

# Crèche Program Operational Procedure

## 1. Summary of program

- The purpose of this program is to provide supervision and play to children who are aged six months through to kindergarten age. We aim to provide a fun, positive environment for children in our church community, and to free parents and caregivers up to participate in the main service.
- Parents are very welcome to try leaving babies who are between six and twelve months in the creche, to see if they are able to settle without the parent present. If babies cannot be settled by the creche leaders, we will contact the parent and ask for their assistance.
- Please note that creche leaders are not in a position to change nappies, settle babies to sleep or give babies bottles or food during the service. If leaders think that any of these are required, they will contact parents via SMS during the service.
- If they prefer, parents are also welcome to keep babies with them in the service, or to stay in the creche with their children.

## 2. Ratios

- We will maintain a ratio of at least one adult to every four children in creche
- We aim for the creche room to be staffed by two creche leaders each week, but occasionally this is not possible.
- When we do not have two creche leaders available, occasionally we will ask a parent to remain in the creche as a parent helper, to maintain a safe and appropriate ratio of adults to children.
- However, there will always be at least one creche leader in the room, and that creche leader will remain the person with primary responsibility for the creche program that week.
- In addition to this 4:1 ratio, children will remain under the supervision of at least two adults at all time. Therefore, even if only three children attend creche, there must still always be two adults present.
- Children should remain within line of sight of at least one leader at all times during the creche program.

### 3. Registration and sign-in process

- A Southern Kids registration desk is available near the front doors at the Cockburn Youth Centre before the service each week, and has copies of registration forms, Safe Ministry policies and procedures and Southern Kids policies and procedures.
- When new families arrive who wish to register their children for one of our kids' programs, the Connect Team will direct them to the Southern kids registration desk to complete the necessary forms before church commences. Where possible, the Connect team will introduce the new family to one of the rostered leaders for that Sunday prior to the service, and the rostered leader will be given the completed registration form.
- When children move into a new age-bracket (e.g. creche to primary school aged program), parents must complete a new registration form.
- A digital registration form is also available online on the church's website, for families who wish to register prior to the Sunday service. Completed forms will be sent to the relevant team leader, who will notify the team members for the upcoming Sunday.
- At Southern, all adults and kids start together in the main hall for a time of singing, prayer and some announcements (around 10 to 15 minutes). After this time, parents will be invited to take their kids to the kids' programs. Parents must go with their children to the creche room: down the hallway on the left side of the foyer, second door on the left. Parents must sign them into the program using the sign-in sheet at the door.
- As soon as the service finishes (usually between 11 and 11.15am), parents should make their way directly to the relevant room to sign their children out.
- Where somebody wishes to bring a child to a Southern Kids program, but they are not the parent or legal guardian of that child, the person bringing the child to church must complete a registration form for that child before the child participates in the program. The form asks the person bringing the child to indicate, if they are not the parent or legal guardian of that child, whether they have obtained consent from the child's parent or legal guardian for the child to attend the relevant program, and to provide contact details for the parent or guardian.

### 4. Settling children in creche

- We recognise that leaving children in a creche can be distressing for both children and parents, and we will seek to support families to make this process as smooth and positive as possible, within the constraints of our resources.
- When it is time for parents to leave children in the creche room, we request that parents do a quick drop-off and exit. If children become upset, creche leaders will do their best to settle the children, either by holding them, or distracting them with an activity. Often children will settle very quickly once the parent is out of sight.
- If a child becomes extremely distressed, or after some time the creche leaders are still unable to settle the child, the leaders will contact the parent to attend to their child.
- If parents prefer, they are welcome to stay in the creche for the full duration of the service, or alternatively, children are welcome to stay with their parents in the main hall to play quietly during the service. However, the creche is there to serve your family, and we would

love to make it work for you. We encourage you to try leaving your child in the creche so they have the opportunity to try to settle without you there.

## 5. First aid process

- The creche room has a small first aid kit for use by leaders. Stock levels are monitored and maintained by the Southern Kids creche team leader.
- Leaders in our kids' programs are not necessarily trained in first aid, and so are only permitted to administer minor treatment for very small injuries or illnesses (e.g. band-aid for a paper-cut, tissue for a small nose-bleed, ice-pack for a small bump).
- If there is minor injury or sickness of this kind, and no further first aid is required, the leaders have discretion to contact the child's parent and ask them to attend and/or pick up the child if considered appropriate.
- Where a child is more seriously injured, or becomes unwell during the program, leaders will contact a parent or guardian and ask them to come to the relevant room to attend to their child. If applicable, the leader will also contact one of the two official first aid contacts, and if the parent consents, additional first aid can be provided.
- Current church first aid contacts:
  - Jade Hoopmann - 0421 743 924
  - Katie Myhill - 0423 747 233

## 6. Toileting

- We encourage all parents to take their children to the toilet or change their child's nappy before the service commences.
- At the Cockburn Youth Centre, there are no toilets adjoining the rooms where our creche is held. To reach the toilets, a child would need to exit the room, walk down the hallways out to the main foyer, and enter the toilets through the large toilet doors. The toilets off the foyer are the same toilets used by adults who are attending the church service. If children in the creche are toilet trained, and need to use the toilet, we will contact the child's parent via SMS and ask the parent to take the child to the toilet.
- Our leaders are unable to change nappies. If a nappy change is required during the service, we will contact the parent via SMS and ask for them to attend to change the child's nappy.

## 7. Food

- We ask that children do not bring any food or drink into the kids rooms, other than a labelled water bottle.
- We ask that parents give their children something to eat prior to the service so they aren't hungry during the kids' program.

## 8. Behaviour

- We seek to maintain a positive environment where all children who attend our creche can grow in their love for Jesus in a loving, fun and safe environment.
- Our creche leaders are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of the children in the creche. By placing children into the program, parents are giving creche leaders a level of authority over their children during the program.
- During our kids' programs, creche leaders are responsible for maintaining safe and appropriate boundaries. Where children are old enough to understand, we expect that they will listen and obey where creche leaders give reasonable instructions.
- Leaders will manage behaviour as follows:
  - Seek to build positive relationships with the children in the creche;
  - Model and affirm positive behaviour displayed by children in our programs, including kindness, gentleness and respect;
  - Where a child disobeys a leader's instructions, or treats somebody else inappropriately:
    - If the child is old enough to understand, discuss with the child to help them understand what they have done, and if necessary, facilitate a process of reconciliation between the child and the other person;
    - If necessary (e.g. if the behaviour is serious or repeated) use a natural or logical consequence (e.g. not being allowed to use equipment or participate in an activity if they are unwilling to do so safely or appropriately);
    - The leader will seek to address the behaviour as privately as possible, without seeking to shame the child in front of the other children; and
    - If a leader has had to manage any inappropriate behaviour in this way, the leader will discuss with the parent when the child is signed out at the end of the program.
  - Our leaders will aim to always act with patience, kindness and gentleness as they maintain appropriate boundaries in our programs, treating children with dignity and respect, communicating that they remain loved and accepted, even if a child's behaviour is not acceptable.
  - Our leaders will never use any form of physical contact, or any other form of abuse or intimidation as a kind of punishment for children in our programs.

## 9. Breaches of this procedure

- If there are any questions or concerns in relation to the creche programs, we encourage the relevant person to contact the Creche Team Leader to discuss.
- If there is an incident or concern related to this policy, we encourage the relevant person to notify our Safe Ministry Contacts using the Management Procedure for Incidents and Other Concerns (available online and on Southern Kids registration desk near the front doors).

**Approved by Lead Pastor:** 12 March 2023

**Date for review:** October 2023