



A PUBLIC SCHOOL MINISTRY

# Volunteer Handbook

Revised 12/2023

# Thank You and Welcome!

Welcome to the Bible2School® Volunteer Team! We are excited to support you as we **Teach Truth and Inspire Hope** in the lives of children attending public school. We trust that the information contained in this handbook will clearly communicate Bible2School's expectations as you prepare to be a blessing to the children you will serve.

## Who We Are

### Our Program Mission

To teach the Bible to children attending public school and inspire hope, showing them their unique value in Christ.

### Bible2School Core Values:

- Committed to Christ – We value starting everything with prayer, sharing the gospel, serving with humility, studying God's word, and being in community with other believers.
- Relationship Building – We value intentionally connecting with others, communicating honestly, listening well, assuming the best intentions of others, addressing conflict, and enjoying one another.
- Team-Focused – We value viewing each role through the lens of the mission, working collaboratively, practicing blameless problem solving, giving credit where credit is due, and being aware of tasks that need done.
- Culture of Inviting – We value being courageous, sharing the vision, thinking outside the box, letting others answer for themselves, and empowering others.
- Embrace Growth – We value keeping the mission first, expecting change, being positive, being flexible, and caring for who/what is entrusted to us.

## Program Core Values:

- Safety – We value providing a physically, spiritually, and emotionally safe environment for our students.
- Christ Centered – We value pointing our students to Jesus in every lesson.
- Age Appropriate – We value teaching the Bible on each child's grade level.
- Relevant – We value teaching kids that the Bible is filled with timeless truths that are applicable to their lives today.
- Relational – We value investing time and energy into building relationships with the kids, appreciating their unique backgrounds and personalities.
- Fun – We value making the lessons fun and engaging so that the kids are excited to come back week after week to learn more about the Bible.

## Non-Denominational

In our words and actions, we uphold the common foundations of faith that God made us, loves us, and sent His son Jesus Christ to die for our sins. It is by grace we are saved through faith. ***Please do not confront denominational beliefs or traditions.***

## Difficult/Controversial Questions

Handle difficult/controversial questions **through the lens of our core values**. Always stay Christ-Centered, Age-Appropriate, Safe, and Relational in your response. Here are some possible things to say depending on the situation:

- "Different churches have different traditions."
- "At Bible2School we only teach what the Bible says."
- "Santa Claus isn't in the Bible, so we won't be talking about him."
- "God created you (or 'name') and loves you (him/her) very much."
- "We can trust God is in control and working for our good even when we don't understand."
- "I don't know the answer to that, but I'll check and let you know next week."
- "Please ask your parents or pastor."
- "That is not a topic we are going to discuss at Bible2School."

# Statement of Faith

## We believe in...

- **Scripture** - God has definitively revealed Himself by His Word (Old and New Testaments), through the Holy Spirit, in various times, cultures, and genres, all for the glory of God and the salvation of humanity. By the testimony of the Holy Spirit, we therefore believe that the Holy Scriptures are authoritative and inerrant truth, and that a proper interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself. (2 Peter 1:21, Hebrews 1:1-2, Romans 10-11, 1 John 4:1, 2 Timothy 3:16)
- **One true God existing eternally as three persons** –The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Luke 3:22, Matt 28:19, and II Cor 13:14)
- **The Lord Jesus Christ** - His pre-existence and deity; incarnation by virgin birth; sinless life; substitutionary death; sin-pardoning value; bodily resurrection from the tomb; ascension into Heaven and present ministry; personal, visible, and imminent return and resurrection of both the just and unjust. (John 1:1-3, John 1:14 & Matt 28:18-23, Hebrews 4:15, II Cor 5:21, Luke 24:36-43, Heb 4:14-16, Acts 1:11, John 5:28-29 & I Thes 4: 13-18)
- **The Holy Spirit** – His personality and deity; his work in each believer: baptism & indwelling at the moment of regeneration and filling to empower for Christian life and service. (John 16:7-15, Acts 5:3-4, I Cor 12:13, Rom 8:9, Eph 5:18, Eph 3:16-19, Acts 1:8, & Gal 5:22-23)
- **The creation and fall of man** – His direct creation in the image of God, subsequent fall into sin resulting in spiritual death and the necessity of the new birth for salvation. (Gen 1:26-28 & Eccl 7:29, Gen 3:1-24 & Rom 5:12, John 3:3-5)
- **Salvation** – Received as the gift of God through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work. (Eph 2:8-9, Titus 3:5-7, & I Peter 1:18-19)
- **The existence and final judgment of Satan** – His existence and personality as the great adversary of God and His people his judgment and final doom. (Rev 12:1-10, John 12:31, Rev 20:10)
- **The Church of Jesus Christ** – One true church composed of all true believers. (Eph 1:22-23 & 5:25-32, I Cor 12:12-13)
- **The Christian life** – (Rom 12:1-2)

