



**ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

# **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

*Revised January 2021*

## **St. Mark Catholic School**

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<http://www.stmcs.net>

*The information in the Handbook reflects the procedures, requirements, and Diocesan and St. Mark Catholic school policies that are currently in effect. The school reserves the right to institute changes that alter any of the information in this Handbook.*

**Signature page at end of handbook must be signed and returned each year before beginning your volunteer service for the current school year.**

Dear Volunteers,

***"I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you,  
you should also do."***

***John 13:15***

May this letter serve as a sign of my gratitude for your willingness to share your time and talent with the faith community of St. Mark Catholic School.

The faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote the value of service as you join in the teaching ministry of the Church. I encourage you to ask for help, direction, or advice as you participate in the numerous opportunities to volunteer.

All volunteers for St. Mark Catholic School must have Safe Environment clearance through the Diocese of Dallas. Please contact Alison Hughes at [Alison.hughes@stmcs.net](mailto:Alison.hughes@stmcs.net), or [click here](#), for more information.

Together let us pray that God, who began this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

I thank you for your priceless gift of gratuitous service.

In gratitude,



Pam Steinkirchner  
Principal

## **Volunteer Handbook Mission Statement**

*"For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve..." (Mark 10:45)*

Research indicates that parent volunteerism in schools enhances student self-esteem, increases academic achievement and improves student behavior and attendance. We appreciate the priceless service that you provide us, and we have created this Volunteer Handbook to assist you. We want to make sure that you are well-informed on all aspects of volunteering at St. Mark.

## **School Mission Statement**

*St. Mark Catholic School: Where Faith and Knowledge Meet*

The mission of St. Mark Catholic School is to educate each student in a spirit of faith, gospel values, and academic excellence according to Roman Catholic principles. This school's aim and desired result is to graduate students who are well versed in the Catholic faith, academically prepared to continue their education, Christian in attitude and outlook, and prepared to give service to community.

## **Philosophy**

St. Mark Catholic School functions under the premise that students enrolled in this school have the ability to learn and can learn well. Learning is a lifelong process and this process begins in the grade levels incorporated in this school program. During these years, the child's individual ability levels cannot be calculated, predicted, or tracked. The child's ability levels will change each time the student encounters a new learning experience. This school will incorporate high expectations for the escalation of the student's ability level as he/she successfully approaches and completes learning experiences designed in the program of curriculum and instruction.

The overall educational package is aimed at the growth of the student's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical, and self-disciplined endowments:

**Religious education** forms the cornerstone for life. Students learn the teachings, traditions, and practices of the Roman Catholic Church; the relevance of scripture; the teachings of Jesus Christ, and the promise of salvation. Moral education guides and illumines the student's intelligence for moral decision making; forming the will and developing the conscience.

**Academic education** focuses on the intellectual development of the student as he/she advances through a variety of learning experiences. Cognitive development is sequential and exploratory as designed in the planned program of curriculum and instruction.

**Social and cultural developments** result from an organized plan of student appreciation and involvement in school, parish, and community activities. These activities are presented in both intra-curricular and extra-curricular arenas. Students participate in music, literature, and art activities that promote creativity and an appreciation for aesthetic values.

**Physical education** strengthens the energies of the body, focuses on healthy life style choices, contributes to self-confidence, and promotes a cooperative team spirit. Although the school sanctions competitive sports, students are encouraged to enter sports programs for the benefits that personal physical challenge can bring, and not for the sake of winning at all costs.

**Discipline** focuses on the respect for oneself and for others. Incorporation of gospel values is used to set positive examples for Christian behavior and to build a true sense of social justice. Self-discipline is the ultimate goal for all students as they experience age-appropriate consequences for actions and responsibilities.

## **PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

### **Volunteer Process**

All volunteers are required to go through the Safe Environment training process. All volunteers must be cleared before working with students. Be sure to do your yearly update once you have gone through the initial training. Please contact Alison Hughes at [Alison.hughes@stmcs.net](mailto:Alison.hughes@stmcs.net) or [click here](#), for information.

The last page of this Volunteer Handbook must be returned to the school office prior to participating in any volunteer opportunities.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

A list of volunteer opportunities and more information about our Home and School Association can be found [here](#).

### **School Hours**

Grades Pre-K through 8 are in class from 7:55 AM – 3:25 PM. The Cafetorium doors are opened for students at 7:15 AM. All other school doors are opened and manned for students from 7:40 AM – 7:55 AM.

### **School Office Hours**

The school office is open on all school days from **7:30 AM – 4:00 PM**.

### **Sign-In Procedure**

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All volunteers are required to wear a designated badge or sticker that may be picked up in the office. Volunteers are to return the badge, sign out at departure time, and leave through the main entrance.

### **Dependability**

The school relies on your support. We ask that you follow through on tasks by attending to scheduled times and please give notice of absence whenever possible.

### **Confidentiality & Professionalism**

A volunteer operates in a position of trust. Personal information pertaining to students must be kept confidential. Children's actions, responses, progress or problems at school are not for sharing in the community. Conversations between parents, teachers and students in the school are confidential. Volunteers should not discuss these conversations outside of school. Refer any concerns to the Administration.

While in service as a volunteer, the volunteer must maintain a high level of professionalism and certain boundaries. A volunteer should not discuss questions or concerns about their own child with teachers. Please set up a conference time for this discussion. A volunteer may not talk with students about their behavior towards their own child. Refer any concerns to the Administration.

## Volunteer Dress

St. Mark Catholic School has very detailed expectations for student dress. Although volunteers do not have a dress code requirement, it is expected that volunteers reflect the image of St. Mark Catholic School and wear modest clothing while working in the school or during school activities. This includes a moderate length for skirts and shorts, conservative blouses and tops.

## Responsibility

The Administration of St. Mark Catholic School is accountable for facilitating, monitoring, evaluating and providing continuity for the success of the volunteer program. The staff is committed to welcoming volunteers, informing them about their tasks, encouraging their initiatives and celebrating their efforts. Volunteers are expected to adhere to school rules and procedures, perform assigned tasks to the best of their ability, work cooperatively with all staff, and seek clarification when necessary.

## Cell Phones

Please refrain from cell phone use while on volunteer duty. Should there be a time when you must use your cell phone, please step outside. While volunteering, no picture taking of students, the school, or school events are allowed.

## Child Abuse

St. Mark Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services. To report, you can visit <http://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx>.

## Crisis Drills

State Law requires that drills be held monthly. Volunteers are expected to participate in all drills and adhere to the guidelines of silence. Please refer to the Crisis Manual located in every room for more details. During the drills, students should follow these procedures:

### FIRE DRILL

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Close doors;
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;
4. Stand in a column of twos, facing away from the building;
5. Return to building when signal is given.

### TORNADO DRILL

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place in single file;
3. Sit, face wall, and put hands over head;
4. Return to classroom when signal is given.

### LOCK DOWN DRILL

1. Rise and move in silence;
2. Close/lock door, cover window;
3. Move to farthest point from the door and most concealed point in the room;

4. Sit on floor;
5. Return to normal when notified BY PRINCIPAL that all is clear.

## **Health and Safety**

A First-Aid Kit will be available on every field trip. Chaperones should, at no time, administer any medication to a student. This includes, but is not limited to, over-the-counter medications.

## **Field Trips**

1. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring preschool or school-age siblings on the field trip.
2. All chaperones must be 25 years of age or older.
3. Chaperones should not smoke while on the field trip. This includes the use of electronic cigarette products.
4. Chaperones should dress modestly and appropriately on the field trip.
5. Chaperones should refrain from cell phone use while on the field trip. No picture taking is allowed.
6. Chaperones should not allow students to use their cell phones on the field trip.
7. Chaperones should be involved in active supervision while on the field trip and not engaged in social conversation with other chaperones.
8. Chaperones may be held responsible for accidents or injuries that happen due to their negligence.

## **Athletic Coaches**

[Click here](#) for additional volunteer guidelines specific to athletic coaches.

## **St. Mark Logo and Image**

St. Mark maintains specific logo and image guidelines. Individuals or groups wishing to use the school logo, or to represent the school through written, digital or video formats for any reason, must first receive permission. Please contact the Director of Marketing and Communications at 972-578-0610 for the official artwork files/guidelines, and permission to use them.

## **Right to Amend**

St. Mark Catholic School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to volunteers.



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## VOLUNTEER PLEDGE

I pledge to volunteer my time and talents in service  
to the children of St. Mark Catholic School.

I will uphold the expectations to the role of volunteer by observing guidelines  
outlined in the Volunteer Handbook and by being committed to my duties.

I promise to respect the confidentiality of the students, faculty and staff.

I have read and understand St. Mark's mission statement and will follow the  
rules, policies and procedures outlined in the Volunteer Handbook to the best  
of my ability.

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Volunteer printed name and signature

Date

***Please sign and date, and return to the School Office before beginning  
your volunteer service for the current school year.***