

# Pre-K Guided Group Visits: Prepare for Your Visit



VMFA Pre-K Guided Group Visits provide young learners with meaningful, age-appropriate introductions to VMFA's rich environment in addition to supporting classroom learning.

For some of your students, this may be their first visit to a fine arts museum. We want all children to feel comfortable visiting VMFA and to know that it is a place where they are welcome. We hope your visit will be a fun and memorable experience that fosters an early appreciation for art and self-expression. Read this guide thoroughly to help you and your students have the best visit possible!



## Before Your Visit:



- **Review the Museum Manners** (located in the “During Your Visit” section) and discuss what it means to visit a fine arts museum. You might involve them in a discussion using these questions:
  - What is a fine arts museum?
  - What will they see?
  - What will they do?
- Visit our website for additional educational resources that can help you prepare for your visit: <https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/>

## When You Arrive

- **One adult chaperone for every 5 students is required.** We ask that you not exceed the 1:5 ratio as we have found additional adults can be distracting to the students, and we have limited space in our classroom, galleries, and art studios. **Please note:** The 1:5 ratio may be exceeded when there are students who require individual aides.
- **Please arrive early to visit the restrooms** before the program begins. If you are running late, please contact Liz Swerdlow, Early Childhood Educator at 804.340.1509.

## Arriving by Bus

- Print the [bus parking map](#) for your driver.
- **Note the location of the School Group Entrance**-this is where your bus driver will drop off/pick up your group. When arriving, look for the big GREY sidewalk sign where you will be greeted by an Early Childhood Educator.
- Be sure your bus driver knows what time to meet your group at the **School Group Entrance** for departure.



## Arriving by Passenger Vehicle

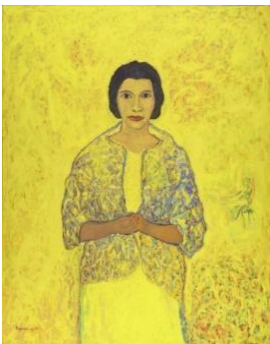
- Allow ample time to park and walk to the **School Group Entrance**. When leaving the museum, prepare your group for walking back to your parked vehicles as well.
- **VMFA Parking Deck** is free for the first 30 minutes and \$6 to park for the day. Parking is free for members.
- **Free parking** is available along the street.
- **PLEASE NOTE: Parking is strictly prohibited in the Entry Plaza, or fire lane in front of the museum.**

## Staying for Lunch?

- There is a conference room available for classes who opt to bring bagged lunches. It can be reserved by contacting [specialevents@vmfa.museum](mailto:specialevents@vmfa.museum). This room is available from September—May.
- You are welcome to eat lunch outdoors in the Sculpture Garden.

# During Your Visit

## Museum Manners



- **Use walking feet.** Walk like a slow-moving turtle while in the museum.
- **Use museum hands** in the galleries (hold hands together like they are giving each other a hug). Please help us protect the artwork by not touching the works of art, walls, platforms, or glass cases.
- **Stay together.** It is important to stay safe and to not wander away from the group.

## Gallery Rules

- **Food, drinks, and gum are not allowed** in the galleries.
- **Non-flash** photography is allowed in the permanent collection galleries and in most special exhibitions.
- If you visit the Sculpture Garden, please remind students that **touching and climbing on the outdoor sculptures is not allowed**.
- **Backpacks are strongly discouraged in the galleries.** If you need to bring a backpack (carrying medical supplies) into the galleries, it must either be worn on the front of the body or carried by hand.



## Teacher & Chaperone Guidelines

### In the Galleries

- **Please put cell phones on silent and stay with your group at all times.**
- Gently remind students to **use “museum hands” and walking feet.** It may be necessary to hold the hand of an active child to help ensure that they do not get too close to the art.
- Museum educators love to hear children’s ideas and try to **ask open-ended questions** that spark creative responses, rather than questions that result in YES or NO answers. Please allow students to answer these questions.

### In the Art Studio



- The **PROCESS** of making art is more important than the end result. **Help children build confidence and autonomy** by allowing them the freedom to experiment with materials, take creative risks, and discover their own solutions.
- Directions are only guidelines; **there is no right or wrong way to create art.** If they are fully engaged, they are doing it right!
- **Model curiosity and embrace the unexpected!**
- **Sit back, relax, and enjoy** watching your students delight in their artmaking process!