

VCES Volunteer Handbook

VALLEY
CATHOLIC
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL



2026-2027

VCES Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteers serving in the school will support and model the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. Volunteers work in a collaborative role with others in service to the children and staff of our school.

School volunteers are expected to practice confidentiality as a living principle, and respect the dignity of those with whom they work and come into contact. Volunteers act in a confidential manner when working around and with our students. This means that volunteers refrain from talking about children other than their own, when visiting with other school parents or people outside our school community. If volunteers do observe or experience something while working around our students that they feel the school staff needs to know about, it should be reported directly and immediately to a school staff member.

Volunteers are also entrusted to refrain from talking at large about school personnel and school community members. If there is a concern about a teacher, another volunteer, student, or other school staff member, please speak directly to the principal or vice principal.

A volunteer who becomes engaged in a conflict with another volunteer outside of the boundaries of school activities must settle that dispute outside of school, and without involving or using school resources.





Volunteer/Service Hours

Each VCES family is expected to provide 20 service hours each school year. If completing service hours is a hardship for your family, please contact the Principal. Parents help us keep operating costs down by performing volunteer tasks. Hiring additional personnel directly affects the cost of tuition. In that regard, we consider service hours to be part of our tuition structure. Volunteering also gives parents an opportunity to become actively involved and feel more a part of our school community. It's a great way to get acquainted with other families!

Since service hours are part of our tuition structure, **these hours must be served working in direct support of Valley Catholic Elementary School**. Up to **five** hours may be earned by serving any of the Valley Catholic Schools.

- A list of volunteer opportunities and directions for logging hours in HelpCounter can be found on the [Parent's Guide](#).
- Families may earn volunteer credit for assisting the Middle School or High School with their STEM or Capstone events and MS/HS CYO athletic events (up to five hours).
- Families may earn volunteer credit for assisting/coaching CYO swimming and Elementary School CYO sports.
 - Hours are not given for assisting/coaching teams outside of VCES.
- Hours can be earned from attending *Back to School Night*, *Parent Information Nights* and/or VALOR meetings.
 - Hours are not given for attending evening music programs or parent/teacher conferences.
- Hours are not given for volunteering in your own church or other charitable, non-profit service organizations or events.

Service hours in excess of the 20 expected of families each school year may not be carried over to the next school year or donated to other families.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the family to log volunteer hours in HelpCounter. Event coordinators, including classroom teachers and the CYO Athletic Director are not able to log volunteer hours for families. If the hours are not served, unserved hours will be billed at a rate of \$25 per hour at the end of the school year. Also be aware that if this bill is not paid, admission for the coming school year may be withheld.



Volunteer Expectations & Responsibilities

Sign In and Out

Volunteers are expected to sign in and out of the building when volunteering.

Exercise Confidentiality

Volunteers must protect a teacher's and student's right to privacy. You may not disclose sensitive school or personal matters which have come to your attention while volunteering. Discuss student concerns only with the teacher or staff member with whom you are working; discuss other concerns with the principal. Do not take any photos or videos of students for personal use.

Be Dependable & Punctual

Students, teachers and staff members rely on the services performed by volunteers. We ask that you contact the school or teacher if you're unable to volunteer on your scheduled day. Please arrive ahead of time for your volunteer shift.

Follow Emergency Drills

Volunteers must follow the same emergency procedures as students and staff. Please be aware of and follow posted procedures for earthquake, fire, secure and lockdown drills.

Do Not Bring Siblings

Volunteers aren't allowed to bring younger siblings and babies to school when they're scheduled to volunteer. It's a safety issue. The situation also can be potentially distracting in the classroom and other areas.

Complete Child Protection Training Requirements

Volunteers are required to remain current with all child protection training requirements communicated each school year. These requirements may include, but are not limited to, completion of C.A.S.E. training, required online modules, a background check, and submission of all required waiver forms.

**Wear Identification**

All visitors, including volunteers, are required to wear the VC Visitor sticker when on campus.

Exercise Professionalism

Although the job is voluntary, the commitment is professional. Besides being responsible for maintaining an attitude of mutual respect, you also should become familiar with school and classroom policies and practices. Working with the teaching staff requires flexibility and a willingness to follow directions.

Attire

Volunteers are expected to dress in a manner that reflects the educational environment and serves as a positive example for students. Clothing should be neat, clean, and appropriate for working with elementary-aged children. Attire that is excessively revealing, contains inappropriate language or images, or may be disruptive to the school environment is not permitted.

No Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco

Valley Catholic has a drug-free workplace policy and prohibits the use of alcohol, drugs (including marijuana), controlled substances and tobacco on property.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer opportunities are shared throughout the school year through a variety of communication channels. Be sure to stay informed by reviewing:

- VALOR meeting agendas and minutes
- Friday Five communications
- Classroom newsletters
- HelpCounter volunteer postings
- Back-to-School Night presentations
- Family Information Nights
- SchoolMessenger notifications
- The Ice Cream Social and other school events

Child Protection Training Requirements

All parents and others who volunteer or are paid to work with our students during the school day—or at school-sponsored events and activities where students are present—must complete all required child protection requirements prior to participation. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Assisting in the classroom with reading groups, Art Literacy, class parties, or other instructional activities
- Volunteering during lunch or recess
- Volunteering at events such as the Jog-a-thon, Field Day, Family Picnic Day, Gala, or other student-related events
- Chaperoning classroom field trips

Requirements

1. Attend an in person Creating A Safe Environment (C.A.S.E.) child protection training session, which lasts about two hours. This in person training only needs to be completed once.
 - Training sessions are scheduled periodically throughout the school year at our campus schools. You may attend training at any of the VCS locations. Information will be shared via the Friday Five or School Messenger.
 - You may attend a training session hosted by the [Archdiocese of Portland](#).
 - You **must** send a copy of your C.A.S.E. certificate to the VCES Office if you are trained outside of VC.
2. A criminal background check will be ordered and paid for by Valley Catholic. This gets resubmitted every three years.
 - A background check will be ordered by VC after an initial in-person C.A.S.E training has been completed. You **must** send a copy of your C.A.S.E. certificate to the VCES Office if you are trained outside of VC in order for a background check to be ordered.
3. Complete an annual training module in Praesidium as designated by the Archdiocese of Portland and communicated each fall to VCES families.
4. Complete the [SSMO Volunteer Waiver](#). This only needs to be completed once.



Recess Volunteer Overview

Sharing Your Availability

You will be sent a Sign-Up Genius link to schedule the times you'd like to volunteer after completing a [Volunteer Interest Survey](#). This information will be shared in the Friday Five.

Step-By-Step Plan for Each Scheduled Day

1. At 10:45am, stop in the office, sign-in and get a recess lanyard.
2. Go to the cafeteria to join up with the classes leaving for recess. The first class leaves for recess at 11:10.
3. Walk at the end of the line unless a staff member gives other directions.
4. Remain with students at recess until 12:45pm when the 5th graders come back inside.
You may be asked to return the walkie talkie.

Logging Your Hours

You will earn 2 volunteer hours for each day of volunteering. You can log your hours in HelpCounter. Select the "Recess Volunteering" and enter the date you volunteered and two hours you earned.

What If I'm Unavailable to Volunteer on My Assigned Day?

If you know a week or more in advance, please remove your name from the Sign up Genius to allow for another volunteer to sign up.

If it's on your assigned day that you find you're unable to be at school, please notify the Vice Principal: Mrs. Smith via email at ksmith@valleycatholic.org

Recess Volunteer General Expectations

- Build positive relationships with students. Learn their names and engage with them throughout recess.
- Supervise all students in your assigned area, not just your own child or students you know.
- Cell phone use is not permitted during volunteer shifts, including texting, phone calls, meetings, or browsing. If you need to use your phone, notify a staff member and step away from your supervision duties.
- Actively circulate throughout the playground, paying particular attention to areas where conflicts or safety concerns are more likely to occur.
- Provide students with time and space to calm down or take a break when needed.
- Encourage students involved in conflicts to share their perspectives when they are ready, whether verbally, through drawing, or by acting out the situation.
- Separate students when they are unable to play safely or respectfully together.
- Check with staff regarding recess procedures, including lineup expectations and signals (e.g., whistle, designated lineup locations).
- Consistently reinforce school expectations for recess behavior and lining up.
- Never physically restrain, force, or remove a student who is exhibiting challenging behavior.

Active Supervision

- Monitor all areas where students are playing.
- Coordinate with staff and fellow volunteers to ensure the playground is adequately supervised. Discuss coverage areas at the start of each recess period.
- The primary role of a recess volunteer is student supervision. Please keep conversations with other adults brief and limited.
- Support positive peer interactions and help students engage appropriately with one another.

Playground Boundaries and Safety

- Ensure students remain within designated recess areas, including fields and playground equipment zones.
- If students are too far away to hear directions or recall signals, they are too far from the supervised area.
- Be familiar with all playground rules and off-limits areas.

Redirection and Behavior Support

- Redirect students calmly, respectfully, and consistently. Be mindful of your tone and model the behavior you expect from students.
- Keep redirections brief, clear, and focused on the desired behavior.
- Volunteers should provide guidance and redirection, but disciplinary consequences should be handled by staff.

Seek Staff Assistance For:

- Students harming or threatening to harm others
- Repeated violations of playground rules
- Physical aggression or unsafe behavior (e.g., hitting, kicking, spitting)
- Disrespectful behavior, including teasing, exclusion, or harassment
- Significant conflicts or disagreements that students cannot resolve independently

Play Areas and Expectations

The two staff members assigned to a grade level will determine the recess location each day:

- Playground/Field
- Playcourt
- Indoor Recess (Eagle's Gym)

Indoor Recess: Eagle's Gym

Eagle's Gym Expectations

- Girls may use the girls' locker room restroom.
- Boys should use the boys' restroom across the hall in the high school.
- Students should remain on their assigned side of the gym when multiple classes are present.
- Basketball baskets are available on each side of the gym.

