

# **Saint Brigid Catholic School**

## **Athletics and Extra-Curricular**

### **Activities Handbook**



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# **Saint Brigid School Athletics and Extracurricular Activities**

## **Mission Statement**

At Saint Brigid Catholic School, nourished by The Word and Sacraments, we find life in Christ by gathering disciples for worship, service, and education.

## **Vision Statement**

A community fully alive in Christ

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance in school is expected of all athletes. A healthy athlete should have a good attendance record. Any student who misses school due to illness may not participate in after-school activities.

Attendance at all games and practices is mandatory unless excused by the coach before the competition or practice. Missing a practice or game without good reason may result in non-participation. Students may be excused from practice to catch up on missing work arranged between coaches and agreed upon between teacher(s), parent, and student. Any grade below C and/or poor conduct as seen on Saint Brigid report cards or progress notices will result in a student being ineligible to play for one full week or until the grade is satisfactory.

Students are not allowed to leave practice or games without permission from the coach. Students must have parental permission to be picked up by someone other than a parent or guardian.

## **Student Eligibility Rules**

Students are only eligible to play on a Saint Brigid School sports team if they are currently enrolled at Saint Brigid School in grades 4-8. Saint Brigid School students in grades 3 & 4 are eligible to play in the instructional league. Consideration will be given to those students who are currently parishioners and enrolled in Homeschooling to ensure a full roster, as needed.

Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect and dignity at all times whether they win or lose. Participating in extra-curricular activities is also considered a privilege, not a right. These activities are always secondary to academics.

- At the principal's discretion, students may not participate if they have a D or F in any core subject.
- Any student suspended for any reason may not participate.

Any student not meeting the above guidelines will be ineligible to participate in practice or games for one week. It is expected that during that week they will concentrate on improving their grades and complete, if necessary, any missing work. This same policy stands for any

student who becomes ineligible for behavior. They will be evaluated after the week of ineligibility. If they improve their academic/behavior standing to fit the guidelines, they will be eligible to participate as a member of the team or activity.

When found ineligible the following procedure will take place:

- 1) On Monday of each week the office will submit to the designated staff member names of students who have fallen under one of the above categories.
- 2) Once the students have been talked to by the teacher, the school will email each parent and coach notifying them of the ineligibility.

If they fall below the guidelines at any other time during that particular sport's season, they will again be ineligible to practice or participate in games and activities for one week. A re-evaluation will take place after the second week of ineligibility. If the guidelines have been attained, the student will be reinstated on the team or in the activity. Any student having more than two weeks of ineligibility is automatically removed from the team and may no longer participate in that sport for the remainder of the season. A student is required to be in school the whole day of a game or practice (if it falls on a weekday).

### **Student-Athlete Responsibilities**

- ***Responsibility to yourself***  
Extra-curricular activities, especially sports, broaden your skills and help develop strength in character. Such an opportunity is a special gift that should be cherished.
- ***Responsibility to your school***  
You contribute to your community and your school by doing your best and representing the true spirit of our Catholic School, *The Saint Brigid Knights*.
- ***Responsibility to others***  
You must be a role model to others, especially to the youngest students of our school as well as the wider Catholic Community of spectators and participants.
- ***Responsibilities of an athlete or academic competitor on the field***  
You must be a role model to your teammates and support them, as well as the teams you oppose.
- ***Responsibilities in the Classroom***  
A good athlete is a good student who is always working on meeting his or her best potential – working toward good grades with no missing assignments and always being prepared for class, including tests. Respectful attention to good academic standing as well as behavior also shows your respect for your teachers and your classmates, just as you are expected to do for your team.

## **Saint Brigid School Colors**

Green & White

## **School Symbol/Mascot**

Saint Brigid Cross and Knights

## **League Participation**

Saint Brigid School participates in the Valley Parochial League. Boys and girls in grades 4th through 8<sup>th</sup> have the opportunity to play basketball. Girls in grades 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> have the opportunity to play volleyball. Saint Brigid School boys in grades 5th through 8th may play football for Nouvel Catholic Central Elementary School Saginaw. Boys and girls in grades 3 and 4 can play in the co-ed instructional basketball league. Students may also join the 4-8th Pompon Squad or 4-8th Cheerleading Squad.

## **Fundraising and Fees**

A sound sports program is expensive and requires continuous updates in equipment in order to provide a sound and safe program. Equipment updates, uniforms, and fees for referees, are among some of the costs incurred. Student fees or *pay-to-participate* and fundraising help to cover team league fees. Should a student be unable to play because of the fee associated with participation, such information should be directed to the Athletic Director. As a Catholic school community, we wish for all students to be able to participate despite any funding challenges and costs may be covered through the Guardian Angel Scholarship Fund.

## **Physical Exams**

Athletes must have written permission from a parent/guardian as seen at the end of this handbook. It is required that an annual Sports Health Form be on file before the student begins to play.

## **Communication and Conflict Resolution**

Athletic involvement can be highly emotional and very time-consuming. From time to time conflicts and issues may arise. Any conflict must be addressed immediately and as directly as possible so that it can be resolved promptly. Every effort should be made to resolve issues at the lowest possible level. The process to be followed is as shown:

1. Student athlete speaks to coach
2. Parent of student-athlete contacts coach
3. Athlete or parent contacts the Athletic Administrator (AD). The AD will inform the coach a meeting will take place. If the discussion with an athlete or parent does

not result in a satisfactory conclusion, a meeting will be scheduled with all involved parties.

4. The principal will be included and become involved

In order for a discussion between student and coach or parent and coach to be productive, the following times to approach a coach should be **avoided**:

- Either before or immediately following an athletic contest
- During a practice session
- During a time when other teammates are present, or
- During a time when it is apparent that there will not be sufficient time to allow for a complete or private discussion.

***A 24-hour waiting period, following the contest, is strongly suggested before contacting a coach regarding the issue.***

## **Rules and Regulations**

The following rules and regulations are standardized for participants of all athletic teams sponsored by Saint Brigid School and are specifically designed to provide a healthy and safe atmosphere in which a student/athlete may participate. Recognizing that participation in athletics is a privilege in which the athlete represents his/her team, school, and community; the athlete understands that inappropriate behavior in school, out of school, in practice, or in competition may result in disciplinary action as determined by the coach and/or principal.

1. To be eligible to try out, practice, or compete in athletics, a student must maintain a grade of C and appropriate conduct in every subject. A student will be declared eligible or ineligible by the school principal.
2. Before a student tries out, practices, or competes in athletics, he/she must have a physical exam within one year of participation dates and must be a registered student, or a homeschooled parishioner.
3. To participate in a game or a practice, the athlete must attend school the day of the game or practice (or the day before if school is not in session on the game/practice day) unless she/he was previously excused by the school. He/she is expected to be in school on time the day after a game.
4. Attendance at all games and practices is mandatory unless previously excused by the coach. Athletes owing detentions are required to attend detention before attending practices or games.
5. Athletes suspended from school are not permitted to practice or compete during the suspension
6. Team managers are considered team members and must meet the same requirements as players.
7. Restitution for lost or damaged equipment will be made by the student to whom it was issued. That student will not be permitted to try out, practice, or compete in another

- sport until such restitution has been made. School equipment and uniforms will only be worn in games, practices, and/or coach-approved activities.
8. Use of foul language, poor sportsmanship and/or disrespect to coach or teammates will result in a one-week suspension, with written notice to parents. A second offense will constitute removal from the team.
  9. Use or possession of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or drugs, or showing the effects of using these will result in the athlete being suspended from athletics and also may be subject to local law enforcement.
  10. All athletes are expected to be neatly dressed when traveling to and attending games.
  11. Athletes and parents understand that circumstances may later arise that require additional rules and regulations by the team coaches or school officials and agree to abide by them. Additional team rules will be given out in writing.

### **Athletic Code of Conduct for All Adults and Students**

Saint Brigid School strives to encourage good sportsmanship throughout our athletic program and this includes good behavior during athletic contests. We expect all players, coaches, and spectators at our contests to be respectful of players, coaches, officials, and other spectators.

Fans are encouraged to applaud the efforts of their team and should not engage in any behavior that is critical, distracting, or derogatory toward opponents or officials.

All students and adults involved in our Athletics programs including our sponsored VPL teams should understand that, as members of our teams or school, they are representing the school and our Catholic community of schools. All regular school rules of conduct and fairness apply, while home or away.

- Treat all visitors to Saint Brigid School athletic contests both home and away as you would treat guests in your own home showing good conduct
- Use only cheers that support and uplift all teams
- Respect the integrity and support of game officials, coaching staff, and fans
- Respect the integrity and support of game officials, coaching staff, and fans
- Do not throw any objects or leave litter on or around playing surfaces both at home or away and care for school equipment as well as uniforms
- Communicate appropriately with coaches and respect their judgment especially when it comes to playing time
- Be a good student and live up to the academic code in order to participate
- If there is a concern speak to the coach first and then the Athletic Director
- Never engage in the use of controlled substances while playing or acting as a spectator
- Students are not allowed to leave a sporting event or practice without letting the coach know, with a parent/guardian or parent's approved carpool
- Adhere to all the rules in this handbook including attendance, and academic codes

If a student/athlete is ever asked to leave an athletic contest or practice because of improper behavior, he/she will not be permitted to attend the next home contest and will be subject to other, additional penalties commiserated with the infraction and dependent upon the decision of officials, coaching staff and the administration. Such consequences may include reparation for damages as well as being prohibited from play for the remainder of the school year, all subject to the decisions of the Athletic Director in consultation with the administration of the school.

**Athletic Program Philosophy:** The purpose of an athletic program and auxiliary activities (i.e. cheerleading) is to complement the home, church, and school in the development of the “whole person.” Activities of the program are for the benefit of the students and suited to their age and physical growth.

The aim of the program is to:

1. Recognize the need for physical fitness for the wholesome growth of the individual.
2. Develop a healthy interest in sports by participation.
3. Provide enjoyable recreational activity, which develops Christian attitudes of being good sports.

### **Facilities Information Facilities**

The gymnasiums located at each building are where all indoor practices are held. Any games that are listed as “home games” will be played at this facility unless otherwise noted. An adult must accompany all students in grades 4-8 who use the gymnasiums before or after regularly scheduled practices. No student should be in the gym without an adult present.

### **General Information**

#### **Coaches Creed**

All VPL coaches will follow the Coaches Athletic Creed:

I BELIEVE sports have an important place in the general educational scheme and pledge myself to cooperate with others in the field of coaching to provide better opportunities for all participants.

I BELIEVE the other coaches of sports are earnest in their desire to keep the VPL program on the plan of citizenship training and I shall do all that I can to further their efforts. I SHALL abide by the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.

I BELIEVE in the exercise of patience, tolerance, and diplomacy at my command in my relations with all players, co-workers, parents, game officials, and spectators.

I BELIEVE these admirable characteristics, properly instilled by me through teaching and demonstration, will have a long carry-over and will aid each one connected with the sport to become a better citizen and Christian.

I BELIEVE in and will support all reasonable moves to improve athletic conditions, provide adequate equipment, and promote the welfare of an increased number of participants.

### **Coaching Expectations & Requirements**

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 any VPL team. This means a zero-tolerance policy for “poking fun” at people or verbally (and physically) abusing others.

Coaches and assistants should attend every game and show up at least 20 minutes before 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, and 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 young people is of incredible importance and thus must display good moral and ethical behaviors.

***Coaches are the backbone of any sports program. There is always plenty of criticism and far too little thanks for the job they carry out. All parents and student participants in VPL Athletics should make sure to thank them and offer any means of support to help them be the best coach to all the participants.***

### **Conduct – Parent, Coach & Student Expectations**

All players, coaches, parents, spectators, and staff are required and expected to:

Act in accordance with the stated philosophy of the program, which emphasizes the importance of learning and growth of all people, commitment to good moral, ethical and social values, deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, and the perseverance for upholding what is right and just. ALL people affiliated with VPL Athletics are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school. This requires courtesy in all relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors that the participant’s sense of appropriateness will indicate to them.

The **Athletic Director** reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.



All VPL coaches, parents, participants, and spectators are required and expected to:

Be polite and courteous to all coaches, officials, and participants, which includes appropriate conduct at all VPL-sponsored events, practices, and games.

Avoid engaging in any situation that could result in a negative representation of the program. This includes arguing with any coaches, officials, players, parents, or spectators, verbally criticizing or reprimanding others, and any inappropriate verbal remarks or verbal abuse.

Support all teams with equal respect and courtesy, regardless of their level of skill.

Abide by the guidelines and rules set forth by the VPL league.

### **Athletic Disciplinary Policy**

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

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

Any athlete acting outside of the guidelines established by the coach will be warned as to what will happen if the behavior is repeated. Penalties appropriate to the age and maturity of the student should be assigned. This warning will be communicated to the student's parents.

Should there be a time when 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 any person be berated, embarrassed, or singled out as an "example."

The coach should initially handle any parent complaints and contact the Athletic Director about the situation.

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

Coaches must be consistent in their disciplinary methods with all athletes.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Students, coaches, spectators, or parents who possess drugs or alcohol at any VPL Athletic event or prior to (or on school property) face suspension and/or expulsion from VPL sports.

### **Grievance Procedure**

An individual or team grievance may include any perceived or enacted unfair or prejudicial treatment of a player by a coach. If you have a concern, express it at the appropriate time and

place. We ask that you refrain from confronting coaches immediately after games or at practices. A 24-hour rule should be utilized.