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God, speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind and is the sole and final source of all that we believe.

\* All Scripture references used in the Statement of Faith come from the NASB.

### Clarifying Statements to the Statement of Faith

We recognize that a Statement of Faith, while providing a broad foundation of our beliefs, may not fully document our position on current sensitive topics or cultural shifts. We offer the following clarifying statements to our Statement of Faith:

- We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25).
- We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18, 7:2-5 & Heb. 13:4).
- God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27).

# Volunteer Basics

## VIP Time before each class

A team meeting held each week before leaving to pick up the students. VIP is an intentional time set aside for volunteers to connect, be prepared, and be supported. VIP stands for:

- Vision – Hear how God is working in our ministry and/or be encouraged by God's word.
- Information – Review the lesson for that day, receive tips, updates, and other announcements.
- Prayer - Cover needs and praises for the kids, school, and each other in prayer.

## Program Components

- **Large Group Time** - Whole class instruction led by the Large Group Teacher that presents the main idea for the lesson (might include skits, science experiment, object lessons, and more!)
- **Small Group Time** - Small Group Leaders engage with the same small group of children each week, interacting with the Bible, discussing questions to dig deeper, and completing activities to apply the Bible to their lives.
- **Worship** - Songs and memory activities led by the Worship Leader.

## Volunteer Expectations

- Be committed and consistent in attendance (approximately a 2-hour per week commitment). Please notify the site director as soon as possible if you are unable to attend.
- Be on time.
- Prepare for the lesson ahead of time.
- Fulfill your role with excellence.
- Help with set up and tear down.
- Help kids focus on the lesson and stay on task.

## Little Blessings

Childcare may be provided for our volunteers' preschool aged children, depending on location. Contact your Site Director for more information.

# Behavior & Discipline

**Program Core Values: Safety, Christ Centered, Age Appropriate, Relational**

To disciple a child in behavior choices can be both rewarding and frustrating at the same time! It is certainly an investment of time and energy that requires patience and awareness. Children will naturally explore boundaries, and some are still learning the skills to handle problems and situations appropriately. Discipling requires **steadfastness, repetition, grace, and resilience** (don't take a child's bad behavior personally). **Be confident, show respect to the child, and be firm.**

The following guidelines are offered to both set the stage for positive behavior and give structure and steps for addressing undesirable behaviors. Volunteers should recognize that their **primary responsibility is developing relationships and carrying out lessons with their small group**. Behaviors requiring more than a minute or two to address (ex: multiple reminders), or behaviors that are severe or are unsafe should be directed to the Site Director or Lead Volunteer.

## **Set the stage for Positive Behavior (Everyone)**

1. Develop relationships.
2. Keep structure and boundaries in mind.
  - a. Communicate expectations to students (Behavior Expectation Chart).
  - b. Encourage good choices.
  - c. Give reminders.
  - d. Be firm and follow through.
3. Recognize that transitions can be especially tricky for children to navigate.
4. Praise in public, discipline in private.
5. Open doors for discussions and problem solving (Tell me more, can you tell me what happened or why you are upset).

