



Holy Trinity School Volunteer Handbook

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www.htschool.net**

Welcome Volunteers

You have taken a step towards making a significant impact on the life of your child by enrolling him/her at Holy Trinity School. The excellent educational programs offered at Holy Trinity School, however, need to be supplemented beyond tuition with time, talent, and treasure offerings from each family. Volunteers provide enrichment opportunities that enhance the educational experience for students while supporting our teachers and staff. Volunteers also help us build a strong foundation for students by serving as role models.

As you enhance and support the academic programs, it is important to also help students be excited about life--to have a positive attitude that will get them through challenging times as they grow and learn. By modeling for students the kinds of expectations they need to succeed, you help them develop into productive citizens of the community. We urge you to become a strong advocate by sharing your positive experiences with others and encouraging them to become involved.

This handbook will help you make a smooth transition into your volunteer job, describe volunteer requirements, and provide helpful hints/tips to get off to a good start.

This is a very exciting time to be part of the educational experience at Holy Trinity School. Thank you for joining us.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Amanda Longden, Principal

Contents	Page
Who Can Volunteer?	4
Becoming a Volunteer	4
Suggestions for Starting Your Volunteer Experience	4
Helpful Hints to Get Off to a Good Start	5
When Working with an Individual Student:	5
When Working with Groups of Students	5
Learning Styles	6
Characteristics of Children Aged 5-8 Years	6
Characteristics of Children Aged 8-12 Years	7
Characteristics of Middle School Children	7
Sign In	8
Confidentiality	8
Dependability	8
Supervision	8
Student Contact	8
Mandatory Reporting	9
Student Discipline	9
School Policies	9
Dress and Behavior	9
Volunteer Policies	9
Emergencies	9

Thank
you

Who Can Volunteer?

A volunteer can be any non-paid person including parents, young adults, senior citizens and parish/community members who have a genuine interest in enhancing and enriching the lives of students and strengthening school/community relations.

A volunteer is many things:

- An extra pair of hands
- An extra measure of personal warmth
- A valuable special resource for classroom enrichment
- A bridge between the instructional program and the community

As a volunteer, you will be investing in the future by freely sharing your time and talents, as students, staff, and our school will benefit from your wisdom and presence.

Becoming a Volunteer

Contact the Holy Trinity School Office at (262) 626-2603. There is a volunteer survey on our website where you can fill out days and times you would be available. You can also mark what types of activities you would like to help with. We will then contact you to see if we can use your talents at the current time.

- **To help with your placement, consider the following questions:**

- What kind of volunteer job would you like to do?
- Would you like to work directly with children?
- What grade would you prefer to help?
- What days or hours do you prefer?
- How much time do you want to commit to a volunteer job?
- What experience do you have that would prepare you for your volunteer job?
- What are you looking for in your volunteer experience?

- **Volunteer Qualities**

- Genuine interest in helping students
- Commitment to your volunteer activity
- Cooperative attitude with faculty and staff
- Flexibility
- Consistent attendance
- Good health

- **Volunteer Requirements**

- All volunteers working with students MUST have the following:
 - Safe Environment Education (S.E.E.) training
 - Criminal background check
 - Read and sign the Code of Ethical Standards and Mandatory Reporting documents (see appendix A).
 - Sign a confidentiality statement from the office.

Suggestions for Starting Your Volunteer Experience

Following are suggestions that should prove helpful in developing a successful partnership with our students and teachers.

- **Meet with the teacher/staff member before you start.**

- Volunteers are placed with teachers or other staff members who have requested volunteer assistance. Some have specific roles and tasks for their volunteers, while others identify those tasks on an as needed basis.

- Ask questions of your teacher (or other staff member) if you are unclear about something.
- Keep communication open.
- **Get to know the school grounds.**
 - Know the location and phone number of the school office.
 - Know the location of important rooms such as the library, cafeteria, office, bathrooms, etc.
 - Find out where to park.
- **If you are volunteering in a classroom, spend some time observing the class.** Become familiar with classroom routines and identify location of supplies within the classroom.
- **Establish positive relationships with the students.** Be friendly and encouraging. Let the students know you are glad to be there!
- **If you are experiencing some problems with your placement, try to resolve them first with the teacher or staff member with whom you are working.** If you are uncomfortable with this, please contact the principal.
- **If you need to quit volunteering for some reason, please inform your teacher as well as the principal.**

