

St. Mary's Classroom Volunteer Procedures

We are happy to have you join us in your child's classroom. There is a great pleasure in sharing in your child's classroom experience where you get to see first hand how your child is growing and learning everyday. **Once arrangements have been made to volunteer, with either teacher or the mom parent**, the following are a few procedures and tips that will help things go smoothly.

1. **Check In.** We require that you always check in at the front office and receive a volunteer pass for any visit to campus during the school day.
2. **Communicate with the teacher.** Let the teacher know what types of things you'd like to help with and get sense of what he/she is comfortable with you doing. You can also inform him/her about any special skills or talents you have that might be helpful to the class. Siblings are not allowed in the classroom during your volunteer time, however you may discuss your particular situation with your child's teacher to obtain his/her approval to bring a sibling with you.
3. **Be flexible.** Be ready to help in any way you are needed. The smallest things can be a great help to a teacher in need of an extra set of hands and eyes.
4. **Don't take it personally if the teacher doesn't have time to chat.** Class time must be focused on the students. If you need to talk to the teacher, please make an appointment to talk outside of class time. We are always available for conferencing.
5. **Remember that you are not responsible for disciplining the kids.** It is OK to ask students to stop unsafe or unkind behavior, but the next step is to let a teacher know about the problem. If you are having trouble with a student or group you are supervising, let the teacher know immediately, and ask how he/she would like you to handle similar situations in the future. Don't be afraid to ask about the class rules *the kids know them better than we do).
6. **Be reliable and on time.** The teacher will quickly come to rely on you and may be caught short-handed if you do not show up. Teachers count on parents who have said they'll be there. If you absolutely can't make it, let the teacher know as far in advance as possible.
7. **Please be very careful to be discreet!** While volunteering, you may occasionally overhear private information about other students' academic progress, family life or behavior. If you learn any sensitive info, be respectful and don't share the information with anyone.

8. **If you work outside the home you can still help.** If you can't take time off from work or you have other daytime commitments, as your child's teacher or room parent if he/she needs any assistance behind the scenes. You might be able to help during non-school hours by calling other parents, making teaching materials or preparing supplies for class projects or science experiments.
9. **Prepare your child.** Talk with your child before your volunteer day and let him/her know that you'll be in the classroom. You might also remind him/her that he/she needs to listen to his/her teacher and follow directions, even when you are in the classroom. It is probably easiest to let the teacher handle disciplining your child during your volunteer time, although you can remind him/her to follow the rules just as you would remind another child. You'll be amazed how much you learn about your child's life at school, even while working with other students.
10. **Have fun!** Learn the names of the students you work with, and try to praise something they did well during your time together. Let them know that you noticed how they shared, cooperated as a group, or listened to directions. Your child's friends will remember your compliment and will be excited to see you next time.