

Monroe Montessori School

Volunteer Handbook

Welcome!

Volunteers have played, and will continue to play an important and valuable role at Monroe Montessori School. Students, teachers, staff, parents and the community benefit from the work of individuals like you who freely share their talents and resources. We also know that as a volunteer, you, too, will be rewarded.

This handbook is directed to volunteers who are parents, grandparents, retired persons, former teachers, high school students, persons from the business and faith communities, persons of every educational level - in short, to anyone wishing to devote a portion of her or his time to one of the most important and treasured resources in our community - young children. Because we want you to get the most out of your volunteer experience, we want to make sure you are an informed volunteer.

One hour a week, one day a week, one day on a special project - your efforts make a difference for students.

We hope you enjoy the time you spend with our students.

*Allan Washburn
Principal*

You are appreciated! *Teachers and staff know they are fortunate to work with so many committed volunteers. Volunteers in our school help in many different ways: classrooms, playgrounds, office, field trips and special projects. We shudder to think what a single day without volunteers in our schools would be like! On behalf of the teachers, staff, and students, - "Thank you, we can't do it without your help."*

. From the teachers and Staff

Commitment

Whether you are volunteering on a regular basis or for a one-time project or event, arrive a little early so there is time for communication and direction. Also, be sure to let the teacher know when your schedule changes or if you can't make it when you are expected.

You're part of a team

As a school volunteer, you are a role model for students. Behave toward students and school staff in a respectful manner that sets an example of professionalism and good citizenship. We ask that your presence in the classroom be unobtrusive and your tone of voice match the teacher's. In general you will notice adults do not use loud voices to speak with each other or a student who might be across the classroom.

Communicate

As a school volunteer, it is crucial that the lines of communication stay open and clear. Remember the saying "No question is a dumb question?" Believe it! If you are unsure about what's expected of you, what to do when you are finished with a task, or how to use certain classroom materials please ask someone for direction.

What to wear

Wearing appropriate, practical, and comfortable clothing when you volunteer is one more way you can be a role model. If you have a question, feel free to talk with a teacher, or another school volunteer.

Who is doing the teaching?

You are under the direct supervision of the teacher. Make sure you and the teacher are clear on your responsibilities and that you are both comfortable with your duties. The real value for a teacher in having a volunteer is that it frees the teacher to teach and it brings additional resources to the teaching of our curriculum. Expect that the teacher will have a few minutes to chat with you and explain job responsibilities but understand that a teacher's attention remains focused on the classroom. Please try not to interrupt a lesson being given by the teacher if possible.

Language

Just as we expect students to refrain from using inappropriate language while at school, we also expect the same from teachers, staff and volunteers. Please do not hold a private discussion in front of the children as if they were not present. Most adults realize how easily children pick up on what we say. But, keep in mind that

what is a harmless slang term to you may be offensive to another adult or student when it is repeated at home.

Our commitment to you

While there are certain expectations from volunteers to help things run smoothly, we realize you also have expectations from school staff. We are committed to working with you to make sure volunteering is rewarding for everyone.

Efficiency

We respect your time commitment and will make every effort to utilize your time efficiently. If you have any questions or suggestions to help us, please share them.

Interests and talents

We want to make the best match we can between volunteer opportunities and your interests and talents. Let school personnel or the volunteer coordinator know how you can best contribute. Your input may lead to the development of additional volunteer opportunities.

Discipline or behavior problems

As a school volunteer you may notice students disobeying school or classroom rules. Your responsibility is to call such matters to the attention of the teacher. Never take corrective measures into your own hands. Many adults find it helpful to read Jane Nelson's book, Positive Discipline for background information on how discipline is handled in the classroom.

Supervision

Volunteers perform under the direction/supervision of school personnel. If a volunteer assists a student or students outside the classroom, they should not be taken to any area except that specified by the teacher. In the event of a medical emergency, trained personnel will respond. Your role is to assist the teacher. Under no circumstances give any medication to a student on your own. (e.g. aspirin, lotion, etc.)

Confidentiality

What you hear or observe about students or staff while volunteering in a school is strictly

confidential. Even a seemingly harmless comment repeated to another parent or friend can be misunderstood and cause great harm to our school.

Child Care

Parents are not able to bring younger family members with them to school while they volunteer. Everyone's focus needs to be on the students who are enrolled in our school and involved in learning activities. There are ways to volunteer at home if childcare is an issue.

Child neglect and abuse reporting

School volunteers are considered mandatory reporters of suspected child neglect and abuse. If a student discloses that they are in a dangerous situation or if you have reason to suspect neglect/abuse, please report this immediately and privately to the classroom teacher or Allan Washburn.

Screening

All prospective volunteers who will be volunteering on a regular basis need to complete a Volunteer Registration Form. All prospective volunteers will be checked by the Washington State Patrol against Sex Offender information and Criminal activity.

Volunteer hours

School volunteers help at our school during regular school hours.

Transportation of students

Volunteers are not allowed to provide transportation for students unless they have prior approval and have completed the required forms.

