



**LOVEWORLD CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
FACILITY AND CHILD SPACE POLICY**

BLW CHILDREN'S MINSITRY FACILITY AND CHILD SPACE POLICY

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MAKING A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION:

Many factors affect how children learn. The teacher and curriculum are among the most important influences in the learning process. However, the learning environment impacts the child's readiness, as well as the learning experience itself.

Think about this; what does your children's church facility or children's space say about your church's ministry?

A Little Exercise

Walk to the Children's hallway in your church building. Enter the rooms as if you are a child. What do you feel?

Does it communicate that you are important if compared to other areas of your building? Is it cheerful, bright and clean?

Do your senses tell you that something stimulating, relevant and interesting takes place in this room? Is it inviting?

Now consider that you are a parent looking at this space for the first time as a possible place to involve your child in ministry.

Is it up to your standards for your child? Is it safe, clean and inviting to you?

The following pages are a compilation of recommendations to help you improve the learning environment of your children's classes, hallways and other ministry areas. Much of what is presented is the ideal, while other ideas are provided to help you do the best with less than the ideal specifications.

First Impressions Checklist:

It doesn't matter whether you have 5, 500 or 5,000 children in your children's Church, the first impression parents have of your ministry is very crucial in their decision to keep bringing their kids to the Children's Church to avail them of the services on offer.

Ask a Leader in the church or a parent to come into your children's Church or Children's Ministry area on Sunday morning and give their first impressions. Use checklist below;

- Does the area smell clean? Does it look clean and uncluttered?
- Does a greeter warmly welcome you and your child and know how to direct you and your family to the right ministry areas for your children?
- Is a secure check-in/pick up system in place for younger children? Are you given a security card or sticker to pick up your child at the end of the session?
- Are allergy alert posters easily seen if food or nature items are to be used in the session?

- Are at least two adult teachers present in each classroom?
- Is the room prepared for teaching when the first child arrives?
- Are children greeted by name upon entering their classroom?
- Are the tables and chairs sized appropriately for the age group using the room?
- Are the supplies neatly placed on shelves or counters?
- If a bulletin board is in the room, is it up to date and attractively decorated with appropriate and relevant information?

FACILITY GUIDELINE BY OUTLINED BLW CHURCH CATEGORIZATION

S/N	Church Categorization	Type of Facility
1.	CE Zonal Churches CE Virtual Zonal Churches	Dedicated Children’s <u>Church Facility</u> with specifications as recommended in the policy
2.	CE Group Churches	Dedicated Children’s <u>Church Facility</u> with specifications as recommended in the policy
3.	CE Church Chapters [Category A]	Dedicated Children’s <u>Church Venue transiting to a Children’s Ministry facility in 12months</u>
4.	CE Church Chapters [Category B]	Dedicated Children’s <u>Church Venue or Ministry Area / Child Space transiting to a Facility in 12-24 Months</u>
5.	Pioneering CE Church	Start-Up Children’s Ministry Area transiting to Dedicated Children’s Church Venue or Facility within a 6 months period.

CHILDRENS CHURCH CLASSROOM FACILITY / CHILD SPACE GUIDELINE

The ambience of our Children's Church Facility or Child Spaces goes a long way to impact the learning experience as we carry out ministry to Children. Please find below; a general specification guideline as well as a specification of facility type by church categorization for our Christ Embassy Churches

General Facility / Space Specifications:

- Allow for 25-30 square feet per person, based on 80 percent of enrollment.
- Large, open classrooms are preferable. If you have an assembly room surrounded by small classrooms, consider removing walls (check for asbestos before removing walls). Another option is to remove the doors from the classrooms and use as one large room with small group teaching options in the smaller classrooms.

CLASSROOMS

Elementary & Preteens Classrooms

- Space per child: 25 square feet recommended
- Room proportions: approximately 1 1/2 times as long as it is wide
- Windowsills: 18 to 30 inches from floor
- Room capacity: 24 maximum
- Sink at adult height in each room

(Check your state and local codes for detailed requirements.)

Preschool Classroom recommended Specifications

- Location: ground level
- Space per child: 35 square feet recommended
- Room size: 320 square feet recommended minimum; no walls less than 16 feet long
- Windowsills: 18 to 24 inches from floor

Hallways or Corridors

- Hallway should be wide and inviting to children and parents. Hall decorations need to be simple and fresh. Murals are not recommended since they can visually “crowd” a hallway. The hallway should set the stage for the learning and worship that will take place in the classrooms. Use color and changeable, realistic pictures (some on the children's eye-level), or perhaps geometric shapes to make the hallways interesting.

