is extremely important Immanuel is consistent in enforcing checkout policies to ensure that every child is returned to the proper parent/guardian. Be sure to use the following procedure:

- Any individual seeking to pick up a child must be over the age of 12 and present the 4-digit security code that matches the child seeking to be picked up. Children under the age of 12 are not authorized to pick up any child but may accompany the parent/guardian to pick up their siblings.
- The team member releasing the child to an individual must look carefully at the child's tag and match the SECURITY CODE with the parent/guardian tag.
- If any parent/guardian does not have their tag, the following alternative procedure may be used to verify the individual:
 - The team member monitoring the door should contact the Kids Desk Team, who must approve the release of the child.
 - The Kids Desk Team must ask for a government-issued photo identification and must log the individual on the missing tag log with (1) their full name, (2) the unique 4-digit security code on the child's tag, (3) the parent/guardian's unique identification number (such as their driver's license number), (4) the class in which the child was located, and (5) the name of the team member who released the child to the adult.
 - If the adult's relationship to the child can be validated by a staff member through the check-in system or church database, then the Kids Desk Team may release the child. In the case that the relationship cannot be verified, then staff must make the decision whether or not to release the child based on the circumstances presented. When in doubt, staff should call the emergency contact information to confirm that the parent/guardian present has permission to pick up the child.
 - Before releasing the child, the Kids Desk Team is required to take a picture of the child with the individual to whom they released the child and should indicate who took the picture on the release sheet.

ACCESS TO AREAS WHERE CHILDREN ARE PRESENT

Hallways:

- The hallways to the Kids ministry will be unlocked for drop-off and pickup 15 minutes prior to any service beginning and 5 minutes before the service is scheduled to conclude.
- At all other times, the door to the Kids ministry hallways will be locked when children are present. (Exception: One door may remain open if a security officer is present).
- All doors must be kept locked if there are no security personnel present.
- Any individual in the hallways other than at drop-off and pick-up times must be a team member with a name tag, a law enforcement officer, church security personnel, or church staff.
- All hallways are monitored by security cameras.
- Immanuel will also have a team member serve as a hall monitor to provide additional surveillance.

Classrooms:

- No person is allowed to enter a Kids classroom other than a Kids team member.
- All team members **MUST** wear a name tag before they are allowed to enter a room to serve.
- All classrooms are monitored by security cameras. Parents and family members of team members are not allowed in the classroom at any time, with the following noted exceptions:
- Parents may be asked by a staff member to participate in their child's class if their child is misbehaving in a harmful way toward others. In those cases, to comply with the established vetting process, the parent will be required to complete a background check before taking part in class.
- A parent from a first-time visiting family will be permitted to visit a classroom to observe that environment, with approval from staff only. The visiting parent must wear the identifying badge/nametag to do so. This is allowed for one week only without performing a background check.

PHOTOGRAPHY/SOCIAL MEDIA

Team members should seek to avoid any private conversations, whether via text message or social media, with any child. If a child reaches out via these platforms, the conversation should be recorded and never deleted and should be reported. No team member should use a platform for youth interactions that allows anonymity or that automatically deletes posts or communications, such as SnapChat.

- IBCLR will utilize the photo permission waiver before using a photo/video of a minor on any of the church social media accounts.
- If team members want to personally post on their own social media accounts, we encourage team members to seek permission before posting from the parent of minors involved, as well as the ministry leader in their area.
- Any post involving a minor will not identify the minor by name.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the unlikely event of an emergency which requires an evacuation, team members shall take the following action:

General Emergency Response:

- Prior to beginning to serve at their assigned time, team members in each room should familiarize themselves with the evacuation route for the classroom they are serving in that day. The evacuation route is posted by the exit door of each room.
- Evacuate all children in the room to the location listed on the evacuation plan and take your room roster with you.
- Do not release children to parents/guardians in the middle of an evacuation. Instead, remind parents/guardians that they can walk with you. You can recruit parents/guardians to assist you in the evacuation of the room. Inform them that you cannot release a child until you have arrived at your designated location.
- Once evacuated, please wait for further instructions from Kids staff before releasing any children to a parent/guardian.
- Please always stay with your group. Do not leave to go get your own children, to obtain first aid, or for any other reason. First aid will be brought to you if needed.
- Release children using the checkout policy only after you have been given permission to dismiss by a staff member. All parents/guardians must have their parent tag.

Tornado Procedure:

- Everyone in the building should move quickly to a classroom or hallway where there are no windows.
- Team members should take their room roster with them if they move locations.
- Have the older children line up along the wall kneeling with their hands on their heads.

Lost Child Procedure:

In the event you notice a child is missing, immediately alert the Kids staff or the Kids Team Desk and church security. Please give a description of the child (what was he/she wearing, color of hair, name).

Lockdown Procedure:

Should a lockdown be deemed necessary, no children will be allowed to be picked up or dropped off during this time. Everyone will stay in their classrooms with their door shut and locked where possible. We will remain in this mode until a team member comes to the classroom to inform us the lockdown is over and to resume normal operating procedures. Do not open the door for anyone other than law enforcement or team members, and only when safe to do so.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

“THE RULE OF 2” (BUT 3 IS BETTER!)

Immanuel’s “Rule of 2” states that there must always be two adults present when supervising one or more children. This rule is non-negotiable and is designed for the safety of children as well as adults. Planning ahead will help avoid the potential of being alone with one or more children. The purpose of “The Rule of 2” is to make sure the actions of any one team member are known to at least one other team member and to encourage team members to support each other in ministry.

Compliance to “The Rule of 2” includes the following:

- There must always be two approved adult team members present when supervising one or more children.
- The adults generally must not be related family members (a married couple would be considered “related”). If two related adults are teaching together, a third team member must generally be present. If a third team member is not available, the two related adults may work together so long as there are cameras present in the classroom.
- Adults should always be in sight of each other.
- If an adult needs to step out of the room at any time (i.e., bathroom, urgent call, to take medicine, etc.) please ask a hall monitor to step into your classroom.

VISIBILITY & SECURITY

It is important that all interaction between children and team members happens in a location where others can observe what is going on for safety and accountability purposes. **At no time** should a child and team member be behind a closed door with no visibility to others.

