

Windsong Elementary

Friendswood Independent School District



Room Parent Handbook

2024-2025

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I. Who can be a Room Parent:

- a. A parent, guardian, or immediate adult family member of a student in the class seeking a Room Parent that can respect and maintain the contents of this handbook and who:
 - i. Completes the required Volunteer Training Video
 - 1. <https://www.myfisd.com/community/volunteers>
 - ii. Completes the Volunteer Application; and,
 - 1. <https://www.myfisd.com/community/volunteers>
 - iii. Passes the Criminal Background Check
 - 1. <https://www.myfisd.com/community/volunteers>

II. Responsibilities and Expectations of Room Parents

- a. All Room Parents shall be respectful towards the administration, faculty, and staff of Windsong Elementary.
- b. All Room Parents shall be respectful towards Windsong PTO and all members of Windsong PTO.
- c. All Room Parents shall wear their name badges on their chest and it shall be visible at all times. The name badge shall not be obscured by a jacket, sweater, or other item. The name badge shall not be on a person's leg, back, or stomach. All Room Parents are expected to help ensure that any class party volunteers properly wear said name badge.
- d. All Room Parents should be able to attend all three class parties. Check Section XI for annual party schedule.
 - i. If said Room Parent cannot attend a class party, he or she shall still follow the steps to prepare a proper class party and work with the other class parents to find a lead volunteer for that party. Full communication regarding this shall be shared with the teacher of said class and the Windsong PTO.
- e. All Room Parents should attempt to help chaperone the Field Trip, attend the class' Field Day, and assist in STEAM Day. Check Section XI for dates.
- f. All Room Parents shall obtain a Teacher Favorite List from his or her teacher and distribute said information to the remaining class parents. See Section III for more details.
- g. All Room Parents shall be responsible for the collection of class money to be used for class parties and teacher gifts. All Room Parents shall be a good steward of said monies and budget responsibly with the funds collected. See Section V for more details.
- h. All Room Parents shall be responsible for professionally and respectfully communicating with the other class parents and guardians regarding upcoming events, PTO requested correspondence, and teacher requested correspondence. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: class party sign up information; upcoming PTO events such as Color Run or Field Day.

III. Teacher Favorite Lists

- a. At the beginning of the school year, Windsong PTO will provide the teachers with a survey of their favorite things. Once this is collected, the PTO will distribute said lists to the Room Parent. Using a class list provided by the teacher (see Section IV), the Room Parents shall share the Teacher Favorite Lists with the other parents and guardians in the class.

IV. Class List

- a. Windsong PTO will attempt to provide all Room Parents with an initial class list which should contain emails for parents. Once you are selected as Room Parent, email your teacher and request a class list, including parent information (name, email, and phone number) be provided in case rosters have changed. Additionally, confirm class numbers before each party as this can change throughout the year.
 - i. Some teachers have students that are not on their official class list, but may attend class party days. Please ensure you have a proper head count.
- b. Once selected as Room Parent, you will be sending out a class money collection form (see Section V). On these forms is a spot for parents or guardians to provide their name and contact information. As this information is provided, add it to your records.
- c. You will be provided with an excel spreadsheet to gather your class lists, the monies turned in, and your expenditures. Use this.

V. Class Money Collection

- a. Not all families will be in a position to contribute to the class funds. All Room Parents are expected to be respectful of others and their personal situations.
- b. The amount allowed to be collected is set by Friendswood Independent School District (hereinafter FISD).
 - i. Room Parents are allowed to accept twenty five dollars (\$25).
 - ii. You must give back any amount over twenty five dollars (\$25).
 - iii. Of the twenty five dollars (\$25), the money should be allocated properly in order to provide for three class parties, a teacher birthday gift, and a teacher holiday gift.
- c. PTO will send out generic email informing parents to send in class money.
- d. PTO will provide you with a form to collect monies. Please input your information on the form and then print enough copies for your class size.
 - i. It is highly recommended that the form is printed on bright colored paper.
 - ii. After printing, clip the forms together and label with the teacher's name.
 1. Depending on what works best for your student:
 - a. Send your student to school with the forms to give to his or her teacher, or
 - b. Bring the forms to the front office and ask that they are placed in the teacher's box.
 2. Send your teacher a note or email on how you are delivering the forms and ask that they be placed in the Friday Folders.
- e. Forms of payment: cash, check, or Venmo
 - i. If more than twenty-five dollars (\$25), send the change back to the parent.
 - ii. If the check bounces, reach out to the parent to inform them. If you need assistance, contact the Windsong PTO.
 - iii. Make sure you have provided a very clear user ID on Venmo and provide the parents or guardians with your phone number. If the funds get sent to the wrong person, there is nothing the PTO or Windsong administration can do.
- f. Collection Form: Windsong PTO will provide a Collection Form for all Room Parents to keep track of monies received as well as expenditures.

- i. Track all money collected on this form.
- ii. Track any money spent on this form. Save your receipts.
- iii. Email the expenditure form on each party day to GoWindsongPTO@Gmail.com.
- iv. The purpose of this is to protect the Room Parents from being accused of misappropriation of funds and to use as data in the future to support the argument of the need to increase the amount of funds requested with FISD.

VI. Communication with Other Class Parents

- a. For information regarding obtaining a class list, see Section IV(a) above.
- b. As parents, we are over saturated with communication from the FISD at times. If you decide to communicate with your class parents over email, please use BCC for mass emails.
- c. Room Parents may choose to start a Group Me or a similar form of communication.

VII. Teacher Birthday

- a. Within days of being selected as Room Parent, ensure you have teacher favorite list and pay attention to the birthdate!
- b. Is he or she a summer date? Find out their “half birthday” and plan on celebrating then.
- c. As Room Parent, it is your responsibility to obtain a gift from your class to the teacher. FISD policy is for the teacher’s not to be gifted items over \$50.
 - i. If your teacher has something more expensive on his or her favorites list, consider gifting a gift card to the establishment from the class and then perhaps from your family as well. Also consider getting a gift card to the same place for birthday and holidays. You can even hint to the teacher that they might want to hold onto it until the end of the year.
- d. Birthday Card: Approximately a week or two prior to the party, you can send in a birthday card to be delivered to the switch teacher. Include a note asking for all the kids (homeroom and switch) to sign and to return the card back to you.
- e. Email the class parents approximately one week before the birthday

Sample language:

Dear Parents,

Ms. _____’s birthday is right around the corner on [insert date]! As the room parent, I have already picked up a gift of [insert] to be presented to her next week. If your student would like to make Ms. _____’s day a little extra special, please encourage them to make a card or pick up something special for her. Attached is her teacher favorites list and here is a link to her Amazon Wish List: [insert link].

Best,

[Your name]

VIII. Holiday Gift

- a. As Room Parent, it is your responsibility to obtain a gift from your class to the teacher during the Holiday Season. FISD policy is for the teacher’s not to be gifted items over \$50.

- i. If your teacher has something more expensive on his or her favorites list, consider gifting a gift card to the establishment from the class and then perhaps from your family as well. Also consider getting a gift card to the same place for birthday and holidays. You can even hint to the teacher that they might want to hold onto it until the end of the year.
- b. Email the class parents approximately one week before FISS releases for winter break

Sample language:

Dear Parents,

As the room parent, I have already picked up a gift of [insert] to be presented to Ms. _____ next week for the holidays. If your student would like to make Ms. _____ a little something special, please encourage them to make a card or pick up something special for her. Attached is her teacher favorites list and here is a link to her Amazon Wish List: [insert link].

Best,

[Your name]

IX. Teacher Appreciation

- a. FISS chooses to celebrate our teachers on a day and not an entire week like other districts might do. Windsong PTO does also provide a lunch for the teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week.
- b. If there is money left over from the class money collection, it shall be used for a Teacher Appreciation gift. However, if no money is remaining, it is not the Room Parent's responsibility to provide a class gift as of school year 2024-2025.
- c. Thank You Card: Approximately a week or two prior to the party, you can send in a thank you card to be delivered to the switch teacher. Include a note asking for all the kids (homeroom and switch) to sign and to return the card back to you.
- d. Email the class parents approximately one week before Teacher Appreciation.

Sample language:

Dear Parents,

Teacher Appreciation will be on [insert date] this year! As the room parent, I have provide the kids with a thank you card to be signed by the entire class and presented to her next week. If your student would like to add some extra appreciation, please encourage them to make a card or pick up something special for her. Attached is her teacher favorites list and here is a link to her Amazon Wish List: [insert link].

Best,

[Your name]

X. Class Parties

- a. Who can attend
 - i. Per FISS policy, a student may only have one adult attend one party for the entire school year unless the adult is the Room Parent. Additionally, if

before the class party, the adult volunteers for the upcoming party are less than three adults, including the Room Parent, then it will be up to the discretion of the Windsong administration to allow additional volunteers to attend the party as an exception to the FISD policy.

1. For further clarification: If grandma attends Fall Party for Bobby, Bobby cannot have any adult attend the Holiday Party and Bobby cannot have any adult attend the Valentines Party.
 - ii. If a student has more than one adult sign up, it is your responsibility as Room Parent to reach out to the adult and explain that only one adult is allowed for the school year. If after you reach out, the student's parents are still unclear, inform the Room Parent Coordinator.
 - iii. The point of the class party volunteer is to help run the class party. There are times in which child care for younger siblings can be challenging. Please encourage your volunteers to find alternative child care for the younger siblings, so that the volunteer's focus can be solely on the class party. When a child care issue does arise, younger siblings who are not currently enrolled in FISD may attend that party; however, class funds shall not be used on the attending siblings.
- b. Teacher Approval: It is never a bad idea to run your party plans past your teacher. The teacher knows the class best. Some groups might be into games, while others are more interested in crafts.
- c. Store Inventory: Keep in mind that stores are putting out holiday and seasonal décor earlier each year and they do not restock. The below timeline suggests party plans start no later than three weeks, but that might be too late for seasonal items at the stores
- i. In 2024, the stores were already out or low on Valentine's décor including plates and napkins by mid-January.
- d. Party Money
- i. You might not receive money from all students in the class. Keep this in mind with your budget.
 - ii. The money should be used for décor, games, crafts, activities, food, drinks, cups, plates, napkins, etc.
 1. Décor idea: ask volunteers to bring décor from home that they already own.
 - iii. If another parents volunteers to purchase an item for the party and expects to be reimbursed by the class funds, please make sure they understand the tight budget and that they need to provide you with a receipt.
- e. Party Volunteers: Have clear communication with the volunteers so they know how to help you set up, run, and clean up throughout the party.
- f. Timeline
- i. When the PTO informs you that the party sign ups are released, email the parents the information on where to sign up. The PTO will provide you with pre-drafted language for you to share.
 - ii. *Five weeks before*, email the class parents about the upcoming party and the link where to sign up.

Sample email:

Hello Parents!

Ms. [Teacher]'s class party is coming up on [insert date]. If you have the opportunity to come help at the party, sign up here: [insert link]

If you can't make it, the other party dates are [insert] and [insert]. Hope to see you there.

Best,
[Your Name]

iii. Four weeks before:

1. Email your teacher to see if there are any allergies in the class to plan around.
2. Check the sign up to see if you have any volunteers.
3. If you still have openings in your sign up, email the entire class again letting them know there are some openings and provide the link to sign up. Remind them of the one adult policy rule.
4. Reach out to those volunteers.

Sample email:

Dear [Names],

Thank you so much for volunteering for Ms. [insert teacher]'s [Fall/Holiday/Valentines] party! I am starting to work on party plan ideas, but if you have something special you were hoping to do at the party, please let me know so I can work on incorporating it into the plans.

Thanks again!

Best,
[Your name]

iv. Three weeks before, start planning your party! This might even be cutting it close with when the stores start running out of things.

1. Put together a list of the supplies you need and make a Sign Up Genius with exactly what you want. You might want to even include a link to Amazon or other store with exactly what you are wanting.
2. Do not let party volunteers bring something major in case they do not show. For instance, a parent failed to bring the only treat one year.
3. Check the sign up to see if any new volunteers.
4. If you still have openings in your sign up, email the entire class again letting them know there are some openings and provide the link to sign up. Remind them of the one adult policy rule.
5. Email the volunteers again.

Sample email:

Dear [Names],

Thank you so much for volunteering for Ms. [insert teacher]'s [Fall/Holiday/Valentines] party on [insert date]! I am busy working on our party plans. So far I am planning on [insert games, activities, snacks, etc here].

If you have an opportunity, I am still working on gathering supplies and it would be great if you could grab one of the remaining things still needed. I made a sign up genius with a few of those items. Here is the link: [insert link].

Also, if you have not yet been into the school, please find a time to go before party day to have your ID scanned. The front office will preprint our badges and this will save so much time.

Lastly, the party will start at [insert time]. The office will let us go back to start decorating 30 minutes beforehand, so please plan accordingly so that you have time to find parking, get your badge, and head back to the classroom to help me set up.

Thanks again!

Best,

[Your name]

- v. *One week before*, ensure that your party is planned and that you have started gathering your supplies.
 1. See what items are remaining on you supplies list and obtain if still needed.
 2. Check the sign up to see if any new volunteers.
 3. If you still have openings in your sign up, email the entire class again letting them know there are some openings and provide the link to sign up. Remind them of the one adult policy rule.
 4. Email the volunteers again.

Sample email:

Dear [Names],

Ms. [insert teacher]'s [Fall/Holliday/Valentines] party is rapidly approaching on [insert date]! The party will start at [insert time], but we can go back to start decorating 30 minutes beforehand, so please plan accordingly so that you have time to find parking, get your badge, and head back to the classroom to help me set up.

If you have not yet been into the school, please find a time to go before party day to have your ID scanned. The front office will preprint our badges and this will save so much time.

Thanks again!

Best,

[Your name]

XI. Dates

- a. The Windsong PTO calendar can be found at the following link: windsongpto.org
- b. The current schedule is shown below:

Date	Time	Event
October 31, 2024	2:00 pm-2:45 pm	Fall Party
December 20, 2024	9:30 am-10:15 am	Holiday Party
February 13, 2025	2:00 pm-2:45 pm	Valentines Party
March 6, 2025	8:00 am-3:20 pm	STEAM Day
Either March 13 or 14, 2025	TBD	Field Day: Typically, K-2 are held on one day and 3-5 on the other, but hasn't been determined yet
TBD	TBD	Field Trip- This is set by the teachers
Week of May 5, 2025		Teacher Appreciation