



Saint Mary School  
RIDGEFIELD

Saint Mary School Ridgefield  
Volunteer Handbook  
2025-2026

# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Thank You and Welcome</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Volunteer Procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
Arrival	3
Virtus Training	3
Dress Code	4
Confidentiality	4
Discipline	5
Privacy and Use of Photography	5
Emergency Response	5
Volunteer Conduct	5
Use of Drugs or Alcohol	6
Ways to Get Involved	6
Right to Amend	6

## Thank you and Welcome!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to you, and thank you for seeking volunteer opportunities at Saint Mary School. Our school relies on volunteers in various capacities, including room parents, field trip chaperones, and HSA members, among others. This handbook is an important reference for all adults volunteering at our school. Please read it carefully and complete the electronic sign-off found on the SMS website at

<https://smsridgefield.org/sms-experience/parent-student-handbooks/>.

As a mission-centric school, we ask you to keep the following in mind at all times in your capacity as a parent and volunteer.

*Saint Mary School is a community rooted in the Catholic faith that is committed to developing the whole child.*

Following the procedures in this handbook will ensure that your volunteer experience is a positive one.

---

## Volunteer Procedures

### *Arrival*

Upon arrival at Saint Mary School, each volunteer will report to the main office and receive a volunteer badge that must be worn for the duration of the volunteer hours. Volunteers may park in the front parking lot.

### *Virtus Training*

All volunteers must complete Safe Environments Virtus training before they can volunteer at Saint Mary School. This training can be completed online or

in person. Information about Virtus training can be found using the link below. Mrs. Monica Harron is our point of contact for Virtus tracking and can be reached at [harronm@smsridgefield.org](mailto:harronm@smsridgefield.org) with any Virtus questions. <https://www.bridgeportdiocese.org/safe-environment/register-for-virtus/>

## *Dress Code*

Saint Mary School is a Catholic School, and as a Catholic School community, we believe in the importance of modesty and neatness in our dress and conduct. All volunteers are expected to dress modestly in a way that upholds the dignity of each person in the school. We believe that adult volunteers are role models for the school and should be mindful of how they dress and the impact it will have on our students. Volunteers should abide by the same dress code as for our student dress-down days. Please see the Parent/Student Handbook for more information.

## *Confidentiality*

One of the joys of volunteering is being an integral part of the school community, seeing the children and staff in action, serving Christ and one another. At times, volunteers may witness behaviors, circumstances, or situations for which they lack context. There are many accommodations and individualized learning plans in place for students, which may not be evident to volunteers. That information will continue to be confidential, even to those serving as volunteers in our school.

All volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding students, staff, and what is observed in the classroom. Volunteers must refrain from talking about children other than their own when they are communicating with others. Personal information about students must be kept confidential, as well as conversations between parents, teachers, and students. There may be times when student confidences cannot be kept. If a student expresses a desire to hurt/harm her/himself or others, this must be reported to school personnel.

If a volunteer observes or experiences something that presents a concern, the volunteer must report the incident to school staff. Saint Mary School volunteers should refrain from speaking at large about school personnel. If

there is a concern about a staff member, the volunteer must report that concern directly to the school principal.

Volunteers have access to information that is not to be shared, and our volunteer program depends on the integrity of each volunteer in the building.

### *Discipline*

Volunteers are not permitted to discipline students unless a student is an immediate danger to him/herself or others. Volunteers should report any incident requiring discipline to school personnel.

### *Privacy and Use of Photography*

Volunteers are permitted to take pictures and/or videos of students at school functions, but may not share or post pictures of students to public social media, as that would violate student confidentiality and privacy (Please research FERPA - Family Education Rights and Privacy Act).

### *Emergency Response*

Saint Mary School practices regular emergency drills. These include fire drills, lockdown drills, etc. Volunteers should follow the directions of the Saint Mary School administrative team or staff member he/she is working with, should a drill or emergency arise.

### *Volunteer Conduct*

Saint Mary School is committed to the education and development of each child. Volunteers must not interrupt classes or walk around the building as it is distracting to the learning process. It is also important that any volunteer who desires to have a conference or meeting with a staff member schedule a time outside of the volunteer hours to do so.

Saint Mary School understands the importance of access to electronic devices such as cell phones or smart watches, but the school asks volunteers to be mindful of their use during volunteer hours so that such devices do not become a distraction.

## *Use of Drugs or Alcohol*

Volunteers must never engage in the use of drugs or alcohol when volunteering at Saint Mary School, either at school or before arriving that day.

## *Ways to Get Involved*

There are a variety of ways to get involved at Saint Mary School Ridgefield. Our Home School Association organizes most of the volunteer opportunities. You can learn more by visiting the HSA page on the SMS website, <https://smsridgefield.org/sms-experience/hsa/>. If you scroll to the bottom, there is a Volunteer Interest Form. Classroom teachers will reach out with opportunities to serve as a Field Trip Chaperone as the need arises. As a reminder, to volunteer in any capacity, you must be Virtus-trained.

## *Right to Amend*

Saint Mary School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be shared with volunteers.