

# St. Theresa Catholic School Athletic Department



## Handbook For Parents and Students

*St Theresa Catholic School is committed to Catholic faith formation, academic excellence and service in a nurturing, Christ-centered environment.*

## Introduction

**WELCOME** to the St. Theresa School Sports Program. This handbook will guide parents and students through the requirements for participating in the athletic program and the expected behavior of both the students and parents. The handbook will acquaint you, your family and your child with the policies, practices, expectations and regulations governing all athletic activities and sports programs at St. Theresa School. Please keep this booklet handy and refer to it when questions and/or concerns about the athletic program arise. This athletic handbook is considered an extension of the Parent/Student Handbook of St. Theresa School as applied to participation in athletic activities.

Our program is committed to the Catholic mission of the school. All programs – either intramural or interscholastic – are open to the entire student population provided they meet the standard academic eligibility, school citizenship, physical/health qualifications and act in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. Participation in the program, therefore, is a privilege earned by students who meet and maintain these qualifications. The interscholastic sports program offers our young men and women an opportunity to exhibit, as well as develop positive leadership, character, responsibility and competitive spirit within the parameters of a moral and Catholic atmosphere. The intramural sports program allows students to develop athletic abilities while learning the basic principles and skills associated with each sport.

We look forward to you and your child's participation in the sports programs.

Brian Rodriguez  
Athletic Director

Sister Rosalie, OCD  
Principal

# Purpose

The purpose of the St. Theresa School Athletic Program is to provide all students with the opportunity to learn and compete in a wide variety of sports. Children will have the opportunity to represent the school in interscholastic competition or to compete in intramural sports. It is our hope that each student becomes a student-athlete and experiences the challenges, triumphs, camaraderie and accomplishment that is derived from participating in sports and being part of a sports team.

## ATHLETIC MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

### Mission Statement

St. Theresa School's Athletic Program pursues the promotion of Catholic faith and values in the development and formation of its student-athletes. Our athletic programs embrace the virtues of good sportsmanship, discipline and teamwork in order to assist and enable our student-athletes to grow as athletes and to exemplify Gospel values in competitive sports in the venues in which they compete. The program encourages personal and athletic growth through team sport. We strive to frame the athletic experience of each student within a context that instills self-discipline, dedication, pride in performance, respect for others, and a lifelong love of sport.

### Philosophy of Sport

**“The human body is, in its own right, God’s masterpiece in the order of visible creation. The Lord has intended that it should flourish here below and enjoy immortality in the glory of heaven.”**

The St. Theresa School athletic program exists as an integral part of St. Theresa School, and as such, its primary mission to assist the school in the athletic development of the student-athletes. In light of our parish patron, St. Theresa, we seek to provide an atmosphere in the athletics arena that promotes the growth of a healthy, strong, and agile body at the service of the spirit. Student athletes are expected to learn to unwaveringly live out the simple truths of our faith on the competitive playing field.

The program of athletic activities is designed to help the students learn the meaning of commitment, teamwork and sportsmanship. It is the shared responsibility of the parents, families and coaches at St. Theresa School to believe and practice this same philosophy and to cooperate to achieve the goals of the St. Theresa School Sports program.

## ATHLETIC PROGRAM GOALS

**“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (1 Cor. 6:19)**

**The dignity of the human person is the goal of sporting activity.**

### Physical Goals

To provide coaching geared to helping children in elementary school develop and cultivate:

- respect for the human body as a temple of the Holy Spirit
- the dignity and the harmony of the human body, to develop its health, strength, agility and grace at the service of the spirit
  - ▶ coordinated healthy bodies and spirits capable of effort, sacrifice, teamwork and courtesy
  - ▶ positive attitudes toward physical activity
  - ▶ concern and care for health and safety
- age-appropriate skills and knowledge of game strategies and rules

## **Teamwork Goals**

To provide coaching geared to helping children in elementary school develop and cultivate:

- the ability to practice and work as a team
- self-direction, leadership and loyalty in a team setting
- commitment and dedication to school, team and teammates
- the ability to collaborate with others to meet a common goal
- self-discipline and a commitment to personal and team excellence

## **Spiritual Goals**

To provide coaching geared to helping children in elementary school develop and cultivate the virtues of:

- courage
- discipline
- fortitude in overcoming obstacles
- respect for others
- honesty
- dedication
- self-control
- self-mastery
- sense of duty
- fair play

