

# Sacred Heart Academy Athletics



Athletic Handbook

Middle School Sports Program

2015-16

Sacred Heart Academy

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# General Information

## ***The Purpose of Sports***

“Consider sports as an instrument of education when it fosters high human and spiritual ideals; when it forms youth in an integral way in values such as loyalty, perseverance, friendship, solidarity and peace. Surmounting differences of cultures and ideologies, sports offers an ideal occasion for dialogue and understanding among peoples, for building the desired civilization of love.” – *Pope John Paul II (Sept. 16, 2001)*.

## ***Sacred Heart Academy Mission***

Sacred Heart Academy, working within a Christ-centered, family-oriented community, offers an education that inspires lifelong learning. Our emphasis is to form ethical and responsible citizens who are increasingly competent, faith-filled, optimistic about the future, and prepared to succeed in our ever-changing world.

## ***Mission of Sacred Heart Academy Athletic Program***

We are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in athletics within the framework of a Catholic community and in accordance with our school’s primary role as an educator and spiritual guide. The athletics program is committed to providing opportunities for each individual student-athlete to reach his/her highest potential while developing the qualities and spirit of a Catholic Christian.

## ***Philosophy***

As a Catholic school, Sacred Heart Academy upholds Christian values and principles. Though our athletic teams strive to win in the sense of having the best score, we recognize that the real value of Catholic school athletics is realized only if it fosters the development of the human person – both in spirit and in body – by cultivating Christian character, strengthening personal integrity and responsibility, and promoting the pursuit of excellence in all endeavors.

Participation on a team is a privilege. With this privilege come responsibilities in the areas of preparation, attitude, sportsmanship, and academics. These responsibilities exist both in and out of school, both in athletic and non-athletic settings.

## ***A Volunteer Program***

The athletic programs at Sacred Heart Academy exist to give students an opportunity to play competitively. These programs would not be possible without the support of our volunteers. All coaching staff holds unpaid positions. We are completely dependent upon parents and

other volunteers to coach our students, transport them to practices, games and meets, cheer on our players, and to represent Sacred Heart Academy in a positive light.

### ***Non-Discrimination Clause***

Catholic schools, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic and other school administered programs. This policy does not preclude the existence of single sex schools, nor does it conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

### ***Procedure for Registration***

A student can become a full, participating member of a Sacred Heart Academy athletic team once the following requirements are met:

1. Student and parent/guardian have completed and returned the Sacred Heart Academy Athletic Permission form.
2. Student and parent/guardian have read the Sacred Heart Academy Athletic Handbook and signed the Athletic Contract.
3. Student has either participated in the sports physicals offered by the Academy in August prior to the start of the academic year, or has a current physical on file in the Academy office. Current implies that the physical has taken place in the summer prior to the start of school.
4. Permission forms must be completed and returned on or before the deadline set before the first tryout/practice date.

### ***Pre-Season Orientation Meeting***

Each year the principal will hold a mandatory meeting for all potential student athletes. During this meeting the Athletic Handbook will be distributed and reviewed.

### ***Fees***

Sports offered at Sacred Heart Academy have costs required for operation. To help defray

these costs, students and their families will be expected to pay a fee for each sport in which they participate.

### ***Levels of Competition***

Development of the skills fundamental to each sport receives primary emphasis on each athletic team offered at Sacred Heart. Each team experience, however, may be slightly different depending on the level at which the team is competing.

LEVEL	VARSAITY	JUNIOR VARSITY
	Teams at this level strive to prepare students for high school athletics	Teams at this level serve as transitions from the developmental level to varsity level.
Commitment required	High Students and families must commit to up to 5 events a week – practice, games, scrimmages, etc.  Attendance at Saturday practices and practices during holiday breaks may be requested.	High Students and families must commit to 4-5 events a week – practice, games, scrimmages, etc.  Attendance at Saturday practices and practices during holiday breaks may be requested.
Tryouts	Yes	Varies according to interest and capacity.
Competition	Officiated games are against other area schools/association teams. The season ends with a tournament.	Officiated games are against other area schools/association teams.
Playing Time	At discretion of team’s coaches.	At discretion of team’s coaches
Skills Emphasized	Advancing game strategies.  Leadership skills on and off the field/court. Individual fundamentals reinforced and extended	Importance of team cohesion. Individual fundamentals introduced and reinforced. Formal game strategies introduced.

