

# SAINT CLEMENT PARENT/STUDENT-ATHLETE ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



SAINT CLEMENT SCHOOL  
*anchored in faith*

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SAINT CLEMENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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Saint Clement School Families:

We all know how formative athletics are in the lives of our students. Please read this handbook carefully and review it with your child(ren). As a parish school, Saint Clement School is committed to providing an athletics program that is grounded in our Catholic faith and values.

We have prepared this athletic handbook in order to give you important information about Saint Clement School with regards to our expectations pertaining to all athletics programs affiliated with our parish school. It contains information about our school's mission, philosophy, policies, as well as general information. We ask that you familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and discuss it with your athlete(s) as appropriate.

Thank you for entrusting your child(ren) to us. We look forward to a wonderful athletics season filled with lessons and teamwork that our students will remember for years to come!

Sincerely,

Father Peter Wojcik, Administrator

Kristen Fink, Principal

Tony Hoolehan, Athletic Director

# Saint Clement School

## Parent/Student Athletic Handbook

### 2021 - 2022

#### **PREFACE**

The Saint Clement Athletics Program is governed by The Handbook For Athletes in the Catholic Elementary School published by the Chicago Archdiocese in May 2011. As an extension of that document, The Saint Clement Athletic Handbook uses the guidelines set forth by the Archdiocese and specifically defines them for Saint Clement School.

Saint Clement School is in partnership with the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA), a national non-profit organization with the mission to provide athletes a positive, character building youth sports experience. Saint Clement will use the tools and models offered by PCA to support these principles.

The Athletic Handbook contains information for the 2021 - 2022 school year at Saint Clement School. These policies are intended to serve and facilitate high academic and moral standards within a Catholic school environment. This handbook presents the core of our school's athletic policies, and we require all students and parents to familiarize themselves with these expectations. The administration of Saint Clement School reserves the right to interpret and modify the stated policies as the situation warrants or necessitates in the interest of the school as a whole.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Saint Clement Athletic Program aims to provide a caring, safe and supportive environment that instills Catholic values for each student. Our goal is to focus on the whole child; promoting individual academic success, developing spiritual awareness, building character and encouraging service for the common good.

## **ATHLETIC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

The Saint Clement School Athletic Program is dedicated to educating students mentally, physically and spiritually. Our athletic program is an integral part of the educational program of the school. Saint Clement views the athletic activities on the playing fields and courts as an extension of the classroom.

Saint Clement believes that participation in athletics can contribute positively to the development of students and aspires to gain maximum participation in its sports programs. In every athletic event, certain values and ideals are being taught, directly or indirectly. Athletics should offer a chance for the students to enjoy both the excitement of sports and the relaxation that it brings to the body and mind. Athletics present the opportunity for success, leadership, cooperation, and communication with fellow athletes. This is important, not only in athletics, but as an integral part of the students' day-to-day experience.

Winning will be emphasized at the appropriate age levels. More important than winning, however, is using the sports experience to help our students learn valuable life lessons and develop positive character traits that will help them be successful in their lives.

## **PROGRAM MISSION**

Saint Clement School Athletic Program aspires to provide its students with a high-quality athletic experience within the Saint Clement community. A high-quality experience is one in which every player:

- Has fun playing and learning the sport(s) of choice
- Develops and learns as an athlete with a deepening understanding of the skills, tactics and strategies of the game
- Shows appreciation and respect for the rules, officials, opponents, team and self
- Participates in an environment where coaches and parents are supportive and serve as positive role models
- Learns valuable "life lessons" that have value beyond the game
- Feels he or she is an important part of the team regardless of performance

## **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Saint Clement School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in its admission or hiring policies, educational programs, loan or scholarship programs, athletics or any other school-administered program.

