

The logo for IPARK ATHLETICS features the word "IPARK" in a large, bold, dark green font with a white outline, and the word "ATHLETICS" in a smaller, bold, dark green font below it.

IPARK
ATHLETICS

Policies and Procedures Guidebook

Introduction

The Park School after-school athletic program is broken into two distinct yet connected components. The first piece is an introductory, intramural program for fourth and fifth grade students which takes place two afternoons a week. The second part is an interscholastic, competitive program for sixth through eighth graders which meets four times per week. Students are not required to participate in either of these programs, but once they choose to do so, they are expected to meet the requisite commitments. This handbook is designed to help students and parents become more familiar with Park's Athletic Department and program.

Philosophy

Although the Middle and Upper Division programs differ in both scope and intensity, we feel they are age appropriate and fit well within the mission of The Park School. Park's goal for "educational athletics" is to offer a program where students learn about themselves and how they operate in the larger world through participation in athletic contests. The athletic program strives to instill a strong sense of personal responsibility, resilience, respect, and gratitude in all of our students. Although our coaches care about winning we are more interested in the development of our athletes than the result of individual contests. Park enjoys many wonderful rivalries and participates in competitive tournaments and games so that our athletes experience healthy competition. Our strongest emphasis is placed on sportsmanship and all that it encompasses. Respect for one's school, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, and spectators is most important in enjoying athletics and understanding its value.

Athletic Offerings

Grades 4 and 5

Fall

Boys Soccer
Girls Soccer
Coed Field Hockey

Winter

Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Coed Wrestling

Spring

Boys Lacrosse
Girls Lacrosse
Girls Softball

Grades 6 - 8

Fall

Boys Soccer
Girls Soccer
Coed Field Hockey
Coed Cross Country
Coed Flag Football
Girls Volleyball

Winter

Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Coed Ice Hockey
Coed Wrestling
Coed Yoga

Spring

Boys Lacrosse
Girls Lacrosse
Coed Track and Field
Girls Softball

Health, Safety and Medical Information

Each fall, all Park School students must complete and return the School's health and emergency contact form as well as provide a doctor's physical form. Participating in after-school sports contests is not allowed until these documents are submitted. A student must have a doctor's physical form completed within one year of the participating season's start. If the physical form expires during the season, the student will become ineligible to play in games until a new physical form is turned in to the School's nurse. The Park School employs an athletic trainer from 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. when athletes are in season. The Athletic Trainer is the first responder for all injuries and emergencies involving athletes and will contact parents directly whenever necessary. If an athlete is injured he/she should see the Athletic Trainer immediately. The Athletic Trainer, in conjunction with a student's doctor (if seen) will decide when the athlete can return to play. ***When an athlete sees a physician due to an injury (whether it occurred at school or not) that physician must provide a return-to-play protocol to the Athletic Trainer.*** All of Park's coaches are trained in CPR and First Aid and are also able to administer initial first aid care in the event of an accident or injury.

An injured athlete is expected to attend all team functions to the best of his or her ability. It is our contention that one can still learn from the sidelines. If a student is unable to participate in his or her daily class schedule (including physical education) then it is assumed that he or she is unable to participate in after-school athletics.

Students in Grades 6 and 8 will take the ImPACT Concussion Baseline test before the fall season begins. Parents who prefer their students NOT take the test should notify the Athletic Director.

Team Placement

Students new to after-school activities can choose to experience a few days "trial period" to evaluate drama and/or different sport options. This is more common for our youngest and new students. A final decision on participation in the activity must be made before team placements and drama cast lists are finalized.

