



MERCEDES COLLEGE

COMPASSION LOYALTY JUSTICE INTEGRITY RESPONSIBILITY MUTUAL RESPECT

Sports Policy

Introduction

The College Council has approved a Sports Policy which aims to provide a sustainable programme of Extra Curricular Sports at Mercedes College. It recognises the value of these sports to the life of Mercedes College while accepting that the Extra Curricular Sports Programme will be funded through a school subsidy and a user pays principle.

The policy provides a framework within which the College can manage Extra Curricular Sport, including the addition and deletion of sports in response to student needs and a finite budget.

The Sports Advisory Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Education Standing Committee of College Council, is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this programme. The Sports Coordinators Years R-7, 8-12 (boys) and 8-12 (girls) are responsible for the operational matters.

The College offers students a large number of sporting options played after school or on Saturday mornings. Additionally, there are annual events such as swimming and athletic carnivals that occupy a high profile.

Rationale

An active and extensive Extra Curricular Sports Programme is a feature of Catholic and other non government schools. It enriches the scope of the school's offerings to students and contributes to the holistic education that is available to them.

The Extra Curricular Sports Programme contributes significantly to the life of Mercedes College through:

- Promoting a healthy lifestyle
- Building children's self esteem and self confidence
- Reducing physical and weight problems through encouraging participation in sport
- Encouraging personal responsibility and team building
- Creating a sense of pride and community building.

The Extra Curricular Sports Programme at Mercedes College is also a key marketing tool and is often cited by prospective parents as one of the features that attracts them to the College.

Policy Statement

- Mercedes College will provide a diverse and affordable Extra Curricular Sports Programme that enables the participation of the majority of students at the College
- The Programme shall be diverse so as to meet student interests, but also limited to encourage the College's excellence in particular sports
- The Sports Advisory Committee, a sub-committee of the College Council, will monitor and review the Extra Curricular Sports Programme. It will determine the sports offered by the College and conduct an annual review of the sports to be offered

The Extra Curricular Sports Programme will be funded by a combination of:



- A school contribution/subsidy, as determined annually by the Finance Committee of the College Council
- The user pays principle

Students who are enrolled at the College are required to represent the College in their preferred sport(s).

Policy Responsibilities

Principal

The Principal is to ensure that the Extra Curricular Sports Programme is conducted effectively within the parameters of this policy.

Sports Coordinators

The Sports Coordinators Yrs R-7, 8-12 (Boys) and 8-12 (Girls) are responsible for:

- Developing the Programme within this policy (resources, hire of staff and facilities)
- Coordinating and managing the Extra Curricular Sports Programme budget
- Managing student choice and participation
- Developing operational procedures as required.

Sports Advisory Committee

The Sports Advisory Committee is responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing the Extra Curricular Sports Programme within this policy
- Approving the addition or deletion of sports within the Programme
- Reporting to the College Council through the Education Standing Committee via the Chair of the Sports Advisory Committee
- The Chair of the Sports Advisory Committee will convene meetings once/term or at other times deemed necessary
- The Minute Secretary will be appointed yearly from parent representatives on the Sport Advisory Committee.

Students

Students participating in the Extra Curricular Sport Programme are required to:

- Meet the required commitments of practice and matches
- Conduct and present themselves within the requirements of the College's established Code of Ethics.

Student Commitment to Mercedes College

Students are encouraged to play sport outside of the College but not to the detriment of their College involvement in that sport.

In circumstances where a sport is offered by the College and played by a student, it is an expectation at enrolment that the student play for the College in that sport.

In circumstances where club and College fixtures clash, the College expects that representation for the College takes precedence. Students who play at a standard above any competition offered by the College must negotiate with the Principal, in writing, a release from their involvement in that sport before making any commitment to a club.

A release from this expectation is at the discretion of the Principal.

Associations involving the College generally attempt to ensure that club commitments do not clash with College matches and training times. This is well recognised by such organisations as Softball SA, Hockey SA, SANFL and the South Australian Football Federation.

Students may choose only one Saturday morning sport per season and must be careful not to over-commit themselves, otherwise training times are difficult to coordinate.

Code of Ethics

A successful sporting programme requires the support of many people – students, staff and parents. The following ‘Code of Ethics’ establishes a standard that creates an approach to sport appropriate for a Catholic College.

