

Blessed Sacrament School **Athletic Handbook**

Introduction

In addition to the requirements contained in this athletic handbook, the athletic policies of Blessed Sacrament School include the requirements of the following:

1. Diocesan Policy Handbook (section #5561 “Athletics”)
2. Illinois Elementary Schools Association rules (grades 7 & 8)
3. Springfield Catholic Athletic Association (SCAA) Rules and Policies Handbook (available in the school office)
4. BSS Parent/Student Handbook

Purpose

The athletic program of Blessed Sacrament School is intended to teach the skills of the games, to foster healthy exercise, to teach fair play, and to create opportunities of enjoyment for all interested students. Our athletic program stresses the idea that every child be given the chance to play a fair amount of time, to be taught Christian values, to enjoy the fellowship of team membership, and to learn appropriate behavior in practice and game situations. School-sponsored athletic programs are a part of the total school program and are subject to the policies of the school as well as to the general administrative responsibilities of the principal. Athletic programs should enhance, and in no way distract from, the academic and religious norms of the school.

Organization

The pastor, principal and athletic director will work together as the Athletic Committee of Blessed Sacrament. They will approve which sports will be sponsored by BSS. Any recommended policy changes should be submitted in writing to the athletic director for review and approval.

Funding for the athletic program is provided by the participants. Each participant in each sport will pay a non-refundable athletic fee to cover the cost of league and tournament fees, equipment, uniforms, etc.; however, no student will be turned away for inability to pay.

General Athletic Guidelines

Only students attending Blessed Sacrament School may participate in BSS athletic programs. Students, parents and coaches must agree to abide by all sections of the athletic policy.

Licensed and insured drivers must provide transportation of students to any out-of-town games.

When a conflict or concern arises over athletics, the proper channels to be followed are coach, athletic director, principal, pastor.

Player Eligibility

Students involved in sports or other school-sponsored extra-curricular activities must maintain at least a grade of "C-" in all subjects and at least a "3" for conduct and effort to remain eligible. All students will be evaluated each Friday for academic and conduct eligibility during the following Monday-

Sunday. If a student's performance falls below the above standard, the student will be ineligible to attend games or practices (or meetings/events) until the results of the weekly grade check are satisfactory. Players ineligible for more than three consecutive weeks or a total of five weeks during the season shall be dismissed from the team or club.

Athletic Director

The responsibilities of the athletic director include the following:

1. Assist the pastor, principal and coaches in developing and administering school policies governing athletic programs.
2. Act as liaison between pastor, principal, and coaches concerning diocesan and school policies, eligibility, discipline, scheduling, or any associated items.
3. Schedule athletic activities:
 - a. set up practice schedules,
 - b. coordinate league scheduling for SCAA and IESA games,
 - c. assume responsibility for tournaments and league and non-league games in compliance with school policy,
 - d. assist coaches in scheduling tournaments and non-SCAA games,
 - e. work with principal in scheduling student/parent meeting and coaches' meeting,
 - f. ensure that grades with multiple teams (grades 5 & 6) are balanced according to ability.
4. Obtain supplies and equipment for the sports program. Verify that common equipment (including first aid supplies) is in working order. Maintain an inventory of sports equipment.
5. Maintain the uniforms, equipment and first aid kits; distribute at the start of each season, and collect at the end of each season.
6. Assist the principal in the selection and training of coaches and institution of new programs.
7. Distribute schedules and student medical/emergency information to coaches.
8. Contact students, parents and coaches with regards to ineligibility.
9. Represent BSS at monthly SCAA meetings.
10. Respect the confidentiality of matters concerning coaches, students and parents.
11. Post an up-to-date gym availability schedule in the school office and gym.
12. Recommend to the principal any disciplinary action against coaches and/or players.

Coaches

All coaches must:

1. be 21 years of age or older (younger coaches may assist),
2. have signed an agreement to adhere to all policies regarding sports,
3. have agreed that no profanity or physical or verbal abuse will be used during the coaching of BSS teams,
4. have completed, or will complete, a coaches' clinic, including OSHA update, before practice or any coaching begins,
5. have signed a child abuse statement and attended a Protecting God's Children workshop,
6. have been approved by the principal.

The principal may remove a coach if there is any violation of rules or policies by the coach.

Coaches' Responsibilities:

1. There shall be competent supervision at games and practice by qualified adult coaches who understand the sport, child development and first aid.

2. Teams will consist of the following numbers:

Minimum/Maximum

Basketball	7/14
Volleyball	9/17
Baseball	11/21
Softball	11/21
Cross Country & Track	not specified

3. Variances can be made only after the approval of the athletic director and principal.
4. The coaches of any grade division where there will be more than one team will mutually agree to the composition of the teams. For fifth and sixth grade teams there will be careful grouping of students into teams by grade level, weight, size, skill, physical maturation, and ability, to prevent injuries and to make all teams as equal in skill and ability levels as possible. For seventh and eighth grade teams, the coaches will be responsible for dividing the students into teams. Students will be placed on an IESA or SCAA team based on ability.
5. There should be proper conditioning prior to participation in practice and games.
6. Coaches will give appropriate details regarding practice, games, schedules, teams and team membership to the principal, athletic director, players and parents.
7. For grades 5 and 6, all players are to play according to the SCAA Rules and Policy Handbook.
8. Coaches will have the authority to make decisions affecting play at practices and games and may bench students immediately during a game or practice for misconduct or failure to cooperate.
9. A coach-player-parent meeting will be held prior to the first game in order to review athletic policies.
10. Coaches are responsible for making sure that good sportsmanship is exhibited both by themselves and the players at all times.
11. Coaches are required to arrive ten (10) minutes before the stated arrival time of the players and will remain until all players are picked up.
12. Coaches will carry first aid kits and student information, including parent and emergency phone numbers, to each game/practice.
13. Coaches are to honor the schedule regarding practice times and gym uses.
14. Coaches are not to schedule games or tournaments outside the SCAA schedule without prior consent of the athletic director and principal.
15. Coaches will not allow ineligible players or players without complete paperwork to practice or play.
16. Coaches are responsible for assigning sport uniforms and collecting them at the end of the season, if school uniforms are provided.

Players

1. Players must maintain their grades as a first priority.
2. Players must also display good sportsmanship and Christian character at all times. Violations may result in suspension or discharge from the team.
3. Players must attend all practices and games. If a player is unable to attend, the coach must be notified by the player or parent directly. Disciplinary action for missing practice and/or games lies within the coach's authority.
4. Players should not arrive more than ten (10) minutes prior to practice and must leave immediately at the conclusion of practice.
5. Players who are absent from school more than half a day due to illness will not be allowed to participate in either practice or games on that same day.
6. Players are responsible for the uniforms that they are assigned. Uniforms belonging to the school must be returned at the end of the season, or a fee will be charged.

Parents

All parents of players participating in Blessed Sacrament athletic programs are expected to comply with the following policies:

1. Each child must have proof of a current (within the past year) physical examination and proof of insurance before s/he is allowed to practice.
2. Parents must sign the athletic permission slip prior to the first practice of each season.

3. Parents must also display good sportsmanship and Christian character at all times as role models for their children and representatives of our school. Parents who display inappropriate behavior may be banned from attending games or practices at the discretion of the athletic director, principal, and pastor. (August 2012)
4. An athletic fee is required of each child for each sport in which s/he participates during that school year. The athletic fee is waived for a student if his parent is coaching that sport. If a family is not able to pay, the fee can be waived by a written request from the parent to the principal.
5. Uniforms are purchased by the parents or borrowed from the school. All school-owned uniforms must be returned to the coach at the end of each season. A fee will be charged for outstanding uniforms.

BLESSED SACRAMENT PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Parent/Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide benefits to our student athletes. As parents, when your son/daughter becomes involved in our programs, you have a right to understand all of the expectations. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your son's/daughter's program.

Communication You Should Expect From Your Son's/Daughter's Coach

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for the athlete as well as all players on the team
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equip., forms to be completed, etc.
5. Procedure should your son/daughter be injured during participation
6. Discipline that results in the denial of participation

Communication Coaches Expect From Parents

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
4. Health concerns

As your sons/daughters become involved in the programs at Blessed Sacrament, they will experience some of the most rewarding and meaningful moments of their lives. It is important to understand there also may be times when problems arise. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

What If The Meeting With The Coach Did Not Provide A Resolution?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the next appropriate step can be determined.

Since research indicates a student involved in extra-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs have been established and will be ongoing. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life during and following high school. We hope the information provided makes your son's/daughter's and your experience with Blessed Sacrament athletic programs less stressful and more enjoyable.