

Chelsea Academy Athletics Handbook 2022

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Dear Chelsea Parents and Students,

Welcome to Chelsea, as the Athletic Director I look forward to serving you and your child through their time at Chelsea. My goal is to provide a truly unique athletic experience during your child's time here. An athletic experience that combines various factors of sports all through the Catholic understanding of the human person. At Chelsea Academy, our aim is the primary focus of life-- the life of Grace. The development of the intellect comes next, as this distinguishes us from the animals. Having a healthy body comes next, as God breathed life into the human body.

While Chelsea athletics does aim to develop our students' bodies, our primary purpose is to use athletics as a tool to develop the life of grace. This is done by striving to cultivate in our student athletes a love for sports while developing the virtues of patience, humility, control of one's temper, perseverance, and charity, to name a few. It is not merely enough to assume that character and virtue will automatically develop from participating in sports. Rather the data and our own experience show us that sports do in fact *reveal character*; the *building* of that character requires an intentional commitment and focus by all involved. If this intentional commitment is lost, sports can quickly turn into a task rather than a game, or worse an end in itself dominated by the pursuit of winning at all costs which quickly becomes a false-god. As a result it is our goal to be intentional in the formation of character by pursuing excellence rather than just simply pursuing a victory. In a sentence Chelsea Athletics strives for excellence in "sports properly directed" as Pope St. Pius XII noted.

The Chelsea Athletics Handbook identifies the philosophy, goals, policies, and procedures of our athletics program. It is intended to clarify the expectations of the program so that coaches, players, and parents can work together both to provide the best possible experience for everyone involved and to build a tradition of athletic excellence at Chelsea.

Thank you for your support of Chelsea's athletics program. Go Knights!

Sincerely,

Chris Vander Woude

Athletic Director

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School Mission

Chelsea Academy seeks to form confident young men and women educated in the liberal arts tradition and the Catholic faith. The Academy is committed to promoting and cultivating in its students the life of the mind and the love of truth; an appreciation for the natural world and the heritage of human achievement; enduring friendships; a spirit of adventure; and the virtues of honesty, diligence, courage, piety, and personal responsibility. Through an ethos shaped by Catholic teaching and devotions and a balanced curriculum that includes the humanities, sciences, the arts, and athletics, Chelsea Academy provides students with opportunities for developing themselves into adults who are capable of making positive contributions to their families, places of work, and communities.

Athletics Philosophy

Embracing Saint John Paul II's view on athletics "Sports contribute to the love of life, teaches sacrifice, respect and responsibility, leading to the full development of every human person." As a part of the school's mission, students are encouraged to use all that they have been given to strive for excellence through athletics. Sports at their foundation are games and meant to be played and enjoyed. However, sports are not only an opportunity for leisure but also an opportunity for personal growth and development.

It is the goal of each coach and student-athlete that, through the athletics experience, they actively cultivate virtue and develop personal skills. The growth of personal skills allows students to grow in confidence as well as to improve their team.

Coaches, players, and parents must strive to develop and display the attitudes of good sportsmanship, teamwork, commitment, dependability, work ethic, self-discipline, and loyalty to teams and school. The highest standard of sportsmanship is expected of all coaches, players, and parents since their actions are representative of Chelsea as a whole. Indeed sportsmanship is grounded in the "inherent dignity" of each human person. This dignity comes from God and not from man and as such it is not an option rather a command from our Creator to treat all individuals even in sports with respect and charity.

Athletics at Chelsea are designed to foster and encourage leadership, character development, sportsmanship, friendship, and excellence in both sports and life.

Sport Offerings

Fall

Girls' Volleyball - V, JV, MS

Boys' Soccer - V, MS

Coed Cross Country - V, MS

Winter

Girls' Basketball - V, MS

Boys' Basketball - V, MS

Spring

Girls' Soccer - V, MS

Boys' Rugby - V, MS

Athletic Participation

Because athletics is an integral part of a Chelsea education, all students in grades 6-11 are encouraged to participate in sports during at least one season per academic year, while participation on multiple Chelsea teams is highly encouraged.

Students who are not able to participate in a sport, due to a physical injury, are still required to participate in one sport by means of a Team Manager role. The Team Manager's duties will be different for each sport and the coach will decide what those duties will consist of. Team Managers must be at practices.

Any athlete who wishes to participate in two sports during the same season must request approval from the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will discuss with the coaches involved and make a timely decision.

