

Recess /Lunch

Guide for

Westbrook Rangers

Westbrook Elementary
Bethesda, MD

2017-2018

We welcome your assistance at **Westbrook Elementary School**. We are fortunate at Westbrook to have such an interested, committed and involved parent community. Our active volunteer program not only provides valuable hands-on assistance throughout many areas of the school, but also benefits the children by reinforcing the partnership between the child's home, the community at large, and the school. In order to ensure a successful volunteer program, each volunteer must understand the responsibilities inherent in working with the children of Westbrook, specifically during the recess and lunch periods.

Please take a moment to review the information that follows prior to volunteering. We thank you for your participation. Parents are a valuable and important part of the Westbrook school community and we appreciate your assistance and support! We look forward to seeing you often.

Important Reminders about Volunteering at Recess or in the Dining Room

Confidentiality

You must respect the confidentiality of your relationship with the school. Your knowledge of the Westbrook students while at school is privileged information. It may only be shared with responsible staff at Westbrook.

Safety

If a child shares anything that involves concerns about personal safety, please see a teacher or administrator at once.

Discipline

You may not discipline students. If needed, get assistance from a staff member. If you are unable to leave the situation, ask a nearby child to bring a Westbrook staff member to you.

Fairness

You are here for all of the students and must treat them all equally. Please work to treat your own child as you treat all others. This can be a challenge, since both you and your child are usually excited to see one another at school.

Follow the Rules Yourself

For example, if it is quiet time, please do not talk. Additionally, please do not be on your cell phone in front of students. If a need arises, please excuse yourself to use your phone.

Injury

If a child falls and is lying on the ground, do not move him! Get help from a staff member. For injuries of any type, please seek assistance immediately from a Recess Teacher.

Discipline

As an adult on the premises of Westbrook, your behavior toward the children and adults will set the tone for children, and it will directly impact their view of school and their confidence in themselves. Interaction that is firm but gentle, along with plenty of positive reinforcement, is the way to proceed when volunteering on the playground or in the dining room!

Please refrain from disciplining students. This includes grabbing or restraining. If you need help, inform a staff member of the issue, and they will take the appropriate steps. If the student will not walk on his or her own to a staff member, ask another student to get a recess or lunch teacher for you.

2017-2018

Recess & Lunch Schedules

Regular Recess/Lunch Schedule

Grade	Recess Time	Lunch Time
2/3	10:45-11:25	11:25-11:55
K/1	11:30-12:10	12:10-12:40
4/5	12:15-12:55	12:55-1:25

Early Dismissal Lunch Schedule - NO RECESS & Modified Lunch Times

Delayed Opening Lunch Schedule - NO RECESS & Modified Lunch Times

Guidelines for Volunteers during Recess

Students are instructed to follow these basic rules on the playground:

- Remain outside the entire recess. Students must have permission from a Recess Teacher to come inside to use the restroom, get a drink of water, or go to the health room.
- Follow adult directions the first time.
- Use all equipment for the intended purpose.
- Remain in the areas of play as instructed by the Recess Teachers.
- Invite and allow your friends to play in all games.
- Promptly move towards the lineup area when a staff member blows the whistle for line up and collect all recess balls/bags.

As a volunteer, you help students at recess when you...

- Monitor recess for safe play. While supervising recess, think of your role as a “lifeguard.” Keep alert at all times.
- Engage with students by introducing new games or by starting a game and encouraging students to join in!
- Encourage students to solve conflicts in a friendly way. Coach conflict resolution steps when students disagree. One method that often works is rock/paper/scissors.
- Refer to a recess staff member when a student will not follow your directions.
- Help staff members gather students and recess equipment when it is time for them to line up for dismissal from recess. This is a very important task that we ask your assistance with so we don’t lose recess balls/equipment. If needed, please help by carrying the bags up the steps to the carts inside by the gym.

With Primary Grades - Please lead students to play age appropriate games (e.g. Duck-Duck Goose and Snake in the Grass). Many students at this age find it difficult to initiate games on their own and do not know the rules of many games. Your support will enhance their playtime!

With ball games (primarily older students) – It is extremely helpful to have a volunteer serve as a referee for ball games such as, soccer, basketball, and kickball. Students can become quite competitive. They frequently have difficulty interpreting the set rules in a fair manner. Students often need to be reminded to use an appropriate level of competitive spirit which is consistent with recess. This is a time for fun and play!

