



Carolyn A. Clark
Elementary School
PTA

Room Parent Manual

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WELCOME:

Welcome to another year at Carolyn A. Clark Elementary! We are happy that you have made the decision to join us as a Classroom Parent for your child's class. Please use this manual to help you prepare as the Classroom Parent. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask either your teacher or the Room Parent Coordinator.

The success of our school depends not just on the quality of teachers, administrators, PTA, or the academics. It also depends on the parent volunteers who help us create successful events & fundraisers. The more parents who volunteer the more activities we can provide for our kids. We cannot expect the same people with the same ideas to do it all. When we do we limit our growth & potential. Volunteering as a Classroom Parent means doing your part to guarantee that our school, PTA, & our kids succeed. We cannot do it alone. We must collaborate with each other. We must build community & in the process prepare our children for a great future.

We wish you the best of luck in the coming year & we look forward to working with you & getting to know you. Please attend our PTA meetings so you can keep up to date & find other ways to support our school.

Thank you,
PTA Board

ROOM PARENT EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Speak with your teacher and find out what their expectations of your role are. Each teacher is different and by becoming familiar with the teacher's expectations and goals you will have a better idea of how best to spend your time.
- If you or your teacher so desire you can have a co-room parent. Discuss this with your teacher.
- Maintain a directory/contact information of all parents in the class room (names, e-mail, phone numbers, etc.)
- Once you have collected everyone's e-mails make sure to bcc everyone so no one can collect or use the parent e-mails. You can send the e-mail to the teacher & bcc everyone else.
- Provide information to parents about Class, School, & PTA events and enrichment programs such as Funvisor, Junior Achievement, Arts Attack, ABC Reading, etc. (inform parents as you receive the information.)
- Provide ongoing volunteer assistance as requested by the teacher. If required, assist the teacher in maintaining a list of class parents who can provide assistance in tasks such as photocopying, Friday folders, fundraising events, and other class room specific activities.
- Keep parents up to date with classroom activity dates and support needs: field trips, fundraising events/activities, spirit days, celebrations, etc.
- With teacher permission create a "wish list" for your class. Some may request kleenex, clorox wipes, baby wipes, hand sanitizers, copy paper, construction paper, costumes, gift cards for specific stores, etc. Check with your teacher as each teacher & grade level will have different needs & wants. Provide this information to the parents in your class.
- Photo sharing sites like Shutterfly or Qlubb accounts can be created with the permission of your teacher and only if they agree to one. If the teacher agrees you must make sure the site is only for your class, is password protected, you invite all parents, & DO NOT allow access to anyone not in your class.
- If parent's prefer, coordinate holiday & end of school year teacher appreciation gift. This is optional! If you choose to coordinate a class gift be aware that it is not mandatory, it is optional, & please be respectful. If parents choose not to participate do not make an issue of it & definitely do not tell your teacher about it. If you choose to coordinate a teacher gift when sending out the e-mail please send the e-mail to yourself (instead of the teacher) & bcc everyone else.
- NEVER share any information (this includes, but is not limited to e-mails & phone numbers) you collect from the parents or teacher. It is confidential.
- NEVER contact parents for any personal reasons using the information you have gathered.
- NEVER post pictures on social web sites of someone else's child (Facebook, twitter, flicks, Instagram, & so on).

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. As the Room Parent you are not expected "to do it all" or to be in the classroom all the time. Your role is to help the teacher relay information from them, the school, & the PTA.

