

Guidelines

Ten Commandments for Teachers

ONE

Understand that teaching is ministry. Sharing eternal truths with the next generation is a privilege and a calling. What happens in a church classroom is the most important information in this world and the next. Pray for children and for wisdom in lesson preparation. Be aware that every part of the session—from greeting children to waiting for pickup—needs to be done with the goal of showing God's love in action.

TWO

Show respect. Teachers earn respect by showing respect to their children. Talk *with* children, not *at* them or *down* to them. Get down to their eye level. Smile and speak kindly. Be interested in the children's lives and their priorities. Assist children with special abilities and accept their contributions to the class. Treat all children as equals and children of God.

THREE

Lead gently. Give suggestions more often than commands. Give directions in a positive way. Treat children according to what they *can* do rather than what they *cannot* do. Be patient and understanding. Accept children's mistakes and help them to grow from their failures. Remember to *guide* a child into a relationship with God and not to *push*; you must live your relationship with Him out in front of that child.

FOUR

Be a visionary. Accept challenges as opportunities. Love all the children that God sends: the most difficult, the most shy, the most confused, the most moody. Instead of trying to change the child, consider ways to change the activity to benefit the child.

FIVE

Provide limits. Allow children freedom within boundaries. Set reasonable boundaries and stick to them. Keep learning fun, but also keep order in the classroom for effective learning. Expect children to honor your authority. Show the consequences for stepping outside of classroom boundaries. Expect the most from children and they will strive to give their best.

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SIX

Be a guide. Be ready when a child needs help. Guide informal conversation and lead meaningful discussions. Ask open-ended questions and encourage children to dig deep into the Bible. *Guide* children to discover Bible truths instead of *telling* them. Demonstrate how children can apply Bible truths to their daily lives. Lend a listening ear when a child needs to talk. Share age-appropriate examples of ways God's Word has helped you.

SEVEN

Affirm children. Thank children often. Compliment children for positive things they say and do. Describe their right actions so that they can learn and repeat them. Thank them for their participation in the class and for the personality they bring to class.

EIGHT

Know children. Know each child's name. Learn their interests. Study them to discover both their needs and their gifts. Be aware of the age-level characteristics of the children you teach so that your expectations are realistic. See each one as a person God has given to you to shepherd, love and lead to Christ.

NINE

Use proven teaching methods. Prepare lessons well, with interesting activities that motivate children's participation. Make learning active (hands-on) rather than passive (listening). Provide a variety of age-appropriate activities. Be aware of the age-level characteristics of children. Read, study and attend workshops to improve teaching skills. Network with other teachers. Get needed help from a pastor, a children's ministry leader or your supervisor.

TEN

Serve as a role model. A child's attitude toward Jesus Christ is largely based on what he or she sees adults say or do. If you model love, acceptance and enthusiasm, the class will follow. Show joy in your own spiritual journey and support the life of the church. Always give your best effort, no matter the size of the class. Three children deserve as much quality education as 20 children.