Most, if not all, areas where children and team members are present on the Immanuel campus are equipped with video surveillance equipment. As a team member you acknowledge that you are being recorded for safety and security purposes. This is done for the protection of both children and team members.

RESTROOM POLICY

When possible, children should use a single restroom if it is available. Once a child alerts a team member that he/she needs to use the restroom, the team member should check the restroom first to make sure that it is free of other adults before allowing the child to enter. As needed, assist young children with their clothing in an open doorway before they go into the bathroom, but give them the opportunity to do as much of this for themselves as possible. The team member should remain outside of the restroom with the door almost closed until the child is finished using the restroom.

If a team member is needed to help a child using the restroom, or a child requires a change of clothes, has special needs or in any way requires extra assistance, the team member shall leave the door to the restroom open and inform the other team member of the facts surrounding the assistance needed. Remember, the two adult rule applies.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or windows in the classroom walls. Classroom doors should never be locked while people are inside the room, except to protect children from walking out, or in case of an imminent threat during lockdown. Team members should be observable at all times.

APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Physical Contact

Immanuel is committed to protecting children in its care and recognizes that appropriate touch is part of a positive, nurturing environment in a healthy kids ministry. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by Immanuel leaders.

Physical contact in any form should be above reproach. The personal behavior of team members must always foster trust. Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected, except in cases where the child's safety or the safety of others is in question.

Using good judgment, the following are appropriate ways to touch kids:

- An arm around the shoulder.
- Walking hand in hand when needed to ensure safety or efficiency in moving a group to a different location.
- Short congratulatory or greeting side hugs.
- A brief, assuring pat on the upper back or shoulder.
- Handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, and knuckles.
- Redirect a child's attention: Get down to their eye level and point to your chin.

The following are actions a team member should **NEVER** take:

- Never touch a child in anger or disgust
- Never touch a child in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between team members and children should be positive and uplifting. Immanuel team members should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children. Team members should not show favoritism, give gifts, or look for alone time with children.

To this end, team leaders should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, team leaders are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children or speaking disrespectfully or maliciously of other people. Finally, team members should not make sexually provocative or degrading comments or make inappropriate or risqué jokes.

CAMP EVENTS

IBC staff and volunteers participating in camp events are required to complete a separate, more comprehensive training session specific to their scheduled event and sign a Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement to participate.

- NEVER invite a child to go alone ANYWHERE for ANY reason. If you feel a child needs counsel, please contact an Immanuel staff member to develop a plan to help the child.
- All Immanuel volunteers must be at least 18 years of age to serve and will go through the same application process required for serving in other areas of ministry.
- Those under 18 years of age may be approved to volunteer if serving under adult supervision, he/she has completed Caring Well Training, and 3 character references are provided.
- NEVER transport a child alone in a vehicle. If there is an emergency which requires a child to be transported, make sure a staff member is notified for assistance, or dial 911.
- In a camp situation, if you need to enter a room or cabin with only the children present, find another adult first or ask the children to step outside.
- Helping children bathe or shower is absolutely prohibited. Never expose yourself in any way to children. In a camp situation wait until all kids have showered or bathed to take yours.
- Always practice modesty and respect privacy.

OFFSITE GROUP EVENTS

- Off-site Group events are encouraged if approved by the Kids ministry leader, who will advise of best practices while off site.
- Team members must obtain permission from a parent/guardian for students to participate in approved off-site activities. Team members are encouraged to communicate with parents concerning date/time/location and reason for the event.
- NEVER invite a child to go alone ANYWHERE for ANY reason. If you feel a child needs counsel, please contact an Immanuel staff member to develop a plan to help the child.
- NEVER transport a child alone in a vehicle. If there is an emergency which requires a child to be transported, make sure a staff member is notified for assistance, or dial 911.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Staff members and ministry volunteers may, from time to time, be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when transporting children:

- Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place must be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- Absent an emergency, drivers may not use cell phones while transporting minors (other than navigation applications for directions). In an emergency, stop the vehicle to use the cell phone, unless a stop cannot safely occur. Texting or other cell phone use is strictly prohibited while driving.
- No drivers under age 25 may drive church-owned or rented vehicles.
- In transportation, the TWO ADULT RULE or RULE OF THREE must be followed.
- Never be alone in a vehicle with a child of the opposite sex.
- Never instruct a child to drive other students to a ministry event.
- Transport only the number of children for whom you have seat belts.

- Seat belts should be worn at all times while in the vehicle.
- No one should be double-buckled.
- Use extra caution when driving children.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Classroom Discipline: We will use love and kindness when dealing with disciplinary issues. Here are some tips:

- Redirection - In most cases, you can positively redirect a child's attention to another activity or behavior.
- In some cases, it may be necessary to temporarily remove a child from a situation. Team members will sit with and offer emotional comfort and assistance until the child is ready to appropriately come back to play times or learning times. If they are unable to calm down or return to activities, please ask Kids staff for assistance. Remember, the team member should not be alone or isolated with the child.
- Positive Reinforcement - It is important to consistently reinforce positive behavior with smiles, encouraging words, and from time to time, stickers, or other rewards. This should be applied consistently to all children, and no child should receive isolated rewards or gifts.
- In cases of biting or when a child seriously harms another child, please remove the aggressor child from the room and contact staff.
- For more severe and/or persistent disciplinary situations, the staff will meet to discuss steps to take with families whose child persistently endangers others or themselves.
- For team members whose own children are involved in the ministry, during the time you are serving you should only use these same disciplinary policies with your children when you are on campus or at church activities.

Inappropriate forms of discipline:

- Do not spank.
- Do not use sarcasm or ridicule.
- Do not discipline the child in front of others.