GETTING STARTED CHECKLIST:

- Speak with your teacher as soon as possible to discuss their expectations of your role & ideas you both may have for the school year.
- Be proactive! If you have an idea speak with the teacher & get their input. Remember you are there to help them & your idea might be a useful & productive one, but remember if they turn your idea down don't take it personally. Move on because it's not about you. It's about helping your teacher.
- If relevant, 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: centers, making copies, laminating, bulletin boards, computer lab, field trips, book fair, 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.
- Write a letter introducing yourself to the class and tell the parents how and when they should expect communications from you (I have included both a request for parent e-mails & an introduction letter for you to use.) The initial correspondence should be in paper form & included in the student's folders that go home. Discuss with your teacher how & when they will be distributed & when you will collect the information.
- If you & your teacher have agreed to a co-room parent you can ask another parent to volunteer with you. Please discuss how the responsibilities will be shared & make sure everyone understands their responsibilities.
- Let parents know about 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.

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES:

- E-mail will be the primary source of communication between the PTA Room Parent Chair and you, and it should be the primary between you and your parents.
- You will receive PTA mails throughout the year that simply need to be forwarded to your classroom parents. These e-mails allow the PTA to further communicate with parents on a timely basis. **PLEASE FORWARD ALL OF THEM AS REQUESTED.**
- Please keep an electronic or paper copy of all communications, with parents, teachers, or PTA.
- Please notify the PTA Room Parent Chair as soon as possible if there is any change to your contact information.
- Communication is the key to having a successful year, so make sure you “over communicate” rather than “under communicate.”

RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE TEACHERS:

- Speak with your teacher & ask what their expectations of your role are.
- Successfully interpret from the teacher their needs and expectations. All communication should be genuine and effective.
- Discuss with your teacher when & how you will distribute & collect the e-mail parent request forms.
- Attempt to personally attend as many special events as possible & encourage the families to attend the events as well: carnivals, book fairs, Winter Wonderland, Open House, etc.
- Once you speak with your teacher about your role & their expectations be proactive & helpful. Find ways to help, raise class funds, coordinate a wish list, classroom participation in school & PTA events, etc. Do not limit yourself! Think outside of the box. Just because things have always been done one way doesn't mean it's the best way.
- Your "job" is to help the teacher & relay information from the teacher, the school, & the PTA to the parents.
- Although it goes without saying - Please fulfill your obligation! If you cannot please notify the teacher and the PTA Room Parent Coordinator as soon as possible!

RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE PTA:

- Inform the PTA Room Parent Coordinator immediately if you cannot fulfill your role for any reason or if you need help.
- Inform the PTA Room Parent Coordinator immediately of any changes to your personal information: e-mail, phone number, etc.
- Do not hesitate to ask for help or ask ANY questions you may have to the PTA Room Parent Coordinator.
- Any concerns you may have should also be addressed to the PTA Room Parent Coordinator.
- Forward any information to your classroom parents immediately unless otherwise stated.
- Check the PTA website: carolynclarkpta.org & school website cc.schoolloop.com for updates often.
- Help your teacher reach 100% PTA membership in the classroom.
- Support classroom, school, & PTA events whenever possible. You should be an example for the parents to follow.

WHAT THE ROLE OF ROOM PARENT IS NOT:

- The title of “Room Parent” is not just a title - it is a RESPONSIBILITY so please take it seriously as the teacher, PTA, school, & parents are counting on you. If for any reason you cannot fulfill your role please notify your teacher & the Room Parent Coordinator immediately.
- It is not a burden. You have made a choice and if done correctly you should enjoy it. Once you have discussed with the teacher their expectations of your role be honest about what you can and cannot do. Enlist help from other parents. DELEGATE!!! You are not supposed to do it all nor are you expected too. So be honest about what you can do & enjoy it!
- This is not an opportunity for you to take advantage of the role. Please do not volunteer to be a room parent only so you can have “special access” to the teacher. Do not abuse your role. Anyone found abusing their role as room parent or misusing any information that they have gathered or are privy to as room parent will be asked to step down as the classroom parent.

E Mail Request Form:

I have included a copy of the e-mail request form for you to use. Note that there are two to a page. You can include your name, e-mail, & your child's name so the parent's can identify you more easily.

Once you print the necessary copies you can then hand them over to the teacher to distribute.

