



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

Dear WCA Volunteer:

On behalf of the teachers, staff, and students, we would like to thank you for volunteering at Westside Christian Academy.

Volunteers are an integral part to the success at WCA. We deeply respect and encourage the many efforts of our exceptional volunteers who give so willingly of their time to the staff and students at the school. WCA encourages and promotes the use of school volunteers in order to expand and enhance parental and community involvement within our school.

This handbook is an attempt to articulate the necessary guidelines and expectations to which a person commits when considering volunteering at WCA. It is important for all volunteers to thoroughly read the handbook as it contains details about WCA and the roles and responsibilities of volunteering.

If you have questions or concerns about anything contained in this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact the school office at 440-331-1300.



PURPOSE – MISSION – PHILOSOPHY

Educational Philosophy and Vision

Westside Christian Academy seeks to aid children in their moral and academic development in order to be equipped to fulfill God's purpose for their lives in the home, church, and society. WCA, as an extension of the home and of the church, exists to fulfill God's commands to raise children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." While we believe that the Bible clearly gives the responsibility of training children to parents, WCA is here to assist parents in fulfilling this biblical responsibility.

Our mission is to integrate biblical truth with academic excellence so that our students will become leaders committed to impacting the world for Jesus Christ. The educational philosophy of WCA is based on the understanding that the knowledge of God is the beginning of wisdom, and that truth can only be understood through a relationship with Jesus Christ as the Creator and Sustainer of the world around us.

Included in our philosophy is the acknowledgment that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, and has authority to guide us in our pursuit of Truth and in the instruction of the children entrusted to us. WCA's philosophy embodies the concept that education is more than just academics; it also involves character development which prepares children to fulfill God's will in their lives.

Our vision arises from a desire to create an atmosphere where Christian teachers and administrators can challenge their students to develop an understanding of God's hand in all of creation while striving for the highest level of academic achievement. We believe that we have a God given responsibility to educate children in a way that integrates faith and learning. Through this integration, a Christian worldview is being instilled in our students, preparing them to impact the world for Jesus Christ.

Non Discrimination Policy

Westside Christian Academy recruits and admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational programs and athletics/extracurricular activities. Furthermore, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, or public school district initiated desegregation.

Westside Christian Academy will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its personnel.



Statement of Faith

In accordance with the mission of Westside Christian Academy, we hold the following Statement to be true and to be the foundation upon which the Christian Faith is practiced. We therefore request that all who wish to associate themselves with Westside Christian Academy accept and agree with the following statement:

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, without error in its original writings, the only complete and authoritative source of His will and His plan for the salvation of man, and of guidance for Christian life (II Timothy 3:16, 17).
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Gen 1:1; John 10:30; John 10:37-38).
3. We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin Birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His imminent return in power and glory (Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23; Luke 1:35; Heb 4:15; Heb 7:25; John 2:11; Heb 9:12; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; John 11:25; Acts 1:11; Rev 19:11-16).
4. We believe that Man was created in the image of God, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners in thought, word and deed (John 3:5; Rom 5:8).
5. We believe that the sinless life, sacrificial death and physical resurrection of Jesus Christ provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only those who receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and thus become children of God (Titus 3: 4-7; Eph 2:8-9; Rom 3:21-28; Rom 5:8; Gal 4:4-7).
6. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, and that those who are saved through faith in Jesus Christ shall have eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord; those who have not believed in Jesus Christ through faith shall receive judgment and eternal damnation (John 5:24; 28-29; Matt 25:46).
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 8:9; I Cor 12:12-13; Gal 3:26-28).

Secondary Doctrines

Because there are many different denominations and churches represented at WCA, occasional doctrinal differences may arise between students, families, and/or faculty. Although we all share a commitment to the central message of the Word of God and have agreed to not compromise on the primary doctrinal positions found within the WCA Statement of Faith, it is expected that some of us may hold secondary doctrines that are specific to our particular church or denomination and which may differ from doctrines held by other churches or denominations represented at WCA. When these differences are raised in the WCA community, they should be referred back to the parents and local church for guidance, and not let them divide the community that makes up WCA. In this spirit we adhere to the following statement by the seventeenth century German theologian Rupertus Meldenius: **In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.**



Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely reflects Christ's relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Westside Christian Academy as part of the Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the WCA community, it is imperative that all persons employed by WCA in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Westside Christian Academy.