A grievance should be handled in the following manner:

Have the student speak to the coach.

Set up a time to discuss the issue with the coach. If the situation is not remedied, arrange a time to discuss the issue with the Athletic Director.

If you still feel the issue has not been adequately addressed or explained, arrange an appointment with the principal.

### **Playing Time**

The coaches must abide by the VPL League rules. However, there are some general guidelines that coaches follow in order to assist them in determining playing time for all participants. These are:

Regular attendance at practices and games

Good attitude

Respecting players, parents and coaches

Obedying the rules set by the coaching staff

Work ethic

Being on time for games and practices

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.

### **Practices**

**Practices for any VPL Athletic teams will not exceed the limits established by the governing body or by the Athletic Director. During the school year, each team may not “meet” more than 4 times a week. Therefore, once games begin for basketball you are allowed no more than two practices in a week.**

### **Playing Up/Down**

Playing up refers to a player who participates on a team that is one level above his/her own grade. The purpose of playing up is to fill a team with the necessary number of players for participation in games. Playing up will normally only be done when there are less than two substitutes (for most sports). **No**

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**players will play up purely for a competitive advantage.** All participants on teams should be given opportunities for play time and growth on their own team. Refer to the VPL rules regarding playing up/down. VPL board approval is required.

### **Safety**

The VPL athletic program provides a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual will be taken seriously. Anyone making such threats (seriously or in jest) faces suspension and/or expulsion from VPL sports.

### **Weather Policy**

When school is not in session due to weather conditions, no practices or games will take place.

### **Statement of Risk**

**Participation in interscholastic athletics includes a risk of injury, which may range in severity from minor to long-term catastrophic.**

Although serious injuries are not common in supervised athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate this risk. Participants have a responsibility to help reduce the chance of injury. Players must obey safety rules, report physical problems to their coaches, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect equipment daily.

### **Medical Policy and Insurance Program**

**The VPL does not assume responsibility relative to medical expenses. Athletics are voluntary. The student and his/her parents participate with the knowledge that athletic training and competition involve the possibility of injury.**

### **Christmas Tournaments**

Participation in any Christmas tournaments is strictly optional. No coach may demand that the players participate in these games.

### **Players' Behavior**

A. Fight:

One game suspension (This involves an exchange or return of blows physically or verbally). A second offense will result in dismissal from the team. Any further action is at the discretion of the principal. (Causes for Benching/Suspension/Dismissal) Any disciplinary actions taken by the coach or athletic director must be reported to the principal the next day, in writing.

B. Swearing:

No swearing at practices or games

1. Technical fouls must sit out 6 minutes of playing time.

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2. 2nd Technical foul and will be removed from the rest of the game and all of the next game. This will carry over from season to season.

C. Respect for Property

D. Verbal Abuse

### **Athletic Director and Coaches' Behavior while on School Property or at School Sponsored Events**

A. No swearing at practices or games

1. Warning

2. Dismissal

B. No belittling/excessive yelling

1. Warning

2. Dismissal

C. Not playing a player

1. Warning

2. Dismissal

D. Not following regulations

1. Warning

2. Dismissal

E. Using tobacco/drugs/alcohol

1. Immediate dismissal

### **Coaches – Technical Fouls**

All referees will be asked to give technical fouls to coaches for poor sports' conduct. On the second technical foul, coaches will be removed from a game, must leave the premises, and will sit out the next game.

### **Players – Technical Fouls**

Athletes who receive a technical foul will be benched for 6 minutes of playing time. Players will be ejected from a game for their second technical foul and must sit out the next game.

### **Spectators**

**If spectators are abusive to the coaches, athletes, or referees, they are subject to removal from the facility.**

**Agreement**

The Athletic Director and all coaches who represent the school will sign this Code and Regulations Agreement.

It is the intent of the Catholic Schools that all players play and that Christian values are prevalent at all times. It should be stressed that having fun is what is important in elementary school sports and winning may come as a result of that fun.

Players are always encouraged to be friendly and display good sportsmanship at all times and places. Competition between schools should be emphasized as an opportunity to meet friends.

We have read and understand the Saint Brigid Catholic School Athletic and Extra-Curricular Handbook and agree to adhere to the school policies as well as the policies of the Valley Parochial League.

\_\_\_ Player Expectation Form

\_\_\_ Parent Expectation Form

\_\_\_ \$75.00 payment

\_\_\_ Sports Health Form attached

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Print \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Print \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Print \_\_\_\_\_

Athletic Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Print \_\_\_\_\_