

ST. MARY

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2025-2026



Athletic Director: Michael Butler mbutler@stmarylc.org

The mission of St. Mary Catholic School is to develop the whole child's spiritual, moral and intellectual growth and well-being in a Catholic environment.

GHCAA

Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association



Revised 7/28/2025

St. Mary Catholic School offers a variety of competitive sports including co-ed soccer, girls volleyball, boys and girls basketball and coed track and field. Our athletic program is overseen by the principal, the athletic director and the coaches. Parents can check the school website for updated information and season schedules.

2025-2026 Sports Offered

Fall Sports:

Cross Country
Soccer
Volleyball

Winter Sports:

Girls Basketball
Boys Basketball

Spring Sports:

Track
Jr. High Track and Field

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the athletics program is to support the mission of the school. Faith, obedience, commitment, dedication, loyalty, teamwork, leadership, responsibility, and discipline are the very core of the Christian Athlete's service to the lord. The St. Mary Athletic Program will teach and nurture such values in our young athletes.

GHCAA - GREATER HOUSTON CATHOLIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

St. Mary Catholic School is a member of the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association. The G.H.C.A.A. is dedicated to fostering human development, within the framework of a Christian environment, encouraging a positive vision in our young men and women through exercise, positive athletic competition, and fully recognizing the dignity of each student in Christ's image.

All affiliated schools agree to the following goals:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the lifestyles of the participants
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity
- To develop an acceptance and appreciation of others
- To train and instruct in athletic rules
- To develop the students physical abilities and coordination
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation
- To show the necessity of practice, work and management of time
- These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God

ELIGIBILITY OF ATHLETES

Enrollment: Athletes must be enrolled students at St. Mary Catholic School.

Grade Level Requirements: We participate in a Junior High League. 6th, 7th, & 8th grade students may participate in all athletics offered. 5th & up may participate in Volleyball, Soccer and Basketball with participation at the coach's discretion keeping the athletes safety as a factor. 5th & up may participate in Cross Country and Track and Field. 3rd & 4th on the Elementary Track Team. 5th on either Elementary Track team or Junior High Track and Field Team.

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right.

HEALTH PHYSICALS

Students must have a current physical done and signed off by a physician once a year (every 365 days) before a student can participate in any sport. These forms can be found in the office or online at our website, www.stmarylc.org.

ACADEMICS/BEHAVIOR

Students must maintain a minimum grade of a “C” average (77 or above) in all classes and a behavior of “P” or better in all classes during both progress reports and report card. The athletic director will be notified if either a grade or conduct drops below the requirements.

- A student who receives a grade below 85 in conduct and effort shall be deemed ineligible.
- A student who receives a grade below 77 in any one subject shall be deemed ineligible.
- Should a student become ineligible, he/she will be placed on a 10 school day probationary period. The probationary period shall begin on the day immediately following the reporting period. During this period, an ineligible student will not be allowed to participate in any practices, games, meets, or other school-sponsored athletic activities. It is expected that the student will use the two weeks to improve the grade(s) that resulted in the ineligibility.
- For those students who are deemed ineligible, a review of the subject area grades and/or conduct grades shall be made two weeks after the reporting period. If the grade(s) meet the requirements stated above, the student shall be deemed eligible to return to full participation in extra-curricular activities. Eligibility shall be resumed on the day immediately following the grade check.
- If the student's grade or conduct is still unimproved after 3 weeks (21 days) the student will miss the remainder of the season for that sport.
- The student must then improve his/her grades before beginning participation in another sport.
- Any student suspended or expelled for behavior will not be allowed to participate in the current sport. If the current sport is more than halfway through the season, they will miss the second sport.

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are issued per sport at the beginning of each season. These are to be used exclusively for St. Mary Catholic School games. These uniforms are to be treated with care as they are used for future teams. The student will be responsible for replacing lost or damaged uniforms. ***If a uniform is not turned in before the requested date or in good condition, a fee of \$75 will be charged.*** Students will not be allowed to participate in athletics until all fees are paid.

EQUIPMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

As it is necessary to issue uniforms and equipment to athletes, the following policy applies:

1. Each athlete accepts full responsibility for his/her issued uniforms/equipment and is financially responsible for loss or damage (damage that occurs outside of games) of each piece of uniform/equipment. Damage occurring during a game will be replaced at no cost to the athlete.
2. Each athlete is responsible for having all necessary equipment for practice or games.
3. Uniforms will be issued at the beginning of the season and will be returned at the end.
4. Cleats, socks, shin guard, knee pads, spikes, etc will not be provided by St. Mary School.

TEAM SELECTION

Try-outs will be held for each middle school sport and are held for all eligible grade levels. Selection is based on ability, skill level, and effort. All decisions as to team selections are made at the discretion of the coach and are final. All try-outs are closed to parents and the public. Students in 6th and 7th grade will be placed on Varsity or Junior Varsity teams according to the criteria listed above. All students in 7th grade or below may have the opportunity to rotate from JV to Varsity, with all players being guaranteed to get some playing time in their assigned division. Students in 5th grade will be considered developmental athletes. They will typically play at a Junior Varsity or C team level.

TEAM MEETING

Coaches will hold a pre-season meeting to go over expectations. Attendance of at least one parent is mandatory. Students/Parents will be provided with a copy of the Athletic Handbook, fee requirements, transportation information, uniform details, and practice/game schedules.

TEAM PARTICIPATION

Team practice is one of the most important elements in any athletic program. A team is only as good as its best practice. We ask for a serious commitment and attendance on the part of the athletes and support from the parents. If an athlete is unable to attend a practice or game, that coach should be notified prior to the event. ***If a student is absent from school, he or she may not participate in any athletic events, including games or practices on that day. A student must arrive at school by 10:00 am in order to be eligible to participate in athletics that day, unless a doctor's note is provided.***

Excused absences and/or tardies from practice(s) and game(s):

1. Personal illness
2. Death in the family
3. Medical appointment
4. Scheduled tutoring

Unexcused absences and/or tardies from practice(s) and game(s):

1. Forgotten equipment or uniform
2. Attendance of another club or intramural sport (not including Orchestra or Musical Theater)
3. Chores or errands
4. Homework (We take homework very seriously, however it is precisely that “home” work. It is important for athletes to learn to organize their time efficiently.

Any unexcused absence and/or tardy from a practice and game may result in losing playing time in future games at the coach’s discretion.

Excessive unexcused tardies and/or absences may result in an athlete being suspended from the team. Attendance and tardiness is reviewed when considering athlete awards.

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM PRACTICE AND GAMES

Students are not allowed to walk over to Cargill Hall or any practice field unattended and supervised by an adult.

Transportation to and from practices and/or games are the responsibility of the parent of the athletes. Carpooling arrangements can be made off campus. **If a student is riding to or from a sporting event, the coach and athletic director must be emailed prior to pick up.** Coaches should have visual confirmation that a student athlete is being picked up by a parent or other previously approved source of transportation. Student athletes will not be allowed to wait in front of the school or any other place that is not within sight of a coach.

Parents need to be on time for designated pick-up times from practices or games. Coaches should be notified if a parent is running late. Students will be sent and charged for after school care if they are not picked up 5 minutes past scheduled time.

Games or practices might be cancelled without notice due to weather or other conditions that are beyond the school’s control. We ask for patience and understanding when these situations occur. The coach/school staff will make every attempt to provide immediate notification of cancellations via email and/or a parent alert text.

INJURIES

Students should never play with injuries. Every effort is made to ensure the safety of the athletes, however there is always a risk of injury when participating in athletics. The school is not held responsible for injuries that occur during practices or games.

GENERAL RULES AND DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS

1. All athletes will exhibit proper Christian behavior at all times. Athletes need to remember they are a reflection of Christ and should strive to always reflect his love and compassion.
2. Athletes are responsible for all necessary game uniforms and equipment. Failure to bring required gear will result in not playing in that game.
3. Athletes must have necessary practice clothes and equipment to stay and participate. No athlete may be taped or wrapped without notification of injury or need. Prolonged or improper taping of joints weakens the joint and makes it dependent on that support.
4. Disrespect, use of foul language, gestures, threatening behavior or physical violence will not be tolerated. Infractions could result in suspension from games, removal from current team and/or participation in the next calendar sport.
5. If a student is absent, they may not attend practice or after school games.

PLAYING TIME

Varsity: This is the highest level of competition. Each team member will receive playing time throughout the course of the season; however there is no guarantee as to the amount of time. Varsity teams will be competitive and all players may not have the opportunity to play in every game.

JV: Each team member will receive playing time in every game. It will be at the coach's discretion to determine how long each member of the will play.

C-Team: Each team member will receive as equal play time to the best of the coaches ability. During tournaments, play-offs and championship games, individual participation is at the coach's discretion meaning that not every team member is guaranteed playing time.

Play time is determined by a variety of factors: skill, strength, physical development, attendance, following directions, dedication, aggressiveness, attitude, respect, willingness to be coached, and effort applied at practices.

QUITTING

Should an athlete decide to quit, we ask the student to first meet with the coach to discuss reasons. Should the athlete quit the program he/she will not be allowed to rejoin that same sport for the remainder of the season. Should a student quit 2 sports (fall & winter) within a school year, they will be ineligible for our spring sport.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Students must be in good financial standing with the school: tuition, lunch fees, library fees, etc. in order to participate in after school athletics. After school sports are not part of the tuition and therefore have a fee. This fee pays for coaches, referees, GHCAA dues, specific sport needs, trophies, plaques, equipment needs, and when possible uniform updates. *It does not include tournaments.*

FEES

Athletic fees must be paid by the first practice or the student will not be allowed to participate. If additional time is needed, please communicate your needs with the coach. **All athletic fees are non-refundable or transferable except in the case of a student injury that prohibits participation in the sport.** Tournament fees will be requested as needed.

PARENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Family support is essential for a successful athletic program as with most Catholic Schools. It is because of family support that we are able to achieve our school mission. Some of the main areas that a coach may need help with, include: scoreboard operator, stat keeper, fundraising, concession stands and end of season celebrations. Please prayerfully consider which area(s) you are able to help with during your child's sport season.

Please refrain from sideline coaching your child. Often times it becomes confusing for the athlete as to whom they should listen to. The coach will communicate with the athletes their expectations and/or positions, and an athlete's unique role in the game. Praise and celebrate those moments with cheers of support and accept mistakes as just that, a mistake. Give your child the opportunity to recognize and make the necessary corrections. The coach will take care of the rest.

The St. Mary Catholic School Handbook may be amended at any time. Athletes will be notified of all changes made.

THE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP CODE

THE ATHLETE SHALL BE...

- Honest, humble and gracious. Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend.
- Positive and encouraging to opposing players and teammates through words and actions. Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a courteous manner following either victory or defeat
- Respectful of the judgment of referees and coaches
- Accept responsibility as a team member on and off the court/field. It is your responsibility to maintain your grades and conduct

THE ATHLETE SHALL NOT...

- Cheat
- Lose one's temper
- Speak negatively of teammates, coaches, referees, and opposing players
- Blame teammates for mistakes or a poor team performance
- "Trash talk" and/or taunt opponents
- Showboat
- Argue referees' calls and judgments

SPECTATORS SHALL:

- Remember that you are at the contest to support your team and to enjoy the skill and competition.
- Remember that school athletics is a learning experience for students and mistakes are sometimes made.
- Learn the rules of the game and the league, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student/athlete, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Use only cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
- Be a positive role model at events through your own actions.
- Please respect the buildings and property of the facilities that are used.
- Ensure the safety of children who are spectators by supervising them at all times.

THE SPECTATOR SHALL NOT...

- Intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fans.
- Lose one's temper
- Speak negatively of teammates, coaches, referees, and opposing players
- Blame teammates for mistakes or a poor team performance
- "Trash talk" and/or taunt opponents
- Showboat
- Argue referees' calls and judgments

Athletic Handbook Acknowledgment Form

I have carefully read the St. Mary Catholic School Athletic Handbook. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept and agree to comply with the information contained in the Athletic Handbook. I understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, and expectations of the St. Mary Athletic Department.

Student Athlete Name

Student Athlete Signature

Date

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

SPORTS TRANSPORTATION RELEASE FORM 2024-2025

Athlete's Name: _____ Grade: ____ Sport: _____
Parent's Name: _____ Phone No.: _____
Email address: _____

During the above sports season, ordinarily my child will be transported to the games by myself, or

Name _____ Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____
Name _____ Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____

After each game, ordinarily my child will be picked up by myself, or

Name _____ Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____
Name _____ Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____

If there is a change, I will send an email to Coach Butler at mbutler@stmarylc.org

No Catholic school employee may transport any student(s) to or from a school-sponsored event or extracurricular activity.

Parent's Signature

Date