**** Please note that kindergarten and 1st grade students are not allowed on the green climber on the lower part of the playground.**

Restroom Use during Recess

- All students must use the restrooms that are located at the top of the steps by the gym (same bathrooms used during lunch).
- Students must ask permission from a Recess Teacher prior to entering the building.
- The Recess Teacher will give students a pass when they give them permission to enter the building. Students should return these passes to a Recess Teacher.
- Encourage students to return to the playground as quickly as possible and remind them of the expectations for restroom use.

Injuries

- Bring all matters of injury to a staff member. Staff members can provide Band-Aids. More significant first aid must be delivered in the Health Room.
- If a student cannot get up by themselves, stay with the student and send another student to get a staff member for you. DO NOT move the student yourself.

Guidelines for Volunteers in the Lunch Room

As a volunteer, you help students in the lunch room when you...

- Circulate throughout the lunch room to assist students who raise their hands for help.
- Remind students to sit safely and remain until they receive permission to leave their seats.
- Assisting students with condiments, utensils, and napkins as they exit the lunch line.
- Encourage students to keep eating, sometimes conversation makes it difficult for students to finish their lunch within the 30 minute lunch period.
- Encourage students to raise their hands if they need assistance. Students who would like a drink of water may use the fountain in the dining room. Students who need to use the bathroom need to check with a Lunch Teacher. Let the Lunch Teacher know which student needs to talk to them and get permission.
- Assist the students in throwing their trash away in the large cans, recycling their milk bottles, and recycling or stacking the trays near the trash cans. It helps to remind children to pick up any trash that has fallen to the floor under the table.

Restroom Use

- Boys and Girls restroom passes are posted on the wall by the stage.
- When a student needs to use the restroom, they must raise their hand and ask for permission to leave their table.
- Please let the Lunch Teacher know if a student needs to use the restroom, they are able to monitor who has already left their section etc.
- If all passes are in use, students must wait for another student to return.
- Please reinforce to students that they should walk bathroom and return to the Dining Room as quickly as possible since others might be waiting.
- The Lunch Teachers stop sending students to the bathroom 5 minutes before it is time to dismiss so that all students are back in the lunch room and ready to transition at the end of lunch.

Allergies

This year Westbrook has only one lunch period that requires an **Allergy Friendly Table**. This is during the Kindergarten/1st grade lunch period. It is located at the end of one of Mrs. Moore's table. Students from Mrs. Moore's class who have brought an allergy friendly lunch from home or have purchased one from school are allowed to sit there. The students who bring allergy friendly lunches have notes in their lunches that designate this. Since Westbrook students are allowed to eat only their own food, and the level of concern for food allergies for this year are centered on ingestion rather than contact we are able to use this procedure. We do have many students with food allergies of all kinds. Be on the lookout for these signs of an allergic reaction and report them **IMMEDIATELY** to a Lunch Teacher in the dining room or a Recess Teacher when on the playground.

Allergic Reaction (Anaphylaxis / Severe Allergic Reaction)

Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) is an acute, systemic reaction which can occur in a person who has a hypersensitivity to insect venom, nuts or other allergens. This reaction may occur within seconds after a previously sensitized person is exposed to the allergen. However, onset of symptoms may also be delayed for more than an hour after exposure.

If you suspect an allergic reaction, please contact a Recess Teacher immediately and follow these basic steps:

- Stay with the student.
- Alert a Recess Teacher or Lunch Teacher on duty that a possible allergic reaction is occurring **(immediate attention is vital)**. If you cannot get the attention of a staff member, send another student to get the staff member. The staff member will alert the health room of the situation.
- Monitor the other students and help them remain calm as the staff member alerts the office that there is a possible allergic reaction. The staff member will escort the student to the health room.
- Office staff will notify health tech, administrator, and classroom teacher and follow the appropriate emergency procedures.

Possible Symptoms of an Allergic Reaction

- Generalized tingling / itching
- Apprehension
- Rapid Pulse
- Facial Flush
- Hives
- Acute Coughing / Sneezing
- Throbbing in Ears
- Difficulty Breathing / Wheezing
- Lightheaded / Dizzy
- Swelling of Lips / Eyelids
- Vomiting

Information obtained from the Montgomery County Health Department 12/04

Q: What are the “Top Ten” things a volunteer should know before going in for lunch and recess duty?

