



The Springs

Room Parent Manual

2016 - 2017 School Year

Thank you for volunteering your time to serve as a Room Parent for your child's class. It is both fun and rewarding and is something your kid's will be proud of. A Room Parent is going to be a very important part of The Springs' community and provides volunteer services to a teacher's classroom. A Room Parent should enlist the help of other parents and be able to delegate these responsibilities. The teacher will tell you of their specific needs and determine exactly what type of assistance is needed. The Room Parent serves as the critical {magical} liaison between

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ROOM PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Thank you for volunteering your time to serve as a Room Parent for your child's class. It is both fun and rewarding and is something your kid's will be proud of. A Room Parent is going to be a very important part of The Springs' community and provides volunteer services to a teacher's classroom. A Room Parent should enlist the help of other parents and be able to delegate these responsibilities. The teacher will tell you of their specific needs and determine exactly what type of assistance is needed. The Room Parent serves as the critical {magical} liaison between the teacher and class parents.

Typically, Room Parents help coordinate class parties (scheduling birthday celebrations), special events (Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.), parent volunteers in the classroom, and maintain a positive attitude among the parents in your room. While a Room Parent's main responsibility is to the teacher and class, the Springs Parent Advisory Committee (SPAC) does ask for your help to further communicate with our parents throughout the year. It is the Room Parent's responsibility to communicate with the classroom parents and keep them informed. Every child's family should be given the opportunity to be involved in their child's classroom and school, if they so choose.

GETTING STARTED CHECKLIST

- Meet with your teacher as soon as possible (bring your calendar)!
- Discuss expectations and ideas for the school year.
- Get party dates and ideas of what will be expected at parties.
- Get schedule of dates/times when volunteers will be needed and whether it is inside/outside the classroom: Library, Assisting with projects, Bulletin Boards, Field Trips (Elementary class only), The Springs BBQ, Special Events, etc.
- Find out the preferred method of contact for the teacher and let them know the best way to reach you.
- Find out if there are any important allergies to note in the class. **Please remember The Springs is a nut-free school.**
- Write an e-mail introducing yourself to the class and tell the parents how and when they should expect communications from you. If you do not have a co-room parent, now would be the best time to ask another volunteer to serve with you.
- Let them know about the potential events for the month. It is IMPORTANT to give your parents a chance to be involved in the classroom and share their feedback on improvements.
- Your teacher should have completed the *Teacher Favorites List/Tell Us About Yourself* teacher profile form (See Appendix B for the form). A hard copy is kept in the Administrative Office.

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

- Normal everyday communication with your parents doesn't need to be reviewed by SPAC as long as you DO NOT use a SPAC verbiage that would lead a parent and/or teacher to associate that it is coming directly from the SPAC.
- Email and/or Transparent Classroom will be the primary source of communication between the SPAC Room Parent Chair and you, and it should be the primary between you and your parents. Please respond to all e-mails, even if it is a simple "ok" so that the sender knows that you received and read the email.
- Please keep an electronic copy of all communications, with parents, teacher, or SPAC.
- Please notify the SPAC Room Parent Chair as soon as possible if there is any change to your contact information or if you are planning a move from the school.
- *Communication is the key to having a successful year, so make sure you "over communicate" rather than "under communicate."*

RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE TEACHER

- Successfully interpret from the teacher their needs and expectations. All communication should be genuine and effective.
- Obtain and update, as needed, a class roster from the "Room Parent Request for Information" forms provided to you from the SPAC. Please remember that this information is to be considered confidential amongst the other parents unless they give permission for you to share their information with the other parents.
- Make an attempt to personally attend as many special events (Mother's Day Celebration, Father's Day Celebration, Thanksgiving Celebration, etc.) as possible. If you cannot be there, enlist someone from the class to take your place. Invite and encourage as many parents to come as well, assuming space is not a concern.
- **REMEMBER: Don't try to bear the burden yourself. You are a classroom coordinator, and there are people out there willing to help. Please reach out to them.** If you find that you need assistance, and are not getting anywhere within the class, please reach out to the SPAC and/or Room Parent Coordinator.

RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE SPAC

Check the [SPAC](http://www.springsmontessori.com/spac/) section on The Springs website (<http://www.springsmontessori.com/spac/>) often to stay current on important dates, and volunteer opportunities that your class needs to know about. A contact list is available there for all SPAC members.

Support School-Wide Events

Provided below are the events that the SPAC and the Room Parents might be asked to participate and assist in set-up and clean-up.

Fall BBQ and Spring BBQ

September 24, 2016 and June 6, 2017

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

(Note: The time includes set-up and take down time. The actual event takes place at 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM).

Booth: Each classroom will be assigned a game booth. The class is asked to manage (set-up, run, and take down) a booth the day of the Fall BBQ. Very detailed information sheets about each booth will be provided. If only half the parents in the class helped for 30 minutes, you would be covered. Aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. are welcome as are other groups looking for service projects.

Thanksgiving Celebration

November 23, 2016

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

(Note: The time includes set-up and take down time. The actual event takes place at 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM).

This is a wonderful family event, where the students make all the food for the celebration for their loved ones. We will ask for your help in soliciting volunteers to make it successful by providing the ingredients necessary to make the feast dishes. Please make a note of this event now and start planning because the months of November and December can be hectic for all of us.

Fall and Spring Community Service Project

November 2016 and April 2017

Service to others is an important part of the Montessori philosophy. The SPAC organizes school-wide drives for various causes. During the holiday season last year, The Springs collected food and drive goods for under privileged families in Springfield, VA. In the spring, the children baked dog treats for the dogs the Fairfax County animal shelters. Parents are encouraged to involve their children in the drives and participate in activities. Please make note of these service projects because we will need the room parent to assist in the coordination of good.

Thanks for all you do! Please do not hesitate to contact the [SPAC](#) with any questions or comments. SPAC Room Parent Coordinator for 2016-2017 is [Insert Name, Phone Number and Email].

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE ROOM PARENT EMAIL TO THE PARENTS IN THE CLASS

This email is distributed in the beginning of the year to the parents of the class.

Dear Parents in [Insert Teachers name] class,

Our names are (ROOM PARENT(S)). This year we will be working together as Room Parents for (Ms. Insert name) class.

How to reach us:

<your name>
<your phone number>
<your email>

<your name>
<your phone number>
<your email>

Throughout the year we'll be asking for parent volunteers to assist with class parties, send in items, and/or help the teacher. I know everyone's schedule is a bit different, hope you'll jump in when and how you can.

If you are interested in signing up for either of these in-class positions or specific events, please contact one of us.

Please ensure that your profile is updated in Transparent Classroom this way we can get in touch with you quickly, keep you updated on class and school events, and send you pictures taken at class events.

If you have any questions or suggestions throughout the year, please do not hesitate to call us. We are looking forward to a great year! Thanks for your support!

Sincerely,

APPENDIX B: TEACHER FAVORITES LIST/TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

This form would be provided to the lead teacher and the two assistant teachers in each class to fill out in the beginning of the year. Once this is complete, it would be helpful to pass this along to the parents in the class.

Teacher's Favorites



Dear <teacher's name>,

Your students' families would like to show their appreciation to you. Please fill out the survey below and return to me by Sept. 15. Thanks!

~ <your name>

Hobbies: _____

Author: _____

Color(s): _____

Flower(s): _____

Beverage(s): _____

Snack(s): _____

Store(s): _____

Restaurant(s): _____

Do you have pets? _____

Anything else you would like to share?
