

ALL VOLUNTEERS...

- Are discouraged from bringing their family (young children) to school with them. Total attention must be given to the children in our classroom. Opportunities do exist, however, that do not require staying in the class. Some clerical and other work can be performed outside the school. Also, the PTO has many opportunities for volunteering.
- Need to sign in and wear volunteer/visitor badges. This is a safety precaution. Any stranger not wearing a badge will be asked to report to the office and/or leave the building. Please cooperate and wear your badge, making sure to return it each day to the office.
- No physical restraint training is provided for volunteers. If you observe a student in danger it is permissible to intervene to protect the child(ren) at risk.

This Handbook was adapted from the Abbot, Nabnasset and Robinson Schools' Volunteer Handbooks. We welcome and encourage any suggestions for its improvement. Please see the Principal or Assistant Principal with any suggestions.



“Real partnership comes when parent and teacher recognize that each has a role, vital but different, and that together they can accomplish more than just twice as much. They give the child the security of feeling that these important people in his life are pulling together.”

Alice V. Keliher

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The Norman E. Day Elementary School

Volunteer Handbook

Volunteers are valued at the Norman E. Day School and integral to the accomplishment of our shared mission. Our school aims to provide a welcoming and inclusive community for all members, which can only be achieved through our mutual effort.



**“A Gateway To An
Expanding World Of
Growth And Knowledge”**

1. What is a Volunteer?

- A non-paid employee of the Westford Public Schools subject to all rules and regulations.
- A person who performs clerical chores, assists teachers or specialists in their daily tasks, and reinforces instruction.
- The volunteer does NOT have responsibility for decisions such as how much, when or what a child will learn. These decisions must be made by a certified teacher.
- A volunteer performs the specific duties defined by the classroom teacher or specialist. Teachers are responsible for the instructional program in their rooms and decide within defined guidelines how a volunteer aide functions. Teachers have varied styles for providing instruction for children and will therefore have varied needs for volunteers.
- A volunteer is expected to maintain the same professional manner, dress, and appearance we have for our teachers, staff and administrators.
- A person who is responsible, dependable and discreet. The volunteer must remember that these characteristics are of the utmost importance. The success of a school depends on this trust.
- Sample list of potential volunteer duties:
 - Help with ongoing school-wide activities (Scientists and Inventors Fayre, Field Day, Grade Five Completion Ceremony, Class Picture Day, etc.)
 - Help with special grade-specific programs (Fifth Grade Environmental Program, etc.)
 - Chaperone field trips

- Act as a room parent to organize holiday-related parties
- Assist in Library or Computer Lab on a regular or as needed basis
- Assist in class as needed for special projects such as research, Living Lab exploration, etc.
- Assist in class regularly in capacities defined by individual teachers' needs

This list is intended to serve as an example. This is not a complete list by any means!

2. Qualities of a Good Volunteer

- A good volunteer listens to, supports, reassures, and respects all children, without discrimination.
- Each child is a person and has his or her own pace and pattern of growth and development. The volunteer makes no judgment of the children
- The needs of individual children must often be met in the context of a group. A skillful volunteer meets those needs without causing discomfort or embarrassment.
- The volunteer recognizes he or she has accepted a challenge as well as a responsibility and commitment. The volunteer is a model; children identify with the adults in their environment.
- A good volunteer is punctual and reliable - qualities critical to a successful volunteer program. The children wait for the volunteer and the teacher depends on that person. A potential volunteer needs to consider priorities BEFORE volunteering; once assigned a role, a responsible volunteer does everything he or she can to keep that commitment.
- When a volunteer does need to be absent, he or she communicates with the teacher or school Office as soon as possible. If necessary and possible, the volunteer tries to get a replacement.
- A volunteer must never question or challenge the teacher's authority in the presence of children. If there is a concern, the volunteer should see the teacher privately.

3. Confidentiality

- All people who work in a school – teachers, custodians, secretaries, nurses AND volunteers – face the issue of confidentiality. You will see and hear many things and must exercise discretion in reacting to situations.
- Respect children's, families' and teachers' right to privacy. Remember if you do overhear a conversation or see an interaction that was private, please keep it private.
- If you feel you have seen or heard something that you feel is important to share, talk only with the teacher, Principal or Assistant Principal.
- Avoid the urge to gossip.
- If you have a specific concern about a student, please make an appointment to talk to the teacher, Principal or Assistant Principal.

4. Administrative details

CORI Check – Massachusetts state law requires all school districts to conduct a criminal history screening of any adult working in a school building. Potential volunteers must complete a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) form, available at each school, BEFORE they begin working in the school.

Bathrooms – all adults are requested to use the adult bathrooms located near the main entrance or by the Faculty Room.

Fire and Safety Drills – Staff, teachers and children follow specific procedures during these drills. Volunteers should take their cue from whomever they are with. Everyone must assume that an actual fire is taking place and exit the building immediately.

Materials for volunteer activities will be provided as needed.