



Merryhill
School[®]

**Volunteer
Handbook**

Table of Contents

I. Volunteer Opportunities	3
II. Keys to Building & Maintaining a Successful Partnership	3
III. Volunteer Procedures	4
IV. Student Behavior Policy	5
V. Child Abuse and Sexual Molestation Prevention	5
VI. Bathroom Procedures	6
VII. Field Trip Protocols	6
VIII. Handbook Acknowledgement	7

Information contained in this Volunteer Handbook may be updated throughout the year. Volunteers will be notified of any changes. This Handbook is not an all-inclusive list of school policies and procedures. We follow all state licensing regulations and guidelines.

I. Volunteer Opportunities

We sincerely appreciate your participation and involvement with our student activities. We look forward to you enjoying a very positive experience with our students and staff. Research has shown that parental participation at school directly impact's student achievement and more extensive involvement results in higher levels of student achievement. Building a strong and supportive parent relationship is essential and a hallmark of our schools education. Our school has always viewed the relationship between home and school as an essential contributing factor to the positive development and overall success of its students. We provide many opportunities and welcome parents, grandparents and Uncle/Aunts to become actively involved in any chosen area(s) of interest. These may include:

- Planning and organizing class and school-wide events
- Classroom presentations and demonstrations, including but not limited to occupations, art, science, reading, and multi-cultural week
- Participation in the school-site parent committee
- Planning, organizing, advertising, and managing our annual book fair
- Making costumes and props for winter/spring programs or the middle school play
- Serving as chaperones on field trips
- Volunteering for lunch and rainy day supervision
- Help advertise and support student council events and community outreach programs
- School beautification projects
- Promote and support campus leaders' coffees and parent gatherings
- Managing the uniform exchange
- School sponsored family events

II. Keys to Building & Maintaining a Successful Partnership

We appreciate your willingness to be an involved member of our school community and value our parent volunteers. The following guidelines will contribute to a successful partnership.

What we anticipate from our volunteers:

- Be familiar with and follow school protocols for student safety. Questions regarding school safety protocols should be directed to the leader at your child's campus.
- Treat all students, members of staff, and parents with respect.
- Be professional in appearance and conduct. This includes conducting all communications in a professional and respectful manner.
- Understand that information about students, staff, and school affairs is considered confidential and is not to be discussed with anyone, except with the staff member responsible for coordinating the event. If you have additional concerns that cannot be addressed by that staff member, please bring them to the attention of the campus leader.
- Provide as much notice as possible if you are going to be absent when you are scheduled to volunteer or participate in a school event.
- Support school procedures and policies.

What you can expect from us:

- **Information:** We will educate you about our school policies and procedures.
- **Guidance:** We will provide you with the training and information necessary to do your task, and we will answer your questions in an accurate and timely fashion.
- **Respect:** We will respectfully listen to your opinions, ideas, and suggestions because you are valued.
- **Appreciation:** We will thank you each day for your time and valued assistance.

While interacting with the students, keep in mind the following ways to show you care:

- Smile
- Thumbs up
- Specific verbal praise

III. Volunteer Procedures

The welfare and safety of our students are always of paramount importance. As such, we implement safety guidelines that are strictly enforced throughout the school day.

Background Checks

We will not, under any circumstance, knowingly become involved, with anyone who has been convicted of child abuse or sexual molestation. We require, as part of our pre-volunteer process, that a background check be conducted on all individuals before we will consider accepting them as a school volunteer and/or overnight field trip volunteer. Please note that all volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

All parents who volunteer at any campus on a recurring basis (at least once per week) or as a chaperone on a field trip are required to undergo background checks which may include the following, depending on applicable licensing requirements by state and age:

- Criminal Background Check
- Suspected Child Abuse Index
- Fingerprint Clearance

Signing In & Out

In our efforts to keep our campus safe, it is necessary for us to always be aware, of all individuals who are on site and of their whereabouts. We, therefore, require all parent volunteers, visitors, and maintenance workers to report to the office to sign in upon arrival, without exception. All visitors are also required to sign out in the school office at the end of their visit.

Identification

Upon checking in at the school office, all school volunteers and chaperones must provide state issued ID such as a driver's license. It is essential, for all staff members and students, to easily recognize individuals who are authorized to be on the school grounds. After signing-in, and checking ID's, all visitors are given a Visitor Sticker or Badge, which he/she will be required to wear in a visible location on their person while on the campus.

Volunteers must always be under the direct supervision of a teacher/authorized staff member. Volunteers may never, under any circumstances, be left in charge of a class.

IV. Student Behavior Policy

Children find security and direction where there is consistent guidance and routine. It is the role of the volunteer to uphold school guidelines and assist the children in conducting their behavior in a positive manner. Our goal is to teach students to exhibit self-control, while managing their emotions and anger. This can only be accomplished by consistent, firm, and loving methods. No corporal punishment, including but not limited to spanking, hitting, slapping, tapping, and pulling on any part of the body, will be used.

NEVER interact with a child when you are ANGRY

If you become angry, upset, or feel that you need to remove yourself from the situation for any other reason, advise the nearest staff member and then remove yourself from the situation. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES, should you touch a child when angry or upset.

Because it is best to avoid interacting with the students when you are highly emotional, you will be excused from the remainder of the activity or event. If you are at the school, return to the office to sign out. If you are on a field trip, discuss options for arranging your return home with the staff member in charge.

