



St. Mary School

S W O R M V I L L E

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2019-2020

Saint Mary School

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Dear SMS Volunteers,

May this letter serve as a sign of my gratitude for your willingness to share your time and talent with the faith community of Saint Mary School.

The faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote the value of service as you join in the teaching ministry of the Church. I encourage you to ask for help, direction, or advice as you participate in the numerous opportunities to volunteer.

The volunteer application forms are available in the office and need only be completed when you initially apply to become a classroom/school volunteer.

Together let us pray that God, who began this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

I thank you for your priceless gift of gracious service to Saint Mary School.

In gratitude,

Mary Jo Aiken
Principal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Our Volunteer Handbook
Mission Statement of Saint Mary School
Saint Mary School Philosophy

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Application Process
School Hours
School Office Hours
Sign-In Procedure
Dependability
Confidentiality
Technology
Health and Safety
Volunteer Dress
Responsibility
Inclement Weather Procedures
Emergency Procedures
Field Trips

LUNCH MONITOR DUTIES AND GUIDELINES

Appropriate Dress for Monitors
Service to the Children
Lunch Schedules
Lunch Protocol
Seating Arrangements
Freedom of Movement
Volume Control and Discipline
Clean Up
Illness/Injury
Playground Expectations
Inclement Weather

Right to Amend

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

VOLUNTEER PLEDGE

Our Volunteer Handbook

Research indicates that volunteerism in schools enhances student self-esteem, increases academic achievement and improves student behavior and attendance. We appreciate the priceless service that you provide us and we have created this Volunteer Handbook to assist you. We want to make sure that you are well informed on all aspects of volunteering at SMS.

Mission Statement of Saint Mary School

St. Mary School provides a Catholic Atmosphere of concerned and supportive involvement. Students use their God-given talents to reach their full potential academically, socially and spiritually. Then, they can joyfully and enthusiastically contribute to the growth of their community and continue to broaden their faith.

Philosophy

Saint Mary School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with the Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Buffalo.

1. To develop the total Christian personality by instilling in the students a respect for life and reverence for Christian living.
2. To develop within the school a strong religious education program based on the Catholic Theology, Scripture, Liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life.
3. To facilitate the intellectual, social, and physical development of each child through a variety of instructional methods such as small and large group instruction, departmental classes and other tools for basic knowledge and formation.

*Thank you for your service to the children of
Saint Mary School!*

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Application Process

All classroom/school volunteers are required to fill out a Volunteer Application. Volunteers can access the application through our office. The information you provide on these forms will be held in the **strictest confidence**. Please fill out **all** of the information requested, sign and date and return to the office. Please keep a copy the Diocesan Code of Conduct for your records.

Gratuitous Service

Volunteers to Saint Mary School choose to volunteer without an expectation of anything in return. Serving in the ministry of Catholic education is a privilege and not a right. The principal reserves the right to discontinue the services of any volunteer.

School Hours

Grades Pre-K through 8 are in class from 8:05 AM – 2:15 PM. The School doors are opened for students at 7:30 AM.

School Office Hours

The school office is open on all school days from **7:30 AM – 3:30 PM**.

Sign-In Procedure

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge or sticker that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to return the badge and sign out at the time of departure.

Dependability

The school relies on your support. We ask that you follow through on tasks by attending to scheduled times and please give notice of absence whenever possible.

Confidentiality

A volunteer operates in a position of trust. Personal information pertaining to students must be kept confidential. Children's actions, responses, progress or problems at school are not for sharing in the community. Conversations between parents, teachers and students in the school are confidential. Volunteers should not discuss these conversations outside of school. Refer any concerns to the Administration. All volunteers will be required to sign the Volunteer Pledge.

Technology

Any photographs or statements made on a volunteer's Social Networking Site may be cause for dismissal of services and separation of the volunteer's family from the school. This includes defamatory comments made about the school administration, other teachers, students, or the parish. **Volunteers should never take photographs of students during school sponsored activities. This includes, but is not limited to, field trips and class parties.**

Health and Safety

A First-Aid kit will be available on every field trip. Volunteer chaperones should at no time administer any medication to a student. This includes, but is not limited to over-the-counter medications.

Volunteer Dress

Saint Mary School has very detailed expectations for student dress. It is expected that volunteers reflect the image of Saint Mary School and wear modest clothing while working in the school or during school activities. This includes a moderate length for skirts and shorts, conservative blouses and tops, no workout apparel, and no jeans if a volunteer is volunteering in the front office.

Responsibility

The Administration of Saint Mary School is accountable for facilitating, monitoring, evaluating and providing continuity for the success of the volunteer program. The staff is committed to welcoming volunteers, informing them about their tasks, encouraging their initiatives and celebrating their efforts. Volunteers are expected to adhere to school rules and procedures, perform assigned tasks to the best of their ability, work cooperatively with all staff and seek clarification when necessary.

