

MOUNT SAINT MARY ACADEMY

Office of Development



Volunteer Handbook

Mount Saint Mary Academy Volunteer Application

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

**Social Security # _____ Phone # _____ Cell# _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

In case of an EMERGENCY, please call:

Phone: () _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime other than a traffic violation? Yes No

If yes, what charge? _____

Date convicted: _____ Where _____

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:
Mount Saint Mary Academy School Office**

Mount Saint Mary Academy
2291 Elm Street
Manchester, NH 03104

**Disclosure of social security numbers is voluntary, but disclosure of a birth date is required in order to volunteer. Mount Saint Mary Academy reserves the right to refuse volunteer assignments to individuals convicted of offenses. The social security number may be used to verify the information provided on the Volunteer Application.

Welcome!

Volunteers have played, and will continue to play an important and valuable role at Mount Saint Mary Academy. Students, teachers, staff, parents and the community benefit from the work of individuals like you who freely share their talents and resources with our school.

Your help allows us to offer more programs and enhance our curriculum. Your help is essential in enhancing the education of our students. We also know that as a volunteer, you, too, will be rewarded.

We ask that you take a few minutes to read through this handbook. It is directed to volunteers, who are parents, grandparents, college or high school students, retired persons, former teachers, persons from the business and faith community, persons for every educational level – in short, to anyone wishing to devote a portion of her or his time to one of the most important extensions of our faith. Because we want you to get the most out of your volunteer experience, we want to make sure you are an informed volunteer and are familiar with our policies and procedures. If you have any questions regarding these policies, procedures, or your own volunteer service, please feel free to call the Development Office. Whatever you can contribute – one hour a week, one day a week, one day a month, or just one day on a special project – your efforts make a difference for our students and community. Besides helping to build up the school, volunteers are teaching their youngsters the joys and obligations of stewardship. Our children learn from you that the donation of your precious time is a worthy cause.

Purpose of the Volunteer Handbook

The volunteer handbook aims to provide a clear description of volunteer responsibilities as well as outlining areas regarding the benefits, expectations, policies and procedures concerned with volunteering.

Goals of Volunteering

The goals of volunteering include:

- Assisting teachers in providing individualization and enrichment of instruction to their classes.
- Increasing the students' motivation for learning.
- Enriching students' experiences beyond what is normally available in schools through the unique resources that can be contributed by volunteers.
- Building an understanding of school procedures to stimulate widespread involvement in the total education process.
- Enhancing communication between teachers, staff, parents, children and the community.

Be A Volunteer !

Volunteering is the giving of time, energy, and concern. It is an honorable and cherished responsibility of our society. We thank all volunteers for their participation and dedication to the students of Mount Saint Mary Academy. Together we can make each child's years in our school a solid foundation upon which to build a lifetime of successful achievement.

“God does not choose the qualified.
He qualifies the chosen.”

--Mother Teresa

Ways That Parents Can Volunteer

There are many ways parents and/or caregivers are invited to volunteer, some of which include:

- School Fundraising & School Spirit Events
- Helping children in the classroom (e.g. reading groups)
- Field Trip Chaperones
- Scholastic Book Club coordinators
- Tutoring
- Assisting with Career Talks
- Box Tops for Education coordinator
- Serving Hot Lunch
- New Parent Mentors
- Room Parent
- Coaching

For classroom focused Volunteer Opportunities, speak directly with your child's teacher.

Volunteer Requirements

1. All volunteers must submit a School Volunteer Application before beginning any volunteering or chaperoning in the school.
A new application or review of past application is required each school year.
2. Complete the online Child Safe Environment training (see below) and **provide a copy of the certificate of completion to the school office by Jan. 1.**
3. Provide a copy of a valid driver's license and proof of auto insurance to be kept on file in the office (Driving Chaperones)
4. Read, sign and return the Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgement Form in the back of this handbook.

Child Abuse Training for Adults

The Diocese of Manchester has launched an online child safety program to help train Church employees and all volunteers. This is required for all who work with children.

Shield the Vulnerable Online Training

Online training is available 24 hours a day and is accessible from any computer. To access the training, go to: www.shieldthevulnerable.org and click on the yellow button that says 'First Time Signup Click Here.'