Lighting and Ventilation

- If possible, provide outside windows in each classroom. Use clear glass with the windowsill low enough for children to see outside. Mini-blinds or shades can block direct sunlight or glare, as well as allow you to control light for videos or other teaching methods that require a darkened room.
- Curtains that block light are not recommended. A short valance at the top of the window will add color if needed. Window decorations should not block the windows (diminishing natural light) or draw attention from the teaching materials. Windows should be washed or cleaned often to remove dust.

Flooring

Either tile or carpeting is acceptable. Consider these factors in making your choice:

- **Quality**
If you install carpeting, choose a carpet that is high grade and durable with a stain-resistant quality. Light padding or underlay is recommended to provide additional cushioning and comfort for the kids.
A plastic drop cloth can be used to protect the carpet for messier activities.

- **Noise and warmth**

Carpeting has been know to absorb sound and will reduce noise

- **Cleaning**

Generally, tile floors are easier to keep clean and harbor fewer allergens.

- **Part-tile/part-carpet flooring**

If you have a sink in the classroom, you might choose to have tile around the sink area. Painting and other messy learning projects may be done in this area

- **Area rugs**

If you have tile flooring, area rugs can help reduce noise. They need to be bound on the edges, skid-proof and removed and cleaned often.

No matter which floor covering you choose; provide adequate equipment to keep it clean.

Walls

The classroom walls are background to the learning or worship experience and should not call attention to themselves. Walls in classroom space should be light, cheerful and durable.

- **Color:** Consider a color that will be cheerful but not over-stimulating Bold colors can over-stimulate and over-power some children. Consider pastels in light or medium intensity rather than intense colors. An option to add visual interest is to paint one wall as an accent wall using a darker shade of the base color.
- Wallpaper or paneling ☒This is an option as long as you follow the color guidelines above. Avoid using wallpaper with strong patterns.
- Paint ☒Choose high quality, durable finish paint (satin or semi-gloss enamel) that can withstand bumps, scrapes, masking tape and occasional scrubbing to remove marks from walls.
- Electrical outlets ☒A minimum of two electrical outlets per room is recommended.
- Wall murals in classrooms are not recommended. The permanence of the mural subject will not suffice to reinforce what is being taught each Sunday. In time, children will become so accustomed to seeing the mural that they no longer "see" the mural
Visuals in a classroom should relate to the current lesson for each week..

Doors

- Solid doors with a window at adult eye-level are a necessary part of any standard safety and security policy. This allows anyone outside the classroom to monitor leaders and children during teaching sessions. Door windows should not be covered or obscured at any time. If a solid door cannot be replaced with a door that includes a window, the door should remain open at all times.

- In addition, the doors should be fire-rated to meet building applicable state of national fire codes.

Ceiling

Acoustic tiles are most effective in absorbing sound

Facility Safety Checklist

The safety of children is of utmost priority in The BLW Children's Ministry. Below is a typical Fire Safety Checklist to conduct periodic checks for safety hazards. Check items that need correcting to ensure your facility safe for children. Include all teachers of children in a safety walk.

- . Protruding nails or other sharp objects
- . Sharp corners or edges on furniture
- . Broken tile or damaged/loose carpeting
- . Peeling paint on walls or furniture
- . Unsecured windows
- . Cluttered hallways or corridors
- . Loose rails or steps on stairwell
- . Closets and storage areas which are fire hazards
- . Damaged electrical outlets or fixtures
- . Mold, mildew or dampness
- . Damaged blinds or shades
- . Unsecured or unstable shelves and/or cabinets
- . Broken chairs or tables (check for splinters)
- . Exposed asbestos (sheets or any other material)
- . Dust (for allergy sufferers) is present
- . Damaged or dirty ceiling tiles or light fixtures
- . No fire escape route posted or practiced. Contact fire department for suggestion.
- . Well stocked First aid kit is available to all classes
- . No Obstructed or glass window in classroom doors.

GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN'S CLASSROOM SET-UP

The typical layout and set up of the Classroom in the Children's Church plays a great role in the learning experience and overall impact of the lessons on the children.

