

St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School

Athletic Handbook



St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School
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MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School is a community that proclaims the gospel by our dedication to quality instruction while fostering our commitment to the needs of others.

We pray. We learn. We care.

Our Commitments to Our Students, Faculty, and Families

At St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School, our commitment to our families is....

- ❖ Our school will seek to provide opportunities for our students and faculty to develop and foster a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Our students will be challenged each day through rigorous instruction and mentoring to reach their maximum potential spiritually, academically, socially, and physically.
- ❖ Our students will receive an outstanding and well-rounded education in all subjects that will have them prepared for their futures. We seek to create lifelong learners in our students.
- ❖ Our school will provide each student with opportunities to be involved in a variety of activities on our campus outside of the classroom.
- ❖ Our school will provide our faculty with opportunities to grow professionally and personally in their vocation as Catholic school educators through professional development in their content area(s) and opportunities to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Our school will provide a warm and welcoming environment where all parents and families can contribute to the success of our school by partnering with the faculty through community involvement, outreach, and supporting the mission and vision.
- ❖ Our school will actively provide meaningful outreach opportunities for all students, faculty, and families to be engaged in giving back to our community locally and globally. Through these outreach opportunities, our students will learn the value and importance of the Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a way to maintain consistency throughout our athletic program and to set forth clear standards and expectations for our athletes, parents, and coaches to follow.

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

Athletics teach young people many life lessons. The purpose of the athletic program at St. Mary Magdalene is to complement the academic program in the development of well-rounded students. While a strong academic program is the focus at StMM, the athletics program complements that mission by helping to develop character, discipline, teamwork, and other life skills that are of benefit to the student/athlete, and to the overall mission of St. Mary Magdalene.

The prevailing ideals of the athletics program are 1) academics first, 2) sportsmanship, 3) teamwork, 4) and personal growth. These ideals will help to promote good character for all student-athletes at StMM.

Parental involvement is also critical to the success of the program, and, as such, parents are requested to support the standards and goals of StMM by keeping the long-term goals of StMM academics and athletics first and foremost.

It shall be the purpose of the St. Mary Magdalene School Athletic Program to promote and develop good sportsmanship by example, to support team building, and the spirit of competition that reflects the values of the Catholic Church and St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School. Student-athletes are expected to exhibit leadership in the areas of behavior and academics, as participation in athletics is a privilege.

ATHLETIC FEE

All students who participate in StMM athletics will be charged an athletic participation fee of \$175 per sports season. **Cross Country will be charged an athletic participation fee of \$125.** The purpose of this fee is to cover expenses for officials, uniforms, equipment and more. Some sports may require an additional fee to help subsidize the cost of field or facility rentals. Additionally, some sports may also require an additional fee for specific parts of a uniform (socks, hats, etc.), which the athlete will then own.

These items are chosen by the coach and are issued directly to the player following payment to the coach or vendor.

No participation fees will be refunded after the first game of the season regardless of eligibility or desire to continue. This fee must be paid within 20 days of being posted to FACTS (SIS). Athletes that have not paid will not be permitted to compete or dress for a contest until the outstanding debt is resolved. Any student with outstanding athletic fees from previous seasons will not be eligible to compete in the next sports season until all debts are resolved.

TEAM SELECTION

Anyone interested in trying out for a team must be at every scheduled tryout in order to be eligible. The coach must be notified ahead of time if an athlete is going to miss the first day.

Middle School programs are by nature, developmental opportunities for student-athletes. The primary focus of the program is to introduce student-athletes to team play and to develop skills for the sport selected. The goal is to encourage full participation by all student-athletes. Although “cuts” are a part of the program, a strong emphasis on skill development over a successful record is valued. In addition, establishing a positive learning environment for each student-athlete and the development of mentor-mentee relationships between coach and player requires supplemental support from parents in regards to sportsmanship, team dynamics, academics, and character.

VARSITY & JUNIOR VARSITY

The varsity level program is the most competitive level of play. Team selection is based on the skills and abilities of each student-athlete to create a successful and competitive experience for the team and improvement for each student-athlete. Athletic ability, sportsmanship, game awareness and knowledge, individual growth, commitment to team and program, and character also factor into team selection. The varsity student-athlete demonstrates strong academic awareness, high level of character, and is committed to personal growth and team development. A realistic understanding, by coaches, student-athletes, and parents, of the individual student-athlete’s skills as a contributor to the team and program is essential to successful competition at the varsity level. Junior Varsity operates under the same guidelines as an aide to prepare for varsity competition.

TRYOUTS & CUTS

Tryouts are held for all new and returning players. Returning players are not guaranteed a roster spot based on previous participation in the sport. The process is selective and may require cuts to select student-athletes that best fit within the team dynamics.

Coaches will use a rubric determined by team goals for the selection process.

Completed rubrics will NOT be shared or discussed with parents.

Clear expectations regarding school programs, team goals, and team selection will be shared openly with student-athletes, parents, and the community. However, coaches will not discuss any student-athletes with parents other than their own child. Tryouts may be “closed” at the discretion of the coach.

Playing time is based on coaches’ judgment with a focus on the student-athlete’s skills, ability, teamwork, and character. It may also be unique from game-to-game, be determined by game conditions, matchups, and competitiveness of teams. Players will not be guaranteed the same amount of playing time. The TCSAC is a competitive league.

CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP

St. Mary Magdalene athletic programs are members of the Triangle Catholic School Athletic Conference (TCSAC).

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Once on a team, a high level of commitment is required to be a member of that team until the last game is complete. Players must be at every practice or game unless excused for one of the following reasons:

- Doctor or dental appointment
- Personal sickness
- Death in the family

Exceptions may be made through direct communication with the coach.

Adult supervision is required for practices at all times. For the safety of our athletes and in consideration of legal liability, all team practices or activities must be supervised by an adult with Level C Volunteer Clearance and Safe Environment Training. Coaches

absolutely may not schedule practices or team activities to be led by student athletes without adult supervision. Coaches who realize at any point that they can not attend an event, must either find an adult to supervise (who has level C volunteer clearance) or cancel the practice. In either event, the coach must notify the athletic department. Yes, individual athletes may work out in and out of season under their parents' authority, but if a coach calls for the activity, an adult must be in attendance. **If coaches are unable to begin practices immediately after school (for any reason), athletes must either go home and return later for practice, go to After School, or attend a mandatory pre-practice study hall, supervised and organized by team parents. Athletes may not wander around campus unsupervised from dismissal to the start of late practices.**

PRACTICES ON NON-SCHOOL DAYS

When attempting to reschedule a missed practice for a SATURDAY, please remember that students may not be "required" to attend such practices unless they were scheduled at the start of the season. Teams are not permitted to practice on School Holidays, Sundays, or when school is not in session.

OFF SEASON PRACTICES AND WORKOUTS

Skill development sessions and competitions with school coaches are permissible as long as:

- They are not required for participation on that team
- Attendance is voluntary and open

QUITTING

Quitting is highly discouraged by the athletic department. We believe one should finish what he/she has started. It is also important to note that once a player has made the team, they are taking the place of someone else who was interested in being on the team but was cut. **In the case where a player chooses to quit, he/she will be responsible for the athletic fee and will not be allowed to participate on any athletic team the next sports season.**

ELIGIBILITY

- ★ Students in grades 6, 7, or 8 are eligible to participate in sports. If a team can't be created due to the lack of players, fifth grade students may participate.
- ★ A student may participate in only one sport per season.

- ★ All student-athletes involved in the athletic program must be in attendance at school for at least 3.5 hours in order to participate in a game or practice scheduled for that day. If a student-athlete goes home at any point during the day because of illness, injury, or disciplinary infraction, they will not be permitted to participate in team sports that day. Students choosing not to attend field trips or attending any other educational function (i.e. Take Your Child to Work Day) will be required to come to school unless prior approval is given by the Athletic Director.
- ★ The administrative team has the discretion to remove or suspend any athlete from a team due to academic/behavior problems. A conference will be held with the athlete's parents before any action is taken.
- ★ The administrative team will check grades on a weekly basis. If a student has a "D" or "F" or "U" in any class; that student will receive a warning and the parent will be notified. If the grade does not improve, the student will be suspended for three weeks (practice and games).
- ★ Ineligible athletes are not permitted to practice with the team or participate in games.
- ★ Students who are ineligible to play may return to the team at the next grade check if they become eligible.
- ★ Parents will be notified via email of ineligibility.
- ★ Daily participation in physical education classes is a prerequisite to participation in interscholastic sports participation. Failure to participate in physical education class for any reason will result in disqualification from practice, competition, or any other school-sponsored team activity.
- ★ An athletic candidate must support their Saint Mary Magdalene Team above all other teams and non-school related activities. Any member of a StMM sports team who misses a practice or game to attend another team's practice or game will be suspended for one game. If a second game is missed, the player will be removed from the team. Coaches may override this policy only after consulting with the Athletic Director.

STUDENT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

All student athletes must have a sports physical and permission form and a Gfeller Concussion Information Sheet on file before they can participate in any try-out, practice, scrimmage, or contest. Student-athletes are required to use the NCHSAA Pre-Participation Form, which is linked on the StMM website. The completed sports physical form and permission form must be on file in the Athletic Director's office prior to participating in any athletic try-out, practice, scrimmage, or contest. The Gfeller Concussion Information Sheet is an electronic form that must be completed prior to participating in any athletic activity as well.

All athletic physicals are valid for one calendar year from the marked "Date of Exam".

ImPACT Baseline Test

It is strongly recommended that athletes participating in a contact sport have an ImPACT baseline test performed. Sports this is recommended for, but not limited to, are: Cheerleading, Soccer, Basketball, Lacrosse.

POLICIES

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

St. Mary Magdalene uniforms are issued at the beginning of the season and collected upon completion of the final game. Any uniforms or equipment issued to an athlete are the athlete's responsibility to return in good shape (normal wear and tear is expected). All uniforms and equipment must be returned to the coach immediately following the final game of the season.

Sports uniforms are only to be worn to games, not practice or any other functions unless pre approved by the Athletic Director.

Any athlete who does not return uniforms/equipment will be charged for the cost of replacement. An athlete will not be allowed to participate in another sport until all overdue uniforms, equipment or other sports fees have been paid. If necessary, report cards will be held until equipment is returned.

St. Mary Magdalene uniforms are placed on a 3 or 5-year rotational system. Under no circumstances should a team parent or other individual purchase new team uniforms for an athletic team without consent from the Athletic Director. At the conclusion of the

rotation, the previous uniforms will be on sale to former members of the team. Money raised from these sales will be returned to the athletic budget.

CLASSWORK EXPECTATIONS

Missing classes for athletic activities will be handled in the same manner as a school field trip. These absences are considered to be pre-arranged; however, students should communicate with their teachers regarding missed class time. Students are expected to get missed work ahead of time and turn it in on or before the due date. Not following this guideline can result in the student work being counted as late or receiving no credit.

COACHES

HEAD COACHES

St. Mary Magdalene coaching staff is hired by the Athletic Directors and Administration following an interview, reference and background checks. All coaches operate under appointments that are made for a specific time period. Priority will be given to St. Mary Magdalene staff members and outside professionals to fill head coaching positions. Head coaches are expected to hold the same standard of professionalism as any St. Mary Magdalene staff member and abide by all St. Mary Magdalene policies and procedures.

ASSISTANT COACHES

St. Mary Magdalene coaching staff is hired by the Athletic Directors and Administration following an interview, reference and background checks. The role of the assistant coach is to support the head coach in the instruction of the skills development. The assistant coach should remain professional at all times under the direction of the head coach. Assistant coaches are expected to abide by all St. Mary Magdalene policies and procedures.

PARENT COACHES/ASSISTANTS/VOLUNTEERS

Parents play a vital role in the success of an athletic program. Many roles are needed in assisting both the Head Coach and Assistant Coach to make sure daily duties are fulfilled. If you are interested in assisting the coaching staff in a volunteer coaching role, please inquire with the Head Coach or Athletic Director. All volunteer coaches are expected to follow St. Mary Magdalene policies and procedures.

ATHLETE/COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDE

Coaches should not engage in one-to-one communication with minors via technology using texts, personal email accounts, and/or social networking sites such as Facebook.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDE

Athletic achievement requires a sincere commitment from all student-athletes, parents, coaches, and athletic administrators. For everyone to be successful, effective communication must occur. As parents, when your child becomes involved in St. Mary Magdalene athletics, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication from the Coaching Staff to the Parents

- Program's coaching philosophy.
- Individual and team expectations.
- Location and times of all practices and contests.
- Team requirements, special equipment, off-season conditioning or activities.
- Procedure followed should your child be injured during practice or games.
- Any discipline or behavior that may result in denial of your child's participation on the team.

Communication from the Parents to the Coaching Staff

- Concerns expressed directly to coaches.
- Notification of practice conflicts well in advance and game conflicts at the start of tryouts.
- Specific concerns with regard to coaching philosophy and/or expectations.
- Support for the program, and dedication, commitment, and responsibility are essential ingredients for success and excellence.

As your children become involved in the programs offered by St. Mary Magdalene, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wish. At these times, discussions with the coach are encouraged.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

- The treatment of your child mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve and develop in a sport.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is sometimes very difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. There are aspects to our programs that are the sole responsibility of the coach and should not be part of any discussion.

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

- Playing time.
- Team strategy or play calling.
- Other student-athletes.

Discussions with Coaches

- Encourage your child to speak with the coach. Intervention by a parent should be a last resort.
- Call or email to set up an appointment. Never approach the coach after a game unless the coach requests it.
- If a coach cannot be reached, reach out to the Athletic Director.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or following a practice or contest. These can be busy and emotional times for the parent, student-athlete, and coach, and this period does not promote objective analysis of the situation. **Wait to talk to the coach for at least 24 hours!**

The Next Step: if a meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution, schedule an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

REQUIRED TRAINING FOR COACHES

- CPR, First Aid and AED certified
All coaches are required to keep a current CPR and AED certification. If a coach is unable to attend one of the training sessions offered, he/she must obtain or renew his/her certification at his/her own expense prior to coaching.

DRESS CODE

Coaches are expected to dress professionally and appropriately relative to their specific job duties and responsibilities. This includes dressing in business casual attire for game day duties.

ATHLETES CODE OF CONDUCT

- Treat everyone fairly and with dignity and respect.
- Arrive on time for all practices, meetings, and contests.
- Play by the rules, demonstrating and encouraging good sportsmanship.
- Exercise self-control at all times, accepting decisions and abiding by them.
- Accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion, never being boastful or bitter.
- Remember that by putting forth your best effort, regardless of the score, you become a winner.
- The use of profanity on or off the field will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the team.
- Fighting during an athletic event, home or away, will not be tolerated. Fighting during a game or practice will result in removal from the team.

ATHLETICS CONTRACT FOR PLAYERS & PARENTS

Student Athletes:

- **HAVE FUN!** This is a game to enjoy individually, but more importantly, as a team. Not all decisions will revolve around you as a player, but will often be based on what is best for the team collectively. Don't take these decisions personally.
- Playing sports is a privilege and commitment. We expect you to give 100% at all times. Do the best you can at all times and celebrate the success of others. Missing practices is unacceptable unless you have a written excuse from a parent or doctor.
- Academics come first. Any student with a grade below a 70% (C-) will be placed on probation and will not be permitted to participate in athletics.
- Show respect and courtesy to everyone. This includes your teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, spectators, St. Mary Magdalene, and the community. Do not talk negatively about your teammates or coaches. Accept all constructive criticism. Accept victory or defeat in a pleasant manner. Always be honest about your performance and areas for improvement.
- Bad attitudes, gossip, lying to or about someone, and swearing will not be tolerated and may result in suspension/dismissal from the team.
- Behavioral problems (as deemed by your coaches) are unacceptable. 1st offense may result in a 3-day suspension from the team. 2nd offense may result in a 5-day suspension/grounds for immediate dismissal from the team.
- Two unexcused absences from practice/games may result in immediate dismissal from the team.
- Being late to school, practice, or games is inexcusable. Students may not be permitted to practice or play in a game without a valid excuse.

- **Academic disciplinary measures from St. Mary Magdalene will also result in Athletics disciplinary measures.**
 - Classroom and academic behaviors may impact a student's practice and/or game eligibility. In these cases, the athlete will attend the game, sitting on the bench to support the team.
- Suspension from school is unacceptable. 1st offense may result in grounds for immediate dismissal from the team.
- Once you are at practice or a game your focus is expected. Off field distractions (cell phones, headphones, off field interaction with friends) are not permitted. You must stay with the team during games. If you are unable to cooperate, you may be asked to leave.
- Any questions, problems, or concerns of players or parents must be discussed with coaches first by appointment only. Issues taken to StMM administration first will likely be referred back to the coach.
- Coaches alone will make the decisions regarding playing time. Playing time will not be discussed. If you are not playing, cheer for those who are. If you cannot, consider if you can be a part of the team.
- Team goals are achieved with hard work. Intense physical conditioning can be expected.
- Parents must be on time when picking up after practice/games. There will be a 15-minute time frame from the completion of practice/games for you to be picked up on time. The 1st offense is a warning and the 2nd offense will be a one-week suspension from practice/games. The 3rd offense will result in dismissal from the team.

Parents of Athletes:

- Parents are a vital part of the success of St. Mary Magdalene athletics and we encourage supportive participation by our parents.
- Parents should not openly criticize a coach to athletes or other parents, including on social media. By openly criticizing the coaches, a student-athlete becomes trapped between the coach's authority and the parent's criticism. This situation merely erodes the athlete's effectiveness and affects their contributions to the team effort.
- Parents are encouraged to be positive with their students. Let them know they are accomplishing something simply by being a part of a team. The emphasis on sportsmanship and character amongst our student-athletes and student body begins with the parents' examples and participation. Parents are not allowed to use derogatory cheers directed at any participant (players, fans, coaches, officials, etc.) This will not be tolerated and will be considered grounds for

removal from sporting events. Criticizing or showing envy in relation to the failures or successes of other student-athletes is an inappropriate behavior. Most are trying their hardest on any given day and they deserve respect for their efforts. Remember, a sport is a game and it is supposed to be fun.

- Parents are ambassadors of our school and should cheer on our teams in an appropriate manner. Parents should focus their energy toward being a supporter of the teams and not tearing either team down.
- Parents should not approach an official before, during or after a sporting event. During a game, the team bench area is for coaches, players, and officials only. Spectators may not approach the bench area during a game (including halftime). Parents will be asked to leave an event if their conduct is deemed inappropriate. An athletic event could be jeopardized should an inappropriate action occur. Your student-athletes participation on a team could also be affected.
- Parents are encouraged to avoid offering excuses for their student. If they are not playing or seeing only limited action, encourage them to work hard, seek their full potential and contribute to the team's efforts.
- Parents are encouraged to communicate any dates their student-athlete will miss practice due to appointments, at least a week in advance. If students choose to participate in athletics, they are expected to fulfill the commitment to the best of their abilities. Every athlete is responsible to attend all practices and games. Unexcused absences will result in disciplinary actions, which can include loss of playing time.
- Parents are encouraged to have insurance coverage. We do not assume responsibility relative to doctor, ambulance, or medical expenses in case of an emergency. Athletics are a voluntary, co-curricular program in which students may participate if they desire, but do so at their own risk. Parents or guardians must obtain adequate insurance coverage for their students through a family insurance policy. Any liability or cost incurred is the responsibility of the family of the student-athlete. Please note that participating in athletics is a privilege and in order for all to work as a unit we need student-athletes, parents, & coaches to operate in one accord.

Fans and Spectators:

St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School students and parents are aware of the standards set forth by the school during the academic day, but oftentimes are unaware of what we expect of them as athletes and spectators. Therefore, we have listed a few things for our students, parents, fans, and spectators to keep in mind when attending a St. Mary Magdalene athletic event.

- Realize you represent the school as does a member of a team; therefore, you have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- Remember that the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contest.
- Respect the judgment and integrity of coaches and game officials.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- Any spectators who are observed showing poor sportsmanship, inappropriate conduct or disrespect will be asked to leave the event immediately.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

After reading and reviewing the entirety of this handbook, please sign the Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement form stating that the student athlete and the parent/guardian have read this handbook and agree to abide by the policies outlined here. All student athletes and their parent/guardian must sign and submit this prior to being permitted to participate in St. Mary Magdalene athletics.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance and set goals for our athletics programs. Nothing in this handbook should be construed as creating a contract between any faculty or staff member and St. Mary Magdalene. St. Mary Magdalene reserves the right to unilaterally change the provisions of this handbook at any time.