

# **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**ST. BRIGID OF KILDARE  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**2019-2020**

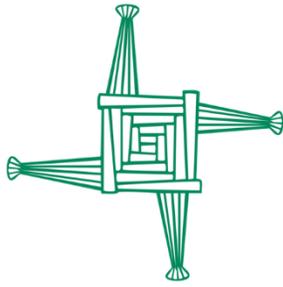
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## Table Of Contents

1. MISSION STATEMENT.....	3
2. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF.....	4
3. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE HOURS.....	4
4. SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM.....	5
5. VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS.....	6
6. ROLES OF THE VOLUNTEER.....	6
Classroom Aides Office Aides Hall Monitors Childcare Volunteers	
7. HARRASSMENT POLICY.....	11
8. HARRASSMENT POLICY VERIFICATION FORM.....	13
9. VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK FORM.....	14

For it is in giving that we receive." --

[Saint Francis of Assisi](#)



# SAINT BRIGID OF KILDARE

## Religious Education

### St. Brigid of Kildare Religious Education Mission Statement

#### “One Faith, One Family”

Catholic faith formation is a lifelong process of spiritual growth, increased understanding, and commitment to the faith and traditions of the Catholic Church. Our desire at Saint Brigid of Kildare is to share as a community in the ministry of Christ, living as One Family and sharing in our One Faith. We hold dear the vital sacramental life of the Church, given to us by Christ, calling each of us to act justly, with love and mercy, living in communion with one another. Following Christ is a lifelong journey and we invite you to join us. Catechesis at Saint Brigid is for all- children, teenagers, young adults, and adults. Welcome home to St. Brigid!

## St. Brigid of Kildare Religious Education Staff

### Director of Religious Education

Andrea Komenda

### Office Staff

Sherri Niekamp	Early Childhood Coordinator and VBS Director
Liz Jennison	Secretary and Sacramental Records
Karin Schubert	Program Support Assistant
Jennifer McManus	Family Tuition Accounts and Program Financials

### Religious Education Office Hours

Monday through Thursday	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Friday	9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

St. Brigid Religious Education Office  
7175 Avery Road  
Dublin, OH 43017

614-761-1176 (Religious Education Office)

614-761-1106 (Religious Education Fax)

614-761-3734 (Parish Office)

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM**

Our *Safe Environment Program* is designed to protect children while they are in the “care, custody, or control” of any volunteer on behalf of the Religious Education Program.

All volunteers must complete four (4) requirements prior to the first day of volunteering:

- 1) Complete a Protecting God’s Children (PGC) awareness session offered throughout the Diocese of Columbus. This program helps raise the awareness of adult volunteers for the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse and steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.
- 2) Undergo a Civilian Criminal Background/Fingerprint check (BCI&I) and if needed, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). There are two options: you can walk in to Fast Fingerprints located at 1486 Bethel Road, [www.fastfingerprints.com](http://www.fastfingerprints.com), or make an appointment with Washington Township Administration and Training Center located at 6200 Eiterman Road, 614-652-3920. The Washington Township Fingerprints form can be found on the parish website. Please complete (but do not sign) this form and bring it with you to Washington Township.
- 3) Complete an online Volunteer Application Form which includes the signed Code of Conduct.
- 4) Submit a copy of driver license or photo ID to Stacey Nerone at [snellone@stbrigidofkildare.org](mailto:snellone@stbrigidofkildare.org).

To clarify, you only need to complete the *Protecting God’s Children* course once and this will cover you for any volunteering assignments at St. Brigid of Kildare parish. The Background and fingerprint check will remain on file and active as long as you are an active volunteer at St. Brigid parish. Should you have a break in service of 18 months or greater, you may need to resubmit this requirement.

You will receive written communication, either through a letter or an email communication, notifying you of your compliance. This will also be reflected in our parish records. Any questions may be directed to Stacey Nerone, Safe Environment Program Coordinator, via email at [snellone@stbrigidofkildare.org](mailto:snellone@stbrigidofkildare.org).

## **VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

**Volunteers are critical to the success of each program and their time and talents are a gift to Religious Education and very much appreciated.**

**However, there are certain expectations that must be met on a weekly basis.**

These expectations include and are not limited to the following:

- 1) Volunteers are expected to be in compliance with the Safe Environment Program as outlined by the Diocese of Columbus. Non-compliance will result in a loss of the volunteer position and forfeiture of the tuition discount.
- 2) Volunteers are expected to fulfill their commitment to the program by being present at their assigned position every week. Volunteers receive 25% tuition discount. **Four absences will result in half of the discount applied, six absences will result in no discount.**
- 3) We understand that unforeseen circumstances arise. If you are unable to fulfill your volunteer assignment we ask that you notify the Religious Education Office either by email or telephone so a substitute can be found for your position. We must remain in compliance with the safe environment ratios for the protection of the students and the safety of our program.
- 4) Volunteers are expected to abide by the Harassment Policy and the Code of Conduct which is accessible on our website.
- 5) Volunteers are expected to wear their ID badge for the entire duration of their volunteering duty for security reasons.
- 6) Volunteers should remember they are representatives of the parish and the Religious Education Program and should conduct themselves accordingly.

## **ROLES OF THE VOLUNTEERS**

St. Brigid offers three (3) types of volunteer opportunities in the Religious Education Program-- Classroom Aides, Hall Monitors, and Childcare. Each type of volunteer position has a specific role which is herein explained.

### **Classroom Aides/Small Group Facilitators:**

- Volunteers should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of class.
- Volunteers should check in by signing the sign in sheet and procuring their ID badge from a member of the Religious Education Staff. ID badges must be returned to the Religious Education Office at the end of class time each week or stored in the Catechist's supply bin located in each classroom.
- Classroom Aides assist the Catechist in maintaining a classroom atmosphere conducive to the learning process. This may include direct interaction with students in need of redirection in the classroom.
- Classroom Aides prepare the room by setting out supplies, distribute any folders, papers, projects, or name tags needed for the day's lesson.
- Classroom Aides maintain the Classroom supply bin and the Catechist supply bin located in the Religious Education cabinet of each classroom.
- Classroom Aides assist the Catechist in gathering materials for class from the Catechist Resource Center or the Materials Storage Room.
- A Classroom Aide must escort students to and from the classroom during class time unless a Hall Monitor is summoned.
- Classroom Aides work with individuals and/or small groups as directed by the Catechist either in the classroom or in the hallway.
- Classroom Aides help maintain discipline in the classroom at the Catechist's direction.
- Classroom Aides set forth a good example of attentiveness by refraining from cellphone use in the classroom and conversing "socially" with other Aides in the classroom that distract from the lesson being presented.
- Classroom Aides refrain from sharing any information about any student with anyone other than the Catechist or a member of the Religious Education Staff. The classroom environment is one of openness and intimacy with all members. For this reason we ask that all classroom activities be held in confidence.

## **Hall Monitors:**

- Hall Monitors should arrive 15 minutes before class time and check in by signing the sign in sheet and procuring their ID badge from a member of the Religious Education Staff. ID badges must be returned to the Religious Education Office at the end of class time each week. A basket is located in the cafeteria for this purpose.
- Hall Monitors maintain security in assigned hallways by monitoring all activity in the hallways. This includes being alert for all unauthorized visitors or students out of their assigned classrooms. Only authorized St. Brigid Staff, Catechists, and Volunteers are allowed in the hallways during class time.
- Hall Monitors help maintain a smooth traffic pattern in the hallways and direct people from using unauthorized entrances and exits. This is especially important during arrival and dismissal procedures.
- Hall Monitors escort students to and from classrooms, including students that have an early dismissal and must be escorted to the cafeteria.
- Hall Monitors must refrain from using cell phones and holding excessive conversations which negatively affect the Hall Monitors ability to maintain alertness. Quiet reading is permitted as long as the Hall Monitor remains diligent to the activities occurring around their assigned station.
- Hall Monitors stay at their assigned position until all students have exited their classrooms and have progressed out either the Primary Grade hallway doors or to the Cafeteria. This is very important for timely dismissal and to assist with unauthorized visitors (including parents) gaining access to the hallways.
- Hall Monitors understand that he/she may be called upon to take on a different Religious Education position during their chosen class time. In order to abide by compliance rules and upon the discretion of the Religious Education Staff, you may be asked to transition into another volunteer position as needed during the respective class time/assignment.