WCA employees of all classifications must be in full agreement with WCA's Statement of Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139).



Core Values

WCA's core values are those foundational beliefs or principles by which we carry out our mission and conduct daily business. Our attitudes and actions should ever be seeking to align with these values.

The core values we have identified are:

1. Interconnected, overlapping
2. True for every classroom and office, and every staff member regardless of role
3. Few enough to memorize but meaty enough to have real meaning

This is different from our mission statement, educational philosophy, and statement of faith. They are simply value-laden words that keep us on track to indeed *fulfill* our mission. So, whether in the classroom or business office or in board oversight, we should strive to always uphold these values or virtues. We should discuss them among staff and with students. These values go with us on field trips and discussions with vendors and how we interact with the community. They would be regularly taught, identified on our website and perhaps placed on walls in the building.

Here are the selected values - six words, all nouns, but loaded with meaning and a call to action. Under each word are four points of some elaboration, not exhaustive by any means.

Christlikeness (Romans 8:29; 2Corin. 3:18; Gal 2:20)

- We aim to glorify the Father by following the Son through the power of the Holy Spirit with the guidance of the Word of God.
- We revere the Holy Scriptures and strive for a biblical perspective in all we do.
- We are to be servant-leaders, as Christ himself was, kingdom-minded, and eternally focused.
- We are people of gratitude who live with joy as we develop in Christ-like character and wisdom with a commitment to prayer in all we do.

Love (Matt 22:36-40; John 13:34-35; I John 4:7-10)

- We love God and others
- We strive to be grace-filled with students and adults alike, treating each other with kindness even when being firm.
- We seek to love and lead as Christ modeled for us in humility and service.
- We are to be known by our love for each other.

Unity (John 17:21; I Corin. 1:10; Eph. 4:3)

- We are unified in purpose and in our identity in Christ.
- We seek to work as one, encouraging and trusting each other, recognizing each other's God-given gifts and celebrating diversity in the body of Christ.
- We hold the family in high esteem and see parents as sacred partners.
- We assume and seek the best for each other and settle differences with love and respect.



Excellence (Col. 3:23-24; Phil 4:8; Prov. 22:29)

- We are to be marked by godly excellence, striving to do our work as for the Lord and not for men.
- We strive for best practices with scripture as our foundation.
- We value hard work.
- We strive to reflect God's truth, beauty and goodness.

Integrity (Titus 2:7; Prov. 11:3; I Corin. 4:2)

- We seek and embrace truth and wisdom.
- We are honest in all dealings.
- We respect authority.
- We are committed to biblical stewardship, recognizing that resources of time, talent and treasure are ultimately from God.

Discipleship (Eph. 4:11-17; I Peter 1:3-11; Prov 1:5; II Tim. 3:16-17)

- We embrace opportunities to grow in knowledge and wisdom and develop a heart after God's own, no matter our age.
- We choose a long-term perspective of education, giving students the tools to learn, explore God's creation, and live for His purposes. We educate for a lifetime on a path of wisdom.
- We understand that difficulties and adversity are opportunities for personal growth. (James 1:2-5)
- We value reading deeply, personal study of scripture, and committed involvement in local churches.



VOLUNTEERING REQUIREMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Purpose

At WCA, volunteers are vital to what we do. Most importantly, it is a command of God that we give of our spiritual gifts and talents: 1 Peter 4:10, “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” We could not do what we do everyday without dedicated, hard-working volunteers. There are many opportunities to serve within the WCA community, including options for those who work outside the home. Volunteers may assist the school in any of the following areas:

- Lunch monitors
- Recess monitors
- Field trip chaperone/driver
- Special classroom events (holidays, etc)
- Trivium Challenge Day-US
- Spring and fall property cleanup
- Parent Teacher Fellowship
- Committees led by board members or others in leadership
- And much more!

No volunteer should be teaching students unless specifically invited in a teaching capacity, such as guest speakers, chapel speakers, etc. Invitations to teach must be approved by a member of administration.

Volunteers must:

- Agree with our statement of faith;
- Be active and engaged in a local Bible believing church body;
- Provide a spiritual reference from a pastor, which permits us to speak to the reference;
- Be able to honestly complete a statement of non-conviction;
- Be approved by a principal and/or head of school;
- Sign off on volunteer policies;
- Pass a background check;
- Complete all required training (Epipen, AED, LifeVac, ALICE, Sexual Abuse Awareness).

WCA has agreed with the parents of its students that all supervision of the students will be guided by Christian authorities who agree with WCA’s Statement of Faith. Accordingly, volunteers must operate within that same agreement and must also ascribe to WCA’s Statement of Faith. If a child’s family member would like to attend school events but cannot ascribe to the Statement of Faith or otherwise meet WCA’s volunteer requirements, they may check in at the desk as a visitor but he or she is not eligible for volunteer status and must interact with students under the supervision of a staff member.



Lunch/Recess

Parents, guardians, and grandparents of WCA are welcomed and encouraged to participate during lunch and recess time. Lunch help consists of assisting the classroom teacher by monitoring the children during their lunch period and cleanup afterwards. Recess time is a coordinated effort with the recess teacher and is set up in advance for specific days and time of the week.

**Allergy sensitive rooms:* Some classrooms may have posted signs and teachers will communicate expectations more thoroughly with students in those classrooms regarding any severe food allergies.

Lunch Help Policies:

- Classroom doors must remain open and lights on when a teacher is not present with volunteers.
- Volunteers should plan to read a book or ask students engaging lunchtime questions for pair and share or group discussion. **Volunteers may not show videos or movies.**
- Volunteers enforce written classroom expectations posted by teachers; if discipline issues arise, the volunteer will contact the classroom teacher to shepherd the student. Teachers should establish contact procedures.
- No volunteer should yell at students or threaten or demean a child.
- No volunteer should engage in inappropriate physical conduct with a child, as detailed below in the physical contact guidelines.
- In the event of an emergency, volunteers should yell or call for the closest adult assistance and monitor the safety of students until help arrives. Any WCA staff member will assist in an emergency situation.
- To request help for non-emergency situations, send a student to the teacher work room to get a WCA staff member.
- Lunch helpers should know the location of the closest AED, lifevac, and epipen and should be capable of retrieving them for a WCA staff member. *Lifevac is a last resort after basic lifesaving procedures have been administered.*

Recess Help Policies:

- Recess helpers should monitor the area assigned by the staff member in charge.
- Ensure understanding of boundaries, guidelines, and policies from recess supervisor.
- If discipline or medical issues arise, the helper should refer them to the staff member in charge.
- The staff member in charge is responsible for communicating any of these issues with the parents or guardians. Volunteers are asked to adhere to our confidentiality policies.
- In the event of an emergency, volunteers should call for adult assistance and monitor the safety of students until help arrives.



Field Trips

Parents or guardians are welcomed and encouraged to chaperone class field trips.

- Chaperones may be asked to monitor an assigned group of children in addition to their own child, which they would be responsible for watching until the students arrive back at school.
- Chaperones must stick to the assigned actions from the teacher and should not amend plans without express permission from the teacher. This might include:
 - changing a route;
 - skipping assignments or requirements of the trip;
 - buying food, drink or souvenirs (unless approved by the teacher); and
 - adding activities not outlined in the plan for the day.
- Chaperones must communicate any issues (discipline, medical, etc.) with the teacher and should have the teacher's cell phone number available to call them during the trip if need arises.

Chaperones may not override school policies or teacher instructions on field trips to make exceptions for their child or others. (If all students must carry their own lunch, may not purchase snacks, etc., then this applies to chaperone children also.)

Driving

Parents will be asked to drive and help supervise students during the activity.

- Parents have been approved through the Volunteer Drivers Application process to be able to drive.
- Driving record background checks and criminal background checks are required for field trip drivers. (Drivers with more than 1 ticketed moving violation within the past 3 years will be disqualified from driving in accordance with WCA's insurance policy guidelines.)
- No driver may be alone in a car with any child that is not their own. It is our recommendation that two adults be present in each vehicle whenever possible.
- No volunteer should engage in inappropriate physical conduct with a child, as detailed below.
- If you listen to music in your car when you drive for a field trip, we ask that only Christian instrumental or classical music be used. We encourage students to engage in wholesome conversation instead of using music whenever possible.
- You may not show movies/DVDs while traveling.
- Students may not take electronic devices with them on field trips. Any exceptions require administrative approval.
- Students should ride in the back seat until they are at least 12 years old, whether or not there is a passenger airbag in front.
- Students should never be double-buckled.
- Ohio law states that all children less than 8 years old and less than 4 feet, 9 inches tall are to be secured in a booster seat when traveling in a motor vehicle. All WCA students in K-2 should be in a booster seat during field trips unless they have met both of the above requirements.



Etiquette for Grammar Students

Hallway Etiquette (K-6)

- Students should walk quietly down the hallway with hands behind their back.
- Students look for opportunities to pick up garbage in order to keep our school clean.

Classroom Etiquette (K-6)

- Students show teachers respect by listening intently and sitting up straight (ready for scholar posture).
- Students raise quiet hands when wanting to participate.
- Students are to obey the lunch volunteers at all times.
- Students are not to throw food.
- Running, wrestling and throwing items is not permitted during lunch times.
- Students are to use appropriate manners during the lunch period.

Recess Etiquette (K-6)

- Students should attempt to resolve conflict by using their words, not their hands.
- Students are encouraged to ask a recess supervisor to assist with resolving conflict, monitor a game or to join them in play.
- Students are encouraged to invite others to join in activities and organized games.
- Students are instructed to contact the teacher on duty if there is a serious injury or emergency.
- [WCA Recess Procedures](#)

Restroom Etiquette (K-6)

- Use the restroom quietly; no playing.
- Respect other's personal space.
- Leave it better than you found it.

Protocol Sayings

- Lines, lines, lines...quiet and straight.
- Obey..right away, all the way with a great attitude every day.
- Leave it better than you found it.
- 1,2,3..eyes on me; 1,2..eyes on you.

Code of Ethics for Volunteers

All parents and other volunteers, when serving in a capacity that might be regarded as representative of WCA (e.g. while serving at the school for lunch, in the classroom, or for school programs, etc., and/or serving away from the school during field trips, or any other school-related activity), are expected to abide by basic biblical standards of behavior for the complete duration of such events or activities. We are to strive to model Christ-like lives for the WCA children and the community around us. A parent or volunteer who behaves in ways contrary to WCA's policies and practices may be asked to refrain from participation in school events.



Confidentiality/Ethical Responsibility

The volunteer is responsible to the staff member with whom he/she is working. Every task performed is important, either directly or indirectly to the educational process.

- Use discretion in commenting on school matters, including the performance of other students or school personnel.
- Volunteers should not request personal information of students or their personal records.
- Volunteers are to avoid gossip. Ephesians 4:29 "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."
- Volunteers are to especially avoid any unwholesome discussion of students, teachers or staff in the context of social gatherings.

Security

All volunteers are required to enter through the main entrance of the school (Door D), and sign in at the front desk. Due to security protocols, all volunteers are required to wear a visitor/volunteer badge at all times while they are in the building or on campus.

Responsible Boundaries with Students

This policy aims to ensure a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for students, in line with the biblical principles of love, respect, and integrity. It provides clear guidelines for physical interaction between adults and students to maintain appropriate boundaries and protect both students and adults from any form of misconduct or misunderstanding.

General Guidelines for Appropriate Physical Contact

Permitted: Handshakes, high-fives, and side hugs are appropriate forms of physical contact. These should be brief and in public settings. Student-initiated hugs may occur but the adult should attempt to redirect students to a more appropriate form of contact, primary students (PK-2) may give full-body hugs without consent at times, and the adult should use one arm to pat their back and attempt to redirect them.

Prohibited: Full-body hugs, lap-sitting, carrying students, kissing, and any form of physical contact that could be interpreted as intimate or affectionate beyond a professional relationship.

Personal Space and Boundaries:

- Respect each student's personal space. Avoid any physical interaction that may make a student uncomfortable.
- Always seek consent from the student before initiating any form of physical contact, even if the intention is benign (e.g., helping with a task, giving a high five).
- Corporal punishment or physical discipline (e.g., spanking, slapping) is strictly prohibited.



- Use words and non-physical gestures (e.g., thumbs up, verbal praise) to affirm and support students. If a student seems uncomfortable with praise talk with the dean or principal for guidance.

Supervision and Visibility:

- Physical interactions with students should take place in an open and observable environment.
- Avoid situations where you are alone with a student in a private setting.
- If one-on-one interaction is necessary, keep doors open and ensure visibility from the outside.

Response to Student-Initiated Contact:

- If a student initiates appropriate physical contact as outlined above it is acceptable to receive the contact provided you are in a public space and the duration is brief.
- If a student initiates inappropriate physical contact, gently redirect them and explain the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries. Situations involving US students should be communicated to the Deans.
- Report any repeated incidents of inappropriate behavior to the administration immediately. Inappropriate physical boundaries may be an indicator of a child at risk.



BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

WCA requires a criminal background check, prohibitive offenses include any listed in division (A) (5) of section 109.572 (see Prohibited Offenses list) of the Ohio Revised Code or an existing or former offense of any municipal corporation, this state, or any other state that is substantially equivalent to any of these offenses as well as a Statement of Non-Conviction for all staff and volunteers.

- Volunteers must complete the Volunteer Application for approval.
- Driving record checks and criminal background checks are performed yearly.
- **Volunteers are required to self-report any changes to their statement of non-conviction or driving record after approval.**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

No policy in this manual will supersede any school policy as outlined in the Faculty/Staff Handbook or the Parent/Student Handbook. All volunteers agree to serve without expectation of compensation unless otherwise specified in writing. All volunteers must commit to providing a safe and secure environment for students and staff.

Volunteer approval may be revoked at any time and for any reason, including but not limited to, non-compliance with any of the above stated policies and procedures. Revocation will be determined by the Head of School and communicated directly to the volunteer.



ROLES & PERMISSIONS MATRIX

Visitors/Parent Helper	Volunteer	Volunteer Driver
Community members with business or personal relationships with the school. <i>Parent Helpers are a subset of visitors.</i>	Community members who have completed and been approved through the volunteer application process.	Community members who have completed and been approved through the volunteer application process.
- Allowed on campus with oversight from a staff member - Allowed in classrooms with direct supervision by a staff member - Distinguished by a visitor lanyard or sticker badge.	- Allowed to serve in supervisory capacities for students on campus, as defined in the volunteer handbook. - Distinguished by a volunteer lanyard.	- Allowed to serve in supervisory capacities off campus, as defined in the volunteer handbook. - Allowed to drive students as defined in the volunteer handbook.
Coach/Club Leader	Staff/Faculty/Subs	Leadership
Community members who are hired to lead a student organization. They serve as a shepherd for the students in the organization. They have completed all training and certifications required by WCA.	Employees of WCA maintain background checks, training, and any necessary certifications as required by WCA. They serve as a shepherd for the students and families of WCA.	Employees of WCA maintain background checks, training, and any necessary certifications as required by WCA. Leadership includes the Head of School, Principals, and Directors of departments at WCA. They serve as shepherds of the students, staff, and families of WCA.
- Allowed to supervise students both on campus and off at official school events, competitions, and practices. - Distinguished by an ID badge - May access the building via fob during non-school hours as required for their position.	- Allowed to supervise students both on campus and off at official school events, field trips, competitions, and practices. - Allowed to supervise visitors or parent helpers. - Distinguished by a staff ID badge - May access the building via fob during non-school hours.	- Allowed to supervise students both on campus and off at official school events, field trips, competitions, and practices. - Allowed to supervise staff, faculty, subs, visitors, or parent helpers. - Distinguished by a staff ID badge - May access the building via fob during non-school hours.