



# ***Volunteer Handbook***

***St. John the Baptist School***



# Table of Contents

Welcome .....	1
Mission/Philosophy .....	1
Volunteer Activities/Programs .....	2
Volunteer Rights .....	2
Volunteer Responsibilities.....	2
Volunteer Supervision .....	2
Profile of a Good Volunteer.....	3
Words of Encouragement .....	3
Words that encourage and stimulate cooperation.....	4
Discipline Code.....	5
Field Trips.....	5
Health and Safety .....	5
Emergency Procedures .....	5
Child-Abuse Laws .....	5
Loyalty to Church and School .....	6
Confidentiality .....	6
Code of Ethics.....	6

# WELCOME

As a volunteer you are a very valuable member of our school family. Through your generous gift of “time, talent and treasure” you have allowed St John the Baptist to provide many services to the students which otherwise would not be possible. This brief handbook is intended to assist you in better understanding our school, your rights, and your responsibilities.

## **Mission/Philosophy**

### Mission Statement

St. John the Baptist School provides an education that is centered in Jesus Christ and on the Gospel values through the intercession of St. John the Baptist. Our school is dedicated to knowing our faith, teaching our faith, and living our faith, while creating an environment that maximizes learning in all academic areas. Our students are provided with the necessary education to become faith-filled, independent, critical thinkers who are prepared to be active, responsible members of the Catholic Church and society.  
(revised 2011)

### Philosophy

We accept Jesus Christ . . .

We challenge ourselves and others to live the Gospel.

We see the person of Christ in each and every individual . . .

We promote respect, acceptance of all, and the total development of human potential.

We challenge all to be ready to live like Christ . . .

We foster spiritual, moral, psychological, mental and physical growth, strength and security.

# Volunteer Activities/Programs

Volunteers are involved in nearly every aspect of the programs at St. John the Baptist School. Some areas volunteers are regularly used are:

Classroom	Health Program	Classroom Speaker
Coaching	Library	
Field Trips	Office	

If you have a particular talent and wish to share it with our school, please call us so we can discuss the possibilities.

**The Diocese of Green Bay requires all volunteers assisting in school to attend a "Protecting God's Children" (VIRTUS) in-service and submit to a background check.**

Many opportunities will be available to volunteer your services in our school program throughout the year. We will appreciate your assistance in any of the services. Remember, the more you get involved, the more interest and appreciation you will have both for the school and parish programs.

## Volunteer Rights

1. You are a valued member of our school family.
2. You have the right to be treated with the respect due any adult staff member, whether paid or not.
3. You have the right to worship with us. Particular times of worship are classroom prayer and weekly student liturgies.
4. You have the right to the tools and information necessary to perform the tasks to which you are assigned.
5. You have the right to ask questions.

## Volunteer Responsibilities

1. The volunteer must sign in and out at the office.
2. The volunteer is expected to arrive on time and perform the assigned task.
3. The volunteer respects and enforces school rules.
4. The volunteer remembers that the school exists for the students and treats all students the way Jesus would treat them if He were the volunteer.
5. The volunteer asks for instructions and assistance when needed.
6. The volunteer assisting in school on a regular basis will attend a "Protecting God's Children" in-service as required by the Diocese of Green Bay and submit to a background check.

# Volunteer Supervision

The classroom teacher has responsibility for supervision of volunteers working in the classroom. The principal is responsible for the total school operation; thus, the principal has final responsibility for all who serve in any capacity in the school.

## Profile of a Good Volunteer

It takes special skills to be the kind of volunteer that school children need. The following is a list of some of those skills.

- Having good listening skills
- Respecting children and their ideas
- Communicating realistic, appropriate and positive expectations
- Providing opportunities for children to use their talents and skills
- Avoiding being controlling and directing
- Making it fun and exciting
- Recognizing children's efforts, achievements and special qualities
- Providing support, guidance and supervision as needed
- Being willing to be flexible
- Being a good role model
- Learning from the children

**Above all, remember that children are children.**

Adapted from: UW – Extension 4-H Youth Protection Program.

## Words of Encouragement

The focus of encouragement should be on children pleasing themselves, rather than on pleasing adults.

- “You’ve done a great job!” Be specific about the task.
- “You have improved in . . .” Children will usually continue to try if they can see some improvement.
- “We like (enjoy) you, but we don’t like it when you . . .” It is important to distinguish between the child and the behavior. A child should never think he/she is not liked.
- “You can help me by . . .” Children want to feel helpful and useful.
- “Give it a try.” Children are afraid to try something new for fear of making a mistake.
- “What can you do differently next time?” Mistakes can teach a child a lot if he/she does not feel embarrassed for having made the mistake.
- “It sounds to me like you think you can’t do it, but I think you can.” Sometimes a child feels that something is too difficult for him/her, and therefore won’t even try it. They need to be reinforced for trying.
- “I’m sure you can do it. Don’t give up.” When a child is trying, but not successful, they need reinforcement.
- “Let’s think this through together.” Adults need to express confidence that children are able to resolve their own conflicts.
- “I can understand how you feel.” Children need empathy not sympathy.

# Discipline Code

**Volunteers are expected to enforce all school rules as is any paid employee. Please see the family handbook and/or middle school handbook to become familiar with expectations. Volunteers are also expected to support the authority of teachers and the administrator. If there are questions regarding discipline, please feel comfortable asking any faculty or staff member.**

## Field Trips

Your willingness to volunteer for field trips allows the school to provide these educational experiences for the students. The teacher in charge will provide specific instructions for each trip. The following general statements apply for all field trips.