***Athletic Teams Offered at Sacred Heart Academy for grades 6-8***

SEASON	GIRLS	BOYS
Fall	Cross Country	Cross Country
Fall	Volleyball	Soccer
Fall	Golf	Golf
Fall/Winter	Cheerleading	Cheerleading
Winter	Varsity Basketball 6-8 <sup>th</sup> graders Jr. Varsity BB 6-7 <sup>th</sup> graders	Varsity Basketball 6-8 <sup>th</sup> graders Jr. Varsity Basketball 6-7 <sup>th</sup> graders
Spring	Soccer	Lacrosse
Spring	Tennis	Tennis

***Try-outs***

Try-out times will be announced through the Friday folders, the public address system, and in the newsletter which is published weekly and posted on the Sacred Heart Academy website.

## *Athletic Coordinator*

The athletic coordinator reports to the principal. He arranges for facilities use, scheduling, and referees with the approval of school administration. Coaches are to adhere to the arrangements made by the athletic director.

The Athletic Coordinator is responsible for the following:

- Schedules: meets and games and provides administrative offices with the schedule.
- Plans a practice schedule and provides that information to the administrative offices.
- Represents the Academy in booking practice and game fields, and other facilities use.
- Negotiates contracts for facilities with approval of administration.
- Hires referees for all home games.
- The day before each game or meet he contacts the opposing team representatives to review details of the scheduled event.
- Arranges for cash payment to referees. Must notify office at least two days before a game to have cash ready to pay referees.
- Aids the office in selection of coaches. Coaches must be Virtus compliant. School administration makes the final decision in hiring coaching staff.
- Acts as a liaison between other schools, teams, and Sacred Heart Academy.
- Keeps office apprised of any changes or cancellations to practices and games.



# Coaches

## ***Coaching Expectations and Requirements***

Coaches are first and foremost educators, and must work in coordination with the parents who are the primary educators of children. They must undergo background checks and be Virtus compliant. They are to serve as role models for student-athletes to emulate. They are to support the school's mission and philosophy and ensure that athletic programs embody the Catholic characteristics prevalent at Sacred Heart Academy.

## ***Coaching Goals***

Sacred Heart Academy coaches build a team by:

Advancing the athletes' understanding of their role as members of a team

Creating a positive and memorable experience

Teaching the specific and unique skills of the sport to the very best of his/her abilities by using all means, methods, and resources available

Teaching the skills of healthy competition that will prepare athletes and the team to succeed

## ***Personal Goals***

Sacred Heart Academy coaches grow as individuals by:

Modeling character, sportsmanship, self-discipline, and a lived faith

Appreciating the moments of grace throughout a season, at times of winning and losing

Becoming a lifelong learner of their sport

Maintaining perspective in and throughout all athletic endeavors, realizing teachable moments

Fostering positive relationships with all school community stakeholders

## ***School Goals***

Sacred Heart Academy coaches contribute to the school community by:

Infusing the school mission in all athletic activities

Promoting academic excellence as an essential component in the development of student-athletes

Committing to effective communication with administrators, teachers, parents, and athletes

Supporting the development of student-athletes as leaders and role models in the greater school community

Creating a culture of school unity and spirit as exemplified through sportsmanship, positive fan participation, and respect for all

## ***Language***

Language should be appropriate and constructive at all times. Coaches are expected to not only monitor their own language, but they should also set and enforce standards of appropriate language for their athletes. This includes, but is not limited to swearing, harassment, exclusionary language, sexual innuendo, personal attacks, and unsportsmanlike gestures.