Students who quit a team before the season is over will be ineligible to participate in a sport the immediately following season. This can only be changed by the Athletic Director.

Participation Eligibility

Participants in Chelsea athletics must be full-time students in good standing with the school. Students may not participate in interscholastic competition if they fail to attend school on the day of competition. Students must have the VHSL Physical Form (found on Chelsea website) completed and signed by a medical professional turned into the Main Office in order to participate in any athletic activities.

Students who accumulate three (3) unexcused absences from practices and games are subject to dismissal from the team and may lose credit for their participation. Any absence or tardiness to practices or games may be subject to partial or full game suspensions at the coach's discretion. Only absences for illness, family emergencies, or previously arranged special events may be excused by the coach. If students are at school, they are expected to attend practices and games unless they are excused for prior commitments.

Athletic Participation Requirements and Goals

The basic requirements for all participants are as follows: attendance at practices and games, a willingness to learn and to implement what they have learned in game situations, and a commitment to put forth their best effort.

At the Middle School level, the focus is on the development of individual skills, commitment, effort, and sportsmanship. Middle School players who meet the basic requirements of the program receive playing time in every game, though the extent of one's playing time is left to the discretion of the coach. Middle School teams may consist of players in grades 6-8. 5th graders may play on the Middle School teams with the approval of the coach and Athletic Director.

At the junior-varsity (JV) level, the focus is on developing players for varsity level competition. Although the primary goals continue to be the development of individual skills, there will be a stronger emphasis placed on team tactics and winning at this level, in comparison to Middle School. In addition to the basic requirements at the Middle School level, JV players are expected to be able to execute team strategy in games, use proper technique, and put forth their best effort at all times. Since experience is a large part of the development process, it is the goal of the program to provide playing time over the course of the

season to each student athlete, although the extent of one's playing time is left to the discretion of the coach. JV teams may consist of players in grades 7-11.

At the varsity level, the goal is to field competitive teams. In addition to the requirements of the Middle School and JV levels, the expectations and commitment of varsity players are greater. Varsity players must possess or strive to develop a high level of skill and team strategy, display commitment to the team, and put forth their best work ethic at all times. Coaches decide on playing time for individuals, and their decisions are based on what they view to be best for the success of the team. There is no guarantee that every player will receive playing time in any particular game at the varsity level. Varsity teams may consist of players in grades 8-12.

Academic Eligibility

Student-athletes are required to be in good academic standing in order to participate on athletic teams. If a student-athlete is under academic probation, his or her case will be evaluated by the school administration to determine whether continued participation on a sports team is in the best interest of the student. Factors such as a general attitude, motivation, completion of assignments, etc. will be taken into consideration.

Age Requirements

Per Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association (VISAA) requirements, "Students will only be eligible for VISAA Events if he or she turns 19 years old after August 1 of the academic year in question."

Club/Recreational Sports

With the principle of "team first" in mind, students' involvement in club or recreational sports outside of school may not interfere with their participation on a Chelsea athletic team. Chelsea practices and games must take priority over other commitments. Students are always encouraged to develop their skills during the off-season, but not at the expense of participation in a Chelsea sport.

In exceptional cases, students who participate in a sport not offered at Chelsea may get credit for that participation in lieu of playing on a Chelsea sports team. Requests for an exemption must be submitted in writing to the Administration via a sports waiver form.

Expectations for Student-Athletes

- Attendance at games and practice is mandatory. Student-athlete's may not leave practice early. If absent from school on a game or practice day, it is the student-athlete's responsibility to contact his or her coach prior to the game or practice.
- The student-athlete is responsible for all academic work. Student-Athletes should speak with any teachers of the classes they will miss, due to a game, before departing for the game.
- Dedication to your team and coach are vital. Athletics require self-discipline and hard work to reach team and personal goals. Distractions and sub-par effort levels are unacceptable.
- Chelsea student-athletes have a responsibility to represent their school at all times in a dignified and positive manner. Exemplary sportsmanship before, during, and after games is expected of each student-athlete.
- Chelsea student-athletes must strictly adhere to the VISAA Code of Conduct policies contained in this handbook.