GENERAL SAFETY REMINDERS

- **Never be alone with a child.**
- **Never leave children unattended.**
- **No medication of any kind will be given to children by any team member. The only exception to this rule is an EpiPen during a medical emergency, and application of diaper rash cream or gripe drops.**
- **Follow the "Immanuel Rule of 2" – A minimum of two adults should always be present in any room, except in the event of an emergency; we strive to have 3 adults present if two of the adults in the classroom are related.**
- **Classroom doors should remain open at all times, unless the door is outfitted with a full window. For classrooms that have Dutch or half doors, the top portion will remain open at all times.**
- **Avoid physical contacts with children that could in anyway be misconstrued as inappropriate.**

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

WHEN TO CALL 911

Call 911 if the following emergencies occur:

- A child begins choking.
- A child is knocked unconscious or suffers a serious injury.
- A child starts to have serious trouble breathing, especially if the child seems to be having an allergic reaction and is in distress.
- If there is a fire, serious security issue, or act of violence.

In the event of a potentially life-threatening illness or injury, any adult has authority to immediately call 911. In non-life-threatening instances, immediately report any medical needs or concerns to the Kids team staff and desk team. Those notified will contact the Immanuel Security Team to decide if 911 should be called. In addition, the staff/desk team will contact the parent/guardian to advise them of the situation.

The team member should remain calm and divert the attention of the other children. The injured or sick person should be kept quiet and still to the extent feasible. Do not attempt to move a severely injured person unless he or she is in imminent danger.

Regardless of severity, any medical needs or concerns should be reported immediately to kids staff. After the incident is under control, the team member involved should fill out an Incident Report (discussed below) and submit it to the Executive Pastor and kids staff.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

If an injury as outlined below occurs, contact kids staff immediately:

- Any injury that leaves a visible mark.
- Any injury where there is bleeding.
- Any occurrence that involves an allergy alert child ingesting an allergen.
- Any occurrence that leaves the child crying for an extended period, even if there is no visible injury.
- Any injury that leaves a child limping or dazed.
- Any injury where a child is complaining of pain more than five minutes after the accident occurred.

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, the staff or team member should contact the parent and/or guardian.

INCIDENT REPORTS

When to fill out an incident report:

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, the team member must complete an Incident Report and fill out completely each and every time a child is injured; damage to property occurred; a security issue arose; a mandated reporter call is made; or any other related issue has taken place: When in doubt – fill it out.

- The Incident Report needs to be filled out by the person who administers first aid and a team member(s) who witnessed the incident.
- Record all details as soon as possible.
- Parents/guardians of any child who has been involved in an incident should be notified.

Completion of Incident Reports:

- All Incident Reports must be turned in to the Kids ministry director by the end of the day on the date of the incident. All reports will then be given to the church administrator for record keeping.
- If requested, a copy of the report may be provided to the parent/guardian of the child involved. If the report contains the names of other minor children, the copy provided shall be redacted to protect the privacy of the other children involved.

NO MEDICATION POLICY

No prescription or oral medication, with the exception of an EpiPen during a life-threatening reaction, may be administered by team members. In the event of a life-threatening reaction, the EpiPen may be administered by an IBC team member.

The parent/guardian of the child must administer all other medication, both oral and topical.

Team members are prohibited from opening or taking medication while in the classroom. If medication is needed, the team member must leave the classroom to take medication.

CHILDREN AND VOLUNTEER HEALTH POLICY

Children who show any visible signs of illness should not be allowed into the classroom. When addressing this with parents/guardians, assure them that we want their child to come back as soon as they are feeling better. If any illness is discovered after a child is in the classroom, remove the child from the room and ask the kids' staff to locate the parents/guardians.

While in class, should a child begin to exhibit any of the following symptoms or shows other signs of illness, contact kids staff to evaluate the child. Symptoms due to allergies will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Has tested positive for COVID-19, flu, RSV, etc.
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Common cold from onset through one week.
- Sore throat.
- Constant cough or croup.
- Colored mucus (runny nose that is not clear).
- Any unexplained rash.
- Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo, or any open sores that leak fluid/blood.
- Pink eye or other eye infections.
- Cloudy or green runny nose.
- Any communicable disease.
- Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits.

If a parent/guardian tells you that his or her child has exposed the class to a contagious disease (e.g. measles, chicken pox, COVID-19, etc.) please contact the kids ministry director (who will advise the Executive Pastor) to handle the situation. Do not alarm other parents or children. The circumstances will be fully investigated, and kids staff will be responsible for notifying other parents.

ALLERGIES

Always check the child's name tag or class roster for the allergy note. Please be aware of all allergies in your classroom. If snacks are served, children will only be served the snack provided in the room, or provided by the parent.

CHILD ABUSE AND PROTECTION POLICY

What is child abuse/neglect?

According to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, “child abuse and neglect” means, at a minimum, “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.”

Arkansas law prohibits child maltreatment—or abuse and neglect. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, or abandonment by the caretaker of a child.

- **Neglect** – Arkansas law defines neglect to include but not be limited to (1) failure to prevent abuse; (2) failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment for the child’s well-being; (3) failure to take action to protect the child from abandonment, abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or neglect; and (4) failure to properly supervise a child, which creates a dangerous situation.
- **Abuse** – Arkansas law defines abuse to include but not be limited to (1) extreme or repeated cruelty to a child; (2) conduct creating a threat of death or impairment; (3) injury to a child’s intellectual, emotional, or psychological development; (4) any non-accidental physical injury; and (5) any intentional acts, such as throwing, striking, shaking, burning, biting, or cutting a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Arkansas law defines sexual abuse to include: (1) sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact; (2) attempted sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact; (3) forcing or encouraging the watching of pornography; (4) forcing, permitting, or encouraging the watching of live sexual activity; (5) forcing the listening to a phone sex line; (6) an act of voyeurism; or (7) solicitation of sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact. Sexual abuse also includes grooming, which means to knowingly disseminate to a child a visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit content with the purpose to entice, induce, or groom the child to engage in the sexual intercourse, sexually explicit conduct, or deviant sexual activity.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

It is essential that Immanuel create a culture where child abuse prevention is discussed, addressed, and monitored. All team members who come to learn of any occurrence of neglect or abuse or who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to neglect or abuse should follow the steps below.