A Church May Have Multiple Groups of Classrooms Per Age Level;

- Suggested Maximum Enrollment Per Age Level Per Class – 24 Children
- Teacher/Pupil ratio – 1/6

BLW Children's Ministry Organizational Models

Model 1:

Nursery Class – 2yrs
Preschool Age 3-5yrs
Lower Elementary Age 6-7yrs
Upper Elementary Age 7-10yrs
Preteens Age 11-12yrs

Model 2:

Nursery Class
Kindergarten 2-3yrs
Preschool Age 4-5yrs
Elementary Age 6-8yrs
Upper Elementary Age 9 -10yrs
Preteens Age 11-12yrs

Room Arrangements

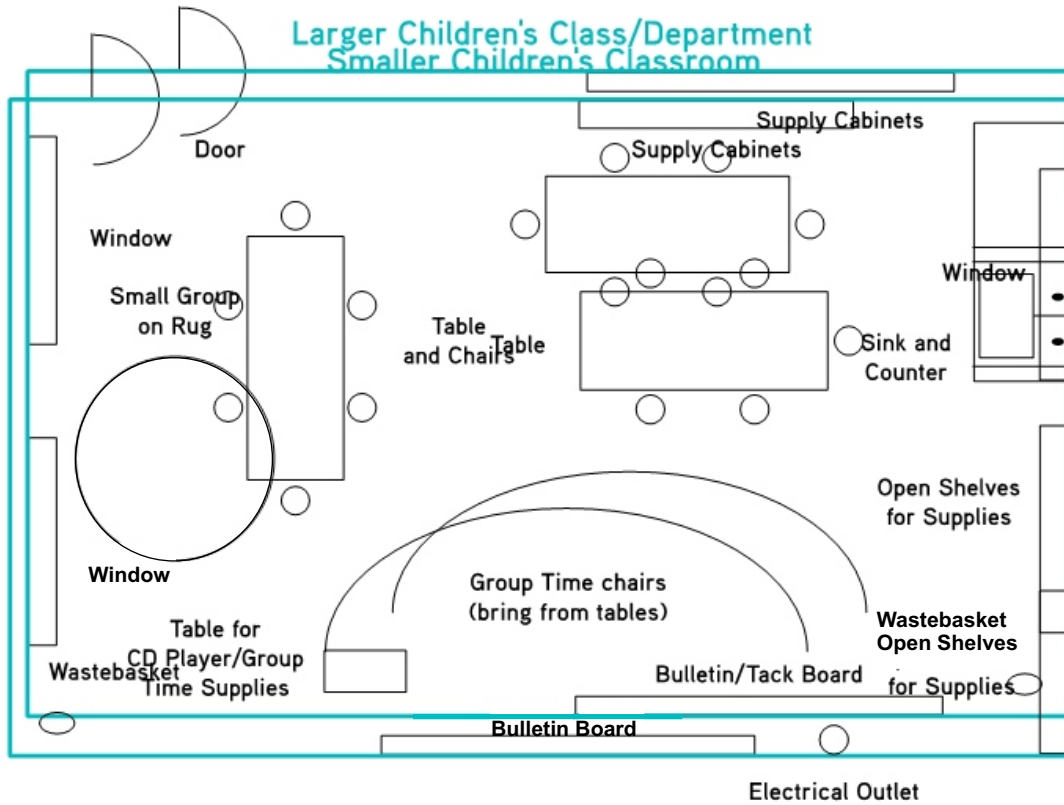
Consider these principles when arranging the space you have available for teaching children:

- If you are cramped for space, eliminate unnecessary furniture such as pianos, tables, extra chairs, etc. Children need room to move. Have one chair per child that they can move from activity time to group time.
- Use all the space all the time. By moving tables and chairs for different activities, you can have small activity groups as well as large group activities in the same space.
- Provide easy access from the doorway to Bible study groups
- Provide both storage cabinets (either standing on floor or hanging above shelves or counters) and open shelves for frequently used teaching supplies such as extra Bibles, baskets with pencils and/ or markers, resource books, scissors, glue sticks and various kinds of paper.
- **Tips:** Chairs and/or rugs rather than tables and chairs can be used for small groups if needed for space. Lapboards made of cardboard or other sturdy material can be used instead of tables

