

St. Mary – St. Michael School
Sports Program Guidelines

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Section 1 - Overview

The St. Mary / St. Michael Sports Program consists of the Boys Varsity Basketball, Girls Varsity Basketball, Boys Junior Varsity Basketball, Girls Junior Varsity Basketball, and Cheerleaders. These programs are competitive in nature. The primary objective is for each player to develop skills while learning lessons in self-discipline, teamwork, friendship, leadership, and good sportsmanship. The coaches and parents are expected to serve as role models in this process. This set of guidelines shall establish school policy governing each of these programs in order to assist all participants in achieving the objectives stated above.

Section 2 - Principal's Role & Responsibilities

The principal shall serve as the administrator of the sports program and will have full responsibility and authority for insuring that the policies established in these Sports Program Guidelines are followed at all times. The principal will be the final authority in resolving any and all issues related to the Sports Program including addressing any violations of policy that may occur or adjustments in eligibility of players.

Prior to the start of the pre-season and before any practice or tryout activity occurs, the principal will approve the application or reappointment of coaches. She will also conduct a meeting with all coaches to review the program guidelines, review and approve league and tournament plans, and to allocate the gymnasium for practices. The gym should be equally apportioned for use among all sports programs. In the event of conflicting times, assignments shall be drawn by lot.

Prior to the start of the sports seasons, the principal shall collect a game schedule from each team and distribute a copy of schedules of all the basketball teams to each head coach. The Cheerleading Squad shall use this schedule so that all r basketball teams may receive the benefits of their cheering efforts.

Section 3 - Coaches

Each coach will be selected and approved by the Principal. The coaches for each of the programs (Boys Varsity, Boys JV, Girls Varsity, Girls JV, Cheerleaders, and Instructional League) will report directly to the principal and receive communications from the principal directly on all matters pertaining to their team and to the program.

Coaches are required to fill out an Archdiocesan Volunteer Application form and file it with the principal. A coach who applies for the first time must personally meet with the principal and receive approval of the principal prior to assuming any role with the team.

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A coach who is interested in returning to a position must re-apply in writing and be approved by the principal prior to September 15 of each year. If by the September 15 date, an incumbent coach has not re-applied to the principal, the position will be considered open and other candidates will be considered.

Coaches will have a group meeting with the principal prior to tryouts or practices begin. At this time, the Sports Program Guidelines will be reviewed and all coaches will agree to adhere to the established policies as outlined in the Guidelines and sign a code of conduct. Gym assignments for practices will be distributed as discussed above.

During the first week of practice, each coach must issue a letter to the team players and parents, which must be approved by the principal prior to issuance. The letter should outline the coaches' team philosophy and policies with regard to matters such as attendance at games and practices, arrival times before games, playing time in games, absence notification, discipline, etc. The issuance of this letter will provide a clear communication to all parents regarding how the coach will conduct his/her program. Coaches are strongly encouraged to issue and discuss this letter within the context of a parents' meeting during the first week of practice.

Coaches have the authority to take appropriate disciplinary action against a player who violates the coaches' policies. The principal should be consulted prior to the issuance of any serious disciplinary action such as game suspensions or removal of a player from a team for any reason.

Coaches will sign a code of conduct in which he/she will agree to emphasize good academic performance and adherence to Catholic principles, promote good sportsmanship, make every reasonable effort within the competitive structure of the program to allow each player to attain playing time, ensure a safe and enjoyable environment, refrain from smoking in the presence of the players, refrain from the use of abusive or profane language, refrain from publicly criticizing a player, refrain from abusive behavior toward a referee, act upon the best interest of the child at all times, and submit to the authority of the principal in all matters relating to the sports program. Coaches are mandated to participate in the Archdiocese of Hartford's Virtus Training program. If a coach has not taken part in the program, he/she will not be allowed to coach.

In order to protect themselves and the school corporation, coaches should also exercise caution and good judgment with regard to placing themselves in a one-on-one situation with a child, especially involving transportation. Coaches are not allowed to transport any player. Except in case of an emergency, a coach must always have a third party present when spending time with a player in the gym. The third party may be another adult or student.

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Section 4 - Player Eligibility

The student's first responsibility will be school attendance and academic performance. All sports program participants must have an overall grade average of "passing". It will be the responsibility of the principal to monitor academic performance and to notify the coach when a player becomes ineligible. It is not within the scope of authority for a coach to determine player eligibility with regard to academic performance or to issue any additional guidelines in this area.

The Varsity Basketball programs are open to participation by students in seventh through eighth grades. Junior Varsity basketball programs are open to participation by students in fifth through sixth grades. Cheerleading is open to students in fifth grade through eighth grade. **At times it may be necessary to adjust grade levels of players and this will be done at the discretion of the administration.**

As stated in the school handbook, boys' basketball is open to male players only. Girls' basketball is open to female players only.

It is not permissible for a student to participate in both the Girl's basketball program and the Cheerleading program.

Section 5- Practice Policy

Practices may start after determination from the principal. They are limited to a length of two hours, except for the cheerleaders who may practice for two and one half hours.

Practices will be scheduled by the coaches. Players are mandated to attend every practice. If a child is absent from school because of illness he/she cannot attend practice or play in a game that day. A parent must call the coach directly if their child is unable to make practice or a game, or will be tardy. Messages are not being sent through other children or parents. Tardiness at games or practices will not be tolerated. Continuous tardiness and missed practices and games will be considered grounds for dismissal from the team.

Each team must have at least two days off per calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) in which they do not have any team activity (practices or games). Since the children are grammar school students, the importance of sports in their lives versus other activities must be kept in proper perspective.

If unusual circumstances arise in which the coach would like to exceed the guidelines, such as participation in the Archdiocesan Tournament or competition, the coach may apply to the

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principal for a waiver regarding practice time or days off. The principal shall exercise appropriate judgment and caution in granting such a waiver.

Only team members may participate in a team practice. Under no circumstances may children who are not team members participate in a team practice. Players are not to bring friends, relatives, etc...to practice with the team. No child or adult is allowed at practice unless they are a coach for or member of that particular team.

Coaches must provide a written practice schedule several days in advance in order to allow parents to plan their own schedules and commitments. Practices must end at the stated end time. Parents are required to pick the child up in the gym after practice rather than outside the school. A coach must remain with a child until the child is picked up after practice.

If a child is out of school because of illness, he/she cannot attend practice on the same day.

Parents or siblings are not allowed to attend practices. An observation session will be scheduled for parents to observe a practice. If a parent does not choose to follow the rules, their child will be removed from the Sports Program.

If a child does not attend practices on a regular basis, the coach must discuss the situation with the principal, and a decision will be made to determine if that student is to be removed from the team.

Players are expected to behave appropriately during practice and at games. Horseplay, foul language, fighting, or disrespect will not be tolerated at practice or games.

Players are required to dress appropriately for practices. No jewelry or gum chewing is allowed at practice or at games.

If a player has been deemed injured by a physician, he/she cannot practice or play in games until a written note from the physician has been presented to the coach and principal.

Playing time during a game is at the discretion of the coach or specific tournament rules. There is no requirement that every player must play at every game. All players are required to sit on the bench at games and pay attention to what is happening in the game. No player may leave the bench without permission from the coach.

Section 6 - Game Scheduling

Game scheduling is performed by the league or tournament directors without consultation or input from the coaches or administration, although some consideration in extenuating circumstances may be given. Participation in two leagues or overlapping tournaments may result in two games on a given day. While two games in a day are permissible, coaches

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should review schedules as soon as they are issued and request appropriate changes from the league or tournament directors in order to insure at least four hours of rest time between games. The principal should be made aware of any controversial scheduling issues.

Section 7 - Parents' Responsibilities

Parents of each player must become a member of the Sports Club. Since all sports programs, including uniform purchases, are funded exclusively by the Sports Club budget, this requires payment of a participation fee as well as participation in several fundraisers. Each parent must agree to participation in the Sports Club and adherence to all Sports Club requirements as a condition of their child's participation in a sports program.

Parents are strongly urged to attend their child's games and exhibit good sportsmanship at all time. Parental conduct is a direct reflection on our school and also an example for our children.

Parents will also fill out and sign a medical clearance form that contains a waiver of responsibility prior to the beginning of the practice season. The coach must carry the medical clearance form at practices and games.

Parents must inform the coach where they will be while their child is at practice. Parents must be accessible for contact in case of an emergency.

If the parent will not be at home, they should provide a cell phone or pager number to the coach to facilitate contact in the event of an emergency.

If a parent has an issue with a coach, the parent should meet with the coach to discuss the issue. If agreement is not reached, the parent should request a meeting with the principal to discuss the complaint. Under no circumstances should additional parties become involved. The principal is the final authority in all grievance issues with the sports programs.

In the event that a child is subject to a custody agreement, the parent must make the principal and coaches aware of the agreement and inform the coach of "pick up" arrangements after practices and games.

Section 8 - Injury Management

Medical forms are required to be filed with the school by parents prior to the start of the practice season.

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In the event that a child is injured at a practice or game, the coach must exercise best judgment in providing care for the child. The coach must contact the parent immediately in case of injury. If in the coaches' opinions, the child requires immediate medical attention and the parent is not reachable, the coach shall call 911 and remain with the child until the ambulance arrives. In the event that the child is transported to a medical facility, the coach should accompany the child and remain with the child until the parent arrives.

When a child is injured, the coach must file an injury report with the principal within forty-eight hours of the incident.

First aid kits, including ice packs and protective gloves, must be distributed to coaches prior to the start of the tryout/practice season and must be replenished as needed throughout the season.

If a child has a medical condition that may affect his/her ability to practice or play, the parent must notify the coach of the child's condition prior to beginning of the season, so the coach is aware.

A phone must be available at all times during a game or practice. If a coach does not have access to a phone the practice will not be held.

Section 9 – Uniforms

When distributing uniforms, the coaches will determine the shirt number that each player is assigned. Uniforms are the responsibility of the players to be kept neat, clean, and returned at the end of the season in a clean condition.

Section 10- Sports Club Fee

Students participating in JV or Varsity Basketball and Cheerleading is \$70.00. Two children from the same family who are participating in the Sports program will be charged a family rate of \$125.00. These fees must be received by the Financial Administrator before uniforms will be issued and participation at practices can begin.

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Letter of Participation

I/We have read the Sports Program Handbook and will abide by the guidelines set forth in the book.

I/We agree to follow the policies set forth by my child's coach.

Also, in consideration of permitting my son/daughter to participate in the St. Mary-St. Michael School sports program, I/We hereby release and save harmless St. Mary-St. Michael School of Derby, CT and any of its employees, and its volunteer coaches from any and all liability for any and all harm arising to my child due to his/her participation in the sports program.

(Parent/guardian signature) _____
(date)

(Student participant) _____
(date)

This form must be on file in the Principal's office BEFORE attendance at the first practice.