Helpful Hints and Tips to Get Off to a Good Start

- **When Working with an Individual Student:**
 - If you working with an individual student, take some time to get to know him/her.
 - Find out what your student does outside of school.
 - What sports do they play, favorite TV shows, favorite games.
 - Does s/he have a pet?
 - Talk about the pet.
 - Tell the student a little bit about yourself and your interests.
 - Discuss what your schedule will be. Don't make any promises you can't keep...students remember everything!
 - Keep to your schedule as much as possible. Your student will be expecting you and will look forward to you coming to his/her school. If you need to make a change, let the student/teacher know in advance if possible.
 - Be a good listener. Let the student know that you care about their thoughts and ideas.
 - Accept the student for who she/he is...don't try to make them into something they are not. You are here to help, not change them.
 - Be encouraging. Recognize effort as well as products.
 - If you don't know an answer to something, admit it and work it out together...nobody knows everything!
 - Let the child know that you enjoy your time with him/her...and enjoy yourself!!
- **When Working with Groups of Students (small or large groups):**
 - Find out what the teacher wants you to work on...get specifics.
 - Indicate to the children how you would like to be addressed.
 - You may want to have the children wear nametags so that you can address them personally.
 - Discuss with the teacher ahead of time what classroom management techniques you should be using, in the event of the need for discipline...or if the teacher wants to handle this.
 - Encourage all the students, not just the ones with the correct answer.
 - Give each student time to answer...don't allow other students to jump in and answer for him/her.
 - Let the children know that you enjoy your time with them...and enjoy yourself!!

- **Learning Styles**

Not everyone learns in the same way. Your learning style is simply the way in which you learn best. Most people use all of their senses as they process information; one sense generally dominates. Here are some descriptions and suggestions that may be helpful in understanding the students with whom you work:

- **Auditory Learners**
 - They learn best through verbal demonstrations. They prefer talking about a situation and enjoy listening to themselves talk.
 - Read instructions aloud
 - Have them repeat instructions to you
 - If the student is having difficulty understanding, rephrase instructions
- **Visual Learners**
 - They learn best by observing. They prefer watching demonstrations and have intense concentration and ability to visualize information. Students who are visual learners like to write, doodle, and study their environment.
 - Keep a copy of the written instructions, charts, etc. in front of them
 - Use visual aids for reference (maps, charts, pictures, etc.)
 - Try having students write or draw problems on paper
 - Encourage the use of a homework notebook to remember assignments
- **Tactile (Kinesthetic) Learners**
 - They learn best by doing. They remember best by what they did, not what was seen or heard. They need frequent breaks when studying and are easily distracted when they are not able to move.
 - Have students use manipulatives, such as money or blocks with a math problem
 - Learning aids, such as a globe, for geography
 - Have students use their bodies to act out fiction or non-fiction stories.

- **Characteristics of Children Aged 5-8 Years**

- **Physical Characteristics:**
 - Full of energy, may find it difficult to sit still
 - Tire easily
 - Aware of physical limitations
 - Increasing fine motor skills (e.g., using scissors, writing).
 - Proud of their accomplishments
 - Prefers to participate rather than observe
- **Self-image**
 - Self-image based primarily on what they think others think of them.
 - Proud of their own accomplishments; want to be treated as individuals
 - Eager to please adults they admire
 - Becoming more independent of home and parents
 - Flourish from positive reinforcement about specific things
 - Sometimes adamant about their likes and dislikes
- **Relationship with Others:**
 - Try out new ways of getting along with others
 - Imitate adults in attitudes and actions
 - Sensitive about feelings—both their own and others
 - Aware of individual differences in physical appearance
 - Still seek acceptance and encouragement primarily from parents and teachers
 - Beginning to develop a sense of right and wrong in attitudes and actions toward others
- **Interest in Learning:**
 - Beginning to draw conclusions from practical experience

- Still have private worlds of fantasy and wonder
 - Eager to learn
 - May surprise adults at times with their insight
 - Eager to try new activities but frustrated by attempting things beyond their capabilities
- **Characteristics of Children Aged 8-12 Years**
 - **Physical Development:**
 - Growing steadily; physically active
 - Differ widely in physical maturity (girls likely to mature earlier than boys)
 - May be maturing sexually and having questions about their bodies
 - Becoming increasingly interested in improving personal appearance
 - **Self-Image:**
 - Becoming more independent of adults
 - Often frustrated when they do not measure up to their own expectations or those of others
 - Want to make their own decisions
 - Often mention what they would like to be when they grow up
 - Want tasks to perform; want to be useful
 - **Relationship with Others:**
 - May be aware of the opposite gender but unsure of relationship; teasing often denotes attraction to opposite sex
 - Have increased concern about right/wrong (example: lying, cheating)
 - Developing more responsibility for forming and keeping friendships
 - Interested and informed about people around the world
 - Values of peer group generally accepted over those of adults
 - **Interest in Learning:**
 - Developing longer attention span
 - Interested in current events
 - Increased skills in reading and expressing ideas in writing
 - Learning to think abstractly
 - Often try to be perfectionists which can result in frustration
- **Characteristics of Middle School Children**
 - **Physical Characteristics:**
 - Have spurts of boundless energy and periods of dreamy lethargy
 - Vary greatly in size, strength, and dexterity; girls tend to mature earlier than boys
 - Becoming increasingly interested in improving physical appearance
 - Are concerned about the normalcy of their development
 - Rapidly changing bodies and minds
 - Enjoy exploring and experiencing new things
 - Exhibit erratic behavior
 - **Self-image:**
 - Extraordinarily self-conscious about themselves and the attitudes of others towards them
 - Need to hear that what they do is valued by others whom they respect
 - Are concerned about presenting a positive image for their peer group; want to avoid embarrassing situations.
 - Can be easily discouraged if they do not achieve
 - Not comfortable taking risks in front of peers

- **Relationships with Others:**
 - Parents and families remain of primary importance in setting values and giving affection (although this might not always be obvious!)
 - Are concerned with the standards set by their peer group...want to conform.
 - May show an indifference towards adults
 - Like to discuss their experiences with adults who will listen, not judge.
 - Want to know and understand rules (explicit boundaries help define the areas in which they may legitimately seek freedom to explore).
 - Increasingly able to participate with adults in framing their own rules and limits
 - Are angered more easily and may take longer to recover
- **Interest in Learning:**
 - Enjoy participation in activities that shape their lives and allow them to use their new talents
 - Want to be included in the planning of events
 - Can have a short attention span; prefer choice of varied tasks that enlist diverse interests and abilities
 - Enjoy exploring and experiencing new things
 - Are able to see relationships among similar concepts, ideas, and experiences and make inferences; learning to think abstractly.
 - Interested in current events

Sign In

The school office has a visitor logbook for you to sign. Please remember to sign in and out and wear a visitor badge each time you volunteer, documenting your presence in the building, providing information for recognition, and ensuring your safety in an emergency situation.

Confidentiality

To guarantee the privacy of students and staff and potential activities of the school, volunteers and staff members are not to share goings on in classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, or meetings. Information from meetings will be shared when minutes are approved and published. Any information related to students is never to be shared outside of official meetings. Concerns raised regarding staff shall be reported to the administration and left with that authority to handle as a personnel situation. A confidentiality disclosure and more detailed policy is available for staff and volunteers to read and sign.

Dependability

Please be prompt and consistent. If you are late or unable to fulfill your commitment, please call the school office. We understand there will be times when you are ill or unable to volunteer for good reason. If you anticipate an absence, please notify the staff as far in advance as possible.

Supervision

Your immediate supervisor will be the staff member you are assisting. If you have any concerns or questions, feel free to bring them to his/her attention. Suggestions and opinions are always welcome.

Student Contact

As a volunteer, you will meet many delightful students. We know you will enjoy working with them. However, volunteers should not telephone students, visit them at their homes, or meet students off school grounds without permission from their parent(s) and notification of school staff.

Mandatory Reporting

If you suspect abuse of any kind, please report any incidents or suspicions to a staff person. All reports are confidential. The following circumstances should be reported: neglect, malnutrition, sexual abuse, physical injury, mental injury, and/or failure to provide sustenance, clothing, shelter, or medical attention. Persons reporting are guaranteed immunity from any civil or criminal liability.

In cases of institutional abuse (abuse by a school employee or volunteer) the school administration must be notified, either the principal or priest. The proper authorities will be contacted and administrative actions will be taken to protect the child.

Student Discipline

Volunteers are to report all discipline problems to the teacher, principal, or staff person in charge of the area. The responsibility of all discipline rests with the professional staff of the school.

School Policies

All staff and volunteers are expected to observe school policies. As part of policy, volunteers must fill out an enrollment form (A sample is found in the back of the Family Handbook Appendix D, but please obtain one from the school office to fill out) before they are contacted to help.

All school policy handbooks are in the principal's office. Feel free to ask a staff person to view the handbook if you have any questions regarding school policies.

Dress and Behavior

Take your lead from the staff and dress appropriately for the tasks you are doing. Your behavior and conversation should serve as good role models for students.

Holy Trinity School Volunteer Policies

The following are policies and procedures developed by the administration:

- Volunteers will work within guidelines established by the school administration and will work under the direction and supervision of teachers and school staff members.
- Volunteers may perform those assignments as directed by the administrator or designated staff member.
- Volunteers will not have access to student records and grades.
- Volunteers may not supervise a class during a teacher's absence due to illness or injury.
- Volunteers should not bring younger children when assisting in a classroom.
- Volunteers may bring younger children to field trips if prior approval is given by the principal.
- Alcohol and drug use are prohibited at all times prior to and while volunteering in the school or on field trips.

Emergencies

In case of emergency, or when you have concerns for student safety, please report your concern immediately to a school official.