## **GENERAL POLICY**

1. All students interested will be afforded the opportunity to participate in athletics.
2. Each athlete must have a registration form with a signed permission and insurance waiver prior to their respective first practice session. All registration forms must be received by the Athletic Director by the designated deadline.
3. All school medical forms must be completed prior to participation in an athletic program.
4. In the event a student is injured during a game or practice, the coach will inform the player's parent and/or guardian and, if necessary, will seek appropriate medical treatment.
5. All students must be in good academic standing in order to participate in extra-curricular activities. Any student found not in good academic standing may be suspended or removed from the team at the discretion of the Principal/Assistant Principal and Athletic Director.
6. Attendance at school is a prerequisite to attending practice or playing in that day's game.
7. Student-athletes who are unable to participate in that day's scheduled gym class may not participate in that day's scheduled practice or game, without authorization from the school principal, assistant principal or athletic director.
8. Any player involved in an action that violates the school's discipline code may be suspended from practices and/or games. Furthermore, all practices and games are an extension of the school day; therefore, all school rules apply.
9. Reasonable efforts will be made to create additional teams at each grade level to ensure the best possible experience for all students.
10. Depending upon the particular needs of a team, a player may be asked to "play up" to a team that is one grade higher at the discretion of the Athletic Director, in consultation with the Principal.
11. If there are enough players to warrant more than one team, players will be divided evenly in regard to ability in the sixth grade and below (i.e. the teams should have an equal amount of talent on each). Players divided among teams in seventh and eighth grade will be divided by ability (i.e. student athletes with more game ready skills will be on an "A" team, with the remaining players who need additional skill development on a "B" team).

12. If the number of athletes is insufficient to make up a team, players from a lower grade can “play up” or a lower grade can be combined with an upper grade to create one at the discretion of the Athletic Director.
13. The Athletic Director will approve all coaches and team rosters.
14. The school will issue uniforms to all players on competitive sports teams. Each player is responsible for his/her uniform and is expected to clean and return it to Saint Clement at the end of the season. A replacement fee will be assessed for unreturned or damaged uniforms.
15. Players are expected to come to practices ready to play, focus and follow directions from the coaches. Learning self-discipline and self-control are two of the most important skills coaches can teach.
16. Any player, or family, that decides to discontinue participation on an athletic team will need to notify the head coach and athletic director in writing. The player, and family, will have 48 hours to reconsider the decision, and must notify both the head coach and athletic director in writing; after 48 hours, the player’s and family’s decision is final. Once the season begins, there will not be a registration refund.
17. Saint Clement School’s policy regarding playing time for student-athletes is established by the Principal. It is based on the policy set forth by the Archdiocese of Chicago, and it has been reinforced by our community of parents over many years. Policies vary depending on grade level, but attendance at practice is a large determining factor for playing time across all grades. Teams comprised of student-athletes from multiple grades will follow the policies set forth for the eldest team member.

*Fourth and Fifth:* Grades 4 and 5 provide a developmental environment for student-athletes and teams. The goal at this level of the athletic program is to nurture the growth of all student-athletes and to foster the greatest possible depth of skill and experience within the class. Therefore, all student-athletes shall receive equal playing time in each game or across the season. Coaches may use discretion in modifying this guideline based on a student-athlete’s attendance, effort, and attitude.

*Sixth:* Grade 6 provides a transition between developmental and competitive programs. The goal at this level is to balance the priorities of nurturing the growth of all student-athletes and positioning teams to be successful in competition. For the first four games, nurturing the growth of all student-athletes is the priority. Therefore, playing time shall be equal for all student-athletes, in accordance with the Grades 4 and 5 policy, to the coach’s best ability. For the remaining games, positioning teams to be competitive is the priority. Therefore, playing time is based on a student-athlete’s ability and preparedness to contribute to a positive competitive outcome. Coaches may also use discretion in modifying these guidelines based on a student-athlete’s attendance, effort, attitude, and participation

at practices. Throughout the season, playing time is expected for every student-athlete present at a game.

