CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS HANDBOOK
JOIN THE RANKS

WELCOME TO OUR CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER PROGRAM!!

We hope you will gain

- Enjoyment and satisfaction from your involvement with the children and teachers and

- A greater understanding of teaching and school processes
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
EVERYBODY CAN BE A VOLUNTEER!

SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- Volunteer to help with particular activities or interests
- Work with children in the classroom to support class programs
- Assist with data entry and/or cover and label books in the library
- Help coach or transport sporting teams
- Make games and charts at school or home
- Collect materials for art activities
- Print up children’s work at home
- Accompany children on excursions
- Support the P&C Association

PERHAPS YOU CAN THINK OF YOUR OWN WAY OF HELPING

BE PREPARED TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOUR COMMITMENT
CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS - WHY?

Volunteers are invited into classrooms

- To help teachers with many non-teaching tasks
- To provide more variety in learning activities
- To provide individual attention to pupils
- To enable teachers to get to know children better
- To give parents a greater understanding of what happens in classrooms

DEFINITION

A volunteer is someone who gives their time, talent, energy and expertise free of charge in a productive way to enhance and enrich our school community. They are relatives of students or people who have responded to a request.

PHILOSOPHY

- We believe that a volunteer program is invaluable to our school BUT needs to be supported by sound policies, procedures and planning in order to meet our objectives.

- Interaction between volunteers and our school enhances our role within the local community.

- We believe that volunteers enhance our ability to deliver an effective education to our students.
AS A VOLUNTEER YOU CAN EXPECT:

- Respect and thanks from Nashville State School for your valuable time and assistance.

- Enjoyment and satisfaction from working with children and the activity you are supervising.

- Something for your self, such as new skills, friendships or personal fulfilment.

- Respect from class members and support and encouragement from the teacher.

- Time to be given instructions about the activity and report to the teacher afterwards.

- Worthwhile duties that are within your capabilities and areas of interest. (You can say “no”.)

- Appreciation for your help and support.
TEACHERS WILL EXPECT:

- Reliability and punctuality – give the teacher as much notice as possible if you are unable to come to the session.
- Respect for their teaching ability and knowledge of the curriculum and the children in their care.
- **Confidentiality** regarding children’s individual abilities. It is important **not** to discuss this with others outside the classroom.
- Understanding – teachers are busy people and have good and bad days – sometimes frustrations may show.
- An awareness of class rules and consequences of non-compliance.

THE CHILDREN WILL EXPECT:

A caring person who will

- accept them as they are
- listen to them, but not pry or take sides
- talk to them in a friendly open manner
- know how to manage minor behaviour problems firmly and fairly and support the classroom behaviour procedures
- not discuss confidences with others
- find value in their attempts
- encourage them to learn by working with others and sharing ideas
BREAK TIMES

♦ It is school policy that classrooms are closed to children and visitors, unless under the specific direction of a classroom teacher during recess periods.

VOLUNTEER’S RESPONSIBILITIES

- To sign on and off in the Volunteer’s Book in the office.
- Wear a “Parent Volunteer Badge” when in the school.
- Be supportive and encouraging to other volunteers.
- Behave in a competent and trustworthy manner.
- Be loyal to Nashville State School by upholding its standards and performing your duties according to its policies and philosophies.
- Treat all students, their families and staff with dignity and respect.
- Respect the privacy, dignity and wishes of our students.
- Treat any information you acquire about the students as CONFIDENTIAL. Note: Disclosures by children regarding abuse (physical, emotional, sexual) should be reported to the teacher.
• Please see classroom teachers to organise the most appropriate time to help in the classroom.

• Please do not impose personal views on others. It is important that “personal issues” remain outside the classroom and school.

• Enter and leave a classroom quietly so that the children are not disrupted.

• Stop what they are doing and model attentive behaviour when the teacher addresses the whole class.

• Volunteers other than a parent, working with children, must hold a current ‘blue card’.

• Remember that children need to develop independence. There will be times when it is advisable to work in other classrooms.

TRAINING

• Most of your training will be “on the job” as you get used to the classroom situation you will relax and enjoy the experience.

• Sometimes teachers may ask you to arrive 10 minutes early so they can explain the activities to you.

• The support teacher or program co-ordinator may run short sessions or workshops to help you gain a greater understanding of what goes on in school and provide any special instruction which may be required.

• The school administration may run workshops or parent-nights.
SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS WHEN WORKING WITH SMALL GROUPS

- Try to get to know the names of the children in your group.
- Make sure they know your name.
- Be friendly and open (but not too familiar).
- Keep your sense of humour and smile.
- Be a good listener – what the children are saying is important to them.
- Be firm and fair when trying to keep children on task.
- Try to build the children’s self-confidence – praise them honestly and frequently. Reward effort – accentuate the positive, minimize the negative, encourage children to “have a go”. Help them understand that mistakes are a part of learning.
- Understand that children learn if different ways and at different rates. They all need to feel that their effort or contribution is worthwhile.
- Be patient – with yourself and the children – improved motivation, behaviour, attitude and self concepts are as important as academic achievement.
PARENT VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO:

- Discipline students
- Mark work
- Instruct classes
- Take responsibility for difficult students

SIGN-ON

On arrival each day, parent volunteers must sign the Parent Volunteer Sign On Book located in the office. If you are unsure of where, please ask office staff.

“Volunteer” badges are obtained from the office for daily use and must be kept on during their visit and returned to the office before you go home.
A FINAL WORD

FINALLY, WE HOPE:

- You enjoy your work as a volunteer in our school and receive the appreciation you deserve.
- You will learn more about how schools operate these days.
- You might feel more confident about being involved in other areas of school life.
- You will approach your teacher, the school administration or the co-ordinator of the volunteer program if you have any questions about your child or school policy and procedures.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME