



Brookside Elementary School

Parent Volunteer Handbook

Helping children is what teaching, parenting, and volunteering is all about – a shared venture, a cooperative undertaking, and a labor of love.

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Message from your Brookside Principals

Brookside Elementary School welcomes parent and community volunteers. We need and want your involvement! Brookside is proud to provide an excellent team of dedicated teachers and staff. To complement this, we rely on volunteers like you to make a significant difference each day in our classrooms and on our campuses, extending the work we do. Volunteering is a great way for parents to become better acquainted with Brookside, while contributing valuable support to our students, teachers and programs. This Volunteer Handbook will provide you with some background information and guidelines to help make your volunteer experience more meaningful.

We look forward to another great school year!!

Message from your Brookside Parent Club

Your Brookside Parent Club is continually recruiting parent volunteers to help with all aspects of campus activity. We are tremendously thankful for the countless hours that you, as parents, spend helping out at school. Your dedicated involvement each year truly makes a difference at Brookside and for our kids. In fact, research indicates that **excellent schools have parents and community members who are actively engaged in supporting schools.**

We thank you in advance for your continued volunteer efforts at Brookside!

Volunteer Handbook

The purpose of this Volunteer Handbook is to assist you in your role as a volunteer at Brookside Elementary School. As a volunteer, you are an important part of our educational team.

Goals of the Volunteer Program

- To enlist and strengthen the cooperation of parents and the community in the education of children
- To assist teachers and other school staff in meeting the needs of individual students
- To provide the extra support needed to plan and run special school-related activities and events
- To develop an environment that encourages friendly communication among the home, school and our community

Signing Up for Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer sign-ups take place on campus the first week of school (at special volunteer tables) and in classrooms on Back-to-School Night. Volunteer opportunities are also announced in *Bear Necessities* (our school newsletter) and via special e-mail messages throughout the school year. In addition, parents are always welcome to contact Brookside's Volunteer Coordinators, as well as their children's Room Parents, to find out about and sign up for volunteer activities.

Check-In Procedures and Name Tags

All Brookside volunteers are asked to sign in at the school office and pick-up a "Beary Important Person" (BIP) Badge prior to classroom or other campus volunteer assignments. This is a safety precaution that is necessary for school staff to be able to account for everyone who is on campus. The volunteer sign-in logs and badges are located in both campus offices.

Keys to Volunteer Success

Dependability

Volunteer time is most effective when the commitment is taken seriously and the school can count on you. Please plan to arrive early to volunteer assignments so that class time is not interrupted. If you will be unable to make a scheduled volunteer assignment, please try to find a substitute volunteer from your class list. If you are unable to find a substitute, please call the office to let your teacher know that she/he may need to find a replacement.

Professionalism

Parent volunteers serve as adult role models for the children at Brookside, and therefore, should always demonstrate consideration, good judgment, sensitivity, and professional attitudes when working with students.

Confidentiality

As a matter of professional ethics, and federal law, school volunteers need to be careful not to share information regarding individual students, staff members, or any school records or files with unauthorized persons. It is extremely important that confidentiality be maintained at all times. This respect for the privacy of others is essential.

Following Directions and Asking Questions

School staff or volunteer leaders will provide volunteers with clear directions for classroom and campus tasks. Parent volunteers are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification from staff and volunteer leaders as needed.

Communication

Sharing ideas, concerns, and suggestions with school staff and volunteer leaders can help enhance the effectiveness of our programs and special school activities and events. Most issues can be effectively resolved with good communication between parent volunteers, teachers, and administrative staff.

Pledge Your Time and Make a Difference at Brookside!!

There are many different volunteer opportunities at Brookside. Here are just a few examples of ways that parents can get involved:

- Working in the classroom
- Serving in a leadership role on the Brookside Site Council or Parent Club
- Working on Octoberfest, the Brookside Bears BBQ, and other special school-wide activities
- Developing and managing a Brookside website
- Driving on field trips and/or coordinating field trip drivers
- Helping maintain Brookside gardens and engaging in other campus beautification projects
- Serving on the Yearbook Committee and/or gathering photos for the yearbook
- Helping with the daily lunch program
- Serving popsicles after school on Wednesdays
- Monitoring activity on the playground during recess and/or lunch
- Assisting the art and music teachers and the librarian with various tasks
- Becoming a "Safe Routes to School" leader and helping kids get safely to school...the green way!
- Helping out with YES Theatre and experiencing an outstanding drama program for kids
- Working on the YES Gala or assisting with other YES fundraising activities
- And much, much, more...

Finding your own way to volunteer at Brookside (i.e., a way that suits your interests, personality, and schedule) can be fun. If you have special skills or talents, or access to special resources, please let us know. We can often use a parent's special expertise in the classroom and in other ways on campus.

Your volunteer service will make a positive difference at Brookside and can be very rewarding personally. Not only will it benefit school programs and kids, but it can help you to feel more connected with the community and to have an influence in your child's education and the future of our school.

Key Volunteer Opportunities at Brookside

Listed below are descriptions of some key volunteer positions/opportunities at Brookside.

Brookside Volunteer Coordinators

These key volunteers help coordinate volunteer efforts at Brookside. They communicate to the parent body about volunteer opportunities and recruit volunteers for key positions on both campuses. They work closely with Parent Club representatives, Room Parents, and school administrators.

Room Parents

Room parents help coordinate activities and events within a specific classroom. They communicate with the teacher and other parents about volunteer needs for the classroom and school and about upcoming activities and events. This job involves staying in contact with classroom parents and Volunteer Coordinators through e-mail and can be completed during the school day or in the evening.

Classroom Volunteers

Classroom volunteers assist teachers in the classroom in a variety of ways (e.g., leading small-group reading and math centers, working one-on-one with students, helping with special projects, completing clerical tasks).

Parent Club and Site Council

Both of these Brookside leadership committees are continually looking for new volunteers for their Executive Boards. Get involved in what goes on each day on campus and in the classroom, and work closely with Principals, teachers and parents throughout the Ross Valley School District to meet the ongoing needs of our school.

Octoberfest Chairs

Octoberfest is the Brookside Parent Club's largest fundraiser, attracting hundreds of folks from the Ross Valley each year. The Octoberfest Co-Chairs spearhead and oversee all activities associated with the event and lead it to success each year.

Brookside Bears BBQ Coordinators

The Brookside Bears BBQ is a beginning-of-the-potluck event with music and activities. It provides a great opportunity for families to welcome each other to a new school year. The BBQ Coordinators plan and run the event with the help of many other parent volunteers.

Book Fair Volunteers

Both Lower and Upper Brookside promote the love of reading among children in a variety of ways, including annual book fairs. During the book fair on each campus, age appropriate books and items are made available for sale, and kids have a week to look over the merchandise and make purchases. Volunteers are needed to plan/organize the book fairs, as well as to help sell items during the events.

Bear Necessities Editor

Bear Necessities is Brookside's school newsletter. The editor is responsible for soliciting newsletter submissions and for compiling the articles and information submitted each week into a single document to be sent out to parents electronically. The editor works closely with Brookside's principals, support staff, and Parent Club representatives.

Brookside Website Manager

This volunteer will help design and manage a Brookside Parent Club website to facilitate the dissemination of important information to parents.

Campus Care Volunteers

These volunteers will promote and run two community clean-up days for both Brookside campuses and recruit a team of parent volunteers to help with campus clean-up and beautification activities.

Garden Coordinators

The gardens at both Lower and Upper Brookside need continual TLC to make them a flourishing and exciting environment for students to enjoy. It is primarily parents who provide this TLC, and we need more of you to join in the effort.

Field Trip Coordinators and Chaperones

Field trips extend learning beyond the school boundary and parent chaperones are vital to keeping field trips alive. Without adequate student-to-chaperone ratios, teachers are unable to provide field trips to students. If you are interested in coordinating field trip chaperones for your child's classroom, you can sign-up in the classroom on Back-to-School Night.

Lunch Coordinators

These volunteers work on campus at lunchtime to provide pre-paid lunches to students.

Lunch/Recess Monitor

Lunch recess is a busy and active time at Upper and Lower Brookside. Children benefit from having extra adult supervision and support both at their lunch tables and on the playground. Please let your principal know if you are interested in helping with this very important role at Brookside.

Yearbook Editor

The Yearbook Editor is responsible for designing the annual Brookside yearbook and arranging for the document to be printed and distributed to students. The editor is also responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Brookside Photo Archivists who volunteer to help take/gather photos for the yearbook.

Brookside Photo Archivists

Like taking photos? There are many “candid moments” to capture on campus and at various field trips throughout the school year. Volunteers are needed to take and gather a broad spectrum of photos to include in Brookside’s yearbook.

Teacher Appreciation Volunteers

Each year, Brookside holds several events to celebrate all that the school’s teachers and staff do for our kids and community throughout the year. Volunteers are needed to help coordinate these events as well as to prepare food and other items for the activities.