Inclement Weather

If it should be necessary to close the school because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made over television. The **SCHOOL MESSENGER® notification system will be initiated to contact all families.** When the Williamsville School District closes, Saint Mary School also closes.

Emergency Drills

State Law requires that eight fire drills and four lock-down drills be held during the school year. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Close windows and doors;
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;
4. Stand in a column of two's, facing away from the building;
5. Return to building when signal is given.

The procedure for lock-down or shelter in place drills is:

1. Rise in silence when the lock-down is called;
2. Check hallway and lock classroom door;
3. Walk briskly to the "X" area marked in each room; in the cafeteria, students are to move to the back kitchen area.
4. Remain silent until the door is unlocked by authorities.

Volunteers are expected to participate in all drills and adhere to the guidelines of silence.

Field Trips

1. Parents or other volunteers who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip.
2. All chaperones must be 25 years of age or older.
3. Chaperones should not smoke while on the field trip. This includes the use of electronic cigarette products.
4. Chaperones should dress modestly and appropriately on the field trip. Teachers will notify all chaperones of the appropriate dress code for the trip.
5. Chaperones should refrain from cell phone use while on the field trip.
6. Chaperones should not allow students to use their cell phones on the field trip.
7. Chaperones should be involved in active supervision while on the field trip and not engaged in social conversation with other chaperones.
8. Chaperones may be held responsible for accidents or injuries that happen due to their negligence.

LUNCH MONITOR DUTIES AND GUIDELINES

Appropriate Dress for Monitors

Saint Mary School has very detailed expectations for student dress. It is expected that volunteers reflect the image of Saint Mary School and wear modest clothing while working in the school or during school activities. This includes a moderate length for skirts and shorts, conservative blouses and tops, and no workout apparel.

Service to the Children

Lunch monitors are onsite in the lunchroom and at recess to assure the **safety and enjoyment** of our students. Vigilant attention to the children is essential, and we require **one monitor per class** to facilitate and oversee the recess portion of the lunch period. Unsafe or inappropriate activities/interactions must be redirected, and if necessary, a student may be required to “sit out” the remainder recess on a bench.

In the lunchroom, we hope to establish a spirit of community and enjoyment as the children are eating and commingling. Again, monitors should be **well-spaced to be accessible** to the groups of children and to assure safety. All monitors should be familiar with the administration of the Heimlich maneuver should it ever be necessary.

Lunch Schedules

Recess will **precede** lunch on a daily basis. The advantages include:

1. No food or drink on the playground
2. Teachers will monitor for appropriate outdoor dress and send unprepared students for the first 10 or 15 minutes to our Middle School Lunch detention room or possibly the Library.
3. We'd cut down on the visits to the office for tummy aches. (Running around after eating a meal is not a great idea....)
4. Students wouldn't rush to leave the lunchroom and may eat a more complete lunch
5. During inclement weather, we will call for a 10-15 minute reading/game period before lunch is served.
6. Clean up will not be rushed: both students and lunch monitors will be involved in cleaning at the end of the period. There will not be a rush to go outside.
7. Hallways will be cleaner (no food or drink outside the cafeteria)
8. More orderly transitions between lunch periods: Monitors would greet students at the recess door and gather them by grade level for re-entry to the school at lunch time.
9. This cuts down on late arrivals to the lunch line.
10. Recess first gives students more incentive to get out on time...
11. Lunch monitors are more likely to be punctual in bringing the children in to the lunchroom.

| Lunch Period | Grades | Time | Recess Time | Cafeteria Time |
|--------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | K-1-2 | 10:45 – 11:25 | 10:45 – 11:00 | 11:00 – 11:25 |
| 2 | 3-4-5 | 11:25 – 12:05 | 11:25 – 11:40 | 11:40 – 12:05 |
| 3 | 6-7-8 | 12:05 – 12:45 | 12:05 – 12:20 | 12:20 – 12:45 |

Lunch Protocol

- Recess will take place for the first 10 minutes of the lunch period.
- Students must be prepared for recess and leave their homerooms by the time the lunch bell rings. This may require an earlier release from a non-homeroom class.
- Lunch boxes will be dropped off in the hallway.
- Recess will not take place on rainy days or when the temperature or wind chill drop **below 20° F**
- Children in grades K-2 who do not have appropriate weather gear will remain in the cafeteria, supervised by the Kindergarten Aide.
- Indoor recess will be held in the cafeteria, supervised by lunch monitors; students will still drop lunch boxes off in the hallway, and will retrieve them at the beginning of the food service.
- Lunch will be served at 10:55, 11:35, and 12:15.
- Snack is only made available in the last 10 minutes of the lunch period.

