

## **Parish Policies**

### **St. Stephen the Martyr Anglican Church, Thunder Bay**

#### **Policy C1 - Nursery and Sunday School Policy**

*Updated by St. Stephen's Parish Council June 12, 2023*

The Algoma Diocesan Canon H-5 Screening in Faith requires a screening program for children and youth programs. These policies are part of the screening program as they are intended to reduce risk of inappropriate behaviour between adults/older children and children.

#### **Definitions**

1. For the purpose of these policies:
  - a. nursery is children aged 2 to 3; children under the age of 2 may attend the nursery if accompanied by a caregiver;
  - b. Sunday School is children aged 4 to 12; youth over the age of 12 should consult with the teacher to determine if a class is available;
  - c. an adult is a person aged 18 or older;
  - d. caregiver means the parent or an adult whom the parent/guardian has entrusted with the care of their child; it could be a grandparent, aunt, uncle, or friend; and
  - e. a teacher is someone who has been appointed as a teacher as noted in St. Stephen's Ministry Description - Nursery Coordinator or St. Stephen's Ministry Description - Sunday School Teacher.

#### **Application**

2. Teachers and adults assisting a teacher are to follow Policy C1 - Nursery and Sunday School Policy.
3. A copy of Policy C1 - Nursery and Sunday School Policy is to be posted in the Parish Hall and on the web page. A paper copy will be provided upon request.

#### **Child Alone at Sunday School**

4. If a child under the age of 12 attends Sunday School without a caregiver being present in the building, the teacher will ensure that the child's parent/guardian is telephoned immediately to advise them that their child is at St. Stephen's.

#### **Teacher/Student/Care-Giver Interactions**

5. A teacher may request a sidesperson to assist with asking the child's parent/guardian's assistance or with a wellness check from the stairway landing during the worship service.
6. A teacher will avoid being alone in a room with a single student, whenever possible. A teacher should not send an older student off with a younger student to a room by themselves. It is preferred to have a teacher with a group of children.
7. If a young child needs assistance in the bathroom, a female teacher should assist. The child is to be asked what assistance is required. The door of the bathroom will be left slightly ajar.
8. If a child is distressed, seems uncomfortable, or requests to join their caregiver, the caregiver will be asked to come downstairs, or the child will be taken upstairs to the caregiver by another adult.

The caregiver will escort their child downstairs if the child wishes to return to the Nursery/Sunday School class.

9. If a child is hurt, the caregiver will be notified immediately if any first aid is required. If the injury is life threatening, the teacher will call 911 and then the caregiver will be contacted. In all other circumstances, the caregiver will be notified directly once the worship service has ended.
10. A caregiver is always welcome to observe a class. If a caregiver would like to participate, she or he should ask the teacher if it is okay.
11. Once the worship service is over, the parent/caregiver is responsible for ensuring that their child/children is/are supervised.
12. If there are more than 7 children in Sunday School, then they will either be separated into 2 or more classes, each with their own teacher or another adult will be present to assist the teacher.

#### **Discipline**

13. Corporal punishment is prohibited.
14. Children who exhibit unruly behaviour will be taken aside, asked to correct the behaviour, and will have consequences of future problems explained to them.
15. If the child continues to behave in an unruly manner, the caregiver will be asked to come downstairs and sit with their child, and the teacher should talk privately with the caregiver during coffee hour.
16. If the behaviour persists, the Sunday School Coordinator will make a phone call to the parent/guardian and advise the Pastor/Incumbent.

#### **Other Adults Participating in the Sunday School**

17. A caregiver or an adult without children in the Sunday School may help occasionally. When an adult is helping, a teacher must be present. If an adult would like to help regularly or without a teacher being present, they must be appointed as a teacher.

#### **Teen-aged Teacher**

18. In the case of a teacher being under the age of 18, an adult must be present.

#### **Nursing Mother**

19. The Pastor/Incumbent's office is available for women who wish to nurse their child privately, if it is locked, the Pastor/Incumbent will open the office upon request.

#### **Fire**

20. In case of fire, the teacher will evacuate the students following the parish's Fire Safety Plan.

#### **Concerns**

21. If a caregiver is concerned about the Nursery/Sunday School, they are encouraged to talk to the teacher or the Sunday School Coordinator. If their concerns are not satisfactorily addressed, then they should contact the Pastor/Incumbent.

#### **Review**

22. These policies are to be reviewed annually by the Parish Council at the October/November meeting.