You do not need to use this form. You can also have a sign up sheet asking for the e-mails at back to school night, the teacher can forward an e-mail from you, or however you & your teacher see fit. The important thing is that you are given permission by the parents to use their e-mail.

Dear Parents,

Hello! As Room Parent for your child's class I will be sending out e-mails that will give you information on class, school, & PTA events throughout the year. The e-mails are to help you keep up to date & also help you create a better school experience for you & your child.

I am requesting that you please fill out this form & provide me with your e-mail address so I can add you to the list. Your e-mail will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

We have a lot to look forward to in the coming months!

Thank You,

Teacher Name:

Child's Name:

Parent's Name:

E-mail address:

Dear Parents,

Hello! As Room Parent for your child's class I will be sending out e-mails that will give you information on class, school, & PTA events throughout the year. The e-mails are to help you keep up to date & also help you create a better school experience for you & your child.

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We have a lot to look forward to in the coming months!

Thank You,

Teacher Name:

Child's Name:

Parent's Name:

E-mail address:

WELCOME LETTER:

I have included two sample “Welcome Letters” for you to choose from. Although, you can tailor it to your needs please make sure to send a draft to the Room Parent Coordinator prior to sending it to your parents. You must also have approval from your teacher.

The first sample letter is ready for you to print and the second letter can be tailored to fit your needs, but please send the draft to the Room Parent Coordinator.

Dear Parent,

I am excited to introduce myself as the Room Parent for your child's class. As a room parent, I am hoping to establish strong communication with all parents of this classroom. We have a lot going on during the school year and it is easy for us as parents to be swamped with notes, letters, and forms that come through folders from class and other extracurricular activities at the school.

To make this a little easy on us, as a room parent I hope to:

- Maintain directory/contact information of all parents in the classroom (Names and e-mail &/or phone numbers as well).
- Provide information to parents about PTA events and enrichment programs such as Funvisor, Junior Achievement, Arts Attack, ABC Reading, etc.
- Help provide volunteer assistance as requested by the teacher.
- If parent's prefer, I can coordinate holiday and end of the school year teacher appreciation gift.

Please provide the following information in order for me to create a comprehensive database for this classroom.

Name of child:

Parent's Name:

E-mail:

Phone number (optional):

Teacher:

Thank you for your support and I look forward to working with you all.

Sincerely

Classroom Parent

E-Mail:

Dear Parents,

Hello & welcome to the new school year! My name is Jane Doe (John's mom) & I will be your room parent for the year. I will usually send you e-mails with updates on class, school, & PTA events as necessary & to keep you up to date. So please make sure I have your e-mail address.

This is my third year as a room parent, I am a member of the the School Site Council, & PTA member. I enjoy volunteering at our school. Please feel free to ask me questions. If I don't have the answer for you then I will help you find someone who does. If you are also interested in being more involved in our school but don't have the time or don't know how please ask. You will be surprised at what is available.

A few things to know:

- PTA membership: please join! It is only \$10 per membership! The PTA is responsible for providing some of the school supplies to the teachers, Fall Carnival, programs like U-Jam & music to all the students, Odyssey of the Mind, Arts Attack, ABC reader, Fitness Run, & much more! None of this is possible without the PTA & money.
- Flat donations: the PTA is also accepting a flat donation of \$100 per student this year to avoid participating in catalog sales! Once again all the money we raise goes back into the school & directly benefits the kids! If you cannot donate \$100 any amount is appreciated. Although the PTA is trying to avoid participating in catalog sales the school or the PTA may still use them as a fundraiser if our goals aren't met. Don't forget to ask your company if they match your donations! Many do!
- Fall carnival will soon be upon so save the date for September 27! More details to follow.

I look forward to a very exciting year as we celebrate the school's 10th anniversary! All other communication from me will now be through e-mail. Once again, if you have any questions regarding PTA or school events please feel free to contact me & I will do my best to answer your questions.

Thank you,
Jane Doe
(John's mom)
My e-mail