



# **Saint Raphael School**

## **Volunteer Handbook**

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### **Prayer**

Gracious God,  
Just as Jesus said: "Let the little children come unto me,"  
may we, too, follow in His footsteps by honoring and serving the learners in our care.  
We thank you for the blessing of volunteers whose time, energy,  
and talents enrich our school and support our educational efforts.  
We ask for your wisdom as we work with our students.  
Help us to understand their needs, share their challenges, and celebrate their progress.  
Guide our steps in this act of service as we strive to follow in the path of  
Jesus the teacher, working with children who are made in your divine image.  
Grant us wisdom and patience and help us to be nurturing, effective and empowering.  
Bless our efforts with success.  
Amen

## **WELCOME TO OUR VOLUNTEERS**

The administration, faculty, staff and students of Saint Raphael School welcome active and visible parent involvement in the life of the school. Voluntarism enriches the learning environment of our children and the lives of those donating their time.

We look forward to your continued interest, support and involvement in our school community. Enjoy your time with us and do not hesitate to share your insights, questions and concerns. We rely on your feedback for the continued improvement of our volunteer program. Thank you for your generosity. May God bless you and your family for all that you do for our school community.

## **SAINT RAPHAEL SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

As part of a vibrant parish community, Saint Raphael School provides a Catholic environment where each child is loved and valued as a child of God.

Our school offers the opportunity for our children to grow spiritually and intellectually.

We strive to develop in our children a capacity for tolerance and compassion toward others, as well as an awareness of the importance of service to those in need.

Our ultimate goal is that our children will go from here as lifelong learners who are reflective and selfless individuals of faith.

## **PHILOSOPHY / GOALS**

Research indicates that parent volunteerism in schools enhances student self-esteem, increases academic achievement and cognitive development, and improves student behavior and attendance.

At Saint Raphael School, teachers regard parents as valued partners in extending and enriching the educational program. Volunteer parents realize that they make a difference through contributions of time and talent. In addition to strengthening the school, they teach their children the obligation we have to share our time, treasure and talents and the joy we receive by supporting worthwhile causes. Parent/adult involvement allows staff to draw upon supplemental and often unique adult resources and expertise.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Administration is** committed to:

- Facilitating
- Monitoring
- Evaluating

- Providing continuity for the success of the volunteer program

**Staff** are committed to:

- Welcoming volunteers
- Informing them about their tasks
- Providing materials
- Encouraging their initiatives and celebrating their efforts

**Volunteers** are committed to:

- Respecting school rules and procedures
- Performing assigned tasks to the best of their ability
- Working cooperatively with all staff and seeking clarification when necessary

## **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES / PROGRAMS**

**The following are areas for volunteer opportunities**

- **Classroom Special Projects**
- **Library**
- **Family Liturgies**
  - Readers
  - Gift Bearers
- **Room Representatives**
  - Plan and coordinate class parties and other celebrations
  - Coordinate Partners programs, including one activity and the calendar drive
  - Aid the teacher in activities that support the curriculum
  - Plan seasonal arts and crafts projects/activities for the class
  - Assist teachers in planning Kindergarten graduation (first grade only)
- **Supervision**
  - Supervise in the cafeteria and in the school yard during lunch periods
  - Accompany group on field trips
- **School Advisory Board**
- **Partners in Education**

Saint Raphael school (SRS) has a thriving community of parents, teachers and students who work together to make our school a special place. PARTNERS In Education (PARTNERS), the parent-teacher organization at our school has been working to offer a combination of activities, social events and enrichment programs that enhance and promote our school community.
- **Parent Specialties**

We are in the process of compiling a list of skills, areas of expertise, business-related connections or materials, etc. that you could share or donate for the benefit of the children and the school, (e.g. graphic design, printing, classroom demonstration/ presentation of an aspect of your occupation, at-cost professional services, etc.)

## **FIELD TRIPS**

- Children not enrolled in the school should not accompany class field trips.
- Volunteers should check in at the school office ten minutes before designated departure time.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Accident or Injury:**

- All student accidents or injuries that occur under the supervision of volunteers must be reported to the school office. The volunteer should give details of how the accident/incident occurred and fill out an accident/incident report form.
- Do not leave an injured child to seek assistance. Send two children or another adult to the office to report that you need immediate assistance.
- NEVER administer any over the counter medications to a student.