At the start of each sports season, as necessary, there will be days set aside for the evaluation and placement of athletes on specific teams. Whenever possible, we build teams for sixth graders only. Individual decisions for athletes in Grades 6-8 are made based on age, athletic ability, sport specific experience, and physical and emotional readiness. The intent is to allow athletes to develop similarly, participate confidently, and earn meaningful playing time. At the end of the evaluation process, coaches will meet privately with each individual athlete for an evaluation and subsequent team assignment. ***Once these decisions are made, athletes are expected to honor their commitment to their assigned team and are not allowed to change sports or activities.***

Attendance and Playing Time

The athletic program strives to teach personal responsibility. Learning to uphold one's commitments is paramount to our program. Attendance at all practices, games, meetings, and weekend tournaments is required. A written note or email from a parent prior to the event is necessary to excuse all athletes from these commitments. Sub-varsity athletes who attend practice regularly can expect equal playing time in games. Varsity athletes in good standing can expect some playing time in every game, but equal playing time is not guaranteed. Athletes with unexcused absences prior to a game should expect to forfeit playing time for each absence. **If an athlete accumulates three unexcused absences during the same season, a meeting with the parents and coaches will be scheduled to determine the athlete's future status on the team.**

When an athlete is excused from participating in Physical Education (PE) class due to injury or illness, it is assumed that he or she is also unable to participate in after-school sports. In these cases, we expect that the athlete will still attend the practice or game and observe from the sideline if physically able. Athletes who suffer a season ending injury should still consider themselves members of their teams, and coaches will help them to find ways to continue to be involved.

Park's Coaches

Whenever possible, Park's coaches are members of the School's full time faculty and staff. It is important for our coaches to know and understand both the School's philosophy and culture as well as its students. It is also important for students to see and know their teachers in environments other than the classroom. When a qualified faculty or staff person cannot be found to lead a team, the Athletic Director and Head of School will hire an adult from outside the School community. Parents of current students will not be hired to coach Park teams unless they are also full-time members of the faculty or staff.

Student Responsibilities

Uniforms and equipment: Team uniforms and other equipment are issued to students at the beginning of each season. Athletes are then responsible for keeping them clean and in good condition. These uniforms and equipment must be returned as soon as possible after the team's final contest. Uniforms that are damaged during regular game play will be repaired or replaced by the School, but uniforms lost or damaged by other means are the athlete's responsibility. Uniforms are to be worn for interscholastic contests only and should not be worn for practices or physical education classes. **If an athlete does not have his or her complete uniform for a game he or she cannot play.**

Behavior: Park School athletes are ambassadors for our school. Their behavior on buses, in locker rooms, and on the campuses of other schools should reflect that role. Students who do not

represent themselves and their school appropriately will not be allowed to remain on a Park School team.

Player Contract: Athletes will be given a [player agreement](#) by their coach at the start of each season. The contract outlines expectations for both students and coaches. Athletes and their parents are expected to read the contract, sign and return it to the coach before the first game. Athletes who have not turned in a signed contract, are not eligible to play in games.

Locks and Locker Room

At the beginning of each year all students in Grades 5-8 will be assigned a lock and locker to keep their personal belongings safe. Coaches will teach the children how to use a combination lock but if students prefer to use their own lock from home they may do so. We require that the code to personal locks be shared with the PE Department. Students are expected to keep their belongings safely locked in their lockers. The gymnasiums and locker rooms are used by outside groups in the evenings all year long. Please remember that our locker rooms are not private spaces.

Facilities Information

Outside usage: The Park School athletic facilities are comprised of spaces used commonly with the Physical Education Department and include playing fields, gymnasiums, locker rooms, equipment, and storage closets. Park's playing fields can only be used by Brookline youth soccer groups in the afternoons beginning at 4:45 p.m. These groups gain access to our fields by contacting the Athletic Director on a first-come-first-served basis. Priority, though, is given to Park School parents who serve as coaches of the teams. The Upper North Field is not to be used by outside groups, as it is our field hockey field. We are concerned that overuse of this field will cause it to become dangerous for this sport. Use of other facilities including gymnasiums, the theater, and classrooms is managed by the Director of External Programs and in most cases will entail a rental fee and proof of insurance.