Equipment is stored in the recess basket in the gym and includes:

- 2 basketballs per class
- 1 playground ball per class
- 1 volleyball per class
- Shared jump ropes

Equipment Rules

- Ensure equipment is shared fairly among classes.
- Return all equipment at the end of recess.
- Help students clean up for the next group.
- Use the ball pump, wipes, and tissues in the basket as needed.
- Playground balls should not be thrown at basketball hoops, as they can pop.
- Jump ropes are for jumping only—not for tying, pulling, or other unsafe play.
- Students should line up to check out equipment.
- Return jump ropes to the designated bag to prevent tangling.
- No kicking balls during indoor recess.
- When volleyball nets are set up: Classes must remain on their assigned side of the nets. Students may not touch, hang on, go under, or play over the nets.

Playcourt

Playcourt Expectations

- Equipment is stored in the playcourt storage bins.
- Ensure all equipment is returned before lining up.
- Encourage students to take responsibility for the equipment they use.
- Escort students to and from the building when they need to use the restroom or visit the office.
- No running through the doorway between the two playcourt sections.
- Balls may only be used on the side closest to the pool building.
- No balls are allowed on the side closest to the school building.
- Kickball and football games require staff approval.
- Encourage students to be aware of others' space during active games.
- Basketball hoops are shared by all students.
- No climbing on fences or support cables

Playground and Field

Boundaries - Students must remain within the designated playground area:

- Inside the chain-link fence
- Up to the bleachers
- Softball field (when not being used by Middle School P.E.)
- Along the ground pipes (students may not go beyond or climb on them)

Off-Limits Areas

- Forest area
- High school athletic equipment (blocking equipment, dummies, ladders, etc.)
- Areas beyond the playground boundaries

If a ball or piece of equipment leaves the playground area, an adult should retrieve it. Students should not leave the playground to get it.



Playground Expectations

- Stay within playground boundaries.
- Wait your turn when sharing equipment.
- Be respectful of others' space during games.
- No rough play, including hitting, pushing, kicking, scratching, pulling clothing, or wrestling.
- No combat or war games.
- Slides must be used feet first while sitting on the bottom.
- Only one student may go down a slide at a time.

Tire Swing Rules

- Students must sit on the tire with legs inside the center opening.
- Maximum of three students on the tire swing at one time (staff may limit older students to two).
- If others are waiting, each group gets three turns before rotating off.
- Students should hold on with both hands while swinging.
- Only one student may push the swing at a time.





Lunch Server Volunteer Overview

Sharing Your Availability

You will be sent a link to the VC Lunch Volunteer Calendar to schedule the times you'd like to volunteer after completing a [Volunteer Interest Survey](#). This information will be shared in the Friday Five.

Step-By-Step Plan for Each Scheduled Day

1. At 10:30am, stop in the office, sign-in and get a visitor sticker.
2. Go to the cafeteria and join the lunch staff in the kitchen.
3. Remain in the kitchen until all students have been served and the area is cleaned up.

Logging Your Hours

You will earn 2 volunteer hours for each day of volunteering. You can log your hours in HelpCounter. Select the "Cafeteria/Lunch Server Volunteering" and enter the date you volunteered and two hours you earned.

What If I'm Unavailable to Volunteer on My Assigned Day?

Please notify the Vice Principal, Mrs. Smith, at ksmith@valleycatholic.org via email as soon as possible if you are unable to serve lunch.

General Expectations

Volunteer Lunch Servers support students and staff while promoting the Catholic mission and values of Valley Catholic Elementary School. They help create a welcoming, positive, and calm lunch environment for all students.

Volunteers maintain current Food Handler certification, CASE training, and background check requirements.

Responsibilities include assisting with lunch setup and service for students, staff, and guests; following safe food handling practices and school health and safety procedures; collaborating

with school lunch staff to ensure efficient meal service; and performing additional duties as assigned by the Vice Principal.



Essential Functions and Responsibilities

The duties listed below are representative of the work performed in this role and are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Responsibilities may be modified as needed to meet the changing needs of the school.

Lunch Server Duties

- Assist with setting up the service kitchen for lunch, ensuring food is maintained at required temperatures and properly covered until service.
- Serve meals in accordance with all applicable food safety and health regulations.
- Assist the Head Server with food preparation and service activities as needed.
- Set up and maintain the serving line
- Follow all food safety standards and guidelines, including the use of required personal protective equipment such as hairnets and gloves.
- Serve as a positive Christian role model for students and staff.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding students, families, and school operations.





Kitchen Hygiene Reminder



Gloves & Phones

If you touch a **phone** or anything **not part of the kitchen setup** while wearing gloves:

- **REMOVE** your gloves
- **WASH** your hands
- **PUT ON** a fresh pair before handling food again



Leaving the Kitchen

Anytime you leave the kitchen or serving area:

- **CHANGE** your gloves
- **WASH** your hands before returning to service



Hair Control

Keep hair **neat and fully restrained**.



Hairnets are available — ask **Chef Jung** or **Ivy** if you need one.



Clothing

- Wear **clean, close-fitting clothing** or an **apron**
 - Avoid **loose sleeves** or items that could touch food
-