1. Sign in at the office upon arrival. Put on your badge/recess ranger penny.
2. Check in with a Recess Teacher to see if they need extra help in a particular area.
3. Play and have fun at recess! Encourage students to make the most of their outdoor time by moving and having fun.
4. Watch all children in your area and monitor for safe play.
5. Encourage children to resolve their own conflicts, but step in immediately if the encounter is physical. Seek guidance from Recess Teacher if questions arise.
6. Use your judgment to limit bathroom and water fountain visits during recess. Ensure that students have permission and a pass before entering the building.
7. Help pick up the recess equipment and make sure it all goes back into the closet.
8. At lunch, assist any child needing help with opening food items (children will raise their hands).
9. After your volunteer time is over, please return to office and sign out. Return penny/badge if needed.
10. Have fun!

Q: Some children seem unable to find something fun to do during recess. Are there games or activities volunteers can suggest to those children looking for something to do?

A: Ms. Thai (PE Teacher) teaches some recess games during PE. You can suggest students think about those but it really can be as simple as picking up a ball and passing back and forth or running laps around the field! Be creative! We encourage volunteers to play, referee and interact with all students to help keep them moving and having fun at recess!

Q: When volunteering for lunch and recess, where should volunteers go first, should they check in with the aides, is there a way to help children get more involved in playing with other children, etc.?

A: Volunteers should first sign in at the office when arriving at school. Next, they should go to the playground for recess unless it's an indoor recess day and the office will direct you to the room where they need your assistance. Volunteers should introduce themselves to at least one of the Recess teachers and ask what type of help is needed. At the end of your Recess Period, follow that group to the lunch room to assist during the lunch period.

Q: There seems to be an unending need for parent volunteers to help cover lunch and recess. Why aren't teachers available to watch the children, at least during recess?

A: MCPS teachers have a contract with the school system. According to their contract they may not be assigned to provide coverage for lunch and recess. MCPS staffs lunch and recess aides at significantly higher ratio than what is assigned for classroom teachers. Parent volunteers are a way to provide extra coverage for lunch and recess. By volunteering, parents provide additional adult supervision of the children, which is particularly helpful during recess when the children tend to go all over the fields and play areas. By reducing the adult to child ratio, we can ensure that the children are receiving the adult supervision they need.

Q: How many volunteers are needed for each grade? Do we have enough volunteers providing coverage?

A: The goal is to have at least 2 parent volunteers every day for each grade but we will take more! Some grades meet this goal on most days, other grades rarely meet this goal. We definitely need more help with grades K-3 as they are younger and need more assistance at times.

Q: What happens during an indoor recess period (i.e.: when inclement weather does not allow students from not going outside)?

A: At Westbrook we are very fortunate to have 3 indoor recess classrooms on a rotating schedule for all grades. Each of the indoor recess rooms has a slightly different set up. As needed, grades take turns rotating through the indoor recess rooms, so they all get an opportunity to experience each room. Our goal when creating these rooms was to give students more opportunity for free play while indoors. Each room has a variety of games, books, arts & crafts, creative play for all grade levels. Volunteers should encourage students to be creative and have fun while using these rooms. Students must still use indoor voices and behave in safe and friendly ways while participating in indoor recess.

Q: Are there specific rules about bathroom usage, such as how many students may go at one time?

A: The children are encouraged to use the bathroom before the lunch and recess break. No more than three children per gender should be permitted to use the restroom at the same time. When a child asks to use the bathroom, the child should be directed to a staff member who has the restroom passes. This way, in the case of an emergency if children need to be assembled, it will be easier to locate unaccounted for children. During recess, students must enter the building through the doors at the top of the stairs by the Gym. These are the same bathrooms used during the lunch period.

Q: What should a volunteer do if he/she witnesses inappropriate behavior by a student during lunch or recess?

A: Depending on the circumstances and the severity of the situation, the volunteer should consider reporting the incident to a staff member. Lunch and Recess teachers have a form that they can complete to convey important information to teachers about their students' behavior at lunch/recess – please inform a Recess or Lunch Teacher if you would like something conveyed to a student's teacher.

Q: What should a volunteer do if students have forgotten their coats for recess and it is cold outside or their lunchboxes?

A: The lunch and recess period goes by quickly. While a volunteer or a staff member may take children back to their classrooms to retrieve their coats and/or lunchboxes, students should be reminded to bring what they need to lunch or recess in the future.