Coaches

- Remember that children participate for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of their motivation. Never ridicule the children for making mistakes or losing a competition.
- Develop a sense of respect for opposing players, officials and coaches
- Be generous with praise when it is deserved, but selective with criticism
- Always set an example in the use of language, behaviour and temperament
- All decisions made by the umpire must be supported by the coach and any necessary query must be made later and in private.

Players

- If chosen for a school team, students are expected to make themselves available. Exemptions may be made if, for example, a student has to travel long distances.
- Requests for exemptions must be made in writing to the Principal via the relevant Sport Coordinator. The final decision is made by the Principal.
- Students are reminded that the rules and spirit of the game are to be observed at all times and that the umpire’s decision is final
- The opposing team is to be treated with courtesy and respect at all times
- Abusive language will not be tolerated
- A high degree of pride should be exemplified by Mercedes College students at all times
- Students are expected to be punctual and correctly attired for practices and matches. This includes wearing the correct uniform to and from fixtures.
- Attendance at practice is compulsory
- Students are reminded to thank opponents and umpires at the conclusion of the match.

When joining a team, students must be prepared to commit themselves for the whole season. If unable to play because of absence e.g. through sickness, students must inform the coach or team manager as soon as possible.

Players found to be in breach of behavioural expectations (as indicated by umpires/report cards) will be required to report to the relevant Sport Coordinator. Consequences will be the responsibility of Heads of School.

Parents

It is most important to children and coaches that parents attend and assist whenever possible in their children’s enjoyment of the game.

Below are some points that may be of assistance:

- Do not force an unwilling child to participate in sports
- Remember children are involved in organised sport for their enjoyment

- Encourage all children to play by the rules
- Teach all children that an honest effort is as important as victory so that they can accept defeat without undue disappointment
- Never abuse or ridicule children for making a mistake or losing – good example and help in developing skills and sportsmanship is vital in a child’s development
- Applaud good play by the opposition; good example will help your child
- Recognise the value and importance of all coaches. They give their time and resources to provide recreational activities
- It is not appropriate for parents to coach from the sidelines
- Never criticise the umpire or referee
- Should games progress in a manner that causes parents some concern, it is expected that the matter be raised with the relevant Sport Coordinator by ringing the Sports Office on 8372 3249.

Values in sport and code for Mercedes College players, coaches and officials

As an important partner in the mentoring of young sportsmen and women, Mercedes College invites you to engender the following values and code of conduct whilst participating.

These are fundamental to the College and we feel are significant in the development of good sportsmanship and positive behaviour from our young players.

Compassion:

We act with compassion when we are aware of the needs of others and when we ensure that all participants emerge with dignity in all aspects of sporting activity.

We will:

- Discuss with coaches the value of major score blow outs in games and explore the possibility of modifications
- Show tolerance towards the performance levels of players and officials at all levels of competition and training.

Loyalty:

We act with loyalty when we are working within the expectations, practices and policies of Mercedes College.

We will:

- Be reliable from week to week
- Find replacement personnel in circumstances when a commitment cannot be fulfilled
- Prioritise the needs and interests of the College in all areas of involvement

Justice:

We act with justice when we aim to make fair judgments and participate in the spirit of the game.

We will:

- Offer and accept constructive criticism for the purpose of personal improvement
- Provide such feedback in a sensitive and respectful manner
- Respond impartially and honestly.

Integrity:

We act with integrity when we demonstrate the courage to do the right thing, to be honest and trustworthy in all dealings with others.

We will:

- Admit to mistakes when they are made and accept responsibility for actions
- Approach tasks with enthusiasm and endeavour.

Responsibility:

We act responsibly and professionally when we work conscientiously, respect school property and impress upon others this value.

We will:

- Ensure the safety of others around us at all times
- Approach tasks with trustworthiness
- Be at the venue well before the start of play to help with organisation
- Be organised, suitably attired and ready to be involved

Mutual Respect:

We act with mutual respect in all aspects of sporting activity when we value the contributions and roles of all participants.

We will:

- Listen and respond appropriately to others
- Role model positive relationships and behaviours
- Acknowledge players and officials at the commencement and end of matches.

Parental Assistance

Rosters are frequently drawn up whereby parents are requested to assist with transport, management and/or scoring. It is ideal that the burden is shared, so that few parents are called upon to assist frequently.

Transport

All persons involved in transporting students need to note the following:

- Only currently registered, roadworthy vehicles are to be used
- Only competent drivers with some years' experience should drive other students. Students may not travel in a car driven by another fully licensed student to and/or from sporting venues.
- Students are not permitted to travel with 'P' drivers
- Students may be transported by others (non-'P' plate drivers) only if a signed consent form has been organised to cover these occasion(s)
- Each student should wear a seat belt.

Team Nomination

Competitive sport is not usually offered to students from Reception to Year 2. However, in circumstances where shortages exist in Year 3 teams, players may be inducted from Year 2 to form complete teams.

Team nomination will be the responsibility of College Sport staff in consultation with the Sports Advisory Committee. This is completed in October/November of the previous year and this becomes a binding contract for all players nominated.

Decisions regarding nomination will be made on the basis of facilities, student and parent interest, and finance.

No team may be nominated or activity undertaken unless a responsible adult has been appointed to be present at all games/matches.

The Principal may refuse the nomination of a student in any event or sport if the student's behaviour or approach is unsatisfactory.

Sport Selection

The Sport Programme aims to promote sportsmanship, cooperation and involvement in sport. Team selection reflects these aims where possible.

Priority is given to students who have a positive attitude towards training and matches and who are properly attired. The coach/coordinator has the final say on selection.

The Sports Advisory Committee has approved the following competition guidelines:

Years 3-7

- If numbers allow for two teams in the same age group, teams of similar ability will be chosen. When an association nominates/specifies divisions in a particular age group, teams will be chosen on ability
- In general, efforts will be made at the younger year levels to de-emphasise the specialisation of positional play
- If numbers allow for two teams in the same age group, teams of similar ability will be chosen. When an association nominates/specifies divisions in a particular age group, teams will be chosen on ability.
- All players in all teams should be assured of a game on an equitable basis
- Where special representative teams are entered in events and competitions it is appropriate to choose on ability. When the position of the game allows it, reserves should be given an opportunity to play.

Players interested in Knockout and/or zone representation must represent Mercedes in that sport in that year.

Nominations for Zone and State Teams must be submitted via the Primary Sport Coordinator.

Years 8-12

When a secondary team is entered in a competition at a high level division it is appropriate to choose on ability. When the position of the game allows it, reserves should be given a generous opportunity to play.

When teams are entered in lower divisions, all players in the team should be assured of a game on an equitable basis.

8-12 Knockout (KO) Sport Eligibility

Nominations may be submitted to Sport Coordinators for consideration. A team's eligibility will be dependent on their home and away record and/or their progress in other events established to gauge their performances.

An individual's involvement in the Knockout Sport Programme is conditional on the basis of the following criteria:

- Involvement in all Knockout Competition is at the discretion of the Principal of the College
- Players eligible may include those that are not catered for by the College competitions and who, in the sole opinion of the relevant Sport Coordinator demonstrate exceptional skills.
- Eligibility for involvement is conditional on staffing, student/team performances, finance, player involvement in the specific sport for the College, training attendance, attitude and the amount of academic time missed by the player(s) concerned
- The teams/individual must demonstrate a high level of achievement in the sport e.g. above average and consistent form in the home and away competition
- The student's College commitment to that sport as a player
- Players who are excluded from representing the College in the regular home and away competition due to their commitments, as a player for the College in another sport played in a common timeslot, may be considered for selection
- Students may not be granted approval to be involved should teaching staff or the student themselves express serious concerns about their capacity to catch up on missed lessons/academic workload. Players are required to fill out Teacher Notification Sport Knockout Forms for each fixture.
- Players need to make every effort to attend the team training sessions set aside for the teams concerned.
Parental notes explaining absenteeism is expected.
- Selection/involvement in the team is the ultimate responsibility of the coach and/or the Coordinator of the sport. Selection for those eligible is on merit and reserves may be given an opportunity to play at the discretion of the coach.

Interstate or Overseas Competition

Teams interested in competing must qualify through the normal Knockout Competitions and as a minimum, finish 1st or 2nd in that competition.

Teams competing interstate may be eligible for limited funding to assist with some reduction in costs. Transport arrangements must comply with requirements contained in the most recent edition of 'Procedures for Catholic Schools and Preschools'.

Overseas Competition

A proposal for overseas travel must be forwarded to Sport Coordinators for consideration. The Principal will consider any recommendation forwarded by Sport Coordinators. The final decision for overseas involvement is at the discretion of the Principal.

Representative Teams:

Knockout, Swimming, Athletics, Cross Country

Students selected in Mercedes representative sporting teams to compete in local competition will not incur costs associated with such competitions unless competing interstate.

School Association Nominations

Nominations for events conducted by Associations with which the College is affiliated are open to students who have a commitment to the College in the specific sport.

In circumstances where the College does not offer the sport, the nomination is at the discretion of the Principal.

Personal Safety

The school provides basic safety equipment such as helmets, pads etc (see table). Provision of items of a personal nature, such as mouth guards and shin pads, is the responsibility of individual students.

Inclement and Hot Weather Policy Matches

Mercedes adheres to the specification Association guidelines for hot and inclement weather. This detail will be communicated to parents prior to the commencement of season fixtures.

R-12 Hot and Inclement Weather Policy for Sport (not covered by Association Hot and Inclement Weather Policy)

If, in *The Advertiser* on the day prior to a fixture, the predication is 37 degrees or above, sport matches will be cancelled. Sport affected by wet weather will be cancelled at the venue by Coordinators, Coaches and/or Umpires, unless Coaches notify players prior to games. Players are expected to turn up at venues unless contacted by Coordinators/coaches beforehand. Tennis has its own guidelines, please refer to the SDTA Handbook.

Knockout Sport Weather Policy

Hot and inclement weather policy for all Knockout Competition will determine the decision made by relevant Sports Coordinators the day prior to competition and will then be communicated to players as soon as practicable.

Morning practices

Morning practices for sport during hot weather periods will proceed as scheduled. Morning training conducted outdoors that is likely to be affected by wet weather, will be cancelled by coaches and communicated where possible prior to its commencement.

Afternoon practices

All training sessions will proceed as normal and in instances of inclement or hot weather, coaches will conduct alternative activities in allocated classrooms. Collection time will always be the team's normal dismissal time.

Teams will be allocated a classroom for coaches to utilise at the start of the playing season which will be communicated on fixture lists. Parents are able to collect students from that location before the normal dismissal time if needed.

Protective Requirements

Sport	Provision by the School	Personal Provision
Basketball		Mouth guard
Cricket	Batting helmet, thigh pad, Mouth guard gloves, boxes	Mouth guard
Football	No Mouth guard – No Play	
Hockey	Face mask, goalie pads, kickers, gloves	Mouth guard
Netball		Mouth guard
Soccer		Shin pads and mouth guard
Softball	Face mask, chest, throat and leg protectors	Mouth guard and gloves
Volleyball		Kneepads
Water Polo	Caps	Mouth guard

Awards

Awards for Years 3-7

Coaches and parents are requested not to recognise individual teams or performances by purchasing or distributing trophies at the end of the season.

Representative teams are often recognised by the appropriate sporting organisation.

Individual and/or team performances and students who gain awards for outstanding achievement in sport outside of the school are recognised at College Assemblies or in College publications.

Years 8-12

The College recognises excellence in student attitude, effort, achievement and service. Students who have excelled in these areas are presented with a trophy at the end-of-year Presentation Assembly and/or at the season wind up. Students must display an appropriate attitude and demonstrate significant effort to qualify for an award.

Awards are given for individual and team achievements. Trophies are traditionally given for the age level champion in areas such as athletics, swimming and tennis. While the emphasis in these sports will be on natural ability, it is assumed that students have demonstrated suitable effort and attitude. Presentation of awards is at the discretion of the Principal.

Mercy Colours Award

This award is available to all Middle and Senior School Students. The award acknowledges a student's broad contribution to the College and the Community and is presented at the Year 12 Graduation Assembly and at the final Spots Assembly (6-11).

Years 8-12 Team Sport Awards

In team sports, two awards per team will generally be given. A service award may be allocated at the discretion of Coaches

Coaches Award

Criteria include:

- Improvement
- Sportsmanship
- Teamwork
- Attendance at training

Most Outstanding Player Award

Criteria include:

- Performance at a consistently high level
- Frequent recognition in best players' list.

Service Award

A Service Award may be allocated to students who have consistently demonstrated outstanding commitment and dedication in a sporting area throughout a season. This award is at the discretion of the PE staff and coaches concerned.

Sport Leadership

Leadership is available in the areas of Sport Leader, House Leader and Sport Captaincy.

Application for Sport and House Leadership is a formal process whereby candidates must fill out the necessary documentation, available from the Middle/Senior School Office, and lodge the application form by the due date.