### Addressing behaviors that are more frequent or severe (Site Director/Coach)

The following steps may be used in sequential order, in combination with each other, or individually as they apply to the situation at hand.

1. Remove the child from the situation as is safe and appropriate. Give time and space if the child needs to calm down. A successful conversation can't happen if the child is upset or feels threatened.
2. Engage in problem solving.
  - a. **Validate** feelings: "What's up?"
  - b. **Define** the problem behavior: "I've noticed..."
  - c. **Identify** the goal and **invite** solutions: "I wonder if there's a way..."
  - d. Give **choices** & define **action steps**: "What can you change to be successful?"
3. Apply consequences as needed (logical and natural).
4. Keep open communication with teachers and parents.
5. Remove from program for a week.
6. Unenroll from program.

# Policies and Procedures

**Program Core Values: Safety, Age Appropriate, Relevant**

## **Bad Weather**

If the school district of your Bible2School program is delayed, is canceled, or has an early dismissal, Bible2School may be canceled. Cancellations of Bible2School may also take place if there is a special schedule at the school (standardized testing, field trips, assemblies, etc.). Site Directors will notify volunteers of any cancellations in a reasonable time frame.

## **Bathroom Procedures**

Women should not enter the boy's bathroom and vice-versa. Wait outside and handle problems when the students come out. Whenever possible, students should use the bathroom one at a time. **One adult should NEVER be alone with a child.** Please stay in the hallway, which is considered a public place.

## **Medical Issues**

A small first aid kit is available at each site. Site Directors will document any treatment given.

## **Children's nametags**

Children with an allergy or medical concern will have a dot on their name tag. Specifics about the allergy or medical concern will be disclosed on an as needed basis. Children whose parents have **not** given permission for their child to be photographed will have a star on their name tag. A checkmark on the name tag indicated the child has no medical concerns and has permission to be photographed.

## **Transportation of Children**

All adults assisting in transporting children should enforce reasonable safety measures, and position themselves so an adult is always in the front and back of the group, whether walking or riding a bus. **At no time is it permissible for a volunteer or staff member to transport a child in their personal vehicle.**

## **Physical Contact with Children**

When interacting with the kids, maintain personal space, **refraining from physical contact** unless there is risk of physical harm for the child. Several ways to greet or encourage the kids include high fives, thumbs up, and fist bumps.



## **Pictures, Social Media, and Privacy**

To maintain our core value of safety for our kids, please **ask permission of your site director before taking photographs of the students**. Also, please **refrain from posting on social media** any pictures of the students or information about individual students. We would love for you to share posts from your site director or Bible2School to spread the word about this awesome program!

## **Hand Outs**

- Schools request that we don't send home items (like trinkets and worksheets) just to send something home, as it causes distractions, and they are often left to litter the classrooms. We agree with their philosophy and value the emphasis they put on creating meaningful learning experiences.
- Edible treats are great for special occasions. There should be enough for the entire class. Please check for allergies first.
- Small gifts or trinkets may be given as a special treat to celebrate a holiday (Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day). There should be enough for the entire class. The use of trinkets to reward behavior is at the discretion of the Site Director.
- Flyers promoting an event must be approved by a Bible2School administrator first. Our partnering churches have the privilege to request we hand out flyers.
- Volunteer or child made lesson related handouts may be permitted at the discretion of the Site Director (for example: the kids wrote out a prayer as a group and the volunteer copied it for all the group members, or a child asked for a verse to be copied for them so they could study it during the week). These are onetime events (not occurring on a regular basis) and were developed in a meaningful learning experience.
- Worksheets are not permitted. We want to be careful about presenting someone else's work as our own.