- If the child is in immediate danger or if there is an emergency, call security or 911.
- If there is potential for immediate contact between the alleged offender and the victim, take any steps necessary to create distance and call security or 911. After securing the victim’s safety in the moment, the team member with knowledge of the incident of abuse should call the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-482-5964**. This report must happen immediately. The team member should be specific about concerns and provide the child’s name, the alleged offender’s name, and details about the abuse.
- Once the team member makes the report to the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member will receive a report number and should then immediately provide this number along with a completed incident report to the Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor and the Director of Finance & Administration.
 - The team member must also report the incident to the Caring Well Pastor and/or Caring Well Director and the Caring Well Chairperson.
 - If the team member informs a pastor or ministry leader that he/she has not yet called the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member should immediately call the hotline with a pastor or ministry leader present for the call.
- After a report of neglect or abuse has been submitted, the pastor/director or ministry leader must immediately send the incident report to the Caring Well Team for further review and any needed actions.

The investigation of any allegations of neglect or abuse is the responsibility of the proper authorities. Team members or any other persons at Immanuel should not conduct their own investigation into any claims of abuse or neglect. Immanuel will cooperate fully with an investigation by local, state, or federal authorities.

Confidentiality

Except to comply with this Policy and applicable law, or to cooperate with any official investigation of the incident, team members with personal knowledge of the suspected neglect or abuse should be mindful of the sensitive nature of the matter and should keep such matters confidential. Team members should not reveal the identity of the victim except when necessary. Any requests for information directed to team members by individuals outside of the official investigation (e.g., requests from the media) should be directed to the ministry leader or Executive Pastor.

Reporting Other Policy Violations or Inappropriate Behavior

There may be instances where a team member observes violations of this policy or other inappropriate behavior that is concerning but does not qualify as neglect or abuse as defined above. In addition, a team member may observe or be aware of inappropriate behavior by another team member with another adult, such as that team member making sexual related comments or jokes or having inappropriate physical contact with another adult while serving at Immanuel.

If you are subjected to any conduct that you believe violates this policy or witness any such inappropriate conduct that does not qualify as child neglect or abuse, you must promptly speak to, write, or otherwise contact your kids staff or, if the conduct involves staff, then contact the Executive Pastor within 5 days of the offending conduct.

Your complaint should be as detailed as possible, including the names of all individuals involved and any witnesses. Immanuel will directly and thoroughly investigate the facts and circumstances of all claims of inappropriate behavior or will refer the investigation to the proper professionals and will take prompt corrective action, if appropriate.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Immanuel will neither condone nor tolerate:

- Infliction of bodily injury upon any child or physically or sexually abusive behavior towards a child.
- Physical neglect of children, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to church activities.
- Emotional mistreatment of children, including verbal
- Abuse and/or verbal attacks.

Removal of Those Accused of Wrongdoing

Immanuel reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation an Immanuel member who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child or is currently under investigation for such wrongdoing.

SCREENING AND PLACEMENT

Screening

- Each potential team member must be a member of the church and known for at least 6 months before he or she is eligible to apply for a team member position. Once an individual meets these initial criteria, he/she will take the following steps: Each potential team member will fill out an online application.
- Once the online application is received, it will be reviewed and approved by the respective minister or director.
- A formal state and federal background check will be conducted on the potential team member. This background check will be consistent with our current process, which includes a signed consent form. All background check information will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. Immanuel will comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding background checks.
- For screening of paid staff members, Immanuel will contact those entities / individuals listed by the applicant as former employers or supervisors to verify that the information presented on the application is accurate.
- The publicly available postings on the potential team member's social media accounts will be checked by the respective staff member. In an era in which most people have a social media presence, it is wise to review an applicant's social media history for red flags or any content that could indicate improper behavior.
- Upon approval of the application and an approved background check, an in-person interview will be scheduled by the respective ministry leader. It will be a face-to-face interview. If a question has arisen with the applicant's background check or application, it will be discussed during the interview. Immanuel will also take this time to educate the applicant about the ministry and to inform the applicant of the child protection policies in place.
- For applicants under the age of 15, Immanuel will require additional references given that a background check will not be able to be conducted. The Executive Pastor, director, or assigned volunteer coordinator will contact the character references provided by a potential volunteer applicant to ask the appropriate applicant screening questions.

Training & Placement

- After successful completion of the screening process, and before beginning any training, the team member must review and sign this policy and any others related to his/her area of ministry. This is to demonstrate their understanding of and agreement to Immanuel's policies and procedures.
- All volunteers must complete Ministry Safe and Caring Well training and respective quizzes.
- Upon completion of training, the team member will be placed in their new role.

Recertification of Volunteers

- Ministries will train all team members once a year. The team members must attend recertification training, or if they are unable to attend, they must review the material given at these training courses by video or other provided means.
- Team members must sign a background check authorization every two years, at the time a new background check is performed.



IMMANUEL STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Immanuel Baptist Church (“Immanuel”) seeks to provide a place for all children and youth to grow in their faith and understanding of Jesus. This Policy serves to ensure the safety and care of all children participating in programs at Immanuel and seeks to create policies and procedures to both prevent abuse and to inform both volunteers and staff members (collectively “team members”) regarding the proper procedures to follow in the case of allegations of abuse. As part of this goal, Immanuel seeks to train and equip team members to care for the youth participating in Immanuel’s ministries and to create an environment of trust and respect. **These policies are subject to change from time to time as deemed appropriate or necessary. Limited exceptions and variations may be necessary at times to accommodate practical application based on specific situations.** It is essential that all team members read and understand these policies before serving as team members in any ministry. If you have a question about these policies, please contact a member of the Student Ministry staff.

SECURITY POLICIES

CHECK-IN (ARRIVAL)

Each student upon arrival must follow Immanuel’s established check-in procedure. When available, students will check into Immanuel’s computerized attendance system. This system will log the student’s attendance and provide access to the emergency contact information of the student’s parents or guardians. No student may enter the student area without first checking in to the system.

Offline Check-In Alternative: If for any reason the computer system or printers are down, the team member overseeing registration must switch to Immanuel’s handwritten system by retrieving the back-up written log sheets, which shall indicate the student’s name, age, and the parent/guardian’s contact information.