Expectations for Parents

The success of Chelsea programs depends greatly on parental support. Sports are no exception. As the primary educators and models of behavior for their children, parents are critical to the success of each team. Chelsea asks parents to contribute to the sports program in the following ways:

- Support the Chelsea mission and to adhere to the guidelines, policies, and procedures herein.
- Pick up their child(ren) from practices and games at the correct time. Chronic failure to do so could jeopardize his or her child's membership on the team.
- To display and encourage exemplary sportsmanship toward opposing teams and officials.
- Adhere to the guidelines for communication as outlined in this handbook to communicate concerns at the appropriate time and place and in the appropriate manner and to Support Chelsea teams and coaches.
- Strictly adhere to the VISAA Code of Conduct policies contained in this handbook.
- Understand that coaches will not engage in discussion during the season about the 3 P's: Another player on the team, the Position which the child is being played, the Playing time that the child is or is not receiving.

Spectator Behavior

Chelsea holds a high standard for all those involved in athletic contests including the coaches, teams, officials and spectators. This is based on a few fundamental principles:

- Opponents are guests at Chelsea and should leave thinking "they were the most respectful and Christian yet competitive hardest working team we have ever played."
- Opponents and officials are to be treated with charity and respect even during challenging or emotional situations.
- Inappropriate comments at any individual no matter if that person is a player, coach, spectator or referee will not be tolerated.

All spectators will be held to these standards especially as it relates to interactions with guest teams, spectators and officials.

Communication between Coaches, Parents, and Student-Athletes

Since the success of the teams depends upon strong relationships, the Athletics Department has established expectations with regard to communication between coaches, parents, and players. Chelsea would like its students to learn to have conversations directly with their coaches. At times parents will need to intervene or speak to a coach about particular concerns. However, in most cases, it is best if the player first initiates a conversation with his or her coach. Often a simple miscommunication or misunderstanding can be easily resolved if a coach is made aware of it. The Chelsea Athletic Department asks that coaches communicate with their team and parents in a consistent method utilizing various platforms such as email, REMIND, or other communication methods.

Parent Volunteers

The ability to carry out an Athletic season depends largely on the parents especially by volunteering in various capacities. Each coach during the parent meeting will discuss ways to volunteer during the season. Most teams will need volunteers to help with the following tasks: parent communication, assisting with transportation organization, organizing team snacks for away trips, taking stats or "keeping the book or clock" at home games, assisting with the end of year team party, etc.

Conflict Resolution

- 24 Hour Rule - in the case of an emotional issue those involved will wait at least 24 hours to engage the necessary individuals. This is to allow time for emotions to calm and give all parties involved time to evaluate and consider the situation.
- If there is a concern that persists beyond the player-coach communication or requires a conversation between parents and coach, Chelsea always welcomes parents to raise the issue with their child's coach and, when necessary, arrange an appointment to meet and discuss the concerns.
- The distribution of playing time and team strategy in games are areas that can be particularly difficult for players and parents to understand or accept. Even here, however, students are encouraged to go directly to their coach, keeping in mind that playing time is necessarily limited and that coaches make decisions based on what they believe to be best for all players.

Whatever the issue, parents are asked to take the following approach with communication in order to help resolve matters quickly and encourage Chelsea students to grow in independence and personal responsibility:

1. Direct the child to speak with the coach.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, arrange an appointment to speak with the child's coach.
3. If the matter continues to be unresolved, arrange an appointment with the Athletics Director.

Concussion Protocol

Head injuries can be serious events in the life of a young person. Chelsea will take all head injuries seriously. The current Chelsea Concussion Protocol is:

- If a concussion is suspected the student **MUST** return to normal academic involvement prior to returning to athletic activities.
- In order for a student to return to athletic participation after a concussion has been confirmed they must present the Concussion Form on the Chelsea's Website to the front office and/or Athletic Director. This form **MUST** be signed by a Medical Professional.
- Until the form is returned with the Medical Professional's signature the student may not participate in any athletic activities.

Varsity Athletic Letters

Varsity athletic letters are a standard in high school athletics as a way to recognize those varsity student-athletes who have reached a certain level in their athletic development. Lettering in a varsity sport is not guaranteed but rather is something that is earned. Varsity Athletic letters will be awarded at the end of each season's awards ceremony.

The general criteria for receiving a varsity athletic letter are the following, understanding that the final decision is up to the head coach in consultation with the Athletic Director.

1. An active member of the team in good standing for the entire season.
2. Actively participate/appear in at least 50% of the competitions in a season.
3. Be a positive impact on the team.

Parent Meeting

At the beginning of each season there will be a meeting for all parents of student-athletes for that season. This meeting will be important for all to attend to ensure everyone is on the same page. There will be a short presentation by the Athletic Director and then parents will be able to meet with their child's coach

to discuss expectations and schedule for that specific sport. This meeting will usually occur within the first 2 weeks of the season.