## ***Treatment of Opponents***

Although opponents are not a part of our school community, they are members of the larger body of Christ and should be treated as such. Coaches should model such respect for their athletes and should instruct players on how to welcome their opponents and all visitors in a way that conveys a sense of hospitality and community.

## ***Prayer***

Athletic experiences play an important role in the spiritual formation of students at Sacred Heart Academy. Genuine and lasting spiritual development is only possible through careful and conscientious preparation by those in leadership positions. Coaches, as team leaders, are chosen not just to be mentors and role models for student-athletes, but also to be witnesses. Prayer should become an intentional component to a team's culture. Coaches are encouraged to build and create spiritual traditions into their approach to coaching.

## ***Holding Tryouts***

In a Catholic school, it is essential to demonstrate respect for all members of the school community. There is not an expectation that all students will be able to be members of a team,

but when cuts are necessary, students should be treated fairly and with compassion. Coaches should provide individualized feedback to players rather than simply posting a list of team members. When individuals fail to make a team, alternative team roles should be considered, if possible.

### ***Coaching Duties***

In addition to serving as witnesses and models of faith, Sacred Heart coaches are expected to fulfill the following duties:

Plan out practices and games

Supervise athletes at all times until they are picked up from practices/games

Condition athletes properly

Assess athletes' readiness for practice and competition

Instruct properly on what to do and what not to do

Maintain safe playing conditions

Ensure cleanliness of facilities over which you have control

Provide proper equipment

Communicate practice and game schedule to athletes and parents

Select, train, and supervise assistant coaches

### ***Communication with Athletes and Parents***

Sacred Heart coaches should establish clear procedures and guidelines for communication with athletes and parents that align with the philosophy and mission of Sacred Heart Academy. E-mail should be used only to communicate basic information, such as time and location of games and practices. Discussion of concerns should always be done in person. If a face-to-face meeting is not possible, a phone call is acceptable. Any meeting with a parent will include the presence of the Athletic Director. Before meetings, establish clear agendas and communicate that certain topics will not be discussed. Coaches do not have to discuss playing time, coaching strategies and specific plays, or information pertaining to other athletes.

# Students

## ***Student Expectations and Requirements***

Students and parents should recognize that participation in the athletic program is not a right of all students, but rather a privilege to those selected individuals who possess the ability, attitude, disposition, cooperative spirit, and desire to represent the Sacred Heart Academy community in a favorable way. By joining the school's athletic program, a student becomes a representative of his/her team and of Sacred Heart Academy. Students must understand that being a member of a team does not automatically guarantee playing time.

## ***Eligibility***

We expect student-athletes to maintain academic and behavioral standards in keeping with the Sacred Heart Academy Student-Parent Handbook and the teachings of the Catholic Church. These regulations and procedures apply while on school premises, during practices and competitions, and in the public arena. A student will be considered eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at Sacred Heart if their most recent academic report reflects:

A passing grade of at least 77 in each subject

An effort grade of at least a 2 in all subjects

A personal development indicator of at least 1 in all areas

A student-athlete will be considered on probation should his most recent academic report, either an interim or a quarterly report, reflect any one or a combination of the following academic grades or conduct:

Grade lower than 77 in any subject

An effort grade of 1 in any subject

An incomplete in any subject

A personal development indicator of X

## ***Probation and Suspension***

Probation is one, two (2) week period\* during which a student-athlete works to improve his/her grades and/or conduct. During this two-week period, a student is still considered a full, participating member of the athletic team, but time should be spent wisely in improving one's grades.

Academic Suspension is one, two (2) week period during which a student athlete works to improve his/her grades and/or conduct. During this two-week period, the student is removed as a participating member of the athletic team. Within the two –week period students will have the opportunity to improve their grades.

\*The only exception to the two-week probationary period is the incomplete, if the incomplete occurs because of illness or for another serious reason as recognized by school administration. As soon as the student-athlete makes up the work that caused the incomplete and the work is to the satisfaction of the appropriate teacher, the student-athlete is no longer on probation.

### ***Evaluating Probationary and Suspension Improvement***

A student-athlete remains a full, participating member of a team if his/her grades at the end of the probationary two-week period are 77 or better in every class, has an effort grade of 2 or better and the student-athlete meets expectations in conduct. After the two weeks, if student athlete does not meet academic requirements they will be removed from the team.

During an academic suspension, a student athlete is removed as an active member of the athletic team. The student athlete is given the opportunity to return as an active member if grades are at 77 or better in every class, has an effort grade of 2 or better and the student-athlete meets expectations in conduct. A conference with student, parents, teachers, coach, and athletic director will be required if student does not meet academic standards and conduct at the end of two weeks. This may result in removal from the athletic program.

### ***Ineligibility***

A student-athlete will be considered ineligible for interscholastic sports at Sacred Heart Academy should there be no improvement after the two-week probationary period. Ineligibility means that a student-athlete may not participate in interscholastic athletics at Sacred Heart for the remainder of the season. This will result in the removal of the student from the team's roster.

If a student is suspended from school for unacceptable behavior, the student is also suspended automatically and immediately from his team. He/ She will remain suspended from his/her team and cannot attend after school activities for a probationary period of two weeks, and will be allowed to return only if teachers, coaches, athletic director, and principal agree. Any student athlete that is serving a level one offence will develop a behavior plan with Athletic Director. Student Athlete must follow behavior plan or it will result in suspension from the next athletic competition/event. Student- Athlete receives a level two offence it will result in a one week suspension from the athletic team. If the student athlete receives a level three offence, the two week suspension rule detailed above will be applied. Any infraction after that may cause removal from the athletic program.

All student-athletes are allowed one (1) probationary period and one (1) academic suspension period per school year. Should a student-athlete fails to meet the academic and behavior standards outlined above during a school year, he/she will be considered ineligible and may be removed from participation in interscholastic sports at Sacred Heart for the remainder of the school year.

### ***Student-Athlete Expectations***

A student-athlete's behavior is governed by the same rules, regulations, and procedures that apply to all students as set forth in the Sacred Heart Parent-Student Handbook. Each student-athlete is expected to demonstrate and encourage in others behaviors that reflect good sportsmanship. Failure to meet all student-athlete expectations may result in removal from the athletic program/team.

### ***Attendance***

All student-athletes must be marked as present in school on the day of practice or a game in order to participate. Please see the Student-Parent Handbook for what constitutes an absence.

All student-athletes must recognize the time commitment made to a team. One is expected to attend all practices and games. If one cannot attend a practice or game, please make sure the coach has been notified in advance. Consequences for a missed practice or game will be determined by the coach/team at the beginning of the season in addition to the natural consequences that result from missing practice instruction or game experience.

### ***Dress Code/Uniforms***

Student-Athletes are highly visible representatives of the school and, as such, are responsible for using good judgment in their overall appearance. All game shirts will be tucked in. No player should make modifications to his or her uniform. Athletes are to wear a school issued uniform and treat their uniform with respect.

Uniforms must be returned to the athletic director within seven (7) days of the last game. Progress reports and/or report cards may be withheld until the uniform is returned. If a uniform is not returned, parents are responsible for the cost of replacing the uniform.

### ***Sportsmanship***

All student-athletes are expected to represent Sacred Heart Academy in an exemplary manner. This behavior is expected both on and off the court or field. Student-athletes are expected to display the best of Christian courtesy and manners to all officials, coaches, opposing coaches, players, and spectators. At all times good sportsmanship is the rule, not the exception. The

penalty for unsportsmanlike behavior during a practice or game will be left to the discretion of the coaches for each sport along with input from the athletic director. This can range from sitting out at practice to a one-game suspension. In extreme cases when an athlete has been ejected from a game, multi-game suspensions and dismissal from the team may be appropriate. The athletic director and principal will make the final decision following a meeting with the athlete, coach, and parents.