CHECKOUT (DEPARTURE)

Students will be dismissed at a set time, with students having a plan previously discussed with their parent/guardian for pickup.

ACCESS TO AREAS WHERE STUDENTS ARE PRESENT

Hallways:

- **During student meeting times, any adult in the hallways other than at drop-off and pick-up times must be a team member with a name tag, church security personnel, or a law enforcement officer. All hallways are monitored by security cameras.**
- **Immanuel will also have a team member serve as a hall monitor to provide additional surveillance.** Team members will walk around during student programming to ensure that students and adults are not alone together in a closed room or environment.

Classrooms and Ministry Areas:

- No person is allowed to enter into a student ministry classroom other than a team member.
- All team members **MUST** be wearing a name tag before they are allowed to enter a room to serve.
- Parents and family members of students are allowed into the student area so long as a team member is present, and after the parent/family member has checked in and received prior approval from student staff to accompany their student.
- All classrooms and ministry areas are monitored by security cameras.
- IBC reserves the right to limit or prohibit participation in IBC events and activities in the event of a student's failure to follow rules of conduct from team members or a student's presence at an IBC activity possessing or under the influence of illegal substances.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media Connections

- No team member may initiate a connection with a student on social media (adding a friend/following/messaging).
- If a student initiates a social media connection, a team member may respond by adding the student, as long as the student is in the 6th grade. Team members should be mindful of what they post online in terms of content.
- No tagging of students by team members is allowed. All church-related social media groups and pages must have at least two administrators. One of the administrators must be a Pastor or Director. If an administrator is no longer associated with the ministry, that individual's administrative status will be revoked.
- **Social media, even though it offers convenient and private channels, is not an appropriate medium for guidance and discipleship - especially with minors.**
- Social media is a great tool for communication with a student ministry **as a whole** – getting information out to the group, **not one on one**.
- It is not necessary, nor productive, to reach out to minors that have never connected with the church or ministry. Minors spend a great deal of time online; however, it is not the means by which they form connections with the church; as such it is not appropriate to engage in conversations over these platforms.
- When checking in on any location-tagging social media, only “check in” yourself. Never check in students. Rather, create a hashtag to facilitate conversation.

Texting and Social Media Communication

- Team members should generally communicate pertinent information about ministry, events, etc. to parents as the primary audience via email, group text, social media, etc.
- All communication with students should be in a public or group forum. Just as one should never be alone with a student in person, no team member should have a private electronic conversation with a student. **No student should be in a virtual conversation with an adult without a third person in that conversation. If a student reaches out to a leader virtually, that leaders' responses should be very brief. If the student is persistent in continuing the conversation, the leader should let the student know they are adding another person to the conversation, and then add someone to the conversation – either another leader or one or more students.**

Snapchat, Signal, and other similar applications which “delete” messages

Due to the design of this type of social media, any communication or other interaction between a team member and a student via Snapchat, or any other similar application that “deletes” the messages after being sent is prohibited.

Photos

Team members should seek to avoid any private conversations, whether via text message or social media, with any student. If a student reaches out via these platforms, the conversation should be recorded and never deleted and should be reported. No team member should use a platform for youth interactions that allows anonymity or that automatically deletes posts or communications, such as SnapChat.

- IBCLR will utilize the photo permission waiver before using a photo/video of a minor on any of the church social media accounts.
- If team members want to personally post on their own social media accounts, we encourage team members to seek permission before posting from the parent of minors involved, as well as the ministry leader in their area.
- Any post involving a minor will not identify the minor by name.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the unlikely event of an emergency which requires an evacuation, the team members shall take the following action:

General Emergency Response:

- The team member in each room should familiarize themselves with the evacuation route for the classroom they are serving in that day, prior to beginning to serve at their assigned time. The evacuation route is posted by the exit door of each room.
- Evacuate all students in the room to the location shown on the evacuation plan.
- Do not release students to parents/guardians in the middle of an evacuation. Instead remind parents/guardians that they can walk with you, and you can recruit parents/guardians to assist you in the evacuation of the room. Inform them that you cannot release a child until you have arrived at your designated location.
- Once evacuated, please wait for further instructions from ministry staff or security before releasing any students to a parent/guardian.
- Please stay with your group at all times. Do not leave to go get your own children, to obtain first aid, or for any other reason. First aid will be brought to you if needed.

Tornado Procedure:

Everyone in the building should move quickly to a classroom or hallway where there are no windows.

- Have the students line up along the wall kneeling with their hands on their heads.

Lost Child Procedure:

In the event you notice a student is missing, immediately alert ministry staff and church security. Please give a description of the student (what was he/she wearing, color of hair, name).

Lockdown Procedure:

Should a lockdown be deemed necessary, no students will be allowed to be picked up or dropped off during this time. Everyone will stay in their classrooms with their door shut and locked, where possible. The main building entrance/exit doors will be locked. We will remain in this mode until a team member comes to the classroom to inform us the lockdown is over, and we resume normal operating procedures. Do not open the door for anyone other than law enforcement or team members, and only when safe to do so.

STUDENT PROTECTION POLICIES

“THE RULE OF 2” (BUT 3 IS BETTER!)

Immanuel’s “Rule of 2” states that there must always be two adults present when supervising one or more students. This rule is designed for the safety of students as well as adults. Planning ahead will help avoid the potential of being alone with one or more students. The purpose of “The Rule of 2” is to make sure the actions of any one team member are known to at least one other team member and to encourage team members to support each other in ministry.

Compliance to “The Rule of 2” includes the following:

- During Student events there must always be two approved adult team members present when supervising one or more students.
- The adults generally must not be related family members (a married couple would be considered “related”). If two related adults are teaching together, a third team member must generally be present. If a third team member is not available, the two related adults may work together so long as there are cameras present in the classroom.
- Adults should always be in sight of each other.
- We recognize the potential value of student staff meeting with a student on a limited basis. Student staff may meet with a student of the same gender under the following measures of accountability: parent permission and dialogue, supervisor awareness, and within sight of the public eye.