On the dropdown fields, select 'Catholic Dioceses,' then 'Manchester (NH).' Next, enter your registration information and the other required items. Once you accept the license and click 'Confirm Signup,' you will automatically be taken to the training area. Click the green button next to the course listing to begin. Please send in a copy of your completed course certificate to the school office.

Office Hours

The school office is open on all school days from 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM. In the summer months it is open in the morning from 8:00 AM to 12 noon from Tuesday through Thursday.

Sign In & Sign Out

All volunteers MUST SIGN IN AND OUT at the main office. As a safety measure, it allows the school to know who is or who has been in the building. Signing in also helps the school to find you if there is an emergency.



When signing in, please WEAR your volunteer badge or visitor's tag each time you visit.

This will help everyone, including students, to get to know you more quickly and allows the school to know that you have a reason to be there. Visiting and Volunteering must be pre-arranged with the classroom teacher or staff member.

Volunteer Role

A Volunteer provides support not only to the students, but also to the teachers, the nature of which is based on the discretion of the teacher for whom you are volunteering. As a parent, you have a unique perspective and ability to understand students. However, as a volunteer, you must act in THAT capacity first and foremost.

Volunteers must not lend money to students, and shall not indulge the children with gifts, food or presents.

Professionalism

Although the job is voluntary, the commitment is professional. Besides maintaining an attitude of mutual respect and confidence, you should become familiar with school and classroom policies and practices. Working with the teaching staff requires *flexibility* and a willingness to follow directions. Please be on time! Volunteers' timelines affect a teacher's ability to execute their daily plan. Remember, too, that teachers' desks are private ! Please do not go through their papers or files.

Dependability

Students, teachers and staff members rely on the services performed by volunteers. If you are unable to volunteer on your scheduled day, please make every effort to notify the teacher or staff member within 24 hours of your scheduled shift. Room Parents may be helpful in identifying substitutes.

Confidentiality

Volunteers must protect the teachers' and students' right to privacy.

Once a volunteer begins to work in a school setting, s/he becomes privy to knowledge about children's behavior patterns, academic ability, emotional maturity, relationships with others, etc. In some cases, information of this nature is imparted so that the volunteer can work more effectively with the child. In other cases, it is simply acquired in the course of frequent contact in the school.

In addition, volunteers are in a position to learn more about staff members than would normally be learned from their public image. One also forms personal opinions about the professional competency of individual teachers and staff.

Regardless of how a volunteer comes by this type of information and/or develops personal opinions, it is considered privileged and must be kept personal and private.

A volunteer is expected to:

1. Never share opinions about behavior and/or academic program of students.
2. Never share personal information about the student or student's family with other people.
3. Never share specific information with a parent about their child based on your classroom experience, whether positive or negative.
4. Never share knowledge and/or opinions about the professional competency of individual teachers and staff in the community or with anyone who has no legitimate need to know.

5. Never make comments harmful to the reputation of any pupil, professional or other volunteer.

If parents and friends ask about your work, tell them you enjoy working with the children and discuss the activities you do rather than specific information about the child, the teacher or the school.

If problems develop, the line of communication regarding a situation in the school is always, first with the staff member concerned and then, if necessary, with the principal.

Schedule Teacher Conference Time

Important conversations deserve preparation and dedicated time. If you need to speak with a teacher about your child, schedule a mutually agreeable time outside of your volunteer-time.

Respectful Behavior

Volunteers are expected to exhibit behavior that is respectful and assumes equality toward members of the same and opposite sex, and all ethnic/racial and religious groups. Volunteers shall not make any comments that can be construed as racist, sexist, or bigoted. Volunteers shall respect cultural differences and attempt to broaden their knowledge and understanding of human relations.

Student Discipline

As with all employees, volunteers may not touch a student in an aggressive, disciplinary, or sexual manner. Allow the teachers to discipline children. If there are incidents of misbehavior, it is the teacher's job to deal with them. As a volunteer, it is helpful to be specific about rules and expectations with students. Keep limits and boundaries in place. Consistently and calmly work with students taking a neutral stance, restating rules and expectations and offering reasonable choices.

