



Volunteer Guide
École Bonaventure

Volunteer Handbook – Ecole Bonaventure

WELCOME!

Welcome to our school. On behalf of all the students and their teachers, thank you for volunteering to help us provide the best possible education for our students. Your presence in the classroom will provide the teacher with valuable help in giving individual and small group assistance. In whatever way you choose to help, whether in the classroom, library, during special events or in other school programs, you can be sure your contribution is needed and valued in your role as a school volunteer and this brochure will provide you with the guidance for making your volunteer experience successful. We hope you will feel rewarded by the appreciation of the students and staff. Thank you very much for your caring and support.

Volunteer Requirements: Child Abuse Registry Check, Criminal Records Check, Pledge Of Confidentiality, Respect in Schools (on-line training) & Volunteer Confirmation Form

Child Abuse Registry

All volunteers working in our school or on school-sponsored activities will be required to complete a Child Abuse Registry Check form. The form is available from the school office. Once the form is completed, it is to be returned to the school and the school will verify the information and ensure the form is complete. This form will then be submitted to the Board Office and then sent to the Provincial Child Abuse Registry. The response from the Registry is returned to Lord Selkirk School Division, and completed responses kept in the divisional office. Please note that the presence on the Child Abuse Registry will exclude an applicant from placement as a volunteer.

Criminal Records Check

All volunteers will be required to complete a Criminal Records Check form. Applicants must complete forms at the local RCMP office. There is no fee for volunteers if they take a letter from the school, on school letterhead, indicating that they are volunteering for the school. The RCMP will provide an approximate date to the individual to pick up the Criminal Records Check. The form is then returned to the school by the volunteer. The school will then forward them to the Board Office to be entered in the database. Criminal Records Checks will need to be re-done when students change schools. The disclosure of a criminal record may not necessarily preclude an applicant from consideration for placement as a volunteer, but disclosure of a sexual offence will exclude an applicant from placement as a volunteer.

Pledge of Confidentiality

All volunteers will be required to sign the Pledge of Confidentiality form. Confidentiality is of the *utmost* importance.

- Please do not discuss:
 - student performance
 - teachers
 - school policies, or
 - your own reactions to the school situations with anyone other than staff with whom you are working

- If parents, family, or friends ask you about what you do here, tell them you enjoy your work and share information about the activities you perform rather than the specific information about students, teachers, or the school.
- Please do not discuss the progress of the children with whom you are working.
- All reporting to parents is the responsibility of the teachers and must not be undertaken by volunteers.
- As a student's tutor, you should not become involved with his/her parents.
- It is the responsibility of the school to tell parents when a student is receiving tutorial aid.
- If a parent does contact you, simply refer the parents to the child's teacher.

Volunteer Confirmation Form

This form is to be signed after orientation has taken place for general volunteers as well as a second form for overnight volunteers.

Sign In/Out Procedures

All volunteers/guests are asked to sign in upon arrival and sign out prior to leaving. The Volunteer Sign-In/Out book is located on the front desk in our General Office. Volunteers are asked to wear a Volunteer Badge.

Disclosure

If a child should disclose to you information regarding any form of abuse, you are required by law to report this information to the authorities. The steps to follow are:

- Reassure the child and tell them you will have to tell the teacher or principal about this.
- Inform the principal about the disclosure and he/she will assist you in handling the situation.
- This information is to remain confidential and not discussed with anyone.

Inappropriate Behaviour/Discipline Procedures

Volunteers always work under the supervision of teachers. Disciplining students is not the role of the volunteer. If at any time while you are volunteering in the school or school activity/trip, and you hear offensive comments or observe inappropriate behavior; you are required by Division policy to intervene. Intervention includes discussing the incident with the classroom teacher or administrator of the school immediately. Volunteers must not touch or intervene in any physical manner to stop inappropriate behavior. Physical intervention would be permitted to prevent an assault or to separate the participants in an altercation.

Bill 28, as set out by Manitoba Education and relates to Safe Schools Act, indicates that when a person becomes aware that a pupil may have engaged in unacceptable conduct at school or at a prescribed school-approved activity, they must report the matter to the school principal as soon as reasonably possible. Unacceptable conduct is defined as abusing another pupil (physically, sexually, psychologically, verbally, in writing or otherwise), or repeated or deliberate bullying of another pupil that is of a serious nature.

We ask that as volunteers you model respect and consideration for everyone in the building or school activity.

Emergency Preparedness Procedures

Volunteers should become familiar with the following Emergency Procedures by having a conversation with the classroom teacher to familiarize with:

- **Fire Drill**
If a fire alarm sounds while you are working with a student away from his/her usual setting, take the student to the closest exit. Once outside, take the student to join his/her class and teacher.
- **Lockdown and Evacuate**
These procedures are practiced on an annual basis.
- **Hold and Secure**
Stay inside, outside doors are locked, learning continues
- **Medical**
When dealing with blood or other bodily fluids, wear gloves, which are available in the office. Send someone for a staff member. Wash hands before removing gloves and wash again after removing gloves.

Smoking and Use of Tobacco Policy

Smoking and use of tobacco products is not allowed on Division property including grounds. This policy also applies to all volunteers who are participating in school activities such as field trips, sports days or Division sponsored activities.

Workplace Violence Policy

Everyone is responsible for creating a safe working environment that is free from violence. All volunteers shall be responsible for working together and bringing all issues to the attention of the principal.

Tips for Volunteering

- Communication is important, please ask questions. If you are happy, unhappy, or having difficulties with the assignment, please tell us.
- Personal belongings should be kept with you or check with the teacher for a safe place.
- You may use the staff washrooms and staff room.
- Be aware and ask about our school procedures regarding life threatening allergies.
- Avoid wearing strong smelling fragrances as we have students and staff who have sensitivities to chemicals and perfumes.
- Cell phones should be turned off and not used during volunteer time.
- Be warm and friendly, showing an interest in what the students are doing.
- When working with students, encourage them to do their own thinking, giving them plenty of time to answer.
- Maintain a sense of humour.
- If your child is attending our school, do not use recess or break times to conference with teachers about your child.
- Our children and teachers are looking forward to your coming. If you know you will be away, please let us know in advance.
- A volunteer offers praise and encouragement, trying to build caring and supportive rapport.

Coaches or Overnight Volunteers

Coaches and overnight volunteers must be supervised by a teacher-liaison for all school-sponsored activities. As a volunteer in this capacity, you are acting in the best interest of all the children, as a parent would. The teaching staff is to deal with behavior or discipline issues. It is your responsibility to report to the teacher any unacceptable verbal or physical behaviors or bullying behavior. All overnight volunteers will be

provided a comprehensive orientation prior to the activity/trip and sign a confirmation form after receiving orientation.