TEACHER DUTIES:

- To review and confirm lunch orders to be sure that children's selections are accurate; submit the lunch list **by 8:05 a.m.**
- To prepare students for recess and escort them to the appropriate door for indoor (cafeteria) or outdoor recess
- To periodically drop in on the lunch room to help maintain decorum
- To be present at the cafeteria door to receive children when the bell rings at the end of the lunch period

MONITOR DUTIES:

- To greet the children at the recess door and accompany them to recess
- To have W&W: "whistles and walkies on channel 10"
- To oversee the safety and appropriate behavior of the children at recess and at lunch
- **To stop inappropriate behavior and apply consequences** such as abbreviated recess or redirection to the silent lunch table (see below)
- To separate children by class when entering the building, and accompany them to the lunchroom
- To assure bathroom protocol: no more than 2 girls and 2 boys using a pass to the bathroom at a time
- To retain children in the lunchroom until the bell rings
- **To advise the teacher of inappropriate behavior**

STUDENT DUTIES:

- To form an orderly lunch line when entering the building and the cafeteria
- To be respectful of monitors and lunch servers
- To remain seated while eating: whether lunch or a snack
- To refrain from shouting or using loud voices (restaurant behavior)

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Designate a silent lunch table in the lunch room for children who are misbehaving; they can be assigned to it during their lunch or on the next scheduled lunch day.
- Children in lunch detention should not be released to obtain snack in the cafeteria
- Carpets leading from the recess door to the cafeteria during winter

Seating Arrangements

Round tables are reserved for use of the 5th, and 8th grade students, if they desire to sit there. All other seats may be accessed by any students in grades 3-8. This means that for grades 3-8 there is **freedom of choice for seating** at the rectangular tables in the cafeteria. Grades K-2 will continue to sit in grade-level locations with their classmates.

Freedom of Movement in the Cafeteria

When a child in K-1-2 needs condiments, utensils, bathroom, etc., he/she should raise a hand and be given permission to access the condiment table, or use the bathroom, etc. At grades 3-8, the children should be free to leave their seats to access the condiment table, or to ask permission and to sign out for the bathroom.

Volume Control & Discipline

Volume control should not be accomplished by attempting to raise one's voice over the din. Use of flickering lights, ringing of a bell, or rhythmic clapping of hands typically enables us to gain the attention of the students in order to remind them of their manners.

If disciplinary action is required, please send the child to the silent table. After lunch, please report any improprieties to the classroom teacher or to the office for disciplinary follow-up.

Clean Up

Lunch Monitors should oversee the spraying of the tables with washing solution.

Illness/Injury

If a child becomes ill/injured during lunch or recess, assess the severity and determine whether the child should be escorted to the office by an adult monitor, or whether a second student can help to escort the ill/injured student to the office. Use walkie-talkies to contact the office in emergencies or whenever deemed necessary.

Playground Expectations

Lunch Monitors need to be attentive to students and student behavior while out on the playground during recess.

- 1) Appropriate outerwear determined by the classroom teacher
- 2) Inclusive behavior – please be sure that all children are playing
- 3) No food or drink on the playground
- 4) No pencils/pens/sharp objects on the playground
- 5) Call to order (bell)

Inclement Weather

When weather prohibits students from going outside for recess, **all** students will remain in the cafeteria during the entire lunch/recess period to read or enjoy games prior to lunch.

Right to Amend

Saint Mary School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to volunteers.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT VISION STATEMENT

Diocese of Buffalo

By virtue of our baptism, each of us is called by name to participate in the ministry of Christ who is priest, prophet, and king. In accord with that ministry, we are called as *priest* to share the presence of God with those around us, as *prophet* we speak the truth even in difficult times and call each other to fidelity to God's ways, and as *king* we exemplify the servant leader who generously and conscientiously looks after the welfare of those entrusted to us.

Because all human life is a precious gift from God, we must assure that all persons, especially the young and the vulnerable, are to be treated with dignity, respect, and offered an environment, which promotes safety. A safe environment is one that provides for the protection of the physical, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being of each person. More than simply offering protection from danger, a safe environment within our context also reflects the reality that the Church sees itself as a sanctuary, that is, a "sacred space" where one finds protection, security, support, guidance, and the presence of God. Thus the entire church community must live in a way that is consistent with that covenant by fostering environments that not only are safe, but also are healthy.

The Safe Environment Program of the Diocese of Buffalo strives to empower parishes, schools, families, and individuals to create and foster safe and healthy environments for children and youth in all aspects of their lives. We strive to achieve this through preventive measures, as well as educational strategies. Prevention of abuse and neglect of our children and youth is foundational to the Safe Environment Program and constitutes its initial focus. As the program develops, safe and healthy environment training also will include but not be limited to such strategies as education and training in effective parenting, conflict resolution, internet and computer safety, the prevention of harassment, bullying, or violence in any form, healthy and best practices for injury prevention, and attention to safety in the event of emergency or disaster.

