



**St. Mary's School of Piscataway
Home & School Association Room Parent Volunteer Form
2022-2023 School Year**

Please indicate below if you are interested in being a Room Parent for this school year.

Here is an excerpt from an article found on ptotoday.com that explains the duties of a room parent. The full article can be found on the back of this form.

“A room parent’s main task is to facilitate communication between other parents and the teacher, the school parent group, and occasionally school administration. This can vary widely from class to class, teacher to teacher, and sometimes even district to district. For the most part, as a room parent you’ll solicit donations (paper goods, snacks, decorations, etc.) from parents for classroom parties and events (usually based on a list from the teacher), collect money for teacher gifts during holidays and Teacher Appreciation Week in May, organize volunteers for the classroom for events or enrichment, and other tasks as decided by the teacher. As well, some room parents act as liaisons for their school’s PTO or PTA, attending parent group meetings and, potentially, helping generate support or interest in parent group efforts. (For example, room parents can help the PTO promote an event by reminding their parents of an upcoming program or fundraiser.)”

Volunteers for Room Parent positions must complete the required steps for the child protection program and be cleared through the Archdiocese of Washington. If you have not completed this step, please call the main office at (301) 292-2522 to learn more.

I would like to volunteer to be a Room Parent for grade: _____
(enter grade here)

Parent’s Full Name: _____

Student’s Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Thank you for volunteering to serve as a room parent! You will be notified if you are selected to serve as Room Parent for the 2022-23 school year.

Please return the completed form to the school office no later than **Friday, September 2, 2022**.

What Does a Room Parent Do?

Are you thinking about volunteering as a room parent? Find out what to expect and get some helpful pointers from a veteran room mom.
by Elizabeth S. Leaver
03/02/2017

Have you ever sat with the pile of back-to-school forms in your lap, pen hovering over the yes/no boxes on the “would you like to be room parent” section of the volunteer forms, completely terrified at the thought?

You don’t have to be. Really.

When my first son was little, I was overwhelmed by the school process. My volunteering was limited to twice-monthly visits to his kindergarten class to work on simple crafts and attending an occasional field trip. Being a room mom never even entered my mind. But in time, I became more confident and eventually I worked up the courage to check off the “yes” box. What has followed are several years of a special type of involvement in which I’ve enjoyed a closer connection to my younger son’s teachers and other parents, and the feeling of knowing he appreciates my efforts. Here are some of the things I’ve learned during my time as a room parent.

What Will You Do?

A room parent’s main task is to facilitate communication between other parents and the teacher, the school parent group, and occasionally school administration. This can vary widely from class to class, teacher to teacher, and sometimes even district to district. For the most part, as a room parent you’ll solicit donations (paper goods, snacks, decorations, etc.) from parents for classroom parties and events (usually based on a list from the teacher), collect money for teacher gifts during holidays and Teacher Appreciation Week in May, organize volunteers for the classroom for events or enrichment, and other tasks as decided by the teacher. As well, some room parents act as liaisons for their school’s PTO or PTA, attending parent group meetings and, potentially, helping generate support or interest in parent group efforts. (For example, room parents can help the PTO promote an event by reminding their parents of an upcoming program or fundraiser.)

Meet with the Teacher

Teachers’ expectations of their room parents vary widely. Some rely heavily on volunteers to pull together all events and parties; others have specific ideas and will ask parents to coordinate only certain parts. Either way, it’s critical to find out your teacher’s preferred way of doing things early on, and stick to it.

And don’t limit your communication to those types of emails. It’s a good idea to check in with your teacher periodically to ask whether she needs anything. More than once, I emailed my son’s teacher to find she had been intending to contact me about an upcoming event, and she was grateful my co-room parent and I were being proactive.

Get a List

Without a doubt, your best resource during your tenure as room parent will be an up-to-date parent email list. Sometimes your parent group or teacher can provide this; other times, you’ll have to compile it yourself by sending a note around that asks parents to reply to your email. (Alternatively, depending on when room parents are chosen, you could provide a sheet on back-to-school night.) Whatever effort it entails early on is worth it; you’ll be grateful as the year progresses.

Play Fair

Email is a very convenient way to communicate with a group of parents, but there are a few issues you should be aware of. You may come across families who don’t use email; take the extra step to include them in communications by calling or sending a note in their child’s backpack. As well, smartphones make it possible for volunteers to reply almost instantly to requests. If you find that the same parents are replying over and over, it’s completely OK to give others a chance to participate. Some classes are fine with a first-come, first-served approach, but in other cases, a bit more patience is required.

Get to Know Your Co-Room Parent

Establishing a warm connection early on with your co-room parent, if you have one, is another important aspect of how successful your year will be. Sometimes you get lucky and are paired with someone whose style meshes with yours. If you’re really lucky, you’ll get someone who happily picks up the slack when you’re overloaded, and vice versa. But even in situations where personalities and styles differ, it’s important to learn to work together. That might mean coming up with a more formal arrangement to get things done—for example, you handle the Halloween event, the other room parent organizes the winter holiday party, and so on. Remember that you both checked the “yes” box in the first place because you care about your kids’ experience and want to help in the best way you can.

Being a room parent will allow you some perspectives and opportunities you wouldn’t otherwise have. You will have the satisfaction of knowing you helped a busy teacher organize a fun event, or gathered chaperones for a field trip. You will establish yourself as a reliable member of your school community. And perhaps best of all, you will have the opportunity to participate in your child’s school life in a special way. So check “yes” on the form—it’s well worth it.