

Holy Spirit School Recess Duty Policy

2023 – 2024 School Year

Thank you for taking the time to acquaint yourself with the **Recess Duty Policy**. This document presents many details to help new parents. Each year parents of students in **kindergarten through eighth grade** are asked to **monitor/chaperone** RECESS DUTY at our school. Pre-K recess is separate and managed by their teachers.

Parent involvement in recess helps the school in several ways:

- a. reduces number of professional staff on playground as it frees up teachers to spend that time planning lessons.
- b. eliminates the need to hire multiple staff or monitors.
- c. we model to the children the important connection between school and family.
- d. we benefit by seeing our kids having a great time with their fellow students!

Recess Duty is a *separate obligation* from your Parent School Service Commitment (PSSC) where 20 service hours per family or 10 hours per single parent family are required each year.

You must be Child Protection Compliant. Questions? Contact Assistant Principal Ann Stich astich@holyspiritflames.org

Going into the 2023-24 year, all families will be asked to select one (1) date for recess using Connect1. After all families have signed up for their mandatory slot, we invite you to select a second slot in exchange for two (2) PSSC volunteer hours.

Questions/concerns not addressed in this document should be forwarded to the 2023-2024 Recess Duty Coordinator(s) email: ptorecessduty@holyspiritflames.org

You are required to be at the school from: 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Bring a time piece (e.g. watch) to manage the schedule. **No small children** are permitted to accompany you during your recess duty.

When You Arrive

- **Sign in** at the school office. By signing in you prove that you have been there and ensure that you will not receive a bill as a “no show”.
- Pick up a **Visitor’s Badge**. Parents will be met by the permanent recess duty staff and oriented as to duties and assignments.
- Assistance putting communal recess equipment in place may be requested.
- The school will regularly make use of the back field, playground, back blacktop area, and upper blacktop area.

- While you are outside, make sure **chain rope is up at the entrance/exit to parking lot**. If it is not present, notify **General Flow**
- Each of the three recess sessions will follow the same general flow just in different locations.

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- Wait in the lobby by front office. Five (5) minutes before the session time, head to the session hallway.
- Position yourselves at the ends of the hallways. Determine which teacher has recess duty when the kids start assembling in the hallway.
- Two monitors will go out with the main mass of kids. The one in front will open playground with the key; please attach and close the lock on the fence so it is easily found at the end of the last session. Keep playground key but leave the playground open until the last session is finished.
- The last monitor will check all the classrooms by peaking his/her head in the door to make sure all students are off to recess *or with a teacher*.
- The last monitor will also give a reasonable effort to escort any students that are seen exiting bathrooms out to recess. If you see students enter the bathroom or clearly hear students in the bathrooms, then wait patiently in the hall for them to exit.

Recess Sessions (when the bells ring)

11:15 a.m. until 11:40 p.m. (Grades 6-8)

- All 3 **monitors** report to basement classroom hallway by the large staircase or the staircase that leads to the Quinn Room. Follow the children up the large staircase and out the back doors near the gym **EXIT #7**. The class playing on the Upper Lot will use **EXIT #4**.

11:50 p.m. until 12:15 p.m. (Grades 3-5)

- 1 monitor reports to the hallway on the left when facing the front office to retrieve the 3rd graders. Exit out the door in that hallway **EXIT #9**.
- 2 monitors report to the classroom hallway to the right when facing the front office to get the 4-5th graders. Follow the children to the back door **EXIT #7**. The class playing on the Upper Lot will use **EXIT #2 or EXIT #10**.

12:25 p.m. until 12:50 p.m. (Grades K-2)

- All 3 **monitors** report to the classroom hallway to the left when facing the front office. Follow the children out the back doors **EXIT #9**. The class playing on the Upper Lot will use **EXIT #10**.
- REMINDER: *Pre-K* recess is separate and managed by their teachers.

Monitor's Role

- **IF ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED, INFORM THE TEACHER ON DUTY.**
- If there is an **injury**, notify one of the teachers **IMMEDIATELY**.
- **Students are not allowed to be outside without an adult present.** If you need help, use the radio, or pick two students to be “buddies” and send them to the front office with a message.
- You are there as a **monitor** and **mentor** for the children.
- **Be Cheerful.** Be Safe. Be Timely. Be in Control.

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- **Be Alert.** Keep your eyes on the children.
- **Put away your cell phones.** Pictures may never be taken of the students.
- Please do not use this time to visit with other parents or focus on your own child but rather do your part to **keep recess safe for all the children.**
- **Be Kind but Firm.** Discipline children as needed to maintain a safe and cheerful environment. Most children respond well to adults.
- You are not a game organizer.
- **Control the boundaries.** Be aware of all egresses and help make sure the students stay in the intended play areas. Prevent student “escape attempts” or wandering off, be it planned or accidental.
- Position yourself at a point where **kids can be seen**, and you are controlling the perimeter of the play areas. Feel free to roam as needed. Here are some good choices.
 - ✓ By the rope chain at the entrance/exit to the parking lot
 - ✓ By the back of the playground near the intersection of the woods and back fence
 - ✓ Near the playground gate
 - ✓ On the blacktop near the basketball hoops
- **Adults** retrieve balls that go in the street or woods.
- Students requesting to leave the playground areas **MUST** be **approved by a teacher** and the student must always go with a **buddy**.

