



HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC SCHOOL

8800 Braddock Rd
Annandale, VA 22003



PARENT SCHOOL SERVICE COMMITMENT (PSSC) HANDBOOK

****SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON THE NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL
AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY****

Table of Contents

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| OVERVIEW | 3 |
| GUIDELINES | 4 |
| SIGNED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | 5 |
| VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES | 6 |

OVERVIEW

Holy Spirit Catholic School ("School") is a wonderful place for your children to grow both spiritually and academically! The School Administration and Parent Teacher Organization ("PTO") continue to believe that parent involvement and participation in School activities is not only a means to show our support for the Faculty and the School but is absolutely necessary in order to maintain and expand many of the academic and extracurricular services offered by the School to our children. Educational research also demonstrates that children achieve at higher levels if parents are involved in their child's education.

Beginning with the 2008-2009 academic year, the School instituted the Parent School Service Commitment ("PSSC") program. Under this program, the parents or legal guardians of each student registered at the school are required to complete a minimum of 20 service hours per family, or 10 service hours for single parent families, each school year. Single parent families include families with a deployed spouse. The **school year is defined as the day after the last day of school to the last day of school for the next year**. Committee chair and opportunities to earn service hours are outlined and described in this Handbook

In addition to the required service hours, up to 2 hours (1 day) are required for Recess Duty (dependent on the School's enrollment), as described in the Recess Duty Policy. Only unpaid Recess Duty hours which occur after the mandatory first instance of Recess Duty count towards PSSC requirements.

If a family has extenuating circumstances that might prevent them from fulfilling their PSSC service hours, make an appointment to discuss with the Principal, who has the discretion to excuse or reduce a family's commitment.

****Please note that all volunteers coming in contact with students are required by the Arlington Diocese to undergo a personal background check, be fingerprinted, and complete a VIRTUS child safety training course. To register for an upcoming VIRTUS class entitled "Protecting God's Children," please go to www.VIRTUS.org. VIRTUS training, fingerprinting and background checks must be completed and paperwork submitted to the Arlington Diocese Office of Child Protection, via the Holy Spirit Church Child Protection Coordinator.****

GUIDELINES

The goal of this program is to give our children the best education possible through the gift of your time and talents to assist the School, faculty, and students. Thank you for your understanding and participation. The PTO and PSSC Coordinator(s) always welcome suggestions to help make this program run smoothly and effectively.

Earning PSSC Service Hours

Service hours are earned by participation in any of the activities listed in the Volunteer Opportunities List of this Handbook. This list contains the type of service hours earned for various activities and estimated time commitment. Every attempt has been made to include all activities; however, as the school grows, additional activities may qualify for PSSC hours. Please feel free to contact the PSSC Coordinator(s) to determine if other activities fulfill PSSC requirements.

The described time commitments and the number of needed people for chairpersons and volunteers are guidelines; some activities may require more or fewer people or time than listed. Furthermore, volunteers serving as PTO Executive Board Members, Committee Chairpersons, and Homeroom Parents will receive 20 hours for their service, provided they fulfill the term of their commitment and they submit their final report.

Reporting PSSC Service Hours

PSSC hours will be tracked and reported through the Connect1 application. Volunteer opportunities will be listed in the Connect1.io by Homeroom Parents, committee chairs, teachers, or PTO board members. In the case that the number of points is incorrect, families need to send corrections to: [Points Adjustment - Google Forms](#)

All unfulfilled hours, as of the predetermined PSSC deadline, will be assessed a predetermined dollar amount (currently \$20) per missing hour. This assessment is a penalty for failing to fulfill the service commitment and should not be considered a substitute for service. All assessments will be collected via check at the end of the academic year. Any hours over the required amount are not carried over to the following year and are not transferable to another family. If your PSSC account is not settled at the end of the year, report cards and transcripts will be withheld until the balance of the money or hours have been reconciled.

Differentiating between PSSC Hours, Fundraising, and Parish Service

Participating in fundraisers, making donations, and providing a service to the Parish are valued greatly, but are not considered PSSC service hours. PSSC service hours are not earned for: Time spent selling items during school or extracurricular activity fundraisers, i.e. going door-to-door selling chocolates, popcorn, mulch, etc. or service to Parish ministries listed on the Parish webpage, such as providing liturgical assistance (i.e. greeter, reader, Eucharistic minister, etc.) or participating in service through the Food Ministry, Good Samaritan Society, etc.