1. All school rules are in effect, unless the principal has explicitly stated otherwise.
2. Chaperones are to stay with their assigned group.
3. Supervision is both mental and physical. Be sure that attention is always on the students.
4. If your own child is on the field trip, he or she is not to be treated any differently than any other child.
5. We hope you enjoy the outing, but we appreciate you remembering your first responsibility is the safety of the students.

## Health and Safety

The safety of students is of the highest priority. Being mentally, as well as physically, present to them increases this possibility. When students get sick or injured, first aid is provided by the office staff. The school does not have a nurse on staff. If there is **any** potential danger in moving the students, send for help.

**All medications, prescriptions or over-the-counter, are dispensed from the office. No other employee or volunteer may give medications.**

To reduce your exposure to blood borne pathogens please treat everyone's body fluids as being potentially infectious to you. Don't touch or handle. Wear rubber gloves.

## Emergency Procedures

Posted in each room is a copy of the fire drill plan and the tornado drill plan. All people in the building are bound by these procedures even if it is only a drill underway, rather than an actual fire or tornado.

## Child-Abuse Laws

If a volunteer has any suspicions of child abuse, they should inform the principal immediately. All child abuse is required to be reported to the proper authorities.

# **Loyalty to Church and School**

When you volunteer at school, you are not just giving your time. You are representing the church and school both to the students and to the larger community. Thus you should support the directions given by staff and administration. If you disagree with the school policy, the principal will be happy to hear your concerns and discuss them with you. Since you are serving a Catholic school you are expected to support the teachings of the Catholic church and to live in a manner consistent with them.

## **Confidentiality**

As volunteers you serve in a quasi-professional function in our school. In the course of your volunteer work at school, you may learn about or observe confidential information about students or teachers. You are expected to keep this information confidential in any setting inside or outside the school. All student's personal matters and records are confidential and are not to be shared with others. Please respect the rights of that child, the child's family, and yourself as a volunteer by not divulging any information that might be hurtful to others.

There are times when a student's confidences cannot be kept, but must be shared with the student's teacher or the administrator. The guideline is: any information which, if shared with teacher and/or administrator may save someone from harm, must be shared.

## **Code of Ethics**

There are certain rules all of us must follow when working in the school.

1. Avoid discussing individual children outside the school.
2. Try not to compare children within the school.
3. Never publicly discuss parents, children, teachers or other volunteers.
4. You may see confidential records of children in the classroom, staff room or office. Under no circumstances should you repeat any of this information.
5. Agree to follow the Diocesan Code of Pastoral Conduct for Volunteers dated July 13, 2005.



Diocese of  
Green Bay

## DIOCESAN CODE OF PASTORAL CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Diocese of Green Bay expects those who volunteer service to conduct themselves properly and appropriately in their relationships with the people they serve, especially with minors and individuals at risk.

As a volunteer, I promise to strictly follow and adhere to the rules and guidelines in this Volunteer's Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children, youth and individuals at risk of our parish/school.

**As a volunteer, I will:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children/youth or individuals at risk. i.e., in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, dressing facility or other closed room or isolated area.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when volunteering.
- Refuse to give or receive any gifts without approval from appropriate administrators.
- Report suspected abuse to the Department of Health and Family Services, local civil authorities and the program administrator. Failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is a misdemeanor. The Diocesan Assistance Coordinator\* should also be contacted.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse.
- Be responsible for maintaining clear professional boundaries if an inappropriate personal or physical attraction develops between myself and children/youth or individuals at risk.
- Use a team approach to managing emergency situations.

**As a volunteer, I will not:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while volunteering.
- Pose any health risk (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations).
- Touch anyone in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates others.
- Use profanity.
- Take photos of minors while they are undressing or are unclothed.

### **Confidentiality**

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Trust is one of the cornerstones in all pastoral relations. Volunteers should understand they have an ethical duty not to disclose confidential information they may come upon during the course of being a volunteer.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

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Avoid all situations that might present a conflict of interest. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can call integrity and professional conduct into question.

### **Ethical Misconduct**

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Volunteers have a responsibility for maintaining the highest ethical standards. When an uncertainty exists about a situation or that violates religious, moral, or ethical principles, discuss the issue with your supervisor.

### **Acknowledgement**

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I understand that as a volunteer working with children, youth or individuals at risk, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history and completion of the VIRTUS Protecting God's Children Adult Awareness Session. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer.

**The Diocese of Green Bay will not tolerate the sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a minor or individual at risk by a volunteer who is in the service of the Diocese.**

**\* To report an incident of sexual abuse please contact:**  
Diocesan Assistance Coordinator  
officesafeenv@gbdioc.org  
877-270-8174 or 920-272-8174

We also encourage you to report the incident to local civil authorities.

For a complete set of the diocesan Policies on Appropriate Conduct, contact the Safe Environment Department, PO Box 23825, Green Bay, WI 54305-3825 or [www.gbdioc.org](http://www.gbdioc.org)



## AGREEMENT FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS

As a condition of my volunteer service in this local church, I agree to strictly follow and adhere to the *Code of Pastoral Conduct for Volunteers* of the Diocese of Green Bay. Moreover, I understand that such is necessary for me to maintain volunteer service in this local Church.

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

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