Practice Information

Grade 4 & 5 practices run from 3:15 to 4:30 p.m., two days per week. Girls play on Mondays and Thursdays. Boys play on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Upper Division practices run from 3:15 to 4:30 p.m. four days per week in the fall and spring. There are no sports on Tuesdays. The winter season is much more complicated due to court space and ice times, therefore the winter practice schedule is distributed at the beginning of the winter season. Practice times and game information are listed on the Park website. Please confirm this information often. Schedule changes do occur!

Away Game Information

Bus departure and return times are listed on the Park School website and families should confirm this information regularly. Directions to our competitor schools are listed on the Park website.

After the game is completed, athletes will return to school on the team bus or go home with their parent or guardian. ***Athletes who wish to depart from an away game with anyone else must provide written permission from a parent or guardian prior to the bus's initial departure from Park. Without this written permission, students will be required to return on the bus. Students will not be released to Uber, Lyft or taxi drivers.*** Return times are listed on the Park website and coaches expect students to be collected soon after the bus returns to school. Students whose rides are repeatedly late may be prohibited from participating in away contests.

Practice/Game Cancellations and Snow Days

From time to time it is necessary to cancel athletic games and/or practices. In most cases this is due to inclement weather and/or unsafe playing conditions. On these occasions the Athletic Department staff will post the information on the Park School website and notify parents via email if possible. Unless instructed otherwise please assume that athletes will remain at school until 4:30 p.m. for a practice, team meeting, or study hall in lieu of the competition. When school is cancelled due to inclement weather, all practices and games are cancelled as well.

Behavioral Guidelines for Parents, Athletes, and Coaches

We hope and expect that parents will be involved with and supportive of their children's athletic endeavors. Should parents have any questions or concerns about how their children are experiencing the season, they should contact the coach for a meeting. Parents should not approach coaches during games to inquire about playing time or appropriate positions for their child and should not speak with others about the ability of participating athletes (either Park students or our opponents) or officials within earshot of other spectators. Like coaches and teachers, parents are role models for our young athletes and must be sensitive about the image they portray. Parents must refrain from coaching their children from the sidelines because it causes confusion, mixed messages, and frustration for players, coaches, and other parents.

Parents can be most helpful by enabling their child to attend as many practices and games as possible. Honoring commitments is a valuable lesson we teach through athletics. Medical appointments and other potential conflicts should be scheduled on off days.

The New England Prep School Athletic Council (NEPSAC) provides valuable guidelines for athletes' proper conduct and sportsmanship, as well as guidelines for spectators. The Park School fully supports these guidelines:

Proper Conduct and Good Sportsmanship:

At the heart of this lie several terms that are often hard to define – yet no more important task confronts teachers and coaches than to set standards that are fair and honorable.

“Proper conduct,” and “good sportsmanship” refer to such standards as these:

1. Treat other people as you know they should be treated, and as you would like them to treat you.
2. Follow the rules of your game.
3. Treat officials and opponents with respect at all times.
4. Accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.
5. Honor visiting teams and spectators as your guests, and treat them as such.
6. Behave as an honored guest when visiting another school.
7. Be gracious in victory and defeat; learn especially to take defeat well.
8. Be as cooperative as you are competitive.
9. Remember that your actions on and off the field reflect on you and your school.

Guidelines For Spectators:

Spectators – whether students, faculty, parents, alumni or friends – bear important responsibilities to the School for the atmosphere and conduct of games, whether home or away.

1. Spectators should watch games from those areas defined by each school as spectator areas. They must not run up and down the sidelines, call to players, coaches, or officials in an unsportsmanlike manner, go onto the field of play, or deface property. Any action that detracts from the ability of coaches, players, and officials to do their best is not acceptable.
2. Spectators who behave inappropriately will be asked to leave a Park School athletic event. Further, if the behavior continues, the athlete associated with this spectator may be removed from the program.