VISIBILITY & SECURITY

It is important that all interaction between students and team members happens in a location where others can observe what is going on for safety and accountability purposes. **At no time** should a student and team member be behind a closed door with no visibility to others. If a situation arises where a student approaches a team member in a closed environment where others cannot visibly or openly see the interaction, the team member should redirect the conversation to an area where others are present.

Most, if not all, areas where students and team members are present on the Immanuel campus are equipped with video surveillance equipment. As a team member you acknowledge that you are being recorded for safety and security purposes. This is done for the protection of both students and team members.

RESTROOM POLICY

Team members must respect and ensure appropriate physical boundaries with students with regard to using the restroom, changing clothes, etc. Students should be given privacy. However, team members should be aware when students are in the restroom and should report students who stay in the restroom for unusual periods of time.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or windows in the classroom walls. Classroom doors should never be locked while people are inside the room, except to protect students from an imminent threat during lockdown. Team members should be observable at all times.

APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Physical Contact

Immanuel understands that appropriate touch is needed and encouraged as part of a positive, nurturing environment in a student ministry; however, it is essential that team leaders do not blur or cross lines. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by team members.

Physical contact in any form should be above reproach. The personal behavior of team members must foster trust at all times. Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a student. A student's preference not to be touched must be respected, except in cases where the student's safety or the safety of others is in question.

Using good judgment, the following are appropriate ways to touch students:

- Short congratulatory or greeting side hugs in public view
- A brief, assuring pat on the upper back or shoulder
- Handshakes, high-fives, first bumps, and knuckles

The following are actions a team member should **NEVER** take:

- Never touch a student in anger or disgust
- Never touch a student in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive
- Never touch a student's private parts, including the genitals, buttocks, or breasts, whether over or under clothing
- No lap sitting

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between team members and students should be positive and uplifting. Immanuel team members should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of students. Team members should not show favoritism, give gifts, or look for alone time with students.

To this end, team leaders should not talk to students in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, team leaders are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of students or speaking disrespectfully or maliciously of other people. Team members should not make sexually provocative or degrading comments or make inappropriate or risqué jokes.

Team members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with students and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any student.

However, it is expected that student ministry discussions and lessons may occasionally address issues related to purity, dating, sex and human sexuality. These lessons will convey the church's views on these topics to the students. Students may have questions/struggles in this area and desire to confide in a trusted adult leader for guidance. Proceed with great caution, teaching with sensitivity and from a biblical perspective.

- Avoid discussing anything of a sexual nature with students of the opposite gender.
- If a student's questions or comments on a sexual matter become too detailed or explicit in a group setting, the leader should use discretion and set up another time to meet with this student. For any follow-up meeting: inform a Student Ministry staff member first, comply with the Two Adult Rule or meet in a public, easily observed location.

- When in doubt as to whether a conversation could be interpreted as a “sexually oriented conversation,” treat the conversation as such and follow this policy. When possible, clarify the question/topic with a Student Ministry staff member.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Discipline: We will use love and kindness when dealing with disciplinary issues. Team members should never physically discipline students. If a student fails to comply with verbal warnings regarding behavior, the student will be asked to leave, and the student’s parent/guardian will be contacted to pick the student up. In the event of a physical altercation, team members will attempt to verbally redirect the students involved to avoid physical intervention. Unacceptable behavior should be reported to the parent/guardian and if the student’s behavior does not change.

Inappropriate forms of discipline:

- Do not use physical discipline.
- Do not use sarcasm or ridicule.

CAMP EVENTS

- IBC staff and volunteers participating in Camp events are required to complete a separate, more comprehensive training session specific to their scheduled event and sign a Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement to participate. NEVER invite a student to go alone ANYWHERE for ANY reason.
- All Immanuel volunteers must be at least 18 years of age to serve and will go through the same application process required for serving in other areas of ministry.
- Those under 18 years of age may be approved to volunteer if serving under adult supervision, he/she has completed Caring Well Training, and 3 character references are provided.
- If you feel a student needs counsel, please contact a ministry staff leader and get them to help you develop a plan to help the student.
- NEVER transport a student alone in a vehicle. If there is an emergency, make sure a ministry staff leader is notified and dial 911 when necessary.
- In a camp situation, team members must continue to make sure that they are never isolated with a student.
- Never expose yourself in any way to students. In a camp situation wait until all students have showered or bathed to take yours.
- Always practice modesty and respect privacy.

OFFSITE GROUP EVENTS

- Off-site GROUP social events are encouraged so long as approved by the ministry staff leader, who advises of best practices to follow while off site.
- Team members must obtain permission from a parent/guardian for students to participate in approved off-site activities. Team members are encouraged to communicate with parents concerning date/time/location and reason for the event.
- NEVER invite a child to go alone ANYWHERE for ANY reason. If you feel a child needs counsel, please contact an Immanuel staff member to develop a plan to help the child.
- NEVER transport a child alone in a vehicle. If there is an emergency which requires a child to be transported, make sure a staff member is notified for assistance, or dial 911.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Staff members and ministry volunteers may, from time to time, be in a position to provide transportation for students. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when transporting students:

- Students should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place must be avoided.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one student in transport. Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with students while in vehicles.
- Absent an emergency, drivers may not use cell phones while transporting minors (other than navigation applications for directions). In an emergency, stop the vehicle to use the cell phone, unless a stop cannot safely occur. Texting or other cell phone use is strictly prohibited while driving.
- No drivers under age 25 may drive church-owned or rented vehicles.
- In transportation, the TWO ADULT RULE or RULE OF THREE must be followed.
- Never be alone in a vehicle with a student of the opposite sex.
- Never instruct a student to drive other students to a ministry event. Transport only the number of children for whom you have seat belts.
- Seat belts should be worn at all times while in the vehicle.
- No one should be double-buckled.
- Use extra caution when driving students.

