



A Children's MODEL CLASSROOM



Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Setting Up the Children's Area

General Guidelines for Facilities

- Create an inviting entrance to your children's area. Have a welcome center clearly marked for guests.
- Children's rooms should open into a hallway, be near rest rooms and an outside entrance. First floor rooms work best, especially in emergencies.
- A minimum of 25 square feet per child (based on 80% of enrollment) is suggested. If you cannot arrange your department room according to the suggested specifications, make adjustments.
- Rest rooms should be accessible, clean and safe.
- Good ventilation and good lighting are essential.
- Walls should be clean and painted using washable semi-gloss paint, containing no lead.
- Windows should be clear and uncovered. Window coverings such as drapery may cause allergy problems for some children. Shades may be used.
- When there are several children's rooms, a storage area can house items that are shared by the groups. A large closet or cabinets with shelves work well.
- Carpet is good in children's rooms because it cuts down on noise and cold floors. Or use rugs in rooms that have hard floors.

Helpful Furnishing Hints for Small Rooms

- Remove all unnecessary furnishings and equipment. If space is limited, replace chairs and tables with a clean floor and carpet squares for sitting. Squares of well-sanded plywood or heavy cardboard make inexpensive lapboards to use instead of tables.

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- Make a chalkboard using Chalkboard Contact™ on heavy cardboard or the side of a box. You might also use the chalkboard spray paint available at a hardware store. One other alternative is to use dry-erase sheets on the wall; these may be purchased at school supply stores.
- Place coat racks in the hallway rather than in the room.
- Maintain storage space for your room. It should be clean, organized, and current for all the groups.

Room Arrangement

Use a focal wall for group time to help define the space. If possible, children should face away from windows during group time.

Teaching Materials

- Teaching items in the room should relate to the session. Outdated materials need to be recycled, filed, or given to a mission church.
- Any pictures, posters, and banners should be at a child's eye level. They should be used for a reason, then removed when the session or unit is over. Too many items, items too high on the wall, and outdated items are of no value.
- There should be a variety of Bibles available for the children to use.

Sharing a Room



Rooms at church are often shared by Sunday School, Discipleship Training, choirs, missions groups and other activities. It is important that all who use it share the space and common resources. Meet with others who use the same room and decide together on room arrangement and guidelines for its use.

Evaluation

After the area is set up according to the guidelines, ask yourself these questions:

- Does the room look confining or inviting?
- Does it look cluttered or calming?
- Does it look clean?
- Would you want your child to learn in this room?

Teacher-Child Ratios

One teacher for every six children, with a total maximum of 30 in any classroom. Also there should ALWAYS be two teachers, regardless of a small number of children.

Department Grading Options

Age grading: Children are assigned to a particular class or department.

Grouping: Children are placed in groups according to ages or grades. The ages are six through 11; the grades are one through six.

	Dept	Dept	Dept	Dept	Dept	Dept
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6

or

	Dept	Dept
Grade	1-3	4-6

or

	Dept	Dept	Dept
Grade	1-2	3-4	5-6



Space Specifications: Children grades 1–6*

- 25 square feet per person
- Maximum recommended group size: 30 (including leaders)
- Room size: 750 square feet
- Leader pupil ratio: 1:6

Recommended Equipment:

- Chairs: (Grades 1 & 2: seat is 12–13 inches from floor)
(Grades 3 & 4: seat is 14–15 inches from floor)
(Grades 5 & 6: seat is 16–17 inches from floor)
- Tables: (Tabletops for children should be 10 inches above
the chair seats.)
- Coat rack
- Resources cabinet
- Shelves (14–19 inches deep, 42–46 inches high, and 3–4 feet
long, with shelves 12–14 inches apart)
- Book racks (42–46 inches high and 30–42 inches long)
- Tackboard or bulletin board (The bottom edge of tackboards
or bulletin boards should be 24–30 inches in height. Lengths
can range from 6 to 10 feet.)
- Wastebasket
- CD player

Optional Equipment:

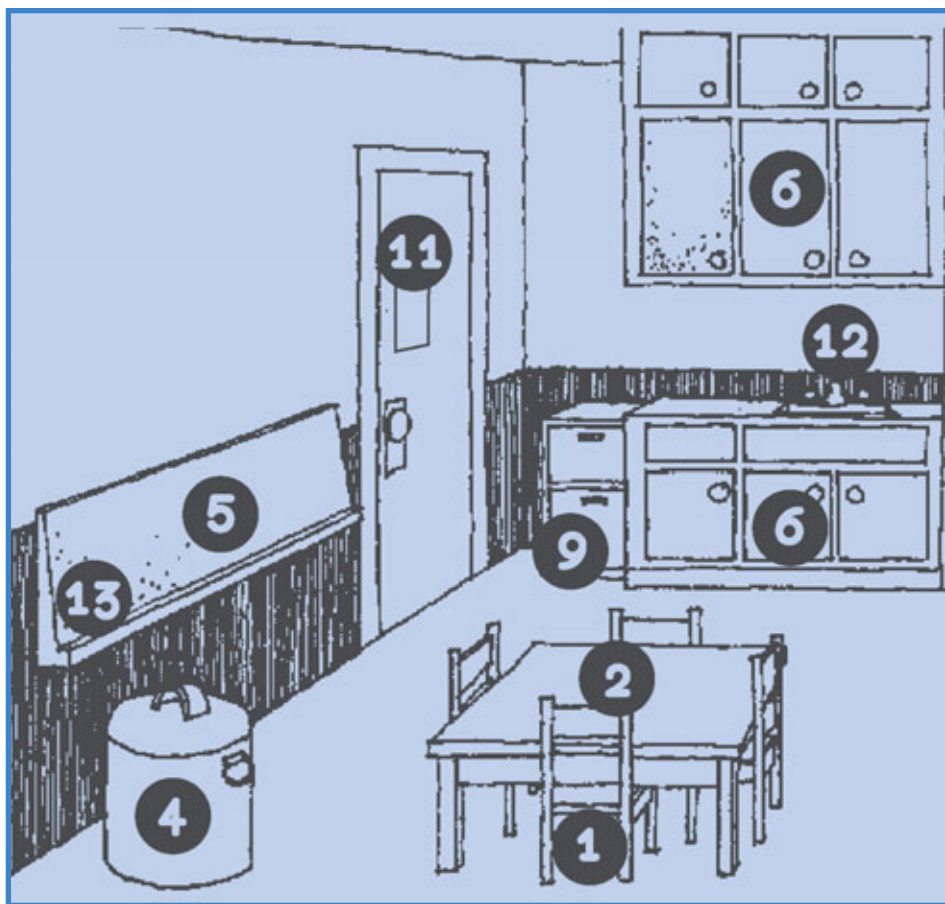
- Sink
- Picture rails (30 inches above the floor and 6 to 12 feet long)
- Chalk/marker board
- TV/VCR**
- Video camera**
- Computers

** Measurements are intended only as suggestions/guides.*

*** Optional equipment can be shared by several departments.
They should be stored elsewhere and brought to rooms as needed.*

Furniture Needs and Arrangements for Teaching Children

This illustration depicts an ideal teaching room. If your room is less than ideal in space, proportion, furnishings, or equipment, use what you have in the best way you can. A good room arrangement enhances the teaching/learning experience; has materials easily available; provides for free movement around the room; takes into consideration lighting and ventilation.



Furniture Needs and Arrangements for Teaching Children

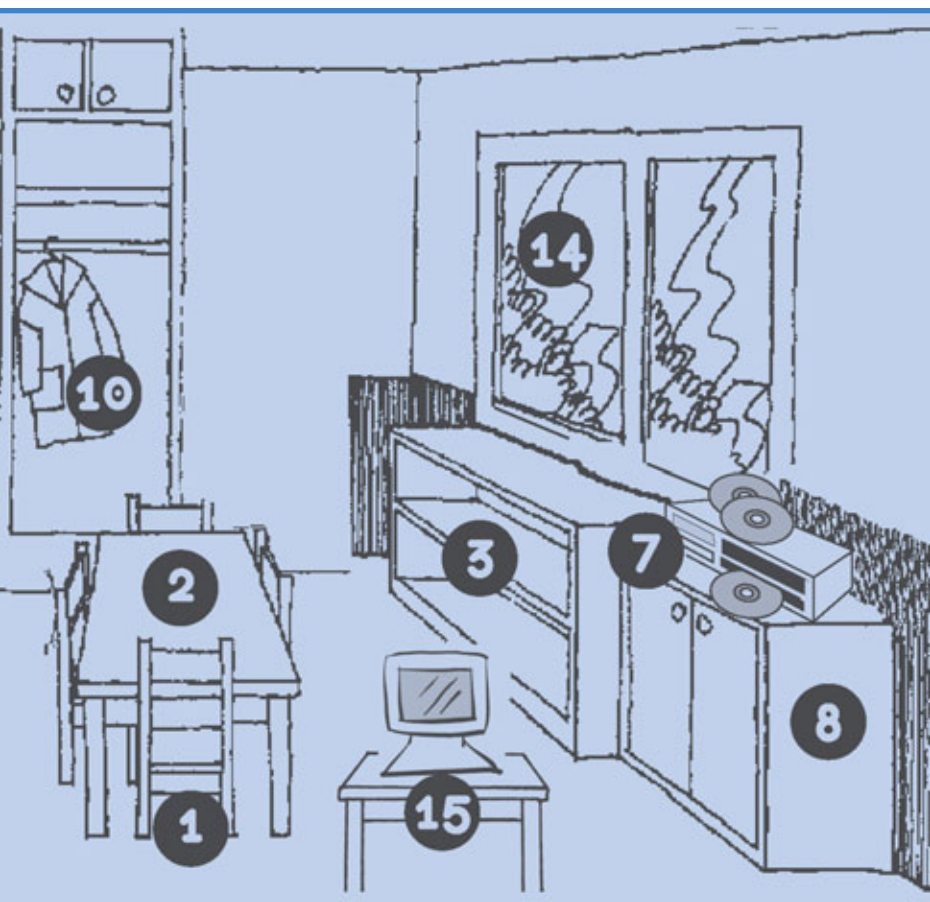


BASIC

- 1 - Chairs
- 2 - Table(s)
- 3 - Portable open shelves
- 4 - Wastebasket
- 5 - Tackboard
- 6 - Supply cabinet
- 7 - CD player