Bear Wear Coordinator

Bear Wear is our school spirit wear (e.g., Brookside t-shirts, sweatshirts, ball caps). The Bear Wear Coordinator is responsible for managing the relationship with our Bear Wear vendor and for communicating with parents about how and when they can purchase their school spirit wear.

Safe Routes to School Committee

This committee is designed to keep our kids safe as they get to and from school each day. As a committee member, you’ll help plan campus events that teach kids about safe ways to commute, as well as host fun activities and challenges that encourage families to use “green” ways to get to school.

Art and Library Docents

Art and Library staff at Brookside can use parent help in a variety of ways throughout the school year (e.g., hanging student art around campus in preparation for special events, organizing library books). This is a

great opportunity for parents to volunteer throughout the year on an “as needed” basis.

Hospitality Chair

The Hospitality Chair works with the Parent Club and Volunteer Coordinators, and is responsible for coordinating refreshments for the Back-to-School Volunteer Sign-Up Tables (first week of school) and for fifth grade graduation in June.

Popsicle Day Volunteers

Wednesdays are “popsicle day” at Brookside. After school, interested students can purchase popsicles. The Popsicle Volunteers help coordinate popsicle sales on both campuses.

Emergency Preparedness Committee

This committee helps ensure that our campuses are adequately prepared for a disaster. Members work with Brookside’s principals and a larger district committee to set up special student drills and to maintain an emergency storage container that houses emergency supplies.

Parent Education Coordinator

This volunteer is responsible for working with Brookside’s Parent Club, as well as Parent Education Coordinators at other RVSD schools, to help plan parent education opportunities for families in the district.

New Family Liaisons

These volunteers are responsible for planning special activities (e.g., coffee meetings) to welcome new non-kindergarten families to Brookside.

Green Clean Committee

This committee supports the use of “green” cleaning products in Brookside’s classrooms. Committee members check classrooms to make sure they are adequately stocked with supplies.

Lost and Found Coordinator

This volunteer sends reminder messages to parents and students regarding “lost and found” items, and helps display items for parents and students to claim. The Lost and Found Coordinator also arranges for the donation of unclaimed items to charity twice during the school year.

YES Foundation Volunteer Opportunities

The YES foundation is an educational foundation in the Ross Valley School District (RVSD) that raises funds to pay for enrichment programs and activities (e.g., art, music, drama, assemblies) in all RVSD schools. The foundation is run by parents. There are many YES-related volunteer opportunities for interested Brookside parents. Several key opportunities are described here.

- **Brookside YES Assembly Coordinator:** This volunteer works with Brookside's principals to plan and book special educational assemblies for students on both campuses.
- **Classroom "Friends of YES" Representatives:** These representatives are responsible for periodically sending YES communications (written by YES leadership) to parents in their children's classrooms and for thanking classroom parents who contribute to the foundation. One "Friends of YES" Representative is needed for each classroom.
- **Brookside "Friends of YES" Leads:** These YES leaders at Brookside are primarily responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Classroom "Friends of YES" Representatives at Upper and Lower Brookside.
- **YES Family Giving Lead:** This YES leader oversees the YES Foundation's annual Family Giving fundraising campaign.
- **YES eScrip Lead:** This YES leader oversees the YES Foundation's eScrip efforts. Among other things, this includes educating parents about eScrip and encouraging participation by parents at all RVSD schools.
- **YES Gala Coordinator and Volunteers:** Each year, YES hosts an annual fundraising gala (i.e., party and live auction) for parents, teachers, and community members in the Ross Valley School District. Many volunteers are needed to plan and run this large event.

For More Information

If you would like to find out more about Brookside-specific volunteer opportunities, please contact one of our *Brookside Volunteer Coordinators*:

- Cynthia Kula at cynthia_kula@yahoo.com (BLC)
- Mary West at maryameswest@yahoo.com (BLC)
- Sarah Sanders at sjsanders@live.com (BUC)

If you want more information about YES Foundation volunteer opportunities, please contact askyes@yestokids.org.

For additional questions you have about the Brookside Parent Club, please contact one of the *Parent Club Co-Presidents*:

- Lisa Graham at birdygraham@yahoo.com
- Kim Lear at lear_kim@yahoo.com



Brookside Bears Care!

Thanks for Volunteering

My Brookside Volunteer Responsibilities Log:

Volunteer Assignment	Where	When	# Hours