*Seventh and Eighth:* Grades 7 and 8 provide a competitive environment for student-athletes and teams. The goal at this level of the program is to position teams to be successful as possible in competition. Therefore, playing time is based on a student-athlete's ability and preparedness to contribute to a successful outcome. Coaches may also use discretion in modifying this guideline based on a student-athlete's attendance, effort, attitude and participation at practice. For Grade 7, teams with more than 11 players, playing time cannot be guaranteed beyond the first 11. In Grade 8, playing time is not guaranteed.

18. A dispute resolution process for all concerns can be found in this Saint Clement Athletic Handbook, which is presented to all parents at the beginning of each school year (Appendix A).

### **SAINT CLEMENT SCHOOL ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AND ATHLETIC BOARD**

**Athletic Director** -- The Saint Clement Athletic Director works closely with the Principal and Athletic Advisory Board in carrying out the school's athletic policies and procedures. The Athletic Director oversees the day-to-day management of the Saint Clement athletic program including, among other things: coordinating league participation and scheduling; managing the athletic webpage, school equipment and facilities; participating in the selection of coaches and supporting their efforts; communicating athletic program policies and procedures with the parents; networking with other school athletic directors and vendors; and, frequently advising the Principal and Athletic Board of the progress of the athletic program, including disputes and important issues that impact the athletic program. The Athletic Director also serves on the Athletic Advisory Board and acts as the school's liaison with the Positive Coaching Alliance and the Chicago Catholic Youth League.

**Athletic Advisory Board** -- The Saint Clement Athletic Board acts as an advisory board to the Principal and Athletic Director. The Athletic Board will advise and support the school on communication with families, assisting and finding volunteers for athletic events, and positively promoting the Saint Clement athletic program. The Principal selects the Athletic Board and its members include the Athletic Director and parents.

The Athletic Director and the Athletic Board support the mission statement, principles and objectives contained within this sports handbook.

## **ATHLETIC PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

Saint Clement participates in developmental and competitive leagues of play in grades 4 – 8. Saint Clement Athletics teams work at developing skills and teamwork while enhancing their individual talents as athletes. The teams also afford all students interested the opportunity to play an organized sport.

### **Fall Season**

#### **Boys/Girls Cross Country**

5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Illinois Elementary School Association  
Practice: After school/Weekdays  
Meets: Weekdays and Weekends

#### **Flag Football**

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Chicago Catholic Youth League  
Practice: Weekday Evenings  
Games: Saturdays

#### **Girls Volleyball**

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Queen of Angels Fall Volleyball League  
Practice: After School/Weekdays  
Games: Weeknights

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – Northside Catholic Academy Fall Volleyball League  
Practice: After School/Weekdays  
Games: Weeknights

### **Winter Season**

#### **Boys/Girls Basketball**

4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> – Chicago Catholic Youth League  
Practices: After School, Evenings/Weekdays/Sundays  
Games: Saturdays/Sundays

#### **JV Basketball**

7<sup>th</sup> Grade – Chicago Catholic Youth League  
Practice: Weekday Evenings  
Games: Weekday Evenings/Weekends

### **Varsity Basketball**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Chicago Catholic Youth League  
Practice: Weekday Evenings  
Games: Weekday Evenings/Weekends

### **Spring Season**

#### **Girls Volleyball (Club)**

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade - St. Bartholomew Spring Volleyball League  
Practices: Once Per Week  
Games: Weekday Evenings, Weekends

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade - St. Viator Spring Volleyball League  
Practices: Once Per Week  
Games: Weekday Evenings, Weekends

#### **Boys Baseball**

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Windy City Baseball & Softball League  
Practice: After school/Weekdays, when available  
Games: Weekdays

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – Windy City Baseball & Softball League  
Practice: After school/Weekdays  
Games: Weekdays

#### **Girls Softball**

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Windy City Baseball & Softball League  
Practice: After school/Saturday  
Games: Weekdays

#### **Boys Volleyball**

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade – Queen of Angels Boys Volleyball League  
Practice: Weekday Evenings  
Games: Weekdays

## **Participation**

- The number of leagues in which school-sponsored teams participate per season should not exceed one league.
- No practices or games should be scheduled before 11:00 on Sunday morning, as families should be allowed the opportunity to attend Mass together.
- Contests will only be scheduled around school-sponsored events, including – but not limited to – school breaks, musical concerts, school field trips, school open houses, God Squad, Parish events, etc.
- Any request to a coach or athletic director to change a sporting event (practice or game) due to a non-school sponsored event, including – but not limited to - travel sports, family travel, ballroom dancing, etc., will not be accommodated.

## **Participation in Other Activities/Teams Affecting In-Season Saint Clement Athletic Teams Attendance**

Saint Clement invests a considerable amount of time, energy and resources to provide a high quality athletic experience for its student-athletes. It is the mutual understanding of Saint Clement, the student-athlete and his/her family that participation on any Saint Clement athletic team is the attendance priority during that team's season. Saint Clement reserves the right to limit to any extent a player's participation whether it be practice or games if it is deemed the player is missing practices or games for other athletic or extra-curricular activities that are not directly related to the in-season sport the student-athlete is participating.

The Saint Clement website (athletic page) and Chicago Catholic Youth League website will be the primary source for information relating to practice and game schedules, as well as any changes that may occur. The website also includes a comprehensive list of locations and facilities with directions. Parents are encouraged to visit and use the website to manage their child's participation in a Saint Clement sponsored athletic program.

## **Not Sanctioned Leagues, Events, or Contests**

In no instance may any official Saint Clement athletic team participate in any tournament, race, league or other organized events/contests without the expressed written or verbal permission of Saint Clement. This includes the wearing of any official/issued Saint Clement uniform in whole or any part of, or using the team names of "Saint Clement" or "Wolverines" for any such team not approved for participation in any of the aforementioned or similarly named athletic events/contests. Affiliated leagues, events, and contests consist of those entered by Saint Clement and that report to Saint Clement.

## **ADULT CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS**

### **Expectations for Parents/Guardians**

1. Parents and fan support is valued and encouraged. Parents/guardians and spectators must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and act as positive role models for all participants.
2. Parents and fans are to cheer for our team and not against our opponents.
3. Parents are to never attempt to contest or challenge calls with any official. Issues related to officiating are to be directed to the Athletic Director who has direct contact with league and tournament officials.
4. Parents are not to address coaches with issues immediately before, during, or after the game. If a parent desires a discussion with a coach about issues relating to their child, a meeting should be scheduled at a mutually convenient time, not on game day, and should include the Athletic Director in any correspondence and/or discussion.
5. Parents are encouraged to attend an annual meeting to meet the Athletic Board, hear the school's sports philosophy and receive our current sports handbook. This meeting will include a workshop from Positive Coaching Alliance that focuses on the important role that parents play in fostering a meaningful and positive sports environment.
6. Parents are to be supportive of the student-athletes and their commitment to being on time and attending all practices and games.
7. Parents are to allow the student-athlete his/her own sports experience by refraining from negative comments about the team, the coach, the referees or the program.
8. Parents should not "coach" any student-athlete before, during or after the game. Be supportive; do not undermine the relationship between coach and the student-athlete.
9. Parents may be asked to leave or not attend their child's athletic events if they cannot act as good role models for their children. Any parent that is ejected from an athletic contest will be, at minimum, suspended for the next two games, with the potential for further consequence if deemed appropriate.
10. All parents, coaches and student-athletes are required to read and sign a Code of Conduct pledge provided by Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA). See Appendix B, C & D.
11. Ensure that all forms are completed and returned prior to the start of the sports season. This includes but is not limited to the Registration Form, Archdiocesan Release Form, Student Code of Conduct and the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct.
12. If any parent, or family, repeatedly is unable to follow the guidelines and expectations of Saint Clement Athletics, then his/her/their child(ren) will be unable to participate in the program.

## **Expectations for Coaches**

1. Will be required to comply with all rules and regulations set forth by the Chicago Archdiocese and the Saint Clement Athletic Board.
2. Shall attend a mandatory preseason training seminar and orientation to:
  - a. Explain the sports philosophy of the Saint Clement Athletic Program
  - b. Establish the goals of the Athletic Program
  - c. Establish the practice requirements and schedules
  - d. Explain expectations and sign Coach's Code of Conduct
3. Shall attend a Positive Coaching Alliance workshop and will attain Double Goal Coach certification with PCA.
4. Have the knowledge and preparation to effectively lead their teams.
5. Be responsible to ensure that the health, well-being and development of their student-athletes take precedence over the win/loss record.
6. Accept that they serve as role models and there must be congruency between your actions and words.
7. Provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for practices and competition.
8. Exemplify honesty, integrity, fair play, and sportsmanship regardless of the impact that might have upon the outcome of the competition.
9. Maintain a professional demeanor in your relationship with athletes, officials, colleagues, administrators, and the public and treat them with respect and dignity.
10. Be committed to the education of the student-athletes and encourage academic achievement.
11. Follow current safe training and conditioning techniques.
12. Exhibit sound injury and risk management practices.
13. Demonstrate an understanding of growth and development stages of their athletes.
14. Place the athlete's needs and interests above their own.
15. Remember that competition should be a healthy and enjoyable experience for all.

## **COACHING RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The coach has the greatest responsibility as well as the greatest opportunity to guide and influence the student athlete. Coaches assume the role of teacher and mentor to the athletes they are instructing. Therefore, the careful selection of coaches is vital if the athletic program is to reflect the Mission, Philosophy and Goals of Saint Clement.

1. All open sports program positions will be posted in the parish bulletin and/or on the school website.
2. Candidates will be asked to submit a resume and, if selected, asked to come in to interview for the position.
3. Once a coach is identified for a position, he/she will be asked to complete an application and agree to a criminal background check. In addition, all coaches must complete and be current with Virtus training through the Archdiocese, as well as concussion training through the IESA.
4. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as Assistant Coaches when there are open positions available. Parents may not be considered for Head Coaching positions, unless there is approval from the Principal, in consultation with the Athletic Director.

### **Decision Process**

1. The Athletic Director will review the applicants, interview and ask candidates to join our coaching staff.
2. Reasonable efforts will be made to designate all coaches no later than one month prior to the start of the season.
3. The Principal, in consultation with the Athletic Director and Athletic Board, must approve all coaches.

## **APPENDIX A: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

It is the policy of the Saint Clement Athletic Program that any dispute between parents/students and coaches be resolved promptly, amicably and fairly.

### **For Parents/Students**

1. If a parent or student-athlete believes the coach is not complying with the *Saint Clement Athletic Handbook*, the parent or student-athlete should first attempt to resolve the issue by approaching the coach. In no case should a dispute be discussed during a game, or in a public situation, in particular in front of other student-athletes and other parents.
2. If the parent or student-athlete feels uncomfortable discussing the matter with the coach, the school recommends a verbal, informal discussion with the Athletic Director.
3. If there is not a satisfactory resolution, a parent or student-athlete may submit a formal complaint to the Athletic Director. This complaint should be in writing and signed.
4. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Athletic Director will:
  - a. Confer with the coach for his/her perspective on the issue
  - b. Determine whether the complaint shall be considered valid and all parties will be notified
  - c. If the complaint is deemed valid, design and require a mitigating solution for the coach.

### **For Coaches**

1. If a coach believes a parent is not complying with the *Saint Clement Athletic Handbook*, the coach should first attempt to resolve the issue by approaching the parent to discuss the issue at hand. In no case should a dispute be discussed during a game, or in a public situation, in particular in front of student-athletes and other parents.
2. If the coach feels uncomfortable about discussing the matter with the parent, the school recommends a verbal, informal discussion with the Athletic Director.
3. If there is not a satisfactory resolution, a coach may submit a formal complaint to the Athletic Director. This complaint should be in writing and signed.
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  - c. If the complaint is deemed valid, design and require a mitigating solution for the parent.