Training, support, and resources will be directed to:

All church personnel, including lay and religious employees and volunteers, priests and deacons, by supporting them in ministering to their people through implementing and participating in comprehensive safe environment programs.

Children and youth themselves, by supporting them in their effort to navigate their way through the confusing and often harmful aspects of the world by developing the necessary knowledge, integrity and self-mastery they need to live a mature and active faith.

Parents, as the leaders of the "domestic church," are called to provide the primary safe and formative environment for their children, by supporting the vocation of parenthood and the marital bond, so as to improve the nurturing and formation of their children, who are a gift and who call their parents together in love.

All Persons, who out of generosity and care, seek to better their own local environments for the safety and health of children and youth. Everything we do as a faith community must reflect our commitment to respect life in all situations by providing a secure sacred space that safeguards and promotes human dignity, by fostering the development of each individual, and by creating and maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all who come to us seeking an experience of the holy presence of God.

Diocese of Buffalo Code of Conduct For Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Ministers, Administrators, Staff, and Volunteers

Code of Conduct

Adults who work with children or young adults through the Diocese of Buffalo or any of its parishes or schools have the legal, moral, and religious responsibility to perform their duties in a way that educates and assists – and does not harm -- the children and young adults with whom they work. In keeping with that obligation, the Diocese of Buffalo establishes the following Code of Conduct for all who minister to children and young adults in the parishes of the Diocese, teach children and young adults in the schools of the Diocese, coach children and young adults on sports teams connected with the Diocese or any of its parishes or schools, or in any other way work with children and young adults through the Diocese of Buffalo.

As one of the priests and religious, teachers and coaches, employees and /or volunteers, who work with children and young adults in or through the Diocese of Buffalo, I solemnly pledge that:

- 1) I will to the best of my ability, perform my work in a manner consistent with the mission of the Catholic Church and the Diocese of Buffalo;
- 2) I will always remember that I am not a peer of the children or young adults with whom I work and I will perform my duties accordingly;
- 3) I will maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries from the young people and vulnerable adults with whom I work;
- 4) I will avoid situations where I am alone with a child and/or young adult at Church activities;
- 5) I will refrain from any and all physical conduct, conversations and other communications with young people or vulnerable adults that have a sexual purpose or result;
- 6) I will not touch a young person or vulnerable adult in a sexual or other inappropriate manner;
- 7) I will report suspected/alleged abuse to the pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor and I will report to the appropriate office of the District Attorney any allegation of sexual abuse of a person who is a minor;
- 8) I will cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or young adults;
- 9) I will treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration;
- 10) I will use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or vulnerable adults;
- 11) I will neither accept expensive gifts from children and/or vulnerable adults nor give expensive gifts to them without prior written approval from the parents or guardians and from the pastor or administrator;
- 12) I will not smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or young adults;
- 13) I will not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol while working with children and/or young adults;
- 14) I will not use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time;
- 15) I will not pose any health risk to children and/or vulnerable adults (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations);
- 16) I will not strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or vulnerable adults;
- 17) I will not humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or young adults;
- 18) I will not use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or vulnerable adults;
- 19) I will not use profanity in the presence of children and/or vulnerable adults;
- 20) I will not acquire, possess or distribute pornographic images.

I understand that this code is to be applied fairly and equitably on a case by case basis.

I understand that whenever I am working with children and/or youth, as a volunteer or employee, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history.

I further understand that this criminal background check will be conducted prior to beginning my employment/assignment and thereafter at such times and frequencies as determined by the agency, department, and/or organization by which I am employed and/or to which I am assigned.

I understand that criminal background and character reference information may be requested from public and private sources.

I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct, or actions inconsistent with Diocesan policies for the protection of children and young adults, or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in removal from my position.

I also understand that this code of conduct does not abrogate or replace any other obligations that I have under any applicable law, guideline, policy or regulation.

I hereby authorize, without reservation, any law enforcement agency, institution, information service bureau, school, employer, or reference contacted by the Diocese of Buffalo or its agent to furnish the information described herein. I hereby release the employer and agents and all persons, agencies, and entities providing information or reports about me from any liability arising out of the requests for or release of any of the information or reports herein.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

VOLUNTEER PLEDGE

In offering my time and talent to the service of
the children of Saint Mary School:

- I will uphold the expectations to the role of volunteer by observing guidelines outlined in the Volunteer Handbook and by being committed to my duties.
- I promise to respect the confidentiality of the students, faculty and staff.
- I have read and understand the Saint Mary School mission statement and will follow the rules, policies and procedures outlined in the Volunteer Handbook to the best of my ability.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Please sign and date, and return to the Principal's Office.