



Summary of Children's Ministry Policies (Revised 7/8/15)

Protection of children attending functions at Covenant Life Church is a responsibility we take very seriously. The following is a summary of the church's overall Child Protection Policy and other procedures that are in place.

SECTION 1: SECURITY PERSONNEL

Sunday morning Discovery Land security is comprised of several layers of security that function together. Security personnel are briefed on individuals of concern, sex offenders, and other known/potential risks. These layers include:

- Police security team — Plainclothes law enforcement officers on duty in various areas of the church building, including Discovery Land spaces.
- Discovery Land safety/security — Volunteers stationed at doors and hallways when Discovery Land is in session.
- Greeting team leaders — Volunteers stationed in various areas, looking for suspicious behavior.
- Church staff — Serving in numerous areas in the building.
- Discovery Land leaders — Volunteers serving in various Discovery Land areas.
- All of the above are either on walkie-talkies or have easy access to one.

SECTION 2: CLASSROOM SAFETY PROCEDURES

Controlled access

- All exterior doors to the building, except the main lobby, are locked before service starts to limit access points to Discovery Land.
- All interior access points to Discovery Land are guarded by safety/security volunteers.
- Safety/security volunteers stop unauthorized individuals from entering Discovery Land spaces.

Classroom documents

The following documents are available in wall-mounted folders or three-ring binders in each classroom:

- Volunteer handbook
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Lockdown procedures
- Tornado procedures
- Earthquake procedures
- Lost child procedures
- Ratio limit sign

Two-adult rule

There must be a minimum of two approved adult Discovery Land volunteers in every classroom or any other context on the church premises where children are located in a Discovery Land capacity.

Volunteer ID

All Discovery Land volunteers must wear a Discovery Land nametag properly identifying them while serving.

Child pickup

Only a parent or another authorized individual with a pickup slip that corresponds to the child's nametag may pick up a child from class. Pickup slips are printed by parents through Checkpoint, our automated child check-in system, using their personal barcoded key tag.

Child-to-adult ratios

The following child-to-adult ratios serve as working guidelines to help inform decisions on how to promote child safety, assess volunteer staffing needs and determine if/when to close classrooms in Discovery Land:

- Nursery — 3-to-1
- Toddler — 4-to-1
- Discover (ages 2-3) — 5-to-1
- Explore (ages 4-5) — 5-to-1
- Adventure (1st-5th grade) — 25-to-1

Parents staying in child's classroom

A parent who is not an approved Discovery Land volunteer may stay with their child in the child's classroom, but they must wear a neon green nametag and they may not serve as a volunteer. They may only act as a caretaker/observer of their own child. This rule applies to the following situations:

- A parent wants to help their child acclimate to class.
- A parent wants to observe their child's class and/or its routine.
- A parent wants to stay with their child in the classroom because the classroom's child-to-adult ratio limit has been reached.

Correction/Discipline

Any correction provided to a child by a Discovery Land volunteer must be done verbally, graciously and in a manner that reflects biblical values. Volunteers may not spank, withhold snacks or send a child to “timeout.”

Emergency situations

In the event of an emergency, volunteers can refer to the corresponding documents in their classroom (see “Classroom documents” section above).

Diaper policy

Here are a few key points from Discovery Land’s diaper policy:

- Only adult female volunteers should change diapers in Discovery Land.
- In Discover classes, parents should be notified through family paging to change their child’s diaper, if necessary.

Bathroom breaks

Here are a few key points from Discovery Land’s bathroom break procedures:

- The two-person rule must be in effect at all times during bathroom breaks. These volunteers must be adults, not teens.
- Female volunteers may supervise both male and female bathroom breaks. Male volunteers may only supervise male bathroom breaks — never female.
- Unless a child is in obvious need, volunteers should not go inside a bathroom stall with any child. If a child needs help, a volunteer should help while another volunteer stands in view.

Family paging

Discovery Land has two family paging offices (one on each floor) where parents can pick up children who need parental assistance for inconsolability, injury, sickness, continued misbehavior, etc. All parents receive a family paging number when they initially register their child in Discovery Land. Parents are alerted that their child is in a family paging office by their number appearing on the display screens in the main auditorium, the video room or the infant care room.

Health considerations

Discovery Land employs the following for the physical health of each child:

- A volunteer medical team that responds to injuries, sicknesses and medical emergencies when paged.
- Child choking and child CPR instructional signs in each classroom.
- A food policy that governs classroom snacks.
- A policy of not admitting sick children into class.
- Other health-related policies and procedures.

SECTION 3: VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROCEDURES

Before serving, all Discovery Land volunteers, regardless of ministry position or tenure, must fill out a Discovery Land volunteer application every year, have a background check performed (good for 5 years), have a sex offender registry check performed, and be approved to serve by CLC. More details on this process are below:

Volunteer application

This form asks pertinent questions about an individual's history that help the Discovery Land staff deem whether it's appropriate to have the person serve, and if so, where he/she might best be suited.

Background/sex offender registry checks

Discovery Land uses the online service, Intellicorp, for all background checks and the U.S. Department of Justice's online sex offender registry site for those inquiries.

Flagged applications

A volunteer's application must go through a pastoral review/elder approval process if it either has a "yes" answer on it or if the background check shows a red flag. The church elders review and make the final decision for approval/disapproval.

Sexual abuse

- Any individual who has a history of legally defined sexual abuse toward a minor will not be allowed to serve in any capacity in Discovery Land.
- This disapproval will not be reconsidered in the future.
- CLC requires any members who are convicted sex offenders to sign a form stating that they will abide by certain rules at CLC, including not entering or serving in any Discovery Land areas.

The "Student Life Do Not Serve" List

There are certain situations where a church member or child of a member may be restricted from either serving in Discovery Land or entering Discovery Land space at all due to an elders' decision based on disclosed information that involves past and/or present sin struggles. This list is called the "Student Life Do Not Serve" list. Here are a few other key points on this topic:

- The list is broken down into several major categories, depending on the situation and severity of each individual's history. Some individuals are classified as "Not Allowed to Enter Discovery Land" while others are classified as "Not Allowed to Serve," and so forth.
- Those aware of the individuals on the "Student Life Do Not Serve" list are as follows:
 - All pastors
 - Any other key church staff member deemed necessary
 - CLC police security team
 - Discovery Land director
 - Discovery Land administrative assistant
 - Discovery Land safety/security volunteers

- Discovery Land volunteer leaders (departmental team captains and coordinators)

SECTION 4: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

See **Reporting Potential Child Abuse and/or Neglect.**