SUGGESTED

- 8 - Small equipment cabinet
- 9 - Picture file
- 10 - Coat racks
- 11 - Window in door
- 12 - Sink
- 13 - Picture rail
- 14 - Windows
- 15 - Computers/plugin-connections



Take a Safety Walk

1. Search from ceiling to floor for these and other hazards:

- ☐ Protruding nails (or other sharp objects)
- ☐ Sharp corners
- ☐ Broken tile
- ☐ Damaged carpeting
- ☐ Leaky ceiling or asbestos in ceiling
(if ceiling is leaking, asbestos must be removed.)
- ☐ Unsafe structure
- ☐ Lead paint in any area
- ☐ Unsafe or unsecured windows
- ☐ Mold, mildew, or dampness – allergens lurk in dampness.
- ☐ Check for cords that raise and lower blinds and shades.
Provide proper holders for cords.

2. Remove unnecessary equipment, supplies, trash, and clutter out of each room, hallway, and stairwell.

3. Doors and hallways should be easy to get through quickly in case evacuation is necessary.

4. Check all stairwells for:

- ☐ Loose railings
- ☐ Loose floor covering
- ☐ Other hazards



5. Closets and storage areas need to be clean and free of clutter or fire hazards.

6. Each electrical outlet and fixture needs to be in good condition and appropriate for its place and intended use.

7. Emergency Precautions:

- ☐ Ask the local fire department to inspect the church building.
- ☐ Post emergency routes in each room.
- ☐ Train teachers to know what to do in case of a fire, tornado or earthquake.
- ☐ Have a fire drill that includes the entire church.
- ☐ Have disposable gloves available to use to prevent contact with blood or body fluids.
- ☐ Secure and supervise entrances and exits.
- ☐ Install crash bars on exit doors so they can be easily pushed opened from inside but not easily opened from the outside of the building.
- ☐ ALWAYS have two adults in each room.
- ☐ Install windows in all classroom doors.



Rate Your Room

Rate your room for each of the following factors which indicate a positive physical learning environment.

	On Target	Needs Work
<p>1. Children need space in which to move around.</p> <p>(Recommended: Twenty-five square feet per person based on 80 percent of enrollment.) Adequate space is required to allow children who are active learners to move around. Freedom of movement also tends to lessen tension, fatigue, and irritability.</p>		
<p>2. Children’s space should be designed for flexibility.</p> <p>This will allow children to work in small groups, large groups, and individually.</p>		
<p>3. Special needs are taken into consideration.</p> <p>Be aware of children in wheelchairs, children with visual or auditory impairments as well as others.</p>		
<p>4. Walls are best painted in neutral colors.</p> <p>Light yellow works well for rooms without much natural lighting. If you would like to be creative, use shapes, textures, etc. without overwhelming the room with too much art.</p>		
<p>5. All visible teaching materials should be from the current units of study.</p> <p>Many learners find it difficult to focus in clutter and behavior problems may result.</p>		



	On Target	Needs Work
<p>6. Only necessary pieces of equipment are in the room.</p> <p>Too much furniture or equipment may give the children a fenced-in feeling which is counter-productive to learning.</p>		
<p>7. Adequate lighting is necessary.</p> <p>Rooms with natural lighting are preferable. Adequate lighting provides a much warmer, more cheerful space.</p>		
<p>8. Temperature should be comfortable - neither too hot nor too cold, about 70 degrees.</p> <p>Many learners find it challenging to concentrate when the temperature is extreme.</p>		
<p>9. Carpet or rugs are preferred for floor covering.</p> <p>Carpet in children's room helps to muffle the noise level and allows children comfort when working on the floor.</p>		
<p>10. Plants, rugs, and other accessories are used to create an inviting atmosphere.</p>		

"Changing Mississippi - One Child at a Time"

Thank you for wanting to create a Model Classroom in your children's area. The Preschool/Children's Ministry Team at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board would love to assist you.

Please give us a call if we can help you in your ministries.

Sincerely,

Angie Boydston

Sunday School
aboydstun@mbcb.org
601-292-3294

Don Gann

Men's Ministry
dgann@mbcb.org
601-292-3339

Don Hicks

Discipleship Training
dhicks@mbcb.org
601-292-3287



A Ministry of the Cooperative Program

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer

515 Mississippi St | Jackson MS 39201
PO Box 530 | Jackson MS 39205
1-800-748-1651 | www.mbcb.org