



BLUEJAY

ATHLETICS

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2023-2024

St. Cecilia School

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PLEASE NOTE

The regulations and other provisions outlined in this handbook are considered a contractual agreement between St. Cecilia School and each student/parent enrolled in the school athletic program. In developing the rules and policies for St. Cecilia School Athletics, the administration has tried to anticipate as many issues as possible. As new and unusual situations may arise, the Athletic Director, under the direction of the Principal, has the authority to use his/her discretion. All school policies remain in effect and may affect eligibility.

Parental cooperation is essential for the welfare of the students. If, in the opinion of the administration, parent behavior seriously interferes with the athletic programs, the school may ban the parent from the athletic event(s) and/or deny the student from participating in SCS athletics.

I. OUR MISSION

Centered in Christ and rooted in historical Catholic tradition, St. Cecilia strives to form missionary disciples and foster academic excellence in a culture of family.

II. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

St. Cecilia School's athletic programs are dedicated to the all-round development of each student. These programs instill values of discipline, responsibility, and sportsmanship, encouraging fair play, teamwork, and leadership. We greatly value the active involvement and supportive role of parents in this journey.

Our approach places equal importance on fun and fundamental skill development, fostering self-fulfillment and a sense of community among participants. While we aim for success in competition, our primary focus is on nurturing positive habits and practices. We believe that by doing so, we lay solid foundations that prepare students to excel at the next level, whether they continue their athletic careers or not.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

A. General

1. Our athletic program is an extension of the school day; therefore, all school handbook policies governing behavioral expectations are in effect. Because student-athletes, parents, and coaches are representatives of St. Cecilia off-campus, the highest standards of behavior are to be upheld at all times.
2. Only positive, supportive, encouraging language is to be used. Players, coaches, and parents shall not use foul, degrading, demoralizing, embarrassing, or suggestive language.
3. The use of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal drug/substance is strictly forbidden.

B. Student-Athletes

1. A player should promote good sportsmanship and school spirit. Any unsportsmanlike conduct including the use of profanity, name-calling, refusing to shake hands, vicious or malicious acts to injure another player, and/or being disrespectful to other players, referees, and/or coaches will result in appropriate disciplinary action as determined by the coach, Athletic Director, and/or SCS Administration.
2. Players are expected to attend all practices and games in a timely manner with appropriate attire and gear, as dictated by the sport in which they are participating.

C. Parents

1. Parents are encouraged to cheer for their child while remembering that they are part of a team. Encourage the other players as well. Parents should not say anything negative to other parents, players, friends, or faculty about other students on the team.
2. Parents should not shout instructions to their child during games and practices. Coaches are responsible for coaching and teaching. Shouting instructions will create confusion and interfere with game plans. Questions and feedback should wait until afterward.
3. Parents, siblings, and any other students not on the team are not allowed in the dugout, on the field, or on the court during games and practices. Parents are not allowed to help the coach unless the Athletic Director has authorized their assistance.
4. Be courteous to all referees as well as our visiting guests. Parents should not shout insults or verbally harass the referees. Such behavior sets a poor example for students. The referee has the power to stop the game or eject individuals if the crowd becomes discourteous.
5. Parents are not allowed to approach, interfere, or interrupt a coach or the Athletic Director before, during, or after a practice or game.

IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES

A. Attire

As an SCS student, athletes are expected to wear clothing that is respectful of their surroundings and suited to their activity. The following are considered inappropriate:

1. Ripped or torn clothing

2. Clothing with inappropriate expressions or logos or that promote illegal activities
 3. Excessively short and/or tight clothing
 4. Spaghetti or halter straps as well as strapless shirts
 5. Biker shorts without shorts over them.
- B. Supervision
1. Students must be supervised at all times. They may not wait outside alone after practices or games.
 2. Unsupervised students may be sent to aftercare, if available, and parents will be charged.
 3. Students must be picked up in a timely fashion at the end of any school activity (within 15 minutes).
 4. Students will not be allowed inside the St. Cecilia gym after school for any reason without a coach present - no exceptions.
- C. All players are required to help maintain restrooms and locker rooms during practices and/or games.
- D. Players may be assigned light maintenance duties to include, but not limited to, keeping up the gym floor before and after practices and/or games, picking up trash, straightening locker rooms, sweeping and/or mopping bleachers, etc.
- E. St. Cecilia School is happy to host games and tournaments throughout the various athletic seasons. We ask that coaches and parents explain the following school policy to the players and students attending the games:
1. For everyone's safety and liability reasons, students cannot be outside of the St. Cecilia gym without adult supervision.
 2. Parents will be called to pick up students found outside of the gym without adult supervision. Failure to adhere to this policy could lead to further disciplinary actions by school administration.
- F. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from all games. St. Cecilia is not responsible for students carpooling with other parents, nor will SCS be responsible for making carpooling arrangements.
- G. Parents will be scheduled to work home athletic events before the start of each sporting season. If a parent is unable to work their scheduled time, they must make arrangements to cover the scheduled shift.
- H. Players shall remain in the designated areas and not leave their team until the end of the game.
- I. If a player remains as a spectator for additional games, he/she will be required to sit in the bleachers. Friends who are not on the team in play cannot sit or stand with the team on the sidelines or benches.

V. PARTICIPATION

A. Physicals

1. Students must have an up-to-date physical examination on file to be able to participate.
2. Physical examinations are up-to-date one calendar year from the date of the physical examination.

B. Registration

1. St. Cecilia will provide a registration period for each sport.
 - a) Fifth and sixth-grade teams are considered instructional, and no tryouts or cuts will be made. Therefore, the school may sponsor more than one team in the case of high participation numbers.
 - b) The one exception is cheerleading. This sport requires a limited roster and is inclusive of grades 6, 7, and 8. Tryouts will be held and cuts made as dictated by skill level.
 - c) Seventh and eighth-grade teams are preparatory for high school and more competitive in nature. Tryouts and cuts will be conducted to maintain appropriate roster counts as necessitated by registration numbers.
2. Once rosters are finalized, players will be assessed the appropriate registration fee for each sport via FACTS SIS. It is the discretion of the Athletic Director if these funds are to be refunded.
3. Only newly enrolled students will be permitted to register for a sport after the registration period for that sport has concluded.
 - a) Any other student who would like to join after registration must get approval from the coach, Athletic Director, and Principal.
 - b) A student who transfers to another school and then returns to SCS during the same season is ineligible to participate during that season.
4. Once a player has submitted their registration, they have committed themselves to participate for the entire season, pending eligibility.
 - a) Any student-athlete who chooses to quit a sport before the end of the season may be denied participation in other sports. This will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Principal.
 - b) Three unexcused absences from practices, games, or tournaments may result in suspension from games, removal from the team, and/or being denied participation in other sports. This will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Principal.

VI. ELIGIBILITY

Being a member of a St. Cecilia Bluejay athletic team is a privilege not to be taken lightly. St. Cecilia prides itself on having student-athletes who exhibit high moral character, integrity, and respect for themselves and their opponents. The following guidelines are set up to establish and maintain a student's eligibility:

- A. The student must have no outstanding balances with the school's finance office.
- B. Timely submission of registration, forms, and fees, including:
 - 1. Athletic Participation form (which includes medical information form)
 - 2. Athletic physical
 - 3. Signed Athletic Handbook Agreement
 - 4. Any other forms specific to each sport
 - 5. Registration Payment via FACTS SIS only.
- C. Conduct and Academic Expectations:
 - 1. Combined average of at least 77% for all core subjects (as defined in the school handbook), with no grade of "F" on the quarterly report card.
 - 2. "C" or better in conduct on the quarterly report card.
 - 3. A student who is ineligible due to report card grades can become eligible by meeting these criteria at the next progress report as long as they attend all team practices and meetings in the interim. Parents may opt out at the beginning of the season; however, students may not become eligible and join the team mid-season.
 - 4. A 7th or 8th grade student who is ineligible at the time of tryouts may not tryout. However, if registration numbers do not dictate that a tryout is needed and no cuts are to be made, he/she will follow the procedures outlined in item 3 above.

VII. NEW STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Any student who has transferred to SCS from another school is considered ineligible until verified otherwise by the Athletic Director.

If a new student wishes to play volleyball or football, they must meet St. Cecilia's eligibility requirements from the 4th quarter of the last school they attended. New students entering in the middle of a season must comply with the same rules and regulations. Team placement will be dependent upon grade level and roster numbers, as previously described.

VIII. ATTENDANCE

Athletes are required to attend all practices and games. If an athlete is unable to attend a game or practice, then it is the athlete's responsibility to inform the coach and/or Athletic Director in advance. Coaches are expected to work with students who have scheduling conflicts with other SCS activities or those students with an illness or death in the family.

A. General Attendance Guidelines

1. As mandated by the Diocese of Lafayette, there will be no practice or games on Sundays or during the Holy Triduum.
2. Athletes should meet at the designated area at the time given by the coach. A child must never be left alone. A parent or coach must be present.
3. All players are to be on time for practice and prepared to participate.
4. The maximum practice and game time per week is 8 hours including weekends. Maximum practice time per session is 2 hours.
5. Games, matches, or meets will not regularly extend past 9:00 p.m.
6. Players who miss a practice or a game without a valid excuse may not play in the next game. Coaches, along with the athletic director, will decide if the excuse is valid or not.
7. All athletes must follow all dress and grooming codes outlined in the Student Handbook (i.e. make-up, etc.). Only modest and appropriate attire is allowed.

B. Unexcused Absences

Missed practices or games due to the following will be considered unexcused:

1. Detention – students must serve an assigned detention before reporting to any game or practice.
2. Non-SCS-related activities
3. Lack of advance communication to the coach and/or Athletic Director.

C. Excused Absences

1. Death of any immediate family member is automatically excused. No written excuse is required.
2. Students missing school due to illness may not participate in a game or practice on that same day, regardless if the absence is excused or unexcused. Students must be present at school for 3 ½ hours to be eligible to participate in any event on that date.

3. Students on medical or excused leave from a sport should still understand their commitment to their teammates and are expected to attend practices and games.

IX. CONSEQUENCES

Failure to abide by the expectations set forth in this handbook will result in adverse consequences which may include, but are not limited to, reduced playing time, suspension or removal from the team, and/or the removal of future participation privileges.

- A. Three unexcused absences may result in suspension from multiple games, removal from the team, and/or not being allowed to participate in the next sport.
- B. If a player is ejected from a game, he/she will be benched for the next game and playing time for the following game may be affected.
- C. It is the player's responsibility to make sure that they meet all uniform requirements. Failure to do so will result in less playing time.
- D. Students serving out-of-school suspensions or placed on SCS probation may not participate in any athletic event during the suspension or probation period. If none occur, they will be suspended from the next scheduled game after their return to school.
- E. A player with major or repeated school disciplinary issues, on- or off-season, may also have to serve a partial or full suspension from the next contest.
- F. Parents engaging in prohibited behaviors may be asked to leave the premises and/or prohibited from returning.
- G. The Athletic Director, under the direction of Administration, will have discretion regarding students who have had major disciplinary issues during non-athletic seasons for all future sports seasons.
- H. Appeals
 1. All concerns should be addressed with the Athletic Director during business hours and no sooner than 24 hours following the completion of the incident causing concern.
 2. The Athletic Director will attempt to mediate a resolution. If a resolution still cannot be reached, the Athletic Director will contact the Principal. There is a chain of command that will be strictly followed by everyone involved.

X. EMERGENCY INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

- A. Parents are responsible for ensuring that all contact information, including emergency contacts, is current in FACTS SIS and on the registration form.
- B. Email and cell phone are the preferred communication avenues.
- C. Communication to be expected from coaches to parents:
 - 1. expectations for your child and the team
 - 2. location and times of all practices and games
 - 3. participation requirements (i.e. practices, special equipment, etc.)
 - 4. any disciplinary action resulting from a violation of this handbook
- D. Communications to be expected from parents to coaches:
 - 1. notification of any illness or injury
 - 2. notification in advance of missed practices and/or games
- E. Coaches make decisions in the best interests of all players on a team, and your support is essential to maintaining an environment conducive to growth.
 - 1. Appropriate topics to discuss with coaches or the Athletic Director include:
 - a) Ways to help your child improve his/her skills
 - b) Concerns about your child's behavior
 - c) Concerns about your child's emotional and/or physical well-being
 - 2. Inappropriate topics to discuss with the coach:
 - a) playing time
 - b) team strategy
 - c) play calling
 - d) other student-athletes

XI. COACHING STANDARDS

Coaching, like teaching, is a vocation that wields great influence over the lives of children. All St. Cecilia coaches are expected to support and model the school's mission and athletic philosophy, demonstrating exemplary behavior. The Athletic Director recommends coaches, approved by the Principal, based on their Catholic identity, experience, knowledge of the sport, and ability to educate and inspire children. All coaches must adhere to the following standards:

A. General

1. Students are to be afforded many opportunities for water or other fluids during practices and games.
2. Only positive, supportive, encouraging language is to be used. Never is a coach to use foul, degrading, demoralizing, embarrassing, or suggestive language. Further, such language by players is not to be tolerated.
3. Coaches are responsible for supervising players the entire time they are on campus or at games.
4. Coaches are responsible for securing the gymnasium after home practices and games.
5. Coaches are to be aware of policies regarding student eligibility and are to implement those policies.
6. Coaches are expected to assist with the upkeep of the gymnasium by having players clean up after themselves.
7. Coaches are responsible for all athletic equipment assigned to them. If equipment is lost or stolen the coach is responsible for the replacement.
8. Coaches may not hand out any candy due to food allergies.
9. Coaches may not administer medication to players except in the case of emergency medications (asthma inhalers, EPIPEN) for which there is a valid medical form on file with the school's office.
10. Coaches represent SCS and are expected to present themselves as such. Coaches who are ejected from a game will serve a one-game suspension from the next game. The Athletic Director, along with the approval of the Principal, will meet to decide if further action needs to be taken.
11. Coaches are required to turn in all scores and attendance to the Athletic Director for all practices and home/away games at the end of each week via text or email

B. Practices

1. Practice is intended to teach students the fundamentals of the sport and to provide opportunities for students to develop skills and teamwork. Therefore, Coaches must ensure players participate fully in the entirety of each practice.
2. Practice sessions may be closed to spectators at the discretion of the coaches. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher's classroom where instruction takes place. In practice, interference and interruption to an athlete's concentration and focus cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic classroom.
3. The Athletic Director, with the knowledge and consent of the Principal, must approve off-campus practice locations.

C. Games

1. At the 5th and 6th grade level, every child is expected to participate in every game.
2. When there is "running time" for tournaments in 5th & 6th grade, students play at the discretion of the coach.
3. The 7th and 8th grade levels are considered competitive and preparatory for the next level. Therefore, playing time is not guaranteed and determined at the discretion of the coach.
4. In a game when the score is excessive (winning or losing), the coach will substitute players to allow more playing time for those players who do not start or do not receive as much playing time as the others.
5. In the final league tournament only, for all sports, at all grade levels, playing time is not guaranteed. The coach's discretion will be used.

D. Injury Protocol

1. No matter the extent of the injury or the location that the injury takes place, it must be reported. No accident or injury should be minimized.
2. Players should be assessed immediately.
3. Notify parents and/or guardians and the athletic director so documentation can begin.
4. If medical attention is needed, appropriate steps must be taken.
5. If injury requires consultation and clearance, the player cannot return to play until released by a medical professional.

XII. TEAM COMPOSITION

In any sport where SCS does not have sufficient numbers to constitute a "team", grade levels may be combined. If SCS does combine grade levels, players are given the option to resign without a penalty within 5 days of the notification. Students choosing to play under these conditions must follow the guidelines of the "higher" grade level.

XIII. ATHLETIC UNIFORMS

- A. Uniforms and certain equipment are the property of St. Cecilia School.
1. Players are responsible for the care of uniforms and equipment issued to them.
 2. Uniforms may not be altered or defaced in any way. If items are not returned in the same condition as issued or not returned at all, progress and/or report cards will be held until items have been returned or paid for.
- B. All players are considered representatives of St. Cecilia School and must be dressed appropriately on school grounds or other venues.
1. Players are allowed to wear their uniform only in conjunction with school events.
 2. Uniform or official team shirts are allowed with uniform bottoms on game days.
 - a) If a game day falls on a Mass day, players may change after Mass. Athletic uniforms are not to be worn at school for spirit days.
 - b) Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times.
 3. Players shall wear only the uniform assigned by the coach for each sport.
 4. Any additional items to the uniform (t-shirts, jackets, headbands, etc.) must receive approval from the Athletic Director.
 5. Players who are not in proper uniform will not participate.

Uniform Care Instructions:

- Machine wash in cold water with like colors
- Only use non-chlorine bleach when needed
- Line dry only
- No ironing (heat is not good for silk-screening)
- If the uniform is damaged or lost, the participant will be responsible for the replacement cost of the item.

XIV. GENERAL CONCUSSION INFORMATION

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

What are the signs and symptoms of concussion?

Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If an athlete reports one or more symptoms of concussion listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, he/she should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a healthcare professional, experienced in evaluation for concussion, says he/she is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. Most concussions occur “without” loss of consciousness. Athletes who have, at any point in their lives, had a concussion have an increased risk of another concussion. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.

Signs observed by coaching staff:

Appears dazed or stunned, is confused about assignment or position, forgets an instruction, is unsure of game, score, or opponent, moves clumsily, answers questions slowly, loses consciousness (even briefly), shows mood, behavior, or personality changes, can't recall events before hit or fall, can't recall events after hit or fall, headache or “pressure” in the head, nausea or vomiting, Balance problems or dizziness, double or blurry vision, sensitivity to light, sensitivity to noise, feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy, concentration or memory problems, confusion, and just not “feeling right” or “feeling down”.

Concussion Danger Signs:

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. An athlete should receive immediate medical attention if, after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, he/she exhibits any of the following danger signs: One pupil larger than the other, is drowsy or cannot be awakened, a headache that not only does not diminish, but gets worse, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination, repeated vomiting or

nausea, slurred speech, convulsions or seizures, cannot recognize people or places, becomes increasingly confused, restless, or agitated, has unusual behavior, and/or loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously).

What should be done if you think you have a concussion?

If an athlete has a concussion, his/her brain needs time to heal. While an athlete's brain is still healing, he/she is much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes to recover. In rare cases, repeat concussions in young athletes can result in brain swelling or permanent damage to their brain. They can even be fatal.

What should you do if you think your athlete has a concussion?

If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, remove the athlete from play and seek medical attention. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a healthcare professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says he/she is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. Rest is the key to helping an athlete recover from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games, may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be carefully managed and monitored by a healthcare professional.

<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/international-consensus-on-sports-concussion-summary-for-schools/>