### **Schools Emergency Plan:**

- Fire Drill – Please be aware of fire drill procedures for the area(s) in which you are working, e.g. classroom, Our Lady’s Hall, parish center, cafeteria.
- There is no talking during fire drills.
- When in a classroom, follow the teacher out of the building and stay with the class.
- When not in a classroom, exit the building and remain at a safe distance until notified to return.

## **VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES/INFORMATION**

### **Saint Raphael Campus**

Our campus consists of :

- The main school building, which houses the administrative offices, K-8 classrooms, science room, computer lab, reading center, cafeteria, Development Office
- Our Lady’s Hall, which is connected to the main building and is used for music and gym classes as well as for several after school programs.
- The parish center, which has upper and lower levels and is connected to the school by an underground passageway called “the tunnel”.
- The convent, where retired Franciscan Sisters live and where the Pre-K Program classrooms are located.

## Parking

Parking is limited on school property. Parking around the school requires some hunting and good fortune. Please read the parking signs carefully to avoid being ticketed. You may wish to leave valuables, such as a purse, locked in your vehicle as we have no place in the school to secure them.

## Entrance

- Please ring the bell at the front door entrance.
- Report to the main office and sign in.
- Pick up a name tag and wear it at all times while at school.
- Sign out and return your name tag when leaving.

## Work routine: (Explained by the school staff; on-the-job-training provided)

- Familiarize yourself with the rules and routines of the school and classroom. Please ask questions if unsure about a direction or routine.
- Respect the teaching/learning process by not using your volunteer time for an informal parent-teacher conference or conversation.
- Be aware that the teachers' room is often a workroom for teachers, and children are not allowed in this area.
- When volunteering in classrooms or on field trips, make other arrangements for siblings.
- When volunteering with a group of children that includes your son/daughter, please encourage him/her to function as part of the group. Avoid placing undue attention or pressure on your own child.
- Be open and honest in your communication to the staff and administration. If you feel a problem exists, help to identify the problem and communicate your concern directly to a staff member.
- As a volunteer, you are **not** expected to be responsible for the actions of the children or for administering discipline. If a student is disruptive, seek assistance from the teacher or administrator.
- Respect confidentiality
  - In the course of your volunteer work at school, you may learn confidential information (e.g. scholastic or health records, test scores and grades, discipline problems, character traits etc.) about students, parents or teachers. You are expected to keep this information confidential in any setting inside or outside the school, just as you would wish your own privacy rights to be respected.
  - There are times when student confidences cannot be kept. For example, if a student confides to a volunteer that s/he is always hungry because there is no food at home, that confidence must be reported. **The guideline to follow is:** *Any information which, if shared with parent and/or administrators may save someone from harm, must be shared.*
- Set a positive example. As the adult role model, be professional in words and actions.
- Do not wander the halls or interrupt your child's classroom. If you wish to speak with a teacher, please email him/her or leave a note with the secretary.

- Please dress in a manner appropriate for the setting in which you are working.

## **VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS**

### **Confidentiality**

A volunteer operates in a position of trust. Personal information pertaining to students, as well as conversations between parents, teachers and students, must be kept confidential.

### **Communication**

Always direct other parents' questions about school issues to the classroom teacher. It is the school's responsibility to inform parents of student progress. If problems or concerns arise, first discuss them with the appropriate staff member and, if necessary, with the principal or assistant principal.

### **Dependability**

The school relies on your support. Please follow through on tasks by attending to scheduled times, and notify the office (781-483-3373) if you are unable to fulfill a scheduled assignment.

### **Respect for Others**

Children learn from watching adults. When you model patience, understanding and respect toward the children and staff, students will learn to value these qualities and to exhibit them in their own behavior.

### **Role**

At all times a volunteer's role is to support the needs of the teachers, students, or program. Observations of staff must never be evaluative in nature, and tasks should be carried out according to the teacher's request.

**Note:** It is important that as a volunteer you are realistic about the amount of time that you can offer the school and what you are unable to handle. Being at Saint Raphael School should be a positive experience, which may not be possible if your commitments outweigh the amount of time or energy that you have available.

# VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

**Note: Please include a CORI form with this application if you have not already submitted one. All school volunteers must have also completed the *Protecting God's Children* course.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ cell or work: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Availability

I am available during the school day \_\_\_\_\_.

Times and days available:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Areas of interest (what I want to help with):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Areas I am not comfortable with:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I am not available during the day but I offer my expertise (specialty) in these areas: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I commit myself to service to this school, and I agree to be bound by the principles, policies and procedures contained in the volunteer handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date