

St. Francis of Assisi Athletic Handbook



Mission:

Faithful to the mission of St. Francis School to educate the whole person, the St. Francis Athletic Program is based on Catholic values, which provides for a safe, healthy, athletic, and family environment as well as priding itself on sportsmanship and teamwork while focusing on teaching and training.

Philosophy:

The athletic programs strive to teach the St. Francis Christian values of teamwork, mutual respect, enjoyment, development of talents, a healthy sense of competition, self-discipline, commitment, honesty and positive name recognition in the community.

Membership:

Any student enrolled at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School or attending the Parish Religious Ed program through St. Francis of Assisi Church in 4K through 8th grade is eligible to participate in the Athletic program.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Nondiscriminatory Policy

SFA Athletics admits any students of any race, religion, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students within the association. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its participatory policies, admissions policies, or athletic programs.

Procedure for Registration

SFA students wishing to participate in a sport must fill out a sport's registration form. Registration is offered on line, through the school office, through the church office and during walk up registration. All information relating to registration is advertised in the church bulletin. SFA students will receive all registration information through Monday and Tuesday email.

Fees

All sports offered through St. Francis have a registration fee of \$50.00. Some sports require additional items to be purchased by the participant.

Deadlines for Registration

The deadline for registration is the same day as the walk up registration. Deadlines are not intended to prevent any interested student from participating, but they are necessary to make sure that team sizes do not become too large to allow for proper instruction of participants.

Refund Policy

Anyone who is unable to participate in a sport and wishes to receive a refund must contact the Athletic Director. Fees will be refunded according to the following schedule:

Prior to the First Practice	100 %
After official roster is prepared and sent to league (approx. 1 week prior to first game)	50 %
After first official game or contest:	No Refund

Student Eligibility (5th – 8th grade only)

It is required that no student be permitted to participate in tryouts, practices, or events until there is on file with the Athletic Director a sport medical form/parent permission form signed by a properly licensed doctor of medicine and the student's parents/guardians. The sports medical form shall certify that the student has passed an adequate physical examination not earlier than June 1 of the current school year, that the student is physically fit to participate in sports programs, and that the student has permission to participate. The parent permission form will include all pertinent information as to insurance and whom to contact in case of an accident.

No student who has reached the maximum age by grade level on or before September 1 of the current school year is eligible to participate. The age by grade maximums shall be:

- Grade 5 – 12 years old
- Grade 6 – 13 years old
- Grade 7 – 14 years old
- Grade 8 – 15 years old

No student who has been retained in any grade for any reason is eligible to participate during the year of the retention.

No student with an athletic record during a school year who transfers from one member institution to another without a corresponding change of address of parent/guardians shall be eligible for participation in sports for the remainder of the school year.

Academic Requirements:

We feel it necessary to maintain a consistent and frequent analysis of our student's academic progress. Therefore, to be eligible to participate in 5th – 8th grade sports during any nine-week period, a student must meet the following requirements:

- a. The student shall have earned a minimum GPA of 2.0 on the most recent report card with no more than one failing grade. (Students who fail to do so are ineligible from both practice and games until the next progress report is issued. Students can regain eligibility at mid-quarter progress report if their grades have improved to the above standard.)
- b. Students shall be regularly enrolled, in regular attendance
- c. A student must attend five sequential class periods on the day of a scheduled or make-up athletic event. Any student who is absent from school on the day of such event or who checks out of school due to illness is not eligible to participate in an athletic contest later that same day.

Behavioral Requirements:

On the days that a student is serving an OSS, he/she may not participate in any school related extra curricular activities, including sports. If the OSS days served include a weekend, the ban of participation may also be extended to weekend days.

Official Roster

All St. Francis sports teams will have an official roster, which will list each participant with their grade level and other relevant information. This roster must be sent in to the league prior to the deadline. All participants must be on the official roster in order to be eligible to play.

DIVISIONS:

Peewee sports for 4, 5, and 6 year old boys and girls (preschool through kindergarten). All teams are coed.

- Fall: Soccer
- Winter: Basketball
- Spring: T-ball

Charlie Brown/ Lucy sports for 1st through 4th grade boys and girls

- Fall: Soccer
- Winter: Basketball
- Spring: Baseball and Softball

PAA sports for 5th through 8th grade boys and girls

- Fall: Soccer, Cross Country
Cheerleading (girls), Football (boys) Volleyball (girls),
Golf (7th & 8th)
- Winter: Basketball
- Spring: Baseball and Softball

Fall sports: 5th – 8th grade teams will begin practice around the 1st of August and the games are played during September and October. 1st – 4th will begin practice around mid August. Peewee soccer will begin at the end of August.