## **Modifications/Additions to the lessons**

If you have an idea to modify or add something to the lesson, we ask that you follow these steps:

- Check the bins for the materials the lesson calls for before gathering materials yourself. The Bible2School staff has prepared curriculum bins full of lesson materials to make your volunteering as easy as possible!
- Email or call your Site Director *before* coming to program. They have a team of staff members willing and able to give feedback on ideas, some of which may have already been tried with varying levels of success. They can help you make the most of your efforts.
- Please do not bring materials from another curriculum to teach from. Again, we want to be careful about presenting someone else's work as our own.
- While Bible2School does provide a variety of music choices for worship, we do realize there are other great music resources you may love! Please give the Site Director plenty of notice if you would like to introduce something new, so they can review the material first.

# Mandatory Reporting

Program Core Value: Safety, Age Appropriate

## Who is a Mandated Reporter?

According to PA law, a mandatory reporter is any individual (employee or volunteer) who is an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service and accepts responsibility for a child. By law, mandatory reporters are required to make a report if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of abuse.

## Definition of Abuse

Abuse is any recent act or failure to act toward a child under 18 years of age which causes non-accidental physical injury, non-accidental mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or serious neglect.

## Signs of Abuse or Neglect

- Unexplained injuries
- Unbelievable or inconsistent explanations of injuries
- Multiple bruises in various stages of healing
- Bruises located on faces, ears, necks, buttocks, backs, chests, thighs, back of legs
- Bruises that resemble objects such as a hand, fist, belt buckle, or rope
- Injuries that are inconsistent with a child's age/developmental level
- Burns
- Fear of going home
- Extreme apprehensiveness
- Pronounced aggression or passivity
- Flinches easily or avoids being touched
- Play includes abusive behavior or talk
- Fear of parent or caregiver
- Lack of adequate medical and dental care
- Often hungry
- Persistent (untreated) conditions (e.g., head lice)
- Clothing that is dirty, inappropriate for the weather, too small or too large

## How to Respond to a Child who Discloses Abuse (told from a child's perspective)

- Remain calm and show concern.
- Try not to act alarmed or I may take things back or stop talking.
- Tell me I'm doing the right thing by telling you. Let me know you believe me.
- Let me tell my story in my own way. Remember that I'm just a child.
- Don't be judgmental. My abuser may be someone I know and love.
- Don't ask me leading questions, or it may hurt the investigation (ex: If I tell you, "My dad hurt me," ask me, "How did your dad hurt you," not, "Did your dad touch you in a private part?")
- Don't make me tell other people what I told you. I chose YOU to help me, you can tell other people who need to know what I said. I shouldn't have to keep repeating my story.
- Let me know what happened is not my fault. Tell me that what I've told you doesn't change how you feel about me.

## Your Responsibility

- Listen.
- Don't promise to keep this a secret even if the child asks.
- You are NOT permitted to investigate, and you do not need to know every detail before making a report.
- All you need is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering from abuse or neglect. It is a determination you make, based on your knowledge of *circumstances*, your *observations*, your *familiarity* with the individuals, and your *feelings* about the incident.
- Keep it confidential. Telling others, outside of a Bible2School staff member, violates privacy rights and could open you up to a slander lawsuit later.

## ChildLine's Responsibility

- ChildLine's mission is to accept reports of suspected child abuse from the public and professional sources 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Cultural sensitivity and courteous demeanor will be displayed at all times to all reporters.
- ChildLine accepts reports of suspected abuse and neglect and refers reports of suspected abuse and neglect to the appropriate investigating agency to ensure the safety and well-being of the children of Pennsylvania.
- ChildLine also refers reports indicating that a child may be in need of other services to the proper county agency to assess the needs of the child.

## How to Make a Report

- Call PA ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313. Child abuse forms are available at each site to help you gather your thoughts before you call. ChildLine may ask you to complete the form and mail it to them *OR* make a report online at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis).
- Inform the Site Director of the report you made. All reports will be kept confidential and disclosed only to staff members who need to know.

## For More Information

- Bible2School staff has completed training per PA requirements. The 3hr. training can be viewed at [www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu](http://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu).
- Visit PA's website at <http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov/> for more resources and links.

# Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

Program Core Value: Safety

As a valued member of our Bible2School Volunteer Team, you may have access to confidential information concerning our kids and our organization. To align with our core value of Safety, we are asking you not to share confidential information about our children and their families\*, our schools, our volunteers, our staff, or our ministry verbally or in written form. Please read and sign the agreement below – thank you!

\*It is lawful to share information with PA Childline as it pertains to the Child Abuse Laws

*I understand that in my role as a volunteer of Bible2School ("B2S"), I may have access to certain confidential information of this ministry. In consideration of my serving as a volunteer for B2S, I agree as follows:*

- 1. I will not during or after the term of my volunteerism with B2S give, disclose, publish, or disseminate to any person not authorized in writing by the B2S to receive it, any of the following:  
(a) any of B2S's proprietary data, trade secrets, or information, whether relating to its computer systems, developments, ideas, or curriculum; or any information pertaining to B2S business, operations, products, financial, donor lists, sales, costs, profits, donations, marketing or marketing plans, or strategic plans; or  
(b) any information that is not generally known outside B2S or that is designated by B2S as "Limited", "Private", "Confidential" or similarly designated; or  
(c) any information pertaining to B2S staff, staff applications, staff background screening reports, volunteers, volunteer applications, volunteer background screening reports, enrolled children and data contained in enrollment, private information, unauthorized publication of donors, B2S curriculum, marketing material and any protected or proprietary B2S information.*
- 2. I understand that if I fail to comply with the provisions of this Agreement, I may be asked to leave our B2S Team.*
- 3. I agree to report any violation, suspected violation or any situation that would compromise the integrity B2S to a B2S staff member or Council member.*

# Process to Discuss Problems and Suggestions

**Program Core Values: Christ Centered, Safety**  
**Bible2School Core Values: Team Focused, Relationship Building, Embracing Growth**

Bible2School strives to create an environment whereby any employee or volunteer experiencing work-related difficulties with another employee or volunteer (whether or not that other person is his/her supervisor) can deal directly with that individual to resolve the difficulty. It is important that this encounter be conducted in a professional, constructive, and courteous manner.

*“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’”  
Matthew 18: 15-16.*

If such individual, one-on-one encounter is not successful or if the difficulty continues, Bible 2 School strongly encourages its employees and volunteers to use the following means to bring problems and suggestions to the attention of Bible 2 School leadership:

- An employee or volunteer should meet with his/her supervisor to discuss the matter.
- If an employee or volunteer is not satisfied with the discussion with his/her supervisor, he/she may meet with the Executive Director. Every effort will be made to work out a mutually satisfactory solution to the matter.
- If the employee or volunteer is uncomfortable with bringing the issue to his/her supervisor because of the supervisor’s association with the concern or complaint, the employee should contact the Executive Director directly. If the employee or volunteer’s concern or complaint is about the Executive Director, the employee or volunteer shall first discuss the matter directly with the Executive Director. If the employee or volunteer’s concern or complaint is not addressed by the Executive Director, or if the matter is of an ethical or moral issue concerning the Executive Director, the employee or volunteer may come directly to the Officers of the Bible2School Board of Directors and request a meeting with the available Officers of the Bible2School Board of Directors to address the issue. In the event such meeting is determined to be necessary by the Officers of the Board of Directors, those in attendance shall include the Officers of the Board available, the employee or volunteer and the Executive Director.

## Acknowledgement Of Bible2School Policies

- I agree with the mission, vision, statement of faith, clarifying statements, and core values of Bible2School.
- I have read the handbook and agree to follow Bible2School policies, procedures, and volunteer expectations.
- I understand that if I have reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering from abuse or neglect, I am mandated to report this directly to PA ChildLine.
- I agree and understand the Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement.
- I will allow a copy of my PA clearances (and FBI if it applies) to Bible2School host sites and schools if they request it.

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Signature

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Please print name

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Date