



Center for Indian Cultural Education Bal Vihar of St. Louis

To foster and preserve Indian cultural values amongst children of Asian Indian origin

BAL VIHAR OF ST. LOUIS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Our Vision

To foster and preserve Indian cultural values amongst children of Asian Indian origin.

Our Mission

To make Bal Vihar of St. Louis an exciting and encouraging educational environment for Asian Indian children through appropriate activities conducted by committed professional volunteers.

GROUND RULES FOR BAL VIHAR

Parents are requested to help the students to adhere to these rules in order to make Bal Vihar a truly educational place.

Mandatory Rules:

1. All students are expected to be in their classrooms by 9:45 am. The classroom doors will be closed during the prayers (10 am – 10:15 am) and students shall remain outside the classroom till the prayers are completed.
2. Do not touch or disrupt the school items including their pencils, papers, crayons etc. You should use the supplies provided by your Bal Vihar teacher only.
3. All classrooms must be left in the same configuration and shape as it was when we entered. It is the students' responsibility to put things back. You must conform to all the rules listed under the attached document 'Use of building agreement'.
4. Do not run around inside the school. Stay within the classroom boundaries and the defined space for Bal Vihar. Wandering on the other side of the school is strictly prohibited. You must conform to all rules listed under the attached document 'Rules and Regulations regarding the use of school premises'.
5. You are expected to complete homework assignments on time. Obtain help from your parents if required in completing the assignments on time.
6. Maintain cleanliness in the hall and the class. If you see any mess on the floor, please clean it. Be considerate to all fellow students
7. Follow an orderly process when moving from the classroom to the Yoga or the Gymnasium and vice versa. You cannot run between these rooms.
8. Perfect (100%) attendance is desirable. However, if you are sick or unable to attend for some reason, you must let your teacher know.
9. Any change in the class schedule due to uncontrollable circumstances will be notified to parents as soon as possible prior to the class. This information will be updated on the website by 8am on the day of the class. Parents must check the

www.balVihar-stlouis.com website on the day of the class for cancellations in case of bad weather or any other situations.

10. The returning students will use their class folders distributed from the previous year. The new students will be given a new folder. All students will be given a student packet at the beginning of the year and the teachers will provide the detailed class materials.

Recommendations:

We make the following recommendations that you may want to follow:

11. On the Bal Vihar day, you are urged to take bath in the morning, put on freshly washed, loosely fitting clothes. Since you will be sitting cross-legged, girls should preferably wear long dresses. No gym clothes or tight clothes are allowed.
12. Chewing gum, bubble gum, candy and toys are **NOT** allowed in Bal Vihar classes.
13. Enter the class quietly. Be enthusiastic, show it with a smile. No side talks during the class will be allowed
14. Always practice safe habits. It is everyone's responsibility to maintain sanctity, cleanliness, discipline and an overall pleasant atmosphere in the class. Bal Vihar can serve our needs collectively only if we act in a responsible way.
15. You are expected to stay for the aarti and prasad.
16. No skating shoes are allowed in school premises.

BAL VIHAR POLICIES

1. Grievance Policy

This grievance policy addresses issues that fall within the framework of Teacher Coordinator Committee's role and responsibility and in compliance with overall grievance policy of Bal Vihar. In case of any conflict between Bal Vihar's overall policy and Teacher Coordinator grievance policy, former prevails.

1.A Grievances against teacher(s):

A formal complaint is filed with the Teacher Coordinator committee in writing. Within two weeks or as early as is reasonably possible after receiving the complaint, teacher coordinator will investigate and call a meeting where all parties concerned are present. Every effort will be made to resolve the issues amicably. In case a satisfactory resolution agreeable to all parties concerned is not reached, the issue will be turned over to the President or Secretary for further deliberation. The resolution is documented and file closed.

1.B Grievances against parent(s) or volunteer(s).

A formal complaint is filed with the teacher coordinator in writing. The teacher coordinator will notify the Parent Coordinator. Within two weeks or as early as is reasonably possible, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent concerned, teacher, parent coordinator and teacher coordinator. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue amicably. In case an agreeable resolution is not reached, complaint is forwarded to the President or Secretary. The outcome is documented and file closed.

1.C Grievance against a member of teacher coordinator committee or any other individual in administrative position:

A formal complaint is made to the President directly. Outcome is documented and filed.

1.D Grievance against a student:

A formal complaint is filed with a teacher coordinator in writing. Teacher coordinator notifies parent. Within two weeks, a meeting is scheduled with student's parent(s), teacher and student. Every effort is made to resolve the issue amicably. In case an agreeable resolution is not reached, complaint is passed to the President or Secretary. The outcome is documented and file closed.

Any disruption to school and or property will be brought to the attention of the parents as soon as possible. A repeat offense will result in the student being expelled from the Bal Vihar.

2. Graduation Policy

The committee consisting of teacher coordinators and the teachers from the 4th group will finalize the list of graduating students after taking teacher's inputs and based on the following criteria:-

2.A . Children transferring to Bal Vihar of Saint Louis.

This policy is for a child who has attended a school similar in spirit to Bal Vihar of Saint Louis for at least two years. In order to graduate the child will be required to fulfill the following requirements:-

- Spend at least a year in group IV.
- Provide written evidence of having attended a similar school
- At least 70% attendance during the year
- An interview or other testing with the relevant Bal Vihar teachers as deemed necessary by the teacher coordinator committee.

2. B. Children who have attended only Bal Vihar of Saint Louis.

This policy is for children who have attended only Bal Vihar of Saint Louis. **In order to graduate the child will be required to fulfill the following requirements:-**

- Spend at least 3 years overall with Bal Vihar
- 2 of the three years should be in group 4.
- At least 70% attendance during the year
- An interview or other testing with the relevant Bal Vihar teachers as deemed necessary by the teacher coordinator committee.
- Failure to meet any of the requirement will automatically require student to repeat the class.

2. C Policies for the Youth Group

Balvihar Youth Group Admission Criteria:

If you would like to register as a new student or continue in the youth group, the following criteria should be met. Please discuss with your parents before future registration.

- You **MUST** be able to be present in the class by 09:30 AM
- You **MUST** be available for all 16 classes unless there is a valid reason. (those students participating in various sports or other activities need to make a choice before registration)
- All assigned homework **NEED** to be completed and e-mailed by 09:00 PM before the next class
- All students assigned to various classrooms, writing articles, community projects and other activities **MUST** be committed and complete those assignments in time
- Once you have registered and have not met the above mentioned criteria, you may be asked to leave the group and no community credit hours could be claimed.

This group consists of children ages from 12 till 18. A completion requirement for this group is set by the youth coordinators. Upon successful completion of the youth curriculum set by the school will provide a certificate with community service hours that were earned by the youth. This certificate may be used by student towards community credit hours requirement for the high school graduation.

- Youth is required to sign a completion requirement form provided by the teacher.

3. Policy for Perfect Attendance awards:

These awards can be given within each class by the respective teachers. Two category awards include one category where students have 100% attendance and other at least 90% attendance. Up to two excused absences due to illness will be accepted as an attended class for the purpose of this award.

4. Policy for Absenteeism:

If a student is absent for more than 3 consecutive classes without reason or without informing the teacher then the teacher can refer the matter to the teacher coordinators. Teacher coordinators will get in touch with the parents of the student and ascertain the reason for being absent. If it is deemed necessary, the teacher coordinators will make the final recommendation to the President of Bal Vihar that the student be asked to leave Bal Vihar. The case will be documented and the President will communicate the decision to the parents of the child.

5. Policy for Cancelled Class:

Due to classroom availability limitations, Bal Vihar will not be able to make up a class cancelled due to inclement weather or any other reason. Any change in the class schedule due to uncontrollable circumstances will be notified to parents as soon as possible prior to the class. This information will be updated on the website by 8 am on the day of the class. Parents must check the www.balVihar-stlouis.com website on the day of the class for cancellations in case of bad weather or any other situations.

6. Policy For Refund of School fee:

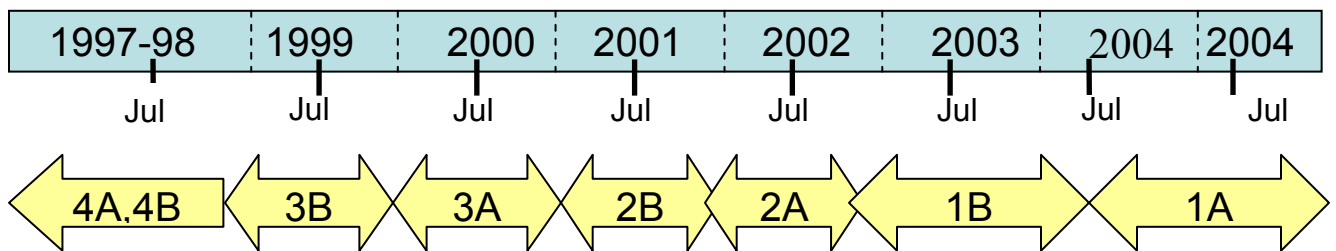
No refund will be made once the child is registered with the Bal Vihar.

7. Class Allocation Policy

New students will be enrolled in the class as per the guidelines listed below. It is possible that returning students may be in a class different (higher) than what new kids are allocated to. However, in the interest of the kids spending the maximum possible number of years at Bal Vihar, the above guideline will be used. We feel the kids would benefit the most by being exposed to Bal Vihar curriculum for the maximum possible time. For example for the school year 2009-2010 it is

July 31, 2004 - Group 1A
July 31, 2003 - Group 1B
July 31, 2002 - Group 2A
July 31, 2001 - Group 2B
July 31, 2000 - Group 3A
July 31, 1999 - Group 3B
July 31, 1998 - Group 4A
July 31, 1997 - Group 4B
Prior July 31,97 - Youth Group

Returning students will be moved up one group from their previous levels.



The years must be adjusted as this chart is used for the year 2009-2010. One must ensure that the child has to be at least 5 years for the school year per above chart.

GRIEVANCE FORM:

Date Grievance Filed: _____

Person Filing Grievance: _____

Association with Bal Vihar: _____

(Teacher, parent, volunteer etc.)

Grievance For: _____

Nature of Grievance: _____

Action Taken: _____

How was decision made: _____

Who Communicated to person filing grievance: _____

Bal Vihar of St. Louis **VOLUNTEERING GUIDELINES**

Bal Vihar is a non profit educational organization made of community volunteers where all parents are expected to share the workload. This permits us to run the organization effectively and efficiently. The volunteer opportunities can be broadly classified into the following categories;

- Operations Administration
- Planning roles
- Teaching
- Events coordination and execution
- Fund Raising
- Others

Operation Administration:

The Bal Vihar operations team is responsible for the day to day planning and execution of all Bal Vihar activities. This team has the following responsibilities:

- Secretary (1)
- Events and volunteer coordination – see below
- Parents coordinator (1)
- Logistics coordinator (2)
 - Arrangements of class room accessories for every class. This includes setting up of carpet, AV, projector if needed etc.
 - Take the teaching material, AV aids and lost & found items to the storage facility.
 - Ensure that the lights are off, class rooms are clean and sign off the paper required by the school.
- Prasadam volunteer (2) – bring prasadam for all classes – will be reimbursed for all expenses

Volunteers are needed to fill these positions and be part of admin staff.

Planning

The Bal Vihar planning team is responsible for the long range planning and extending Bal Vihar's reach into the community. This team has the following responsibilities:

- Web site coordination (1)
- Web site content management (2)
- Web site development (5-10)
- Marketing materials (2-3)
- Marketing communications (2-3)

Volunteers are needed to fill these roles. Volunteers with the website related expertise are encouraged to take appropriate relevant position. Also, Bal Vihar parent with the artistic skills can contribute in our marketing areas.

Teaching:

The success of Bal Vihar depends on the quality and delivery of the curriculum. This can be accomplished only with the enthusiastic, cooperative, and professional teaching volunteering staff members. We require the following volunteers:

- Groups 1 and 2 (24)
- Groups 3 and 4 (12)
- Youth group (4)
- Bhajans and prayers (4)
- Yoga (4)
- Community service (3-4)
- Arts and crafts (2)

No prior teaching experience is needed. The curriculum is well designed and new comers will be paired with the experienced Bal Vihar teacher for the first year. Once, the teacher is experienced, a lead role is possible the following year. Please note that the teaching responsibility is a year long commitment and will require you to attend one summer session and two teachers meeting during the year.

Events coordination and execution:

Bal Vihar celebrates the following events annually. – Diwali, Republic day, Holi, Picnic and annual day. Bal Vihar organization's goal is make these events to be fun for children and parents alike.

Diwali

Diwali Celebration is usually the first major activity of Bal Vihar. There are usually 1-2 event coordinators and 10 parent volunteers needed for various activities. Bal Vihar reimburses expenses incurred for the Diwali activity, buying presents and firecracker.

The activities for this event include:

- Two leads (2)
- Photography (2), video taping (2)
- Communication with teachers coordinator for the program and student speeches and management if any (Diwali coordinator)
- Communication with the parents about the program and expectations
- Arranging with the temple priest and Mr. Singla for the appropriate timings and logistics.
- Diwali Puja at the temple (3 volunteers)
- Buy Puja material (1)
- Bringing Kalash and large Thalies for Puja - 2
- Buy Flowers (1)

- Maintain order while Puja is in progress - 2
- Buying, arrangement and distribution of Diwali gifts. (2 Volunteer)
- Buying, arrangement, distribution and safe display of firecrackers for all students (3 volunteers)
- Monitoring students while in Puja and at the display of firecrackers (4-5 volunteers)
- Food or Prasad arrangements (1-2 volunteers)
- Cleaning after firecracker display (all participating volunteers convene for conclusion)

Republic Day

The republic day is celebrated on the closest Sunday to January 26 and will be held at the school. The program will be for 30 minutes and start at 12 noon at the Gym. The activities include:

- Two leads (2)
- Photography (2), video taping (2)
- Communication with teachers' coordinator for 1-2 student speeches or any other activity. Communication with the parents (1)
- Preparation and singing the Indian and American National anthems and flag hoisting (1)
- Some video and audio for the event (1)
- Buy and distribute some sweets (2)

Holi

Holi program has been a big success in the last few years. Children get to play colors after a short presentation or play. Expenses incurred for buying colors are reimbursed by Bal Vihar.