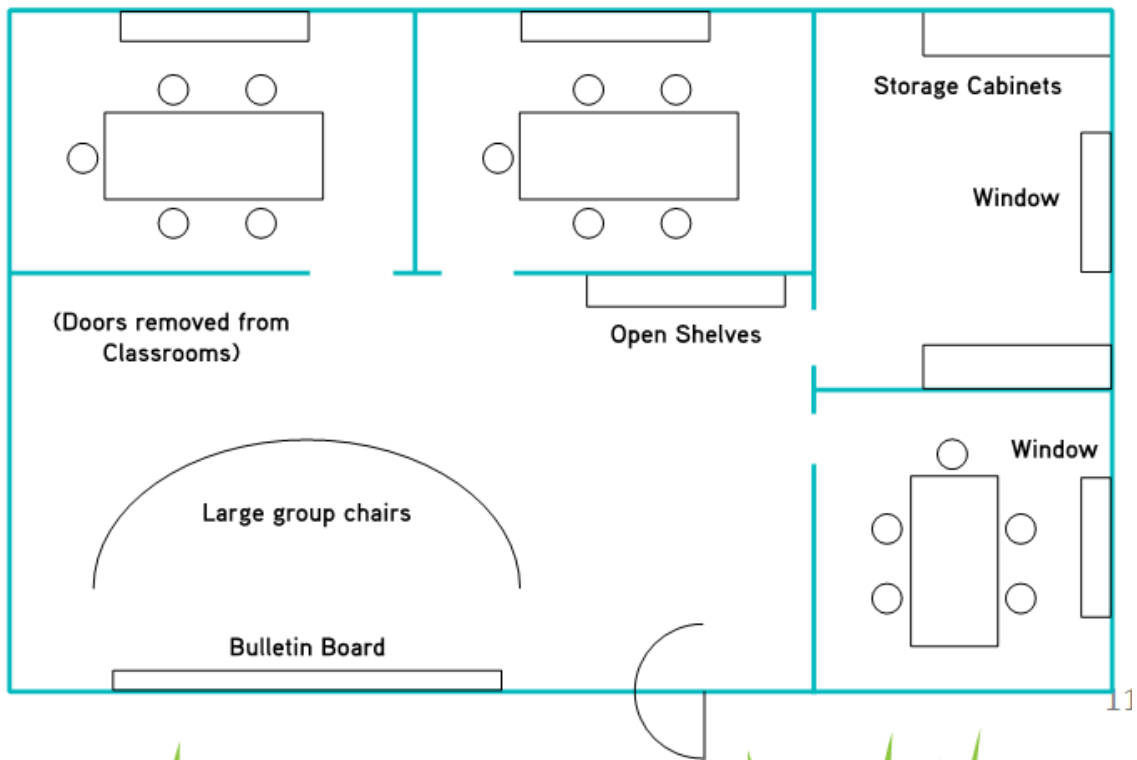
Please see floor plan guides of ideal models for the different classrooms in The Believers LoveWorld Children's Ministry;

Floor Models

Smaller Children's or Nursery Classroom



Adapting Assembly/Classroom Structure



Please see Pictorial Guide to ideal models for the different classrooms in The Believers LoveWorld Children's Ministry;

CLASSROOM MODEL	AGE LEVEL
 <p>A bright, colorful nursery or preschool classroom. It features a large circular rug with a sun in the center and the alphabet around the perimeter. There are wooden tables and chairs, a bookshelf, and a window with colorful decorations.</p>	<p>NURSERY / PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM MODEL</p>
 <p>A nursery classroom featuring a baby changing station, a crib, and various toys. The room is decorated with colorful wall art and a window with a rainbow valance.</p>	<p>BABY CHANGING STATION IN NURSERY CLASSROOM MODEL</p>
 <p>A kindergarten or lower elementary classroom with several tables and chairs. The room is decorated with educational posters, a map, and a small Christmas tree. A yellow banner at the bottom of the image reads "KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM".</p>	<p>KINDERGARTEN / LOWER ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM MODEL [OPTION 1]</p>



**KINDERGARTEN / LOWER
ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM
MODEL [OPTION 2]**



**UPPER ELEMENTARY /
PRE-TEENS CLASSROOM
MODEL [OPTION 1]**



**UPPER ELEMENTARY /
PRETEENS CLASSROOM
MODEL [OPTION 2]**

Guidelines for Children's Classroom Furnishings

Chairs

You need only one chair per child enrolled. Solid wood chairs are the most durable, but are also the most expensive. Plastic Molded chair seats and backs with metal legs are a good option. Purchase secure chairs that do not tip over easily and have comfortable seats. Folding chairs are not safe for younger children.