V. Child Abuse & Sexual Molestation Prevention

All staff members and volunteers share the responsibility for preventing and reporting suspected child abuse and sexual molestation. Child abuse and neglect are against the law in our state and so is the failure to report. Abuse is defined as mental, emotional, physical, or sexual injury to a child or failure to prevent such injury to a child. Every parent who regularly volunteers and/or goes on any overnight field trip will be provided with Child Abuse Prevention Training.

Molestation Prevention at School

We expect all volunteers to limit opportunities for molestation by responding quickly and appropriately to suspicious situations and taking immediate action or filing a report when warranted. Volunteers are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Volunteers and visitors are never to be left alone with a child; another teacher or adult must be present at all times.
- Report any misconduct or questionable behavior to the campus leader.
- At least two chaperones are to accompany students on trips away from school.
- Volunteers are prohibited from driving students on field trips or for any other reason, and are prohibited from driving all school vehicles.

VI. Bathroom Procedures

The following safety precautions are to be adhered to at all times.

Adults:

- No adult is permitted to use student-designated bathrooms, which are to be used only by students.
- Adults should never go alone to the bathroom with a student.

Elementary and Middle School Procedure:

- Students must buddy up with a partner to use the restroom.
- Bathroom passes are to be used in all cases, including lunch, extended day, and middle school afternoon leadership activities. Bathroom passes help in monitoring the number of students who are in the restroom at any one time to avoid horseplay.
- If a child needs a change of clothing, please send them directly to the office. The office will either provide a change of clothing or notify the parents, depending upon the circumstance.

Licensed Child Care Classroom Procedures:

- When using the outside restrooms, volunteers are to assist a fully qualified teacher in counting students upon leaving the classroom and upon returning to the classroom and using our Name to Face tracking. Volunteers may never be left alone with students per licensing requirements.
- In the event that a child needs a change of clothing, the volunteer should alert the teacher in the classroom, and the teacher will assist the student with changing clothes.
- If a child needs assistance in wiping, the volunteer must communicate to the staff member. Volunteers are not allowed to assist students.

VII. Field Trip Protocols

We encourage parent volunteers to chaperone on some field trips. Chaperones should follow all directions given by the teachers, as well as the staff at the field trip venue.

Safety protocols must be followed at all times, under the direction of the teacher. Elementary students should remain in sight of the group chaperone at all times unless they are using the restroom facilities and then they should go in pairs.

Chaperones will be given a list of the students they are responsible for. Additional information such as; a map of the venue, the trip schedule, time line for lunch and departure, and materials that may enhance the students' learning experience, may also be provided by the teachers.

Field Trip Ratios

The kindergarten ratio is one adult for every 4 students.

The elementary ratio is one adult for every 5 students.

The middle school ratio is one adult for every 7 students.

THANK YOU

Thank you for your participation and for reading, understanding, familiarizing yourself with, and agreeing to abide by the procedures outlined in this Volunteer Handbook. We know you are just as committed to the enrichment and safety of our students as we are.

Please detach and return the acknowledgement below. If you have questions about any of the procedures described above, please contact the leader at your child's campus.

Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgement And Waiver

1. I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures described in the Volunteer Handbook. I further agree to familiarize myself with and adhere to the policies within the Volunteer Handbook.
2. As a volunteer, I understand that I will not be compensated for any time spent volunteering, nor am I entitled to benefits, including employment insurance benefits upon the termination of my volunteer services.
3. I am aware that participation in volunteer services may require physical activity (e.g., standing, lifting, and carrying) and will require the exercise of reasonable care to avoid injury. I understand that if I am injured in the course of volunteer activities, I am not covered by the school's workers' compensation program. I authorize school personnel to seek emergency medical treatment on my behalf in case of injury, accident, or illness to me arising from volunteer services. I understand that I will be responsible for medical costs incurred as a result.
4. I understand and acknowledge that certain risks of injury, damage, loss, or other harm are inherent in volunteer services and assume responsibility for any such risks associated with my participation. These risks may include, but are not limited to, accidents, acts of nature, my negligent or intentional acts, or the negligent or the intentional acts of others. I understand that while the school has taken steps to reduce the chances of these risks, it has no control over most risks and, thus, cannot and does not guarantee the safety of me or my property during my volunteer service, and that I must take reasonable precautions to protect myself and my property. I acknowledge and expressly assume all risks and dangers associated with volunteer services, whether described above, known or unknown, and inherent or otherwise. I take full responsibility for any injury or loss, including death, which I may suffer, arising in whole or in part from my volunteer services.
5. As consideration for volunteering, I (for myself and my assignees, heirs, guardians, and legal representatives) voluntarily waive and release all claims against the school, its affiliates, officers, directors, employees, volunteers, agents, representatives, successors, and assigns (collectively "the Released Parties"), that are in any way related to or arising from my volunteer services and to the fullest extent permitted by law, including but not limited to, claims for bodily injury, personal injury, emotional distress, property damage, or wrongful death. I hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties with respect to any claims of injury, death, or other loss or damage to person or property suffered by any person related to or arising from my volunteer services.

Parent Signature _____

Parent Print Name _____

Grandparent/Aunt/Uncle Signature _____

Grandparent/Aunt/Uncle Print Name _____

Print Child's Name _____

Print Child's Grade _____

Date _____

This signed page will be added to your child's permanent file. Your signature means that you have received this Volunteer Handbook and understand the policies and procedures of our school.