The responsibilities include:

- Two leads (2)
- Photography (2), video taping (2)
- Communication with the teachers' coordinator for the presentation or play. Communication with the parents (1)
- Buying colors, packaging and distribution to Bal Vihar students after a liability waiver is signed. (2)
- Food arrangements and distribution (3)
- Cleaning and protecting the MGC and Hindu temple building from color and dirt (3)

Picnic

Picnic is an exciting event usually held in one of the county parks. It gives students, parents, teachers and their families an opportunity to socialize and play traditional sports. Expenses incurred for buying games, prizes and pizza are reimbursed by Bal Vihar.

The responsibilities include:

- Two leads (2)
- Photography (2), video taping (2)
- Communication with the teachers coordinator, Communication with the parents (1)
- Booking the park/ event site well in advance (preferably 3-4 months as most of the parks get booked early. The process should start in February at least) (1)
- Arrange and Set up games (3-4)
- Food arrangements - Order and bring pizza and drinks, Set up and ensure enough paper products, and Distribute food (4)
- Cleaning by all the volunteers (4)

Annual Day

Bal Vihar year concludes with the Annual day program. This is the main event where almost everyone participates. It requires much more organized effort from students, parents, teachers and administrative staff. Each year the annual day preparations begin at least 5-6 months before the event. Teachers usually propose a theme and participants prepare keeping theme. Most groups perform in various events. Rehearsals start at least few weeks before the event. We would like to avoid distraction from the regular Bal Vihar curriculum. Most of the program them usually involves what the students have learned or related activities. Graduating students are awarded certificates. Teachers and volunteers are recognized. There is usually one chief guest, who delivers a small speech related to students or culture.

The responsibilities include:

- Two leads (2)
- Photography (2), video taping (2)

Communication with the teacher's coordinator for the whole program and communication with the parents is most essential from the very beginning. We need coordinators (3) and volunteers (20), and responsibilities include:

- Logistics of putting a program together by the mutual consent of teachers from each group, Yoga and Bhajans and arrangement of the MC (main coordinator).
- Management of sound system and AV equipment (3 volunteers).
- Advertisement, creating, printing and distribution of the program souvenir (1-2 volunteers).
- Arrangement, escorting and food needs of chief guest/guests (one volunteer)
- Stage preparation, setting up, cleaning and seating Arrangement of the hall usually the day before or same day early morning (5-6 volunteers)

- Order, delivery, set up and distribution of food (food coordinator and team of at least 8-10 volunteers)
- Cleaning and conclusion (4)

Fund Raising:

Bal Vihar is a non profit organization and the fees we collect goes towards the educational expenses of the school. We need to raise additional funds for improving infrastructure, teaching aids and facilities for students. To this end, this effort is divided into two broad categories:

- Short term quick wins – sign up programs with Schnucks, Dierberg, Pizza Hut corporation etc to donate the a part of the money to Bal Vihar for each transaction (3 volunteers)
- Long term big wins – Write up proposals and secure corporate and government funding (3 volunteers)

Others:

If you did not sign up for any of the above volunteer roles, sign up here and you will be called upon for any help and at any time.

Volunteering Requirement Policy:

1. Effective Bal Vihar School year 2008 -2009, as a parent of Bal Vihar student, you are required to be a volunteer. You will be required to deposit \$50 per child toward volunteering. One volunteering event corresponds to one deposit. For a family for more than one deposit, more than one volunteering is expected. Thus, for two deposits, two volunteering events are required for refund. During the registration process, choose the activity that you are interested in. Upon satisfactory completion of that commitment, Bal Vihar will return the check to you. In case of failure in meeting the obligations, the school will deposit your volunteering fee as donation to Bal Vihar.
 2. After commitment of assignment, if you cannot meet your commitment for personal reason, it is your responsibility to find another parent volunteer to take care of your assignment. The volunteer coordinator must be notified at least 2 weeks in advance of any change.
 3. Teachers, community projects organizers and administration staff are classified as volunteers.
 4. It is your responsibility to complete the agreed upon assignment.
- Cleaning and conclusion by all food volunteers

Policy for Teachers' involvement in Bal Vihar events:

Bal Vihar school teachers are volunteered for in class assignments and will focus in education aspects of the curriculum assigned to them. All additional responsibilities such as preparing children for the events such as annual day or other such events will be parents' responsibility. The teachers may provide guidance, but, the ultimate responsibility lies on parents or a group of parents who will work with the event coordinator.