Suggested Chair Heights Measured From Floor To Seat Are:

When seated, the child's feet should be flat on the floor with knees at a right angle.

6-7 year olds (Lower Elementary) 8-9 year olds (Upper Elementary) 10-11 year olds (Tweens & Preteens)

12-13" chairs 14-15" chairs 16-17" chairs

Tables

If there is adequate space, tables can be used for Bible study groups. Wooden tables are durable, but are not as flexible as other types of tables. If you purchase plastic-top tables, consider those with adjustable height legs. Remember table legs that fold are sometimes helpful for storage or moving, but can make it difficult to sit at the ends where legs bump the cross bar.

Tabletops should be rectangular and measure 30" by 48" minimum with 36" by 54" preferred. Table height should be set at 10" above the seat of the chairs. The light-colored table tops reflect more light and keep the room brighter, but will need to be wiped clean more often.

Note: If space is a premium, use lapboards or clipboards instead of tables. They may be made from plywood squares 18" x 12" with well-sanded edges, or heavy cardboard squares (the same size) covered with adhesive-back paper.

Boards and Supplies for Display and Teaching

If you use a space that is used for different activities on a regular basis, use bulletin boards, tack strips or grip strips to create focal wall for teaching. The bottom of the bulletin boards should be 30 inches from the floor to be at the eye level of children sitting in chairs.

Water Dispensers / Drinking Fountains and Restrooms / Washrooms / Toilets

A dedicated purpose-built children's restroom facility with child-size amenities would be ideal, although many churches will choose to have reserved cubicles in the common restrooms for preschool to preteens age children. The restrooms and drinking fountains need to be in the vicinity of the classrooms for safety as well as convenience.

If possible, an in-classroom sink (in-built or mobile) is suggested that allows for clean-up after painting, gluing or other messy learning activities. Consider incorporating a sink into storage cabinets and/or countertops for an even more excellent aesthetics.

Storage Cabinets

Wall hung cabinets should be 50" above the floor. A suggested dimension is 42" x 36" x 18" to accommodate larger paper sizes. A supply cabinet that sits on the floor is an option but will take up additional floor space. Encourage sharing resources to limit the number of free-standing floor cabinets in a classroom space.

Open Shelves

Some supplies should be easily available to children when they are working on Bible lesson activities. Our Ministry materials for children & activity resource books and a supply of materials such as assorted paper, scissors and markers need to be kept on open shelves.

Provide a minimum of two shelves: 14" x 19" deep, 42" x 46" high, 3' x 4' long, and shelves 12" x 14" apart. An enclosed backing is suggested
Optional (but nice if you have space!)

Small table or cabinet for CD players and CDs as well as teaching materials for group time
Picture rail: Placed 24-30 inches from the floor, the picture rail can be combined with the bulletin board.

Guidelines for Children's Classroom Resources and Supplies

Basic Classroom Resources

Bulletin board paper in a variety of colors
Dry erase markers for white boards
Water-based markers (thin tip and regular)
Crayons

Colored art chalk
Glue sticks
Tempera paint (variety of colors, washable)
Paint brushes (thin and medium tips)
Lined paper
Manila or drawing paper (9" x 12" and 12" x 18")
Newsprint (9" x 12", 12" x 18", 18" x 24")
Typing paper or unlined white A4 paper
Construction paper (9" x 12" and 12" x 8") in various colors

Pencils with erasers
Scissors (blunt and pointed, teacher size and pupil size, left and right handed)
Sentence strip paper with lines, Masking tape in a variety of colors
Clear tape
Rulers
Tacks for bulletin boards or tack strips
Brads
Hole punchers
Paper clips
Poster board
Electric pencil sharpener
Stapler and staples

- Rhapsody of Realities Bible
- Rhapsody of Realities for Kids and Early Readers
- Range of Ministry Materials for Children by Rev(Dr.) Chris Oyakhilome
- Range of Digital Products for Children by Rev(Dr.) Chris Oyakhilome
- LoveworldChildrens Ministry Teaching Posters
- Loveworld Children's Ministry Age level activity resource sheets
- Simple Bible maps
- LoveWorld Children's Ministry Giant Picture Books (Early Childhood)



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