### ***Transfer/Students/Injured Students***

Transfer students or a student injured at the beginning of a season will be awarded a tryout for a team if there is one more than half of the games left in that sport's season. Transfer and injured students are guaranteed the same tryout duration as the other athletes, though they are not guaranteed placement.

### ***Transportation***

All student-athletes must have signed permission forms on file for any off campus events. The form will allow your student athlete to be transported by a virtus compliant driver. This would include any practices, scrimmages, and games. If forms are not on file, then student athlete will not be allowed to participate in the scheduled events. All forms must be turned in on the scheduled deadline to establish transportation list for administration. All transportation forms will be distributed in the preseason meeting. All student athletes must be signed in and out of every off campus event which, includes any practices, scrimmages, and games. Student athletes will be signed out from off campus events in designated area determined by Coaches and Administrators.

## **Revisions**

### ***Revisions/Modifications to the Policy***

The principal may make changes to any policies outlined in this handbook as needed, and has the final decision with regard to any policy. Changes will be made public in the weekly newsletter.

The principal has the authority to remove a student or cancel a season if student-athletes or parents are not adhering to Sacred Heart Academy standards.



## Athletic Department Permission Form 2015-16

Name of Athlete \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Sports: Basketball \_\_\_\_\_, Cheerleading \_\_\_\_\_, Cross Country \_\_\_\_\_, Soccer \_\_\_\_\_, Lacrosse \_\_\_\_\_, Golf \_\_\_\_\_, Tennis \_\_\_\_\_

### **Insurance**

The following information must be completed and signed by the appropriate parent or guardian and turned in to the main office before participation in student athletic activities will be allowed. If the following information is not complete, this form will be returned to you.

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Emergency Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

All students participating in student athletic activities at Sacred Heart Academy must have their own medical coverage. Students will not be allowed to participate in student athletic activities unless the following information is submitted and the form is signed by the parent or the guardian of the student.

Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Holder: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy and Group Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address or phone number of insurance company:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Waiver of Liability**

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that I (we) am (are) the parent or legal guardian of the student. I hereby give permission to the staff of Sacred Heart Academy to seek during the period of school athletic activities, appropriate medical attention and for the student to receive medical attention and treatment to be covered under the student's insurance policy detailed on page 1 of this form. I/We the undersigned, for ourselves, our heirs, our executor and administrator, waiver, release, and forever discharge Sacred Heart Academy and its staff, officers, agents, employees, representatives, successors and assigns from any and all liability claims, demands, actions, and causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related to any loss, personal injury or property damage that may be sustained or occur during participation in student athletic activities or while at school.

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## Athletic Contract 2015-16

Please initial each statement below to acknowledge your agreement to this contract. Then sign the form at the bottom and return to the Athletic Director to be eligible for participation.

As a Sacred Heart Academy Student-Athlete...

\_\_\_ I will strive to give my best to the team in every practice and every game.

\_\_\_ I will be on time for all practices and games.

\_\_\_ I will not miss a practice or game because of another outside sport or extra-curricular activity unless approved by the coach or athletic director.

\_\_\_ This experience is an opportunity to learn not only \_\_\_\_\_ (sport), but also teamwork with all its inherent responsibilities. There will be times when I will follow someone's lead and there will be times when I must assume that lead – I always have a contribution to make to my team.

\_\_\_ I will take my coaches' directions and comments as constructive suggestions, which make me a better athlete and my team a successful unit.

\_\_\_ Practice is where I learn the concepts of the game. How I apply those concepts in mind and body in practice will carry over into the game situation.

\_\_\_ I will always play hard, but always will be a fair sport whether we are winning or losing the game, realizing that everyone on my team and my opponent's team is playing for fun and the competitive experience.

\_\_\_ I will carry these principles to my schoolwork and my family life with the realization that these are of greatest importance and take precedence to any sport.

\_\_\_ I will be an example of Christ in all my actions on and off the field/court of competition.

\_\_\_ I have read and agree to follow the policies and expectations stated in the athletic handbook.

Player Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE**