



# Parent Volunteer Handbook

# Letter from the Head of School

Villa Montessori School  
2802 E. Meadowbrook Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85016

Dear Parent,

Welcome to Villa Montessori School as a Parent Volunteer. I am pleased that you have decided to spend some of your very valuable time with us. By doing so, you share your experience, talent and expertise with the school community for the benefit of our students and our school.

This handbook contains important information that has been compiled in an effort to make your experience as a volunteer as rewarding and successful as possible. I hope you have an opportunity to become familiar with its contents and to ask any questions you may have.

We appreciate your interest in our school and thank you for being part of our community.

Sincerely,

Margo S. O'Neill, M.Ed.  
Head of School

## **Our Volunteer Program**

### **The goals of our volunteer program are:**

- To relieve teachers and support personnel of some non-instructional tasks
- To provide teachers with more time to work with students
- To enrich the curriculum and children's learning opportunities
- To promote a school-home-community partnership for quality education

### **Villa's volunteers:**

- Recognize that children are our greatest natural resource
- Have integrity and good moral character
- Are willing to accept feedback on their performance when needed
- Understand and appreciate the work of the school staff

### **Volunteer opportunities:**

Individual teachers choose which volunteer jobs they would like help with. Opportunities include –

- Ceramics helper
- Art masterpiece
- Pizza Friday helper
- Lunch supervision
- Helping with special events (auction, luncheons, artists' teas, etc.)
- Middle School electives
- Helping with classroom tasks (copying, material making, etc.)
- Coaching soccer, T ball, or flag football
- Field trip driver
- Overnight chaperones

Every parent that volunteers in one or more of the above ways must complete an application and a criminal history affidavit before he/she begins volunteering. These need to be completed and/or updated annually.

Some volunteer duties (such as overnight chaperones and coaches) also require providing a set of fingerprints for a federal and state background check. The school will also perform motor vehicle driving record checks on those volunteers that transport students for such things as field trips and Middle School electives.

Please read all of the information contained in this handbook carefully before signing the application as your signature indicates you are aware of and agree to abide by all school policies and regulations and that you understand the school will perform background/driving record checks when necessary.

There are also school-wide events and/or fundraising volunteer opportunities available –

- Halloween carnival
- Auction dinner
- Tax credit campaign

These do not require the application or affidavit.

## **Volunteer Guidelines**

### **Supervision:**

School volunteers always work under the direct supervision of the professional staff and only with those teachers who have requested the services of a volunteer. The school is responsible for the education, safety and well-being of each student. For this reason, we may from time to time have to dismiss any volunteer whose actions are not in the best interest of the school or the students.

### **Confidentiality:**

As you work with the staff and students, information of a confidential manner may be shared with you. The problems, abilities, relationships, and confidences of students, their parents and the staff should never be discussed with anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know them. Like teachers, volunteers are bound by a code of ethics to keep confidential matters within the school. Confidentiality must also be maintained when at social gatherings outside of school time. The staff and students need to know they can trust you.

Also, please do not discuss a student's school progress or difficulties with his/her parents. This is the teacher's responsibility.

There may be a time when a student confides in you about personal problems or family matters. Keep this confidential as well. If you believe it is vital that the school have this information, please discuss the student's conversation with the teacher or Head of School.

**Discipline:**

Students rarely have behavior problems while working with volunteers. However, the school has detailed discipline plans and the responsibility for discipline rests with the professional staff. Volunteers may not discipline students. Please make the teacher aware of any discipline problems should they arise.

**Find out about school/class rules:**

Become familiar with the rules and policies of the school and classroom(s). Use reasonable judgment in making decisions when there appears to be no policy or when the policy is not communicated. As soon as possible, consult with the teacher or a staff member for future guidance.

**Dress and behavior:**

Take your lead from the professional staff and dress appropriately for the job you are doing. Casual clothing is fine, but we ask that attire be neat and conservative. Like our school staff, your appearance should attract no undue attention. Please keep in mind that you are in a position to set an example for students. Your speech and behavior should serve as good models for them to follow.

**Standards of conduct:**

Villa expects volunteers to adhere to acceptable standards of conduct that protect the interests and safety of all students, employees and the school. It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered misconduct. The following is a partial list of infractions that may result in dismissal and/or legal action.

- Failure to observe any of the standards of conduct as outlined
- Ridiculing and/or disciplining a child
- Leaving a child unattended
- Endangering the health or safety of the children
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs while volunteering
- Fighting, arguing, or threatening violence
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of School property
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Use of tobacco on School grounds at anytime
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Unauthorized removal of School property

- Unauthorized and/or inappropriate use of computers, telephones, mail system, or other School-owned equipment or Systems
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information
- Inappropriate physical contact with students
- Having inappropriate contact with students outside of School hours by e-mail, phone calls, personal visits
- Criminal conviction (as related to the law or dictated by regulation)
- Failure to remain in alert physical and mental condition
- Malicious gossip
- Sexual misconduct with a student (including sexual abuse and molestation) – this is a criminal offense subject to prosecution under the law

**For the safety of our students:**

Please notify the Head of School immediately if you are arrested for a crime so that the determination can be made as to whether or not you can continue in a volunteer capacity. Failure to do so will result in being dismissed from our volunteering program.

**Volunteers represent the school:**

As a volunteer, you not only serve the needs of the students, you also provide a vital link between the school and the community. Students, their parents, and the community at large may view you as a representative of the school. They will pay close attention to what you say about the staff and the educational programs. Please see this as an opportunity to share all of the wonderful positive things happening at Villa. (Remember not to share confidential information.)

**And finally:**

Thank you...Please know that the contribution you are making directly affects the quality of education for the students at our school.