

**DRAYTON HEIGHTS
PUBLIC SCHOOL**

P. O. Box 40
75 Wellington Street South
Drayton, Ontario
NOG 1PO

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER TEAM

School Administration

- determine guidelines for volunteers in the school
- assess the school's needs
- define objectives for the program
- determine the structure of the school's program
- provide support to all persons involved in the program
- provide group orientation/workshops to volunteers and staff
- coordinate program with School Council
- monitor program
- evaluate the program
- highlight activities in school newsletter
- in conjunction with staff plan appreciation

Teacher

- get to know the volunteer
- provide a welcoming environment
- plan for the volunteer
- inform the volunteer of schedule and schedule changes
- provide on-the-job training
- monitor activities
- show appreciation

Volunteer

- work with and for the children
- be prompt and responsible
- follow teacher's directions
- share information and insights with teacher
- ask questions when needed for clarification
- take available training
- maintain confidentiality

Shared

- recruit volunteers
- work together to maintain student focus
- keep lines of communication open

DRAYTON HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL

Box 40, Drayton, Ontario

NOG 1PO

Telephone: (519) 638-3067

Fax: (519) 638-5235

PRINCIPAL: B. Gottschalk

Dear Volunteer:

As we strive for excellence at Drayton Heights Public School, we extend our warmest welcome to you as a volunteer. Volunteers are an important part in our effort to provide quality education for our students. With your valuable help, more individualized instruction and personal attention will be possible. Additionally, you will be a positive role model for students at an impressionable age.

Education is a unique partnership between parents, students, community and volunteers. Your assistance as a volunteer will reinforce this partnership by providing increased learning opportunities for students. It will also provide you with an increased awareness of your school community.

It has been said "no one stands so tall as when he/she stoops to help a child." We wish to thank you for joining us in the most important task of educating our future citizens.

Sincerely,

B. Gottschalk
Principal

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Volunteers are assigned their duties by the principal of the school in which they are working, although in reality, volunteers work directly with the classroom teacher. Although volunteers are not to be left in charge of an entire class, they may work in a separate room with a child or a small group of children under the teacher's supervision.

If Principals become aware of information that would lead them to believe that a potential or current volunteer has been convicted of a criminal offence, especially sexual assault of another offence involving violence, they will immediately contact their Superintendent of Education who will initiate a criminal record check. The Principal and Superintendent will decide about the volunteer's involvement or continued involvement with the school.

INSURANCE FOR VOLUNTEERS

While acting within the scope of his/her duties on behalf of the Board, volunteers are insured under the Board's liability insurance policy against claims for damages brought by others.

Benefits may be provided to a volunteer who has suffered bodily injury (except hernia, however caused) while providing volunteer service to the Board. All accidents/injuries must be reported to the Principal/Supervisor. The Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) Incident Report Form must be completed and submitted to the Board.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act came into effect on January 1, 1991. The Act is based on four general principles, which provide a balance between access to information and protection of privacy and confidentiality. This legislation is often referred to as the "Balancing Act" as institutions work at balancing the right to information while safeguarding individual privacy. The four principles of the Act are:

- a) The public has a right to access records and information held by municipalities and local boards.
- b) Exemptions to access must be limited and specific.
- c) Right of independent review by the Information and Privacy Commissioner is provided in the Act.
- d) Personal information should be protected to ensure an individual's privacy.

The volunteer's role in the school is one of partnership with the Board employees. In this capacity, it is understood that the volunteer will follow the terms and conditions relating to security and confidentiality of personal information according to the Act.

Volunteers are *not* allowed to have free access to a student's records for any reason. Volunteers will be privy to only that personal information which they need for a consistent purpose; in other words, to perform the function they have been assigned. In some circumstances, the volunteer may require some background information on a student to best understand the particular needs of the student for the purpose of providing proper assistance. The teacher would share the appropriate information. This constitutes a consistent purpose.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer be given such personal information as home phone numbers, addresses, birth dates without the consent of the parent/guardian or student who is sixteen. Volunteers working in a school office will often need to access this information for the purpose of assisting office staff. This is permissible if there is a staff member supervising the volunteer.

Every school has copies of the Act in the school office and library for those who are interested. If there are questions about the Act, please contact the Board's Freedom of Information Officer.

VOLUNTEERS – *adding that special touch*

Why Volunteer?

First, your children will benefit. Even if you are not in their classroom, your children will know that you are in the school. They'll see that you think learning is important.

The community will benefit. You will learn more about 'our' school, and you will be able to share what you know with your friends, neighbours, and co-workers

The school will benefit. The time you spend assisting and helping will allow more time to do more things for more children. That means better learning for all

Volunteering is satisfying. You will meet other parents. You may learn new skills, and you will get a good feeling from knowing you have made an important contribution.

You'll get to know your children's teachers. Knowing the teacher makes it easier to ask questions, or ask for help when your child needs it.

Volunteering is easy. We will be glad to help you in your volunteer work.

We hope that you will feel both welcome and comfortable as you spend time with us. Please feel free to relax in the staffroom and enjoy a cup of coffee.

Help us help children. Be a person who *adds that special touch*.

Volunteer Involvement

How?

Parents differ greatly in their willingness, ability and available time for involvement in school activities. A wide range of options need to be offered...here are six kinds of involvement that you may like to consider

- **Change Agent**

Some caregivers advocate for students' needs and like to help make decisions. These caregivers may enjoy serving on School Council or on special committees.

- **Communication**

Some caregivers are born networkers - always letting other parents know what's going on in school. If this sounds like you, you may like to assist in developing phone trees, putting together and distributing newsletters, or organizing parent groups.

- **Tutor**

Some caregivers love to help in the classroom. One-to-one tutoring or special help for small groups of students may appeal to you.

- **Program Coordinator**

Some caregivers have the marketing and coordination skills to put together programs that benefit the entire school community. Organizing holiday programs, social events or special fundraisers may be for you.

- **Front-line Assistant**

Some caregivers enjoy hands-on-tasks in the classroom or office. Help for classroom assistance, fieldtrips, sporting events, hot dog or pizza days, and general office duties is always welcome.

- **Community Liaison**

Some caregivers have a knack for finding outside resources that meet school and student needs. Such information can greatly enrich the learning environment.

When?

Just let us know what days and times are most convenient for you. We are able to accommodate most schedules.

Where?

Volunteering does not only happen at school. Reading materials and bringing them to our attention, organizing the newsletter on your home computer, making classroom resources - these are only a sample of the activities that can be done in the comfort of your home that contribute to your child's school's success.

Ideas For How You Can Help

- tell or read stories to students
- listen to students read
- help set up and assist in activities
- make/play instructional games
- assist students on computers
- prepare bulletin boards
- help with cooking projects
- set up experiments
- supervise students taking tests
- show a movie/video to a group
- reinforce learning basic vocabulary and math facts
- reinforce learning the alphabet
- help students with motor skill challenges
- assist with handwriting practice
- gather resources for study
- help with clerical work
- assist with special projects such as electives, open house
- assist on field trips or excursions
- speak to groups on topics relating to classroom topics
- Other - many volunteer projects are initiated through suggestions of interested community members. Have an idea? Let's discuss it.

Getting Started

Letting the School Know That You're Interested

You can contact us in the following ways:

- telephone the school - 638-3067
- send a note with your child
- talk to your child's teacher
- come and drop in
- complete the attached form

General Routines

Sign In, Please

Volunteers are requested to sign in at the office when entering the school. It helps the office know who is in the school in case of emergencies.

Sharing in the Community

As a volunteer, you are often privy to information about particular students so that you can better help them. This information is confidential and must remain in the school. All communication with caregivers is to be through the teacher.

Supervision of Students

We expect our students to be cooperative and polite. Please discuss with your host teacher how they would like you to respond should any misbehaviour arise.

If You Are Unable to be Here

Unforeseen circumstances can sometimes make it impossible for you to come in at your designated time. When this happens, please call the school as soon as possible so that the teacher can make any necessary programming changes. Staff value volunteers and you are an integral part of their program.

Working With Children

Be sensitive to and avoid situations with children that may be misunderstood, such as:

- working alone with a child in a closed room
- using student washrooms
- touching a child

Characteristics of School Age Children

There are no sharply defined, rigid characteristics of children as they develop. The following are intended as a guide to understanding the children you may be working with.

Ages 5 through 7

- depends on adult approval, needs acceptance and praise
- becomes aware of individual differences but is very individualistic (not yet always willing to share)
- needs to participate in activities that allow them to put things in order of size and to sort and classify objects
- eye-hand coordination and small muscle control are further developed and child handles paint brushes, pencil, etc. with precise grasp, inversion and reversal of letters and numbers are common
- very energetic, needs a variety of activities to maintain interest
- comprehends simple instructions
- shows tremendous amount of growth in language usage and structures orally
- enjoys imaginative play where they dress up and assume a role, usually from a real-life situation
- needs reasonable limits and external controls that are exercised with love, firmness and fairness
- very accepting of adult's way as a rule
- generally conforms to avoid consequences
- child shows an eagerness to learn outside the home environment
- asks a great number of 'why' questions

Ages 7 through 9

- in terms of physical growth, girls' development may be up to 15 months ahead of boys
- has an increased attention span and stays with activities for longer periods of time
- more readily understands another person's point of view and strives to understand those persons closest to them
- is developing reading skills further, oral reading indicates fluency and expression
- is much more independent in personal problem-solving
- developing concept of conservation in liquid and solid amount
- much clearer understanding of cause and effect relationships
- able to reverse thought
- beginning to self-assess in writing, reading and willing to share those assessments
- generally obeys and accepts adults but beginning to challenge authority
- most friendships are with same sex
- becoming conscious of peer groups
- often quite argumentative with opposite sex

Ages 9 through 11

- may be a physical growth spurt just prior to onset of puberty
- girls may continue to be ahead in physical development
- indicates increased independence and self motivation
- can be easily discouraged
- flourishes in an atmosphere of praise and encouragement
- capable of critical thinking
- reads a wider variety of materials including novels, comics, magazines
- responds to literature with greater attention and appreciation of emotion, development of plot, characters, etc.
- gains in thought processes are evident in both written and oral forms
- enjoys the challenge of proofing their own work
- strives to self improve
- focuses on 'winning' in competitive situations
- periods of emotional sensitivity about self are evident, mood swings
- wants to be part of the 'group'
- continues to have friendships within same sex group
- in later portions of this stage, a greater tendency to challenge and criticize is evident

Ages 11 through 13

- body image becomes a vital issue
- onset of puberty may be later for boys than girls
- coordination and general movement may appear awkward due to sudden growth spurts and/or weight gains
- further tendency for mood swings because of glandular growth and changes
- can read, interpret, and critically analyze author styles, opposing views, implied meanings and feelings for values expressed in literary forms
- can think in more abstract forms about cause and effect relationships
- can utilize thought processes to evaluate the appropriateness of an action
- very high interest in team games
- seeking identity, may seem to try out many roles
- concerned and self-conscious about image
- continues to need acceptance by peer group
- showing interest in friendships with opposite sex
- will criticize yet needs the approval and support from the adult
- seeks independence yet is quite dependent at times, wants and strives to have a close and trusted friend