To provide coaching geared to helping children in elementary school understand:

- that their physical abilities are part of their God-given talents
- that sport, which is at the service of a healthy, strong, full life, can and should be also at the service of God – we are always witnesses to Christ in all our activities
- that properly directed athletic activity, develops character, makes a person courageous, a generous loser, and a gracious victor
- that athletic activity also refines the senses, gives us intellectual penetration, and steels the will to endurance
- that sport is an occupation of the whole person, not just of the body
- that we should conclude all our athletic endeavors with thanks and praise to God, our Creator

## **Competitive Goals**

To provide coaching geared to helping children in elementary school develop good sportsmanship by cultivating:

- an understanding of the differences between competition and hostility
- the ability to compete respectfully
- an understanding of the term “fair play” as honestly following the rules of the game competitively without hostility
- a welcoming attitude toward competitors
  - ▶ the ability to be friendly toward competitors
  - ▶ the ability to respond to poor behavior on the part of others by reporting it to proper authorities and calmly abiding by decisions of officials without resorting to unsportsmanlike behavior
- a pride in performance that does not demean the competitor
- respect and appreciation for teammates, coaches, opponents and officials
- the ability to win or lose gracefully and with dignity

## League Membership

St. Theresa School is a proud member of the Catholic Athletic League (“CAL”). The conference is governed by the Archdiocese of Miami and its own directors and Constitution. A copy of the CAL Constitution is kept in the Athletic Office and in the School Office. All the game schedules, levels of competition and regulations are governed by the CAL.

## Participation in After School Sports at St. Theresa School

Any boy or girl who has the permission of his/her parents, meets Archdiocesan Health requirements and is progressing successfully in academic studies is eligible to try out for any sport that is sponsored by the school. Students may not be eligible for a tryout if the tuition account is in arrears. Before the beginning of any season a permission slip is sent home. Students pay participation and uniform costs. Varsity players at St. Theresa School may be in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade and must be under 15 years of age. Junior varsity players at St. Theresa School may be in 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade and must be under 13 years of age. Primary players at St. Theresa School may be in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade and must be under 11 years of age.

In order for students to participate in after-school sports, he/she must have good academic standing:

- a. Athletes cannot have more than two D in any core subject: Religion, English, Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
- b. Athletes must have an overall C average on the report card in the following subject areas: Art, Computer, Music, Physical Education, and Spanish.

Eligibility for sports will be determined before/during tryouts for each sport and again at the quarter report card. Students who qualify for sports but then suffer a drop in grades may be suspended from participation.

- c. A student who does not meet the academic requirements stated above during the end of any quarter is ineligible to participate until he or she is in good academic standing for the following quarter report card.
- d. Students who are not in good academic standing after the third quarter report card will not be eligible to participate until the next school year.

**It must be understood that all students who try out for a team will not necessarily make the team. Ordinarily parents are not permitted to attend tryouts. Administration/Athletic Directors will normally not discuss tryout results with parents.**

We believe it is of utmost importance for a student to be achieving academically and behaving appropriately in school to be able to participate in after-school sports. Student athletes and parents are expected to comport themselves in keeping with the values of good sportsmanship, fair play, healthy competition, respect for coaches, officials and other players as well as behavior appropriate to a student of a Catholic School. Inappropriate conduct by students or parents during a game will result in disciplinary action (See both Student and Parent Codes of Conduct). Sportsmanship is a vital ingredient for all team sports.

### Withdrawal of Students

Participation in a sport is a partnership between the student, parents, coach and school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

## **Conditions**

Once a student-athlete has been selected as a member of a sports team – either intramural or interscholastic – he or she must follow the policies outlined below and in the student-athlete code of conduct to remain eligible throughout the season.

1. Maintain academic standing explained above.
2. Follow all team rules as set forth by the Coach and approved by the Athletic Director.
3. Attend all practices and games on time. (See practice requirements).
4. Conform to all ACC rules.

Any student-athlete may be suspended or dismissed from an athletic team by the Principal or Athletic Director at any time for failure to follow school and/or team rules and policies.

# Student-Athlete Code of Conduct

Students and parents are accountable to follow the discipline rules and policies of St. Theresa School as outlined in the general Parent/Student Handbook. Additionally, participation in St. Theresa School Athletics programs is a privilege that carries with it many responsibilities. Therefore, it is imperative that any student taking part in a St. Theresa School sports program – either interscholastic or intramural – understands and conforms to the program's rules and regulations. Discipline during the after-school sports program is considered an aspect of moral guidance and character training. Its purpose is threefold:

1. To promote a situation conducive to learning and healthy competition.
2. To promote character training, i.e. to cultivate the virtues that insure self-control and to redirect disorderly tendencies.
3. To guide students in the following of Christ and Gospel values.

The following areas of behavior are important in the development of every student-athlete and students are expected to obey their coaches in all these matters:

## Good Manners

- Student-athletes are expected to exercise good sportsmanship, courtesy, respect, and good manners at all times. It is very helpful to the student-athlete if these manners are also taught and reinforced at home and during other athletic venues. Otherwise they have the appearance of something that is only for school or special occasions instead of something important for daily living.
- The following is a basic list of manners that we try to implement and practice during athletic activities:
  1. Greet any adult, or fellow student, with “Good Afternoon”, “Hello”, or “Welcome to St. Theresa School.”
  2. Answer any coach or official with “Yes, Ma’am” or “No, Sir”, and answer a question with the adult's name if it is known. Never say “yeah?”, “huh?”, or “what?”
  3. When called from a distance, go to the person calling you. Do not answer while walking away or yell from the playing field.
  4. Use “pardon me” or “excuse me” when you have not heard something. Use this also when stepping in front of anyone, whether adult or your own peers.

## Commitment

- Attend all games and practices and put forth one hundred percent effort.
- Be prepared and on-time for practices and games.
- Work to improve essential skills and knowledge of the sport.
- Demonstrate appropriate and safe behavior.
- Adhere to team rules and guidelines.
- Follow all safety procedures.
- Always strive for the highest in moral and spiritual values.
- Show positive leadership at all times in our school and community.

## Respect

- Act and speak respectfully toward yourself, your teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, managers, bus drivers, athletic staff and spectators.
- Respect the rules of the game and play fairly according to the rules.
- Compete respectfully without hostility.
- Show a welcoming attitude toward competitors.
- Calmly abide by decisions of officials without resorting to unsportsmanlike behavior.
- Take pride in your team's performance without “putting down” any other player or official.
- Win or lose gracefully and with dignity.
- Never resort to profanity or illegal tactics.

## Responsibility

- Take care of equipment and uniforms.
- Attend all practices and games.
- Share equally in all team responsibilities.

# Discipline

Students who do not conform to the athletic code of conduct may be “benched” by the coach for a period of time or may be suspended from all athletic activities for the remainder of the school year.

The Coach or Athletic Director handles any disagreements or discussions regarding judgments made by an official. Any behavior that is not conducive to good sportsmanship may result in the removal of the athlete from that contest and possible withdrawal from the sport.

If an action is serious enough as determined by the coach, athletic director and/or the principal, (e.g. fighting, bad language, stealing, property damage, disrespect, etc.) direct measures to curb the inappropriate behavior are taken in accordance with Archdiocesan policy. Since parents are the primary educators of their children, we communicate directly with parents in serious or repeated discipline situations and at times bring them in immediately.

Student-athletes are expected to follow all school rules as enumerated in the general Parent/Student Handbook. The same penalties of suspension or expulsion apply when students are participating in school sponsored athletic events. The reasons for expulsion or suspension with mitigating circumstances are included here:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other pupils.
- Habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Fighting, assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence, directed toward any school personnel or pupils.
- Open, persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher or administrator.
- Continued willful disobedience.
- Use, sale or possession of narcotics.
- Use, sale, distribution or possession of any alcohol for beverage purposes on or near school premises.
- Smoking or having tobacco.
- Stealing.
- Willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in any way property, real or personal, belonging to the school.
- Truancy.
- Possession of a weapon on school grounds (i.e. gun, knife or **any other object that poses as a weapon, including toy weapons**).
- Harassment or threats, verbal or written, including e-mail messages or internet postings.



## Parent Code of Conduct

- I will neither ask nor expect to receive special favors regarding the student-athlete's placement on a particular team.
- I will not force my child to participate in sports.
- I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
- I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
- I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
- I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event.
- I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
- I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well being of the athletes.
- I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect.
- I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.
- I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner every time.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participant for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning.
- I will promote the emotional and physical well being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire I may have for my child to win.
- I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
- I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices unless I am an official coach.

**I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:**

- Verbal warning by official, coach, and/or athletic director
- Parental game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file by organizations involved
- Written warning
- Game forfeit through the official or coach
- Parental season suspension

# Policies

## Athletic Bulletins and Announcements

Regular bulletins will be sent home via Email and Plus Portals. Parents will also be provided a calendar with important dates and events that are to take place during the remainder of the school year. This bulletin is the St. Theresa School sports program's most common means of communication with parents or guardians. Please post and refer to the calendar and newsletter throughout the month. However, given the possibility of changes due to weather conditions, schedule conflicts and competing teams, announcements during the morning assembly will be a regular form of communication as well.

## Attendance

Attendance at practice is a requirement. We ask that parents ensure that their child attends in order to allow the child to develop into a student-athlete. The St. Theresa School Athletic Program takes this policy seriously and believes practice is an essential component of a successful student-athlete's development. Athletes are expected to attend the entire practice and leaving early on a regular basis will reflect poorly on the student-athlete's commitment and during competitive games.

When an athlete has been absent during the school day he or she may not attend any after school activity. A written excuse signed by the parent or guardian is required for failure to attend practice on a day in which the student was not absent.

- a. **If a student misses practice or a game due to a medical/family emergency it will be considered excused**
- b. **If a student misses practice or game due to any other reason than a medical/family emergency it will be considered unexcused.**
  - i. **It will be up to the Head Coach and the Athletic Director and School Administration if the student will be suspended from participation.**

## Injuries

An athlete must report every injury to his/her coach. Any athlete who receives medical treatment for any reason or who is under a doctor's care must submit to the Athletic Director a note allowing them to return to participation in sports.

## Use of Student Information and Pictures

The school reserves the right to use student or parent photos in any school publication and on the school's website. Any parent who does not wish his or her child's picture or video to be used accordingly must notify the school's principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year. **Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the use of student or parent photos.**

## Uniforms and Equipment

The coach or Athletic Director will provide each student with a uniform at the beginning of the season. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete and parent to ensure that the uniform is clean, orderly and worn to all competitive games. In addition, the following are a few rules governing uniforms and the use of equipment:

1. All team members will be issued uniforms/equipment necessary to compete in their sport once the user fee has been paid in full.
2. All equipment must be returned at the conclusion of the last played whether it is a home or away game.
3. Each athlete is financially responsible for all equipment checked out to him or her.
4. All uniforms should be cleaned before each game and kept in good order throughout the season. Athletes cannot participate in any game out of uniform.
5. Athletes pay for their uniforms and the uniform is the property of the athlete.

## Jewelry

Student-athletes may not wear any jewelry during games or practices. A small crucifix or holy medal that does not have a lengthy hang may be worn on a silver or gold chain under a student-athlete's shirt during practices at the discretion of the Coach, taking into consideration the safety of athletes while playing.

## Finances

### • Sports Fee

The sports fee enables the St. Theresa School Athletic Department to pay athletic fees and bills. The Athletic Department with Approval of the School Administration will determine appropriate athletic fees at the start of each school year. We ask all families to be faithful and on time with payment of their sports fee since the school relies on this payment to help meet its athletic debts. **Students are expected to pay the team fee before the first game. Uniforms will not be handed out to students until payment is received.** If there is a difficulty in meeting the commitment on time please notify the school promptly.

### • Fundraising

The sports fees alone do not suffice to financially support the program. Therefore, the cooperation of all is expected in fundraising projects. There are at a minimum two fundraisers expected to be conducted each year. Participation in these fundraisers, while not mandatory, is greatly appreciated and encouraged.

## Transportation

### Away Games

The school provides transportation to all away contests by bus. All athletes represent the school, coaches, parents and their community. Therefore, it is expected that all will dress in an acceptable manner on trips and conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with this handbook. Violation may result in suspension or withdrawal from the team or program.

The following are a few examples of the conduct expected by students and parents during travel to away contests:

1. Be on time for all trips – the bus cannot wait.
2. Dress neatly as directed by the coach.
3. Be mannerly at any visiting location.
4. All student-athletes making the trip on the bus will return on the bus unless a child's own parent is present to transport the athlete due to a time constraint. In this event, the parent will personally advise the coach after the contest of their intention to transport the student-athlete.
5. Upon return from an athletic event It is expected that all student-athletes will be picked up from the school, no more than 15 minutes after the time of arrival at the school.

### Afternoon Pickup Procedure after Practices or Games

Students are expected to be picked up at the Indian Mound Trail entrance. It is expected that all student-athletes will be picked up from the school, no more than **10 minutes** after practice or a home game ends and no more than 15 minutes after return from away games. It is important for parents to understand that a coach or the Athletic Director is required to stay at the school with the children until all student-athletes have been picked up. If a student is frequently picked up late it becomes difficult for both the child and the adult who must wait with the child. If a child is repeatedly picked up late from sporting practices or events the school reserves the right to bill parents at the rate of \$10.00 per every 15 minutes (or portion thereof) for the additional supervision required as a result of their failure arrive in a timely manner. If such a difficulty is not resolved, the school also reserves the right to remove the student from the team.

Game cancellation: Parents will be notified via text by St. Theresa School or Coach.

## Complaints and Grievances

From time to time, parents may have questions regarding school athletic policy or situations regarding their own child. Please use the following procedure for handling these concerns in a respectful and timely manner:

1. Seek facts for yourself, not rumor; talk about your own child

2. Discuss the matter with the proper person, such as the child's coach as soon as possible; it is best to speak privately and at a time when the coach is not expected to be supervising children
3. After meeting with the specific coach, if you believe further resolution is needed, contact the Athletic Director
4. If your concern warrants further action, make an appointment with the Principal and with the Pastor if needed after communicating with the Principal
5. If the concern involves a student or family other than your own, please see the Principal

In most cases, the problem can be resolved with little difficulty. The school administration does not ignore or retreat from parental concerns. Recommendations and possible solutions will be explored and implemented to the best of our ability. We wish to remedy problems and maintain a solid Catholic school environment according to our stated philosophy and guidelines. However, we recognize that not all decisions will be popular ones, nor can all needs possibly be met within the school.

## **School Policy and the Principal's Right to Amend**

Any student action that is not in keeping with the philosophy / objectives of St. Theresa School is subject to the review of the administration and may lead to withdrawal from school.

Since situations arise that were not foreseen at the time of writing this Handbook, the school reserves the right to initiate, change or modify the policies as needed. Parents and students will be notified of any amendments.

The principal and/or Pastor is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rules for just cause at his/her discretion.

St. Theresa School publishes any revisions in the school newsletter and other bulletins, and in directives given to the students. Therefore, the monthly newsletter and/or the sports newsletter is considered addenda to this policy book.

It is expected that all Parents and Students will cooperate and support these policies in a positive manner. When this is not the case, the family may desire to choose another school situation that meets its needs. St. Theresa School also reserves the right to recommend or require parents/guardians to withdraw from a working relationship with the school.

Parents and Students are required to sign and date a copy of acknowledgment upon entrance and/or re-registration to the school. This is the Agreement for Admission.



Archdiocese of Miami



St. Theresa Catholic School

# ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

## Catholic Athletic League of the Archdiocese of Miami

### Consent to Play

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

1. I/we hereby give consent for our child/ward to participate in interscholastic sports.
2. I/ we am aware of the potential danger of concussions and/or head and neck injuries in athletic participation. I also have knowledge about the risk associated with heat related illness during athletic participation and have received information as to the risk of continuing to practice or play once a concussion or head injury is sustained without proper medical clearance.
3. I/ we know of and acknowledge that my child/ ward knows of the risks involved in athletic participation, understands that serious injury, and even death, is possible in such participation and choose to accept any and all responsibility for his/ her safety and welfare while participating in athletics. With full understanding of the risks involved, I/we release and hold harmless my child's/ward's school, the school against which it competes, the contest officials and coaches, and the Archdiocese of Miami including all of its affiliated entities and agents of any and all legal responsibility and liability for any injury or claim resulting from such athletic participation and agree to take no legal action against my child's/ward's school, the schools against which it competes, the contest officials and coaches and the Archdiocese of Miami because of any claim, costs, or cause of action arising in any way from the athletic participation of my child/ward. I further authorize emergency medical treatment for my child/ward should the need arise for such treatment while my child/ward is under the supervision of the school.
4. I/ we have read the Student and Parent Sports Handbook and acknowledge all of its content in its entirety.

I/we have read this document carefully. I/we understand the contents of the document and I/we are aware that it contains a release of liability. I/we understand that the student may or may not practice or compete in any sports activity until this document is on file with the principal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/ Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date