Parking

Parking is limited on school property; however parking is available on the streets surrounding the school. Manchester Community Music School uses the Trenton Street parking lot. This lot may be used if spaces are available for parking during school functions outside of the regular school hours. The Carpenter Street parking lot is used by the Mount's staff. Parking in the school parking lots must be within the designated lines. Handicap parking spaces are restricted for those who have the proper permits. Please do not block neighborhood driveways. Drop off areas need to be free of parked cars at all times.

Refrain from Hallway Chatter

Chattering in the hallway is disruptive to teachers and students. If you need to talk with another parent, it is best to do this quietly near the office.

Preschoolers/Siblings

Please do not bring preschoolers or siblings with you when you volunteer. Exceptions can be made depending on what activity you are volunteering for. Check with your teacher or staff member that you are volunteering for.

Smoking

There is no smoking on school property.

Faculty Lounge / Meeting Rooms / Work Space

The faculty lounge is for staff use only. It is important that staff have a place to go where they can speak privately with each other. If you need a place to work or need to reserve space for a meeting, check with your teacher or the staff member you are volunteering for. They will assist in securing work space for you.

Unauthorized Use of School Name

No faculty member, student, or other person may utilize the school's name, or identifying logo, for any purpose without the written permission of the principal.

Child Abuse Law

We abide by the Child Abuse Law of the State of New Hampshire. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Any volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subject to abuse or maltreatment must report it to the teacher, or the principal. School personnel will proceed by contacting the appropriate authorities.

Photo Publications

On occasions, photos of students are taken and used for informational or educational purposes regarding the programs or curriculum at the Mount. Photos are occasionally published on the Mount website as well as in newspapers, school flyers, etc.

However, there are some parents who do not wish their child's picture to be published in any of these circumstances. Please check with your teacher or the Office before publishing any photos of students.

School Safety / Harassment / Bullying

Mount Saint Mary Academy strives to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual (seriously, in jest, or online) are taken very seriously. Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Engagement in online

blogs may result in serious actions if the content of the blog includes defamatory comments regarding any student, the school, the faculty or staff.

Field Trip Chaperones

Fieldtrips can be especially challenging. Teachers recommend that volunteers:

- Act as an authority figure
- Realize your 1st responsibility is to help, NOT socialize.
- Impart NO special favors.
- Abide and enforce the parameters set forth by the teacher.
- Siblings may not accompany parent chaperones on field trips.

Parents who are chaperoning are responsible for the safety of the students and as such need to give full attention to this duty. This necessitates that siblings may not participate in the field trip. All students leave for the field trip from school and return to school for dismissal unless otherwise stated.

Volunteers may drive to locations within the Manchester area. Those driving need to provide a copy of their driver license and insurance information to the office prior to the field trip. Child seats need to be provided by parents for each child taken in a volunteer car. All children need to be belted in the volunteer vehicle. Children may never ride in the front seat of a vehicle.

Emergency Procedures

If there is a fire, “Lock-In”, “Lock-Out” drill or emergency exercise of any kind, please follow your class and do as the teacher instructs the students.

Student Directories

After the first week of school, a class directory with name, address and telephone numbers will be sent home for family use. If a family does not wish their information to be made public, they will notify the office. We ask that you be sensitive to this.

Whenever you send email to a large group of people, *always* use the Bcc (Blind Carbon Copy) address field instead of the To: field.

When you use the To: field, everyone who gets the message sees the addresses of everyone else whom you send it to. Bcc addresses are not seen in the message. This is very important for those people who do not want their email addresses to be made public.

Volunteering After School Hours

IF YOU VOLUNTEER AFTER SCHOOL HOURS, THIS SECTION IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO READ AND UNDERSTAND.

Examples would be: Lego League, Basketball, Mercy Kids

Because volunteer leaders / coaches are on school site when most staff are not present, it is very important to familiarize yourself with school's emergency procedures and understand that YOU are the school's representative.

School Closings

If Mount Saint Mary Academy is closed; all After-School Programs are closed. If weather becomes inclement toward the end of the school day, the Principal or Volunteer in charge may decide to cancel based on local weather predictions and parents will be notified before the end of the school day.