In order to comply with current tax laws, the monetary value of donations of money or goods to the School or PTO CANNOT be equated to fulfillment of PSSC hours, i.e. \$20 cash does NOT equal one (1) PSSC service hour.

SIGNED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Parent School Service Commitment (PSSC) Handbook

I acknowledge that I have been provided access to the PARENT SCHOOL SERVICE COMMITMENT (PSSC) HANDBOOK. I understand that it is my responsibility to fulfill my obligation of 20 PSSC service hours and 2 hours of Recess Duty per family or 10 PSSC service hours and 2 hours of Recess Duty per single parent family to the school. Failure to fulfill this obligation will result in report cards or transcripts being withheld until such time as my account has been reconciled. I understand that it is my responsibility to register my family in the Connect1 application, to use Connect1 to sign up for PSSC-eligible service hour opportunities, and to use Connect1 to monitor my family's completed hours throughout the year. Unfulfilled hours will be assessed \$20 per hour.

Child/Children's LAST NAME: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many volunteer activities each year. Holy Spirit PTO has many committees that provide a myriad of activities. To volunteer for any of these activities, please contact the committee chairperson listed in the school directory, additionally, they will post all signups in Connect1.io The other major volunteer opportunity is classroom support. The teachers will also be able to set up events in Connect1.io. PSSC-eligible volunteer opportunities are focused on supporting the school; they do not include activities that are sponsored by the church, such as CYO and Scouting.

Committee chairpersons generally must attend at least one PTO board meeting per year to highlight the work of the committee. Committee budgets vary, and the chairperson must negotiate this with the PTO Treasurer in advance of the school year and/ or in advance of an event. Chairperson(s) must ensure that all receipts and requests for reimbursement are turned in properly and promptly. They must also submit reports to the PTO which record the committee's activities and lessons learned.

Volunteers must be child-protection compliant if children will be present during events.

| Committee or Position | Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| Art Show | This committee is led by the school's art teacher. Parent volunteers photograph children's artwork all year before the online show event in May. Volunteers must be child-protection compliant and work closely with the art teacher in the school. This committee may also solicit and organize artwork to be displayed during the Talent Show, typically held in April. |
| Book Fair | The Scholastic Book Fair is run in February for approximately one week at the school. The chairperson(s) work with the school librarian to plan, run, and close the book fair. The co-chairs begin working with the librarian at least two months prior to the fair. Work is performed at school and at home. Chairs recruit parent volunteers to work at the sale itself the week it is held. The librarian coordinates the daily deposits of money from the sale. |
| Boosterthon | This is the school's main fundraiser held each October. It is a weeklong fundraiser full of fun activities, culminating in a big event at the end of the week. Students seek pledges and flat donations from family and friends to help make this fundraiser a success. It requires two co-chairs who are involved in planning this event in September/October. Two or three parent volunteers are also needed to handle event teachers and other efforts that may be part of the event. Most of this role occurs at home or outside of school hours (possibly more in-school the week Boosterthon is held). |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Bulletin Board | This committee is responsible for decorating the birthday bulletin board in the school, usually on the first day of each month, and supporting teachers with volunteers to set up classroom bulletin boards. The chairperson receives a monthly list of children’s birthdays from the school registrar and a parent volunteer designs and decorates the bulletin board with a monthly theme, highlighting each child’s birthday. Faculty, staff, and Holy Spirit priests and deacons may also be featured on the boards. One board is needed for summer month birthdays, and September – May birthdays (10 boards total). The chairperson must attend at least one PTO board meeting per year to highlight the work of the committee. The chairperson assigns months to volunteers who must be child-protection compliant. The budget can vary, and the chairperson negotiates it with the PTO Treasurer in advance of the school year. |
| Christmas Boutique | This event is conducted in December. Volunteers assist students to have an opportunity to "shop" for Christmas gifts for their families. The chairperson coordinates with the principal to sign a contract in the Spring for the following year, coordinates volunteers to support the event, and works with the PTO board for advertising. |
| Christmas Tree Sales | Christmas tree sales start Thanksgiving weekend and go until all trees are sold. Chairperson(s) interface with the vendor, organize delivery and volunteers, develop schedules and pricing, work with school principal for vendor payment and contract approval, work with clergy to obtain permission to set up stand, collaborate with men's club for creche decor, and other volunteer committees for space. Volunteer Fair attendance is crucial. Most of these responsibilities occur at home or outside of school hours. |
| Craft Nights | This committee organizes fun events for parents and/or children. Past events have included cookie decorating and making gingerbread houses. There is no required number of events per year, and the committee is not designed to be a PTO fundraising committee. The chairperson shall propose a budget in advance of each event and seek Principal and PTO board approval. |
| Directory | This committee develops the School Family Directory for publication by the end of September. The chair will work with the PTO board to assess the need for the directory with the implementation of Connect1. Starting SY22-23, directories will only be published as requested. |
| Field Day | Field Day occurs in May, in close coordination with the school Physical Education (PE) teacher. The chairpersons and volunteers work with the PE Teacher to plan the event, adhere to a budget, create teams of students and parents, order t-shirts, and provide breaks, water, snacks and lunch during the event for all participants. Volunteers must be child-protection compliant. Chairperson(s) must attend two PTO meetings per year, one before the event, and one after the event to report on the day’s successes. |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Health Screenings | In October, the school nurse conducts health screenings of mandated students at Holy Spirit School. Volunteers for this committee should have some professional medical background or experience to participate, though it is not required. All volunteers must be child-protection compliant. |
| High School Grant | This committee coordinates the annual high school grant program. |
| Homeroom Parents | Each homeroom teacher has two homeroom parents to help coordinate classroom support and support communicating PTO activities to their classes. |
| Hospitality | The Hospitality committee is on-call to provide home baked goods, paper products, drinks, etc. for various school events throughout the year, including monthly teacher luncheons, the National Honor Society induction ceremony reception, and other events as needed during the school year. The chairperson(s) are expected to attend at least one PTO meeting per year. Volunteers who enter the school when children are present must be child-protection compliant. There is no budget - this committee relies on the time and generosity of parent volunteers. |
| New Family Coordinator | The New Family Committee welcomes families who are newly enrolled at Holy Spirit School with a picnic function prior to the start of school in August, in the late afternoon or evening. The committee ensures that each new family is paired with an experienced Holy Spirit family, ideally with children in matching age groups – elementary or middle school. The “buddy families” introduce themselves to the new families and check-in to ensure a smooth transition at regular touch points throughout the year. The committee sends regular emails to all new families, beginning in July prior to the school year starting, advising of upcoming events, explaining nuanced happenings throughout the year that may seem unfamiliar, and connecting new families with other PTO Committee Chairpersons as applicable. The committee watches the Holy Spirit Families Facebook page for questions and concerns and responds as appropriate with insights and suggestions. The chairperson(s) attend a PTO meeting at the end of the previous school year to discuss their plan and the first PTO meeting of the new school year to offer a report summarizing the August New Family Event. In the spring, the committee solicits experienced families who are willing to serve as mentor families for the next school year’s New Families. |
| Outdoor Classroom | Works with Mr. Thieman, or designated faculty member, to coordinate help to upgrade and maintain the school's outdoor classroom |
| Pavers | Responsible for sale of pavers for inclusion in the school’s outdoor classroom. |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| PSSC | This committee has been a “committee of one” coordinator who tracks Parent School Service Commitment (PSSC) hours for Holy Spirit Families. The PSSC handbook must be updated at least every other year, at the discretion of the Principal and PTO Board. The PSSC Coordinator is expected to attend all PTO meetings once/month and make a report three times per year to the board. S/he also formats and sends letters home to families who are in danger of not meeting their commitment at least once/year prior to the end of the school year. The coordinator responds to questions sent to their Holy Spirit email account promptly. Note: This position is changing with the School’s use of the Connect1.io application starting in SY 2022-2023. The PSSC coordinator will still have to help ensure notifications go out. The first and second trimester notifications will likely be reminders to look at their status on the application. |
| Recess Duty | This has tended to be a committee of one coordinator who manages Recess Duty Sign Ups. S/he tracks each family’s service days to ensure that everyone meets their commitment. The coordinator attends at least two PTO meetings to provide a report on the status of family duties and responds to questions sent to their Holy Spirit email account promptly. The Recess Duty Coordinator updates the handbook in coordination with the PTO Board and the Principal. |
| Restaurant Coordinator | This committee plans food/restaurant related fundraisers. These can be held every other month, depending on other PTO activities. Coordination can also be done with other committees for joint events. Chair is responsible for contacting restaurants and food vendors, arranging and advertising events, and ensuring that earnings are delivered to the PTO Treasurer. |
| Reward Program | This committee only requires one chair. Coordinate with various vendors that provide rewards back to school (Amazon Smile, digital Box Tops, Mabel’s Labels, and grocery stores); set up new fundraisers as needed. Track rewards; submit checks to the school that have been mailed to you (where applicable, such as for Mabel’s Labels). Periodically send out messages via the PTO weekly newsletter and the Families of Holy Spirit School Facebook group. Look for other ways to advertise (for example, have a flyer available at the new family social and at the used uniform sales). This committee role can be fulfilled on one’s own time and does not require coming to school. |
| Science Fair | This event is closely coordinated with the middle school science teachers. It typically lasts three days at the school. Volunteers must be child-protection compliant, and may help with printing and organizing programs, guiding visitor parents, judging projects, set-up and clean up. The chairperson must attend at least two PTO meetings each year, one before and one after the event. |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| SONShine | This is an on-call committee that helps provide discreet assistance to school families due to a family circumstance: new baby, illness, death, etc. This includes, but is not limited to, providing meals, cleaning services, or babysitting. The chairpersons work closely with the PTO Board and the Principal to identify families in need. The chairpersons are required to attend one PTO board meeting, typically at the end of the year, to report on the committee’s activities for the year. Volunteers must be available on short notice to provide all kinds of assistance. |
| Spirit Gear | The Spirit Gear chairperson(s) set up at least two sales per year, the first one in early September and the second one in the Spring. The first sale should be scheduled to receive orders not later than the second week of October to support the October dress down day. In addition to spirit gear, this committee will work on other promotional items such as magnets, book covers, etc. that can be used to raise funds. |
| Spring Fling | This is designed to be a “Thank You” event for PTO volunteers during the school year. Past events have included dances and auctions for adults only. The theme must be coordinated with the Principal and PTO board. A PTO meeting or an online survey tool can be used to gauge interests. This is not a fundraiser, but a cost is associated with attending, offset as much as possible through the PTO with advance approval. Chairperson(s) are expected to attend at least two PTO meetings per year, one before and one after the event. |
| Spring Fundraiser | This fundraiser can take on many forms depending on how the year is going. For the 2021-2022 school year, the spring fundraiser involved auctioning baskets and school “perks” at the Spring Talent Show. |
| Talent Show | This is a much-anticipated April event. Auditions take place in February, and volunteers are needed for both events. The Chairperson must attend at least two PTO meetings, one before the event, and one afterwards for a report. The Show includes a dinner, set-up, clean-up, judging, and marshaling students as they wait to perform. Volunteers must be child-protection compliant. |
| Teacher Appreciation | This committee chooses a theme in coordination with the Principal and makes faculty and staff feel special during the nationally recognized Teacher Appreciation week in May. The chairperson(s) are required to attend at least two PTO meetings per year, one before and one after the event. The chairperson consults with the board and principal on the activities and the anticipated expenditures. Volunteers must be child-protection compliant for events where children are present. |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Trunk or Treat | This event usually occurs on the Saturday evening closest to Halloween, and requires extensive coordination with the school Principal, the Parish, and the PTO with regard to budget, food trucks, set up and clean-up, and facility use requests. The event often has a “rain date” and has sometimes been held indoors with tables in the gym instead of trunks. The chairperson must attend at least two PTO Board meetings, one before and one after the event. The committee is responsible for ensuring that parking spots for cars are filled, and that there is a candy admission “fee” from each family attending the event. |
| Used Uniforms | The chair coordinates at least three used uniform sales each year (beginning of the school year, prior to winter uniform change over, and prior to spring uniform change over). This includes coordinating volunteers, collecting, sorting, and advertising for events. In addition to school uniforms, the committee sells used spirit gear, shoes, and other items during each sale. |