A selection panel consisting of members of the PE faculty and student leaders will interview all House and Sport Leader candidates, assess their performance at interview and recommend to the Principal those students to be considered for the roles.

Those students selected will present Sport Coordinators with copies of speeches for vetting prior to the respective assembly. The student body will then vote on the merits of the candidates and the results of the votes will be presented to the Principal for announcement to the wider College community.

Catherine McAuley Office and must be lodged by the advertised due date. These positions are appointments made by the Sport Coordinators.

Criteria for selection for all positions are set and these are explained on the application forms.

Sporting Association Affiliation

Years 3-7

SAAS: Sports Association for Adelaide Schools (formerly known as ISSA)

SACPSSA: South Australian Catholic Primary Schools Sports Association

SAJNA: Southern Area Junior Netball Association

SAJSA: Southern Area Junior Softball Association

SAPSASA: South Australian Primary Schools Sports Association (South Heights District)

SCC: Sturt Cricket Club

SDJSA: Southern Districts Junior Soccer Association

SDTA: Southern Districts Tennis Association

Years 8-12

IGSSA: Independent Girls Secondary Sports Association

SAAS: Sports Association for Adelaide Schools (formerly known as ISSA)

SACGSSSA: South Australian Catholic Girls Secondary Schools Sports Association

SASSSA: South Australian Secondary Schools Sports Association

SDTA: Southern District Tennis Association

Playing Costs

Costs exist for all sporting involvement and these vary according to the duration of coaching, costs of affiliation and other variables that impact on a finite subsidy from College Council. These costs are provided as a guide on the sport nomination form.

Guidelines for Student Participation in the Extra Curricular Sports Programme

It is not compulsory for all students to participate in the Extra Curricular Sports Programme. However, if a student plays a particular sport, he/she is required to make it a priority to represent the school in this sport.

This requirement can be waived in the following circumstances.

- When the College is not able to offer the sport to the highest standard of which the student is capable
- Where the student, his/her parents and the Sports Coordinator are able to reach a negotiated agreement on the student's representation. If the parties are unable to reach an agreement, the involvement remains at the discretion of the Principal.

Students who nominate for a particular sport must observe the requirements of the sport for:

- Practice
- Availability for matches
- Wearing the required Sport Uniform and conduct as required by the Mercedes College Code of Ethics for participation in Extra Curricular Sport.

Guidelines for Addition or Deletion of Sports to the Extra Curricular Sports Programme

For the addition of a new sport or the extension of a sport to another competition level, the following criteria will be applied by the Sports Advisory Committee in its decision-making:

- There must be at least sufficient students both interested in, and proficient at the sport
- Consideration will need to be given to the likely impact on other sports within the programme
- The sport, when commencing, must not draw significantly on the Extra Curricular Sports budget, so as to detract from provision to existing sports
- Mercedes College must be able to readily access the facilities, venues and personnel (coaches, managers etc.) in order to provide the sport.

For the deletion of a sport, the following criteria will be applied:

- Data that may indicate a decline in student participation
- The rise in cost for students and Mercedes College in continuing to offer the sport.

The Sports Advisory Committee

The Sports Advisory Committee is a sub committee of the Education Standing Committee of the Mercedes College Council.

Terms of Reference

The Sports Advisory Committee is responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing the Extra Curricular Sports Policy
- Conducting an annual review of the Extra Curricular Sports Programme
- Developing strategic directions for the Extra Curricular Sports Programme
- Determining the addition and deletion of sports from the Programme.

Membership

Chairperson:

Member of Education Standing Committee

Executive Officer:

Member of Sports Advisory Committee (by appointment)

Sport Coordinators:

Primary R-7, Secondary 8-12 (Girls) and 8-12 (Boys)

Parent Representatives:

(Maximum of 6)

2 – Junior School

2 – Middle School

2 – Senior School

Co-opted Members:

Members co-opted by the Chairperson on the basis of expertise

Parent representatives are members for a two year term, based on an Expression of Interest.

Committee Procedures

The Committee will meet once per school term.

Agenda items are developed in consultation with and between the Chairperson and Sport Coordinators. The meeting agenda and relevant papers are available to members at least a week prior to the meeting.

The Committee reports to the Education Standing Committee and, as appropriate, makes recommendations regarding any significant changes to the Extra Curricular Sports Programme.