Winter sports seasons vary: 5th – 8th grade begin basketball practice around the 1st of November and the games are played during December, January, and into the first week of February. Peewee basketball will begin in January. 1st – 4th grade will begin practice in February and the games will be played during March and April.

Spring sports seasons vary: 5th – 8th grade begin baseball and softball practice around the middle of February and the games are played during March, April, and into the first week of May. 1st – 4th grade baseball and softball will begin practice around the end of April and the games are played in May and June. T-ball will be played in May and June.

FACILITIES

The St. Francis School gym is located in St. John Neumann Hall and will be used for practice as well as all home games for 5th – 8th grade Volleyball and Basketball. It will also be used for most 1st – 4th grade Basketball games.

The St. Francis Parish Life Center (PLC) gym will be used for practice as well as some 1st – 4th grade Basketball games.

The Cafeteria gym will be used for practice. It will be used for all peewee basketball games.

The St. Francis field will be used in the fall for Soccer (practice & games) and Cross Country (practice only) and in the spring for Baseball, Softball, and T-ball (practice & games). The St. Benedict facilities will be used in the fall for Football (practice & games) and Soccer (games only) and in the spring for 7th & 8th grade Baseball (practice & games). **NO PETS ALLOWED** at any athletic events.

COACHING EXPECTATIONS

Coaches are required to have and attend practices, games, and meetings related to their team within their league and/or called by the St. Francis Athletic Director. Coaches are responsible for securing a substitute or notifying participants of a cancellation when they are unable to attend a practice.

ALL COACHES AND ASSISTANT COACHES ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK ON FILE WITH THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR PRIOR TO ANY INVOLVEMENT WITH PARTICIPANTS. ALL COACHES AND ASSISTANT COACHES ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND THE VIRTUS TRAINING.

A coach is expected to be at practice before any student arrives and must make sure that all children have left before he/she leaves practice or must designate another adult who agrees to take on those responsibilities. Coaches also must not tolerate any abuse or mistreatment of players, parents or others by any member of a St. Francis team. This means a zero tolerance policy for “poking fun” at people or verbally (and physically) abusing others.

Coaches should attend every game and show up at least 20 minutes prior to the start of the game to prepare their team for the contest. It is important, and required, that coaches report any problems with equipment, players, parents (or others) to the Athletic Director within 24 hours of a problem. This will ensure the safety of all participants and allow for appropriate action to be taken by the Athletic Director when necessary.

Coaches should be patient and tolerant of all children, and understand the level of maturity at which they coach. They must be cautious not to have unrealistic expectations, but be willing to challenge each participant to reach potential goals not before attained. Coaches must have the understanding that their impact on the lives of many of these children is of incredible importance and thus must display good moral and ethical behaviors.

Coaches Pledge

Upon my honor as a catholic school coach, I pledge my self to the following:

To guide each player to be a better Christian & better citizen; to be ethical and sportsmanlike in my coaching conduct toward all players, officials, fans, and other coaches; to motivate each player to compete according to the rules at all times; to teach each player, especially through my own example, to be humble and generous in victory and proud and courteous in defeat.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES & PLAYERS

No coach or player is to:

1. Refuse to abide by official’s decision or use profane language or gestures
2. Exhibit objectionable behavior (i.e. throwing equipment or any other forceful action)
3. Verbally abuse an official for any real or imagined unjust decision or judgment, or verbally abuse a player, opposing coach, or spectator.
4. Physically touch, push, shove, strike or threaten to strike a player, official, coach or spectator.

The Board of Control and the Diocesan Director of Athletics in consultation with the Superintendent’s office will determine penalties for any of the above infractions.

Any coach/player that is ejected from a contest for any reason will serve an immediate suspension. Suspension will be for two games for all sports with the exception of football (1 game). After serving one suspension, if coach/player is ejected again within the same school year, the suspension will be for one-year.

CODE OF CONDUCT - PARENTS & FANS

Any parent or fan whose behavior is deemed objectionable (i.e. offenses similar in nature to those in the coaches and players code of conduct) by any game official, pastor, school principal or appointed person in authority at that event, should be asked to leave the premises. The pastor/principal of the school(s) involved should then make a further determination as to whether or not the individual(s) should be banned from additional games.