If you must cancel due to reasons beyond obvious bad weather, and you have children in your care, you must ensure all families are contacted and asked to pick children up as soon as possible. Children will remain in the care of the Volunteer until their families arrive. If you must leave for an emergency, the children in your care should be put into the After Care program. This situation is to be used only in EXTREME EMERGENCIES. Please ensure that the school has your current phone number(s) at all times.

Transportation home after school hours

If you are working with a student in an after-school program, it may be tempting to offer the student a ride home. Your volunteer experience is limited to the school setting. Never go off site with a student alone and never give them a ride in your car unless there is another adult present in the car.

Field Trips outside of Class Time

Volunteer Leaders / Coaches may, from time to time, take children on field trips that will provide children with an educational and recreational experience. Prior to the scheduling of any trip, a "Trip Form" must be submitted to the Principal for approval at least five days prior to family notification about the planned trip.

Following consent by the Principal, the Volunteer Leader / Coach must send a notice to the families explaining the nature and details of the trip along with a Permission Form, at least one week prior to the trip. A signed Permission Form (and any required monies) must be submitted by each family prior to the trip. A field trip can only take place if sufficient chaperones are available to ensure that ratios are met.

Health and Safety: Reporting accidents and/or Injuries:

Every time there is an accident at an after school Program in which a child receives a serious injury, such as a serious cut, possible sprain or fracture, a bump on the head, or loosening of teeth, you must call the family immediately.

You should calmly tell them what has occurred, and ask them to come and pick up their child if necessary. No child should ever go home with an injury without the families having been informed. The Accident/Incident Report must be completed for all incidents; it is an important legal document and must be written carefully and completely.

After all details on the Accident/Incident report are recorded, the Volunteer Leader / Coach who writes the report needs to sign the form. The form should be given to the Principal for his/her signature, and a copy should be made for the Student's file.

Fire Drills

Make sure you go over Fire Drill Procedures with your After School Group.

In the event of a fire, the safety of our children is your major responsibility. Evacuation routes are posted in each of the classrooms as well as in the gym, music rooms, lunch room, computer room, and library.

Rules for fire drills:

2. Remove everyone quickly from the area and have them assemble in the emergency meeting place that you have agreed upon for a head count.
3. The After Care Coordinator or Maintenance Staff will be your contact person when no other staff is in the building. Connect with them and let them know the status of your group.

Student Discipline

It's difficult to run an effective practices/ meetings if you have students that are disruptive. If you have a team member that you're having trouble with, talk to his parents. Explain the problem and ask for their advice. Be careful not to label a player when talking to parents. Instead approach them for ideas on why they think the problems may be occurring. Send out an email or have a mid-season parent meeting explaining the issue and you're plan of action. Don't point fingers at any one player but put a plan in place and make sure you can follow through with it and that you have buy-in from the parents. If you have to cut the meeting or practice short, do so, and call parents for early pickup of team members. Be sure to communicate with school administrators if there is a persistent problem.

****The school principal has the right to decline the services of any volunteer at any time if he/she determines that this is in the best interest of students or the educational process.**

Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgement

I have read a copy of the Volunteer Handbook and have been given the opportunity to ask questions about it. I understand that the Handbook outlines Mount Saint Mary Academy's volunteer responsibilities. I agree to familiarize myself with the information in this Handbook, and will comply with the policies and procedures summarized.

I realize that I am a volunteer and not an employee of the school and I agree to adhere to the Volunteer Code of Ethics :

Volunteer Code of Ethics

Dependability If I am unable to volunteer on my scheduled day, I will make every effort to notify the teacher or staff member within 24 hours of my scheduled shift.

Professionalism Although the job is voluntary, the commitment is professional. Besides maintaining an attitude of mutual respect and confidence, I will become familiar with school and classroom policies and practices.

Confidentiality I am expected to maintain strict confidentiality with information to which I have access while performing my duties. Any question concerning a child's behavior, achievement, and/or needs should be immediately directed to the teacher.

Respectful Behavior I am expected to exhibit behavior that is respectful and assumes equality toward members of the same and opposite sex, and all ethnic/racial and religious groups.

Unauthorized Use of School Name I will not utilize the school's name for any purpose without the permission of the principal.

Please sign and date this receipt and return it to the school secretary.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____