Awards Night

At the conclusion of each season there will be a Sports Awards Night to recognize the dedication and achievements of the teams. All teams are invited to attend. Each team will give out 3 awards: MVP (voted on by the team for Varsity, chosen by coach for JV and MS), Most Improved (Chosen by coach), and either the St. Joan of Arc or the Lionheart award depending on either a boys or girls team.

Transportation

Chelsea strives to provide school transportation for all away athletic contests. However, this is not always possible. As a result we will need parent volunteers to drive their personal vehicle to various away contests. We will need permission for your child to ride with a parent in those situations.

Conferences

The varsity teams are members of the larger state association called VISAA. In addition this is our first year and thus is a "Probationary" Year for Chelsea in the NVIAC. This conference includes both middle and high school teams. The conference is composed of 12 schools who field a variety of teams. For sports where there are more than 10 schools participating it is divided into regions. The member schools are Legacy Christian, Providence Academy, Virginia Academy, Evergreen Christian, Fairfax Christian, Dominion Christian, Ad Fontes, Immanuel Christian, Fairfax Home School, Covenant Christian and Christ Chapel. Chelsea is also a member of the Valley Middle School Conference with members: Front Royal Christian School, Fresta Valley Christian School, Mountain View Christian School, Randolph Macon Academy, Sacred Heart Academy, and Wakefield Country Day School.

Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association (VISAA) Code of Conduct

SPORTSMANSHIP CODE OF CONDUCT

Philosophy. The VISAA believes that interscholastic athletics are an integral part of the total educational program. High standards of behavior, scholarship, and citizenship are important to a sound athletic program. Students volunteering to participate in athletics should assume these responsibilities and will lead by example in demonstrating fairness, respect, and self-control. Athletes, coaches, officials and fans shall at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable and sportsmanlike manner. Each person will be responsible for his or her words and actions at all VISAA Events and shall adhere to the Code of Conduct at VISAA Events. VISAA member schools are asked to include the Code of Conduct in their athletic handbooks.

Sportsmanship Expectations. Each athlete, coach, parent, spectator, official or other attendee, by participating in or attending a VISAA Event, agrees as follows:

- I will treat any coach, parent, spectator, player, official, or any other attendee with respect regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, or ability.
- I will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct.

- I will not engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety, or well-being of any coach, parent, spectator, player, official or any other attendee.
- I will not use drugs, alcohol or tobacco while at any athletic event. I will not attend, coach, officiate or participate in an athletic event while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I will not use profanity.
- I will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse toward at any coach, parent, spectator, player, official or any other attendee.
- I will not initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, spectator, player, official or any other attendee.
- I will not argue with officials or otherwise indicate dislike or disdain for a decision.
- I will not make any degrading remarks about any official, coach, athlete or school.
- I will not detain or attempt to confront an official to request a ruling or explanation of actions taken by an official.
- I understand that conduct that leads to my removal from a VISAA Event may be considered a serious violation of the Code of Conduct and may result in discipline by the Executive Committee.
- I understand that, as a coach or as a school administrator, the removal of a team before the completion of an athletic contest may be considered a serious violation of the Code of Conduct.
- I hereby agree that, if I fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct while attending, coaching, officiating, or participating in a VISAA Event, I will be subject to disciplinary action by the VISAA Executive Committee.

Penalties for Violations. Any one or more of the following penalties may be imposed upon any school, coach, spectator or athlete upon a violation of the Code of Conduct. Violations by parents, spectators or other representatives of a VISAA member school may be assessed against the particular VISAA member school.

- Warning – A warning is an official notice that the conduct in question is a matter of record and any such act must not happen again.
- Probation – Probation is a more severe type of penalty and is for a specified time period. A team, individual or coach on probation shall not participate in any VISAA event.
- Suspension – Suspension is a severe penalty that may be imposed for any VISAA event.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

To be completed by each student-athlete planning to participate in athletics at Chelsea.

I have read and agree to abide by the Rules and Regulations in the Chelsea Academy Athletics Handbook and VISAA Code of Conduct. I understand that failure to adhere to these rules and regulations may result in dismissal from the team and loss of sports requirement participation. I understand the Athletic Director has the authority to adjust these policies as needed.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Student-Athlete Name

Student-Athlete Signature

Date

Sport(s)

Please return this form to the Athletics Department before the first athletic contest that your child will be participating in.

Thank you.