It is recommended that fan ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct be handled in the same manner as coach /player ejections.

Playing Time

Playing time for all 5th – 8th grade participants is left up to the discretion of each individual coach. However, there are some general guidelines that coaches follow in order to assist them in determining playing time for all participants. (Exceptions include 5th / 6th grade combo basketball teams which have a 25% play rule and 5th / 6th grade soccer teams which have a 50% play rule.)

These are:

- Regular attendance at practices and games
- GOOD ATTITUDE
- Positive attitude and interactions with others
- Respecting players, parents and coaches
- Obeying the rules set by the coaching staff
- WORKING HARD at practices and games
- BEING ON TIME for practices and games
- Being responsible to the team by notifying the coach in advance of missing a practice or game

It is important to know that players who do not listen to the coach, follow directions, hustle, and/or display negative attitudes may not receive as much playing time as others who adhere to these guidelines.

The Peewee sports and Charlie Brown/Lucy sports have a 50% play rule. Each participant will play at least fifty percent of each game.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

In coaching any athletic team, it is crucial that every member of the coaching staff know what constitutes acceptable measures of disciplining a child or handling other problems. This helps to prevent many problems that can result from a conflict between coaches and players.

All children are to be treated with respect and are not to be demeaned in any way, shape or form.

Any child acting outside of the guidelines established by the coach will be warned as to what will happen if the behavior is repeated. This warning should include specifics, such as running 2 laps, sitting out the rest of practice, etc. Penalties appropriate to the age and maturity of the children should be assigned. This warning will be communicated to the child's parents.

Should there be a time where an individual player has repeatedly become a problem, the parents and the Athletic director should be notified before the next practice. A meeting with the parents and child to discuss the situation should be scheduled. (At no time should a child be separated from other children to be talked with by a coach).

At NO time should any person be berated, embarrassed or singled out as an "example"

The coach should initially handle any parent complaints and contact the athletic Director of the situation. If the problem persists it may then be addressed by the Athletic Director.

Physical punishment is not an acceptable form of disciplining any athlete and will be grounds for immediate termination of the coach.

Coaches must be consistent in their disciplinary methods with all children. No athlete should ever be given special treatment regardless of their talent level. Coaches who are models of fairness help children to learn values of equity.

Coaches should contact the Athletic Director regarding any issues or problems that are questionable in nature for further direction and/or actions to take regarding the situation.

GENERAL CONTEST OR EVENT RULES

The official rule books as published by the National Federation of High School Associations as well as some PAA modifications shall be used in PAA (5th – 8th grade) sponsored sports.

Sports teams, cheerleading squads, and other event participants shall not exceed a maximum of eight hours of games, practices, or related activities in any week. No practice session shall exceed two hours in length. The maximum number of game sessions and/or practice sessions shall not exceed five per week.

The game officials shall have the authority to use as a penalty the forfeiture of contests as sanctions against the flagrant misconduct of coaches or spectators. The flagrant misconduct of players or coaches shall be penalized by the player's/coach's ejection from the game and a suspension that will follow.

The use of alcohol, tobacco in any form, or profanity by coaches, officials, spectators, or athletes is prohibited at any events.

It is asked that all events begin with a prayer and end with the individual handshake greeting of each visiting participant by each host participant.

Children's Act for clean Indoor Air

For health and safety reasons, smoking is not permitted at any PAA sponsored activity. In response to the "Children's Act for Clean Indoor Air" enacted as Public Chapter 455 by the Tennessee General Assembly, the act prohibits smoking at all public and private kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools and school grounds. The term is defined in the act and includes any building, structure, and surrounding grounds. Adults may be permitted to smoke outdoors as long as they are more than fifty feet from any entrance to the building or playing field.

WEATHER POLICY

Any school cancellations for the Diocese of Memphis will result in cancellation of regular practices and games. In the event of poor weather conditions on game days, participants should contact their coach for details on game cancellations. The Athletic Director will contact the coach of any cancellations and the coach will contact the team players.

For all outdoor sports, in the event of thunder, coaches should be actively looking for any signs of lightning. Play can continue if there is no sign of any lightning and if other weather conditions permit. If there is any sighting of lightning, no matter how distant, all play must cease. Everyone must leave the field and take cover in a covered shelter. Coaches are responsible for issuing this directive in the event that the Athletic Director or an official is not present.

In the event of rain during the regular school week, every effort will be made to make any cancellation decisions for practices or games by 2:00 pm. SFA School Participants will be notified on the PA system at the end of the school day.