GENERAL SAFETY REMINDERS

- **Never be alone with a student.**
- **Never leave students unattended.**
- **No medication of any kind will be given to students by any team member. The only exception to this rule is an EpiPen during a medical emergency.**
- **Follow the “Immanuel Rule of 2” – A minimum of two adults should always be present in any room, except in the event of an emergency; we strive to have 3 adults present if two of the adults in the classroom are related.**
- **Classroom doors should remain open at all times, unless the door is outfitted with a full window. For classrooms that have Dutch or half doors, the top portion will remain open at all times.**
- **Avoid physical contact with students that could in anyway be misconstrued as inappropriate.**

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

WHEN TO CALL 911

Call 911 if the following emergencies occur:

- A student begins choking.
- A student is knocked unconscious or suffers a serious injury.
- A student starts to have trouble breathing, especially if the student seems to be having an allergic reaction and is in distress.
- If there is a fire, serious security issue, or act of violence.

In the event of a potentially life-threatening illness or injury, any adult has authority to immediately call 911. In non-life-threatening instances, immediately report any medical needs or concerns to the student staff or hall monitor. Those notified will contact the Immanuel Security Team to decide if 911 should be called. In addition, the staff/desk team will contact the parent/guardian to advise them of the situation.

The team member should remain calm and divert the attention of the other children. The injured or sick person should be kept quiet and still to the extent feasible. Do not attempt to move a severely injured person unless he or she is in imminent danger.

Regardless of severity, any medical needs or concerns should be reported immediately to student staff. After the incident is under control, the team member involved should fill out an Incident Report (discussed below) and submit it to the Executive Pastor and student staff.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

If an injury as outlined below occurs, contact student ministry staff immediately:

- Any injury that leaves a visible mark.
- Any injury where there is bleeding.
- Any occurrence that involves an allergy alert student ingesting an allergen.
- Any occurrence that leaves the student crying for an extended period, even if there is no visible injury.
- Any injury that leaves a student limping or dazed.
- Any injury where a student is complaining of pain more than five minutes after the accident occurred.

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, Student staff should contact the parent and/or guardian.

INCIDENT REPORTS

When to fill out an incident report:

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, the team member must complete an Incident Report which will be filled out completely each and every time a student is injured; damage to property occurred; a security issue arose; a mandated reporter call is made; or any other related issue has taken place: When in doubt – fill it out.

- The Incident Report needs to be filled out by the person who administers first aid and a team member(s) who witnessed the incident.
- Record all details as soon as possible.
- Parents/guardians of any student who has been involved in an incident should be notified.

Completion of Incident Reports:

- All Incident Reports must be turned into the student pastor by the end of the day on the date of the incident. All reports will then be given to the church administrator for record keeping.
- If requested, a copy of the report may be provided to the parent/guardian of the child involved. If the report contains names of other minor children, the copy provided shall be redacted to protect the privacy of the other children involved.

NO MEDICATION POLICY

No medication may be administered by team members with the exception of an EpiPen® in the case of life-threatening reactions. The parent/guardian or student must administer all other medication, both oral and topical.

Team members are prohibited from opening or taking medication while in the classroom. If medication is needed, the team member must leave the classroom to take medication.

STUDENT AND VOLUNTEER HEALTH POLICY

Students who show any visible signs of illness should not be allowed into the classroom. When addressing this with parents/guardians, assure them that we want their student to come back as soon as they are feeling better. If any illness is discovered after a student is in the classroom, remove the student from the room and ask Student staff to locate the parents/guardians.

While in class, should a student begin to exhibit any of the following symptoms or shows other signs of illness, contact Student staff to evaluate the student. Symptoms due to allergies will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Has tested positive for COVID-19, flu, RSV, etc.
- Vomiting or diarrhea (even associated with medication)
- Common cold from onset through one week
- Sore throat
- Constant cough or croup
- Colored mucus (runny nose that is not clear)
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo, or any open sores that leak fluid/blood
- Pink eye or other eye infections
- Any communicable disease
- Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits

If a parent/guardian tells you that his or her student has exposed the class to a contagious disease (e.g. measles, chicken pox, COVID-19, etc.) please contact Student staff to handle the situation. Do not alarm other parents or students. The circumstances will be fully investigated and Executive Pastor along with his pastoral team will be responsible for notifying other parents.

STUDENT ABUSE AND PROTECTION POLICY

What is child abuse/neglect?

According to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, “child abuse and neglect” means, at a minimum, “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.”

Arkansas law prohibits child maltreatment—or abuse and neglect. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, or abandonment by the caretaker of a child.

- **Neglect** – Arkansas law defines neglect to include but not be limited to (1) failure to prevent abuse; (2) failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment for the child’s well-being; (3) failure to take action to protect the child from abandonment, abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or neglect; and (4) failure to properly supervise a child, which creates a dangerous situation.
- **Abuse** – Arkansas law defines abuse to include but not be limited to (1) extreme or repeated cruelty to a child; (2) conduct creating a threat of death or impairment; (3) injury to a child’s intellectual, emotional, or psychological development; (4) any non-accidental physical injury; and (5) any intentional acts, such as throwing, striking, shaking, burning, biting, or cutting a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Arkansas law defines sexual abuse to include: (1) sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact; (2) attempted sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact; (3) forcing or encouraging the watching of pornography; (4) forcing, permitting, or encouraging the watching of live sexual activity; (5) forcing the listening to a phone sex line; (6) an act of voyeurism; or (7) solicitation of sexual intercourse, deviant sexual activity, or sexual contact. Sexual abuse also includes grooming, which means to knowingly disseminate to a child a visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit content with the purpose to entice, induce, or groom the child to engage in the sexual intercourse, sexually explicit conduct, or deviant sexual activity.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

It is essential that Immanuel create a culture where child abuse prevention is discussed, addressed, and monitored. All team members who come to learn of any occurrence of neglect or abuse or who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to neglect or abuse should follow the steps below.

- If the child is in immediate danger or if there is an emergency, call security or 911.
- If there is potential for immediate contact between the alleged offender and the victim, take any steps necessary to create distance and call security or 911. After securing the victim’s safety in the moment, the team member with knowledge of the incident of abuse should call the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-482-5964**. This report must happen immediately. The team member should be specific about concerns and provide the child’s name, the alleged offender’s name, and details about the abuse.
- Once the team member makes the report to the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member will receive a report number and should then immediately provide this number along with a completed incident report to the Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor and the Director of Finance & Administration
 - The team member must also report the incident to the Caring Well Pastor and/or Caring Well Director and Caring Well Chairperson.
 - If the team member informs a pastor or ministry leader that he/she has not yet called the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member should immediately call the hotline with a pastor or ministry leader present for the call.
- After a report of neglect or abuse has been submitted, the pastor/director or ministry leader must immediately send the incident report to the Caring Well Team for further review and any needed actions.

The investigation of any allegations of neglect or abuse is the responsibility of the proper authorities. Team members or any other persons at Immanuel should not conduct their own investigation into any claims of abuse or neglect. Immanuel will cooperate fully with an investigation by local, state, or federal authorities.

Confidentiality

Except to comply with this Policy and applicable law, or to cooperate with any official investigation of the incident, team members with personal knowledge of the suspected neglect or abuse should be mindful of the sensitive nature of the matter and should keep such matters confidential. Team members should not reveal the identity of the victim except when necessary. Any requests for information directed to team members by individuals outside of the official investigation (e.g., requests from the media) should be directed to the ministry leader or Executive Pastor.

Reporting Other Policy Violations or Inappropriate Behavior

There may be instances where a team member observes violations of this policy or other inappropriate behavior that is concerning but does not qualify as neglect or abuse as defined above. In addition, a team member may observe or be aware of inappropriate behavior by another team member with another adult, such as that team member making sexual related comments or jokes or having inappropriate physical contact with another adult while serving at Immanuel.

If you are subjected to any conduct that you believe violates this policy or witness any such inappropriate conduct that does not qualify as child neglect or abuse, you must promptly speak to, write, or otherwise contact your student staff or, if the conduct involves staff, then contact the Executive Pastor within 5 days of the offending conduct.

Your complaint should be as detailed as possible, including the names of all individuals involved and any witnesses. Immanuel will directly and thoroughly investigate the facts and circumstances of all claims of inappropriate behavior or will refer the investigation to the proper professionals and will take prompt corrective action, if appropriate.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Immanuel will neither condone nor tolerate:

- Infliction of bodily injury upon any child or physically or sexually abusive behavior towards a child.
- Physical neglect of children, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to church activities.
- Emotional mistreatment of children, including verbal
- Abuse and/or verbal attacks.

Removal of Those Accused of Wrongdoing

Immanuel reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation an Immanuel member who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child or is currently under investigation for such wrongdoing.

SCREENING AND PLACEMENT

Screening

Each potential team member must be a member of the church and known for at least 6 months before he or she is eligible to apply for a team member position. Once an individual meets these initial criteria, he/she will take the following steps:

- Each potential team member will fill out an online application.
- Once the online application is received, it will be reviewed and approved by the respective minister or director.
- A formal state and federal background check will be conducted on the potential team member. This background check will be consistent with our current process, which includes a signed consent form. All background check information will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. Immanuel will comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding background checks.
- For screening of paid staff members, Immanuel will contact those entities / individuals listed by the applicant as former employers or supervisors to verify that the information presented on the application is accurate.
- The publicly available postings on the potential team member's social media accounts will be checked by the respective ministry leader. In an era in which most people have a social media presence, it is wise to review an applicant's social media history for red flags or any content that could indicate improper behavior.
- Upon approval of the application and an approved background check, an in-person interview will be scheduled and conducted by the respective ministry leader. It will be a face-to-face interview. If a question has arisen with the applicant's background check or application, it will be discussed during the interview. Immanuel will also take this time to educate the applicant about the ministry and to inform the applicant of the child protection policies in place.
- For applicants under the age of 15, Immanuel will require additional references given that a background check will not be able to be conducted. The Executive Pastor, director, or assigned volunteer coordinator will contact the character references provided by a potential volunteer applicant to ask the appropriate applicant screening questions.

Training & Placement

Each potential team member must be a member of the church and known for at least 6 months before he or she is eligible to apply for a team member position. Once an individual meets these initial criteria, he/she will take the following steps:

- After successful completion of the screening process, and before beginning any training, the team member must review and sign this policy and any others related to his/her area of ministry. This is to demonstrate their understanding of and agreement to Immanuel's policies and procedures.
- All volunteers must complete Ministry Safe and Caring Well training and respective quizzes.
- Upon completion of training, the team member will be placed in their new role.

Recertification of Volunteers

Each potential team member must be a member of the church and known for at least 6 months before he or she is eligible to apply for a team member position. Once an individual meets these initial criteria, he/she will take the following steps:

- Ministries will train all team members once a year. The team members must attend recertification training, or if they are unable to attend, they must review the material given at these training courses by video or other provided means.
- Team members must sign a background check authorization every two years, at the time a new background check is performed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND REVIEW

I, _____ (team member name), acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Immanuel Caring Well Policies and Procedures and understand that it is my responsibility to be familiar with and abide by its terms. I understand that failure to abide by these policies and procedures could result in my removal from my team member position.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

ADDENDUM

Caring Well Response Procedures

- Procedures presented to the Caring Well Committee on 7/12/2026..
- Procedures were approved by the Caring Well Committee on 7/12/2026.
- Procedures to be added as an addendum to the Caring Well Policies and Procedures.

When a Caring Well incident is reported, the following steps will be taken:

1. First point of contact (volunteer, member, ministry leader) should follow policies regarding notification of authorities (if required).
2. Next, the first point of contact should notify the Caring Well Pastor and/or Caring Well Director, Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor, and Caring Well Chairperson.
3. Notify the family.
4. Fill out the Incident Report and submit it to the Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor and the Director of Finance & Administration.
5. Convene the Caring Well Committee to advise the Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor on recommended action steps that may include (if required):
 - Notifying the church or a subset of the church
 - Conducting an internal review and/or engaging a 3rd party to examine facts
 - Disciplinary action if required
6. Convene the Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor to discuss recommended action steps from the Caring Well Committee (if required) .
7. Caring Well Pastor and Caring Well Director develop and implement a care plan for the member/family (if required).
8. Review with the Caring Well Committee for other follow-up action (if required).



501 N. Shackleford Rd | Little Rock, Arkansas 72211

Follow Us     IBCLR

IBCLR.ORG | 501.376.3071