

Our Lady of Mercy School Guidelines for the After-School Athletic Program

Philosophy

As a Catholic elementary school in the Diocese of Fresno, Our Lady of Mercy School is a community of believers dedicated to living the Gospel through their daily commitment to worship, prayer, and service to others. Our Lady of Mercy School, mindful of its mission to be witnesses to the love of Christ for all, accepts students of all races, religions, and ethnic origins while still maintaining its Catholic identity.

We believe in a holistic approach to the development of children, which encompasses their spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and aesthetic growth.

We believe this development is best achieved through the continuing efforts of educators who serve as facilitators of learning as well as supporting and complementing parents in their role as the primary educators of their children.

We believe our students are prepared to take their place in the global community with a sense of respect, reverence, and responsibility.

Mission Statement

Our Lady of Mercy School enlightens the mind while enriching the soul.

School Wide Learning Expectations

1. Active faith-filled people who:
 - a. Know the basic teachings of the Catholic Church
 - b. Live the Gospel Message through service
 - c. Participate in the faith life of the Church by celebrating the liturgical seasons and Catholic traditions
2. Effective communicators who:
 - a. Read, write, and speak with understanding
 - b. Listen attentively
 - c. Respond respectfully
3. Responsible citizens who:
 - a. Share their time, talents and treasures with their community
 - b. Exercise personal responsibility and stewardship for the environment
4. Successful learners who:
 - a. Demonstrate a strong foundation in basic subjects
 - b. Use current technology and research skills
 - c. Practice effective problem solving
 - d. Understand learning is a life-long process

Athletic Program Philosophy

The philosophy and mission statement of Our Lady of Mercy School states that the curriculum is planned to aid the growth and development of the whole person – spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially, physically, emotionally, and aesthetically. The athletic program is to support this philosophy by providing positive supportive athletic experiences for as many children as possible, in an environment where each child will have an opportunity to participate within his or her abilities. Each adult, coach, supervisor, and advisor will support the school's philosophy and adhere to all policies as stated by the principal, and will make a commitment to place primary emphasis on each child's development and growth.

The objective of the athletic program is to provide the individual and the team as a whole with an atmosphere that will encourage the athletes to be a positive influence on and off the playing fields while reaching their fullest potential.

Principal

The principal of the school is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the policies and oversight of the entire school which includes the athletic program.

Athletic Director

The athletic director is responsible for the day-to-day management of the athletic program. The athletic director is to closely monitor the interscholastic activities of all the coaches, the participation of all students in the athletic program and the activities of the volunteers involved in the athletic program in any manner.

The athletic director is guided by the responsibilities outline in the athletic director's job description.

Students

A student athlete must demonstrate satisfactory performance academically and show evidence of working up to his/her ability level in class work, homework, tests, and all other given assignments at all times and in all classes.

Students participating in after school sports must maintain a "C" grade in all academic subjects, a "B-" in effort, and a "B-" in conduct. Failure to meet the above requirements by the student will result in the student being unable to try out for the team.

If a student is interested in trying out for a team, he/she must pick up a verification form from the athletic director. This form must be taken by the student to each teacher for academic, behavior and effort verification. The student will return the completed form to the athletic director before tryouts begin. This does not apply if the tryouts are at the end of a grading period. In this case, verification will be from the current progress report or report card

A student may be suspended or removed from a team for one or more of the following reasons:

1. If a student fails to maintain a “C” grade in academic subjects
2. If a student is missing assignments
3. If a student fails to maintain a “B-” in effort
4. If a student fails to maintain a “B-” in conduct
5. Chronic detentions (3 or more detentions in one month)
6. Suspension from school
7. Improper behavior before, during, or after a game or practice
8. If a student leaves school property without permission before or during game or practice

Students falling below the academic requirements will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season.

The length of suspension for a student suspended from the team for behavioral reasons will be determined on an individual basis by the Principal, Athletic Director, and Parent depending on the seriousness of the offense. It could be deemed serious enough to result in removal of the student from the team for the rest of the season.

Participating in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Students participating in Our Lady of Mercy School’s athletic program must exhibit acceptable behavior at all times. This includes school, practice and during games, regardless of location or situation. Acceptable behavior consists of courtesy to others, respect for others’ rights and property, cooperation with those people who are working with and for Our Lady of Mercy School (teachers, staff, volunteers, and coaches) in order to promote learning and personal growth and compliance with the school’s code and conduct.

Participation

Our Lady of Mercy School is a member of the Merced County League. This league includes the following schools: Weaver, McSwain, Planada, LeGrand, Livingston, Mariposa, and Winton.

Our Lady of Mercy School also participates in local tournaments.

Our Lady of Mercy School offers the following sports:

Fall: Girls’ “A” and “B” volleyball
 Boys’ soccer
 Season begins at the end of August and runs through October.

Winter: Girls’ and Boys’ “A” and “B” basketball
 Season begins at the beginning of November and concludes at the end of January.

Spring: Girls’ “A” and “A” softball
 Boys’ “A” baseball
 Season begins mid-February and concludes at the end of April.

 Girls’ and Boys’ Track & Field
 Season begins mid-February and concludes in early May.

“B” Teams

At the “B” team level, the students will learn the basics of the sports in which they participate, as well as the rules of the game. On the “B” level, players learn the concept of teamwork, competition and fundamental skills. We believe that winning is part of the competition process, but not the most important aspect. Everyone will play in a game, however, in a close game, experience and skill level may be used to determine the playing time. The “B” team is for learning, therefore it is the general policy that if a child comes out for a “B” team, he or she will be on the team. The exception to this policy being: 12 or more come out for a team. This is necessary to ensure the safety and fairness to all the children.

“A” Teams

The goals of the varsity teams are to continue the fundamental skill process and to take competition to a higher level than the “B” team. Experience and skill level may be used to determine the playing time. This means some will play more than others, but all will benefit from the results. When a child gets to the “A” team, they are expected to understand the need for healthy competition. With this in mind, the coach of the “A” team does have the option of cutting players. There is no “eight grade privilege”; which mean just because you are in the eighth grade does not guarantee you a spot on a team. Each individual will be chosen according to his/her own abilities and potential. If a team has more than 10 players in volleyball or basketball or 12 players on a softball or baseball team, there is no guarantee that a player will play in every game. Every effort will be made, however, to ensure students get to play in games.

All students are expected to honor the entire season for the sport. Participants will not be accepted in another sport if the season was not honored.

Players must wear the school sports uniform during all games. Players not dressed in the school sports uniforms will sit out the entire game.

All uniforms must be turned in clean at the conclusion of the sports season. If a player continues to forget to turn in their uniform, a detention may be given. Failure to turn in the uniform will result in a financial charge for that uniform. Players will not be allowed to play another sport if uniforms are not returned.

All players are expected to be at all practice and games. We do realize emergencies and illnesses are unavoidable. However, players absent from practice or games require written excuses from parents. More than two unexcused absences could result in removal from the team for the entire season.

A student who is absent from school due to illness or unexcused reasons may not participate in a game or practice for that day or evening.

Coaches

Each coach is a volunteer chosen by the athletic director. All coaches will do their best to uphold the philosophy of Our Lady of Mercy School. Coaches must have a thorough understanding of the sport they are coaching, but more importantly exhibit leadership, a positive attitude, and be a role model of Christian values and good sportsmanship. All coaches are responsible for their players only during the practices and games.

Improper conduct and/or difficulties between a coach and team member is to be reported to the Athletic Director. Player suspension for improper behavior will be decided upon by mutual agreement between the coaches, parents, principal, and athletic director.

If a player or parent has a concern or problem regarding the athletic program, it is important that they follow the appropriate means of communication. The following lines of communication should be followed: Coach, Athletic Director, and Principal. To ensure a successful athletic program, communication is vital.

Parents/Spectators

Parents are an important part of Our Lady of Mercy School's athletic program. Without parents, Our Lady of Mercy School would not have an athletic program. All parents who transport players to or from games must have attended a Safe Environment Meeting, been fingerprinted, and have an insurance form filled out and on file in the school office. A copy of their driver's license and insurance must also be on file. Parents transporting players to and from games are responsible for their passengers. When transporting players, parent drivers must carry with them the participants' permission slips. These slips are to be turned into the coach or school office the following day. Upon return to Our Lady of Mercy School, drivers must wait until all their passengers have been picked up by a parent or guardian.

It is important to remember that the players are children and are playing for their enjoyment, not yours. Respect decisions made by contest officials. Be a role model by positively supporting teams and by not shouting instructions or criticism to the players, coaches, scorekeepers or officials. Do not coach from the stands. Make no derogatory comments or gestures to players, coaches, scorekeepers, parents of the opposing team, officials or league administrators.

Fees

Each family (no matter how many children will be playing) will be charged \$25 per season. The fee is used to pay officials, purchase equipment, uniforms, and awards. At the end of each season, an awards banquet is held to recognize all team members and coaches.

All students desiring to participate in the sports program this year will comply with these guidelines. The purpose of the guidelines are to develop a well disciplined team of students who truly desire to participate in sports and who are willing to make sacrifices to better themselves as players. Academics should always come first.

Students who participate in the after school sports program are subject to all school disciplinary policies and procedures.

At all times during practices and at games it is expected that participants (students, coaches, umpires, and observers) respect each other and live up to our Catholic tradition of respect and concern for one another over and above winning/losing a game.

*****IMPORTANT*****

As in all physical activities, injuries may occur. Students can reduce the chance of injury by obeying all safety rules and reporting any injuries to the coach or Athletic Director. Even if all these requirements are met, and even if the athlete is using excellent protective equipment, a serious accident may still occur.

Any student not covered through parent accident insurance or school insurance may not play sports for Our Lady of Mercy School.

Signing this form verifies that your child has coverage and Our Lady of Mercy School is not liable. Signing this form also verifies that you acknowledge that you have read and understood the warning statement above.

With your signature on this contract, you agree to follow these guidelines.

Athletic Director

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Date