Expected Behavior for the Children

- NO bullying. NO abusive language.
- NO pushing, wrestling, tackling, dog piling, hitting, waving or throwing sticks or rocks, sword fighting (with anything), throwing of dirt/grass, entangling others with hoops or ropes, taking other kids’ toys, no playing dead or throwing yourself at the ground, or equivalent mayhem that could lead to injury or sour feelings.
- NO kids in woods. **Simple Rule:** *If they look up and see foliage (trees, branches, leaves) above them they are in the woods.* This helps you with border disputes.
- NO kids in ditch, beyond chained edge of parking lot, or beyond fences.
- Encourage mobility if you see a child sitting; this is their time to run and jump.
- Children must remain visible to parents and teachers on the field, playground, or on parking lot blacktop.
- Age-appropriate assembly (lining up in hallways and walking out as a class).
- NO running in school classrooms or hallways.

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Recess Wrap Up

- When the teacher blows the whistle at end of recess, vocally encourage children to pick up and return toys to the designated cart(s). Encourage them to go line up for prayer in the area designated by the teacher.
- Scan the entire play area for toys, jackets, or other personal possessions and try to connect them with the toy cart or the appropriate student before they begin prayer.
- Join the children in prayer.
- Head back up to front office until it is time to begin the next session of recess.
- If this is the last session, lock the playground.
- School staff manages hand sanitizers on a separate schedule and do not need to be put away.
- **Checking Out:** return your badge, playground key, and radio to front office.

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Frequently Asked Questions [FAQs]

1. *What if the day I am scheduled to do recess no longer works for me?*

In this case you have three choices:

- 1) Adjust your personal schedule so you can perform your recess duty.
- 2) Find another parent who is willing to trade dates with you.
- 3) Once you select a date there is no process in place to find a replacement. This responsibility is yours and yours alone. Please do not delete your SIGN-UP slot. If you have an emergency, please contact the Recess Duty Coordinator(s) via email ptorecessduty@holyspiritflames.org and notify the school front office. **They will try to contact a PAID SUBSTITUTE for a \$30.00 fee** to be paid by you directly to the Parent Volunteer that SUBS for you. Last minute requests are extremely difficult to fill but we will do the best we can to help. We know sometimes “Life Happens.”

RECESS Chaperoning is a critical function for a safe and secure RECESS for our kids. Please make every effort to show up on your selected day. There is a **NO SHOW Fee of \$50.00** that will be automatically billed through your tuition account.

2. *I have a serious reason why I may not be able to perform my recess duty obligation, what do I do?*

If you have a very serious long-term hardship, then let the principal and/or Recess Duty Coordinator know about the issue. They can help you identify a solution. Travel, temporary illness, and other common hardships are why we have a substitute program. Please arrange for a substitute.

3. *What about days when school is canceled due to snow or something else?*

If you are scheduled for recess on a day cancelled for snow or other reason, you will receive credit for serving.

4. *How do I get credit for completing recess duty?*

You **MUST** sign in at the front office on the sign in sheet in the slot with your name. Failure to do this will result in “no show” notifications and fines.

5. *I cannot make [Connect1](#) work.*

We have moved volunteering from SIGN UP Genius to [Connect1](#). This robust software was designed for K-8 Catholic Schools to handle engagement with your school community. Our PSSC Coordinator can help: ptopssc@holyspiritflames.org

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6. *Does recess duty count toward my PSSC required service hours?*

No. Recess duty is a separate commitment as stated in the Parent School Service Commitment Handbook.

7. *What is the master record for recess duty?*

The master record for recess duty is in Connect 1.

8. *What happens if my family never signs up for recess duty during the year?*

Families who do not sign up for recess duty will be contacted by the PTO Recess Coordinator and reminded of the obligation to the school. If a family does not sign up for recess duty a penalty fee of \$40.00 will be assessed via FACTS.

9. *I am confused about what I am supposed to do.*

Ask the Recess Duty Coordinator(s) after you have reread this policy. They are there to help! ptorecessduty@holyspiritflames.org

10. *I have a complaint. To whom should I address it?*

We understand that for some families, recess duty can present difficulties. If you are really running into a difficulty that needs to be addressed, please begin by contacting the Recess Duty Coordinator(s) via email ptorecessduty@holyspiritflames.org They will work with you to try and find a solution or send your concerns to the appropriate person. Thank you for expressing your feelings/concerns in a civil manner consistent with the Catholic atmosphere Holy Spirit School promotes.