

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 often cited by prospective parents as one of the features that attracts them to the school.

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 with the parameters of this policy.

Sports Co-ordinators

The Sports Co-ordinators Years R-7, 8-12 (Boys) and 8-12 (Girls) are responsible for:

- developing the Programme within this policy (resources, hire of staff and facilities)
- co-ordinating 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.

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 Collage 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 co-ordinate.

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 Co-ordinator. 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 Schools.

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 your child to play by the rules
- Teach your child that an honest effort is as important as victory so that he/she can accept defeat without undue disappointment
- Never abuse or ridicule your child for making a mistake or losing – your example and help in developing skills and sportsmanship is vital in your child's development
- Applaud good play by the opposition; your example will help your child
- Recognise the value and importance of all coaches. They give their time and resources to provide recreational activities for your child
- 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.

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.

Team nomination will be the responsibility of the PE/Sports staff in consultation with the Sports Advisory Committee.

Decisions 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 Sports Programme aims to promote sportsmanship, co-operation 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 guidelines:

Years 2-7

- 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
- All players in all teams should be assured of a game on an equitable basis
- Where special representative teams are entered in events & competitions it is appropriate to choose on ability. When the position of the game allows it, reserves should be given an opportunity to play.

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
- Knockout (KO) Sport Eligibility Years 6-12
Players interested in knockout and/or zonal representation must represent Mercedes in that specific sport in that year. Nominations must be submitted via the primary sport co-ordinator and authorised by the appropriated Head of School.

Involvement in the Knockout Sport programme is conditional on the basis of the following criteria:

- Involvement in all KO competition is at the discretion of the Principal of the College
- 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 express serious concerns about their capacity to catch up on missed lessons/academic workload. Players are required to fill out green Knockout Forms for each fixture – acquired from the Sports Office – informing teaching staff of the class time missed due to KO games and have these signed by subject teachers affected
- 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.

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.

Protective Requirements

Sport	Provision by the School	Personal Provision
Basketball		Mouth guard
Cricket	Batting helmet, thigh pad, gloves, boxes	Mouth guard
Football		Mouth guard
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

The following guidelines relate to events during