## **Childcare Volunteers:**

- One Lead Volunteer should arrive 10 minutes prior to the start of class time.
- Volunteers should check in by signing the sign in sheet and procuring their ID badge from a member of the Religious Education Staff. ID badges must be returned to the Religious Education Office at the end of class time each week. A basket is provided at each exit for this purpose.
- After checking in, Childcare Volunteers should report to Room 101. Parent volunteers will be bringing members of the Childcare Program to you, in this space.
- Childcare Volunteers are responsible for keeping attendance for all children assigned to childcare. Childcare Volunteers should use the assigned form to be sure that all volunteers sign-in their children at drop-off and sign-out their children at pick-up. In case of emergency, Childcare Volunteers should keep the attendance sheet with them throughout the class hour. This attendance record is to be kept in the Childcare notebook.
- Childcare Volunteers maintain a safe environment for all children in their care. Please be sure that there are two (2) adults per 10 children in the Childcare Room at all times. If a second volunteer does not arrive, please notify a member of the Religious Education Staff.
- Medical concerns, conditions, and all other issues for all children in the Childcare program (i.e. allergies, disabilities) will be provided to the childcare volunteer for reference and in case of emergency plans. Childcare Volunteers will have limited access to the child's belongings in the childcare room.
- Childcare Volunteers should be mindful of the borrowed space they are occupying. Play resources will be provided to the Childcare Program for use during the class hour. Outdoor playtime is encouraged.
- Allergy-free snack items will be provided to the Childcare Program for distribution during the class hour.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

1. Harassment can take many forms. Harassment can occur at any parish activity, and/or can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, gymnasiums, or even at programs sponsored by the parish at other locations. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability or other protected characteristics.
  
2. It is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus to maintain a spiritually enriching environment, in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. No participant, volunteer adult leader, or parish staff member - male or female - should be subject to unlawful harassment in any form, and specifically not to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.
  
3. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Offensive sexual flirtations, advances, propositions;
  - Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual or gender-based nature;
  - Explicit or degrading sexual or gender -based comments about another individual or his or her appearance;
  - The display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures, or objects;
  - Any offensive or physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
  - Graffiti of a sexual nature;
  - Fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others; □  
Spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.

Sexual harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature—it also includes harassment that is based on **gender**. Gender-based harassment, which is also prohibited, is conduct that would not occur except for the sex of the person involved. An example would be referring to a woman by or as a female body part, or a demeaning sex-based term, or treating people differently because of their gender. The same prohibitions apply with regard to inflammatory or offensive comments or conduct which are based upon race, color, age, religion, disability, or national origin. In short, working relationships between employees and volunteers must be based on mutual respect.

Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take, any personnel or other action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to unwelcome sexual activity will have any effect on the individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, development, program evaluation, participation in parish programs or activities, or any other condition of employment or achievement. Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature. (For example, a catechetical leader hugging a child after an accomplishment, a

catechist consoling an adolescent with an injury or physical conduct during an activity to enhance catechetical learning like engaging in movement to accompany liturgical music would not be considered sexual conduct.) However, peer-based sexual harassment is a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.

4. A sexually hostile environment can be created by a parish employee, volunteer, participant, or visitor to the parish activity.
5. Any person who believes that he/she is subject to unlawful harassment or intimidation must contact the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor, or (c) diocesan director of religious education. A complaint must be filed in writing. In the event that an individual alleges harassment by a program administrator or a pastor, the individual may file the complaint with the diocesan director of religious education. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.
6. Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action against any program administrator, volunteer, or staff engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account the individuals and circumstances. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, disciplinary measures up to and including termination of services.
7. No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated. The Diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.

#### PARISH RESPONSIBILITIES

1. At best practice, each parish shall give staff and volunteers a copy of the Harassment Policy Verification Form annually. The staff and volunteers are to sign and return the Harassment Policy Verification Form.
2. Each parish program shall follow diocesan procedures for timely investigation and response to complaints.
3. Each parish shall periodically train program administrators, staff and volunteers to ensure that they understand which types of behavior constitute harassment, the prevention of harassment, and how they should respond in the event of experiencing such behavior. Records are to be kept of training dates and names of those in attendance.
4. Each parish program shall include the Harassment Policy in materials distributed to the program's staff/volunteers.

## HARASSMENT POLICY VERIFICATION FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_,  
Please print your name

(check all that apply)

- an employee of St. Brigid of Kildare
- a volunteer at St. Brigid of Kildare
- a parent/guardian of a minor participant
- a minor participant (grades 6 -12)

have received copies of the diocesan policy on harassment.

I understand that it is necessary that any complaint of harassment must be filed with the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor or (c) diocesan director of religious education. I have had an opportunity to read the policy and am confident I understand the content and purpose.

St. Brigid of Kildare Religious Education

Name of parish and program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Office of Religious Education and Catechesis  
Catholic Diocese of Columbus**

**Adopted: 08/04**

Please return to St. Brigid Religious Education Office by September 28, 2018.

**St. Brigid of Kildare Religious Education**  
**7175 Avery Road**  
**Dublin, OH 43017**  
**614-761-1176**

I have received and read the Volunteer Handbook for St. Brigid of Kildare Religious Education. I understand that I am responsible for and will abide by the information contained therein.

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Signature

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Print name

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Date

Please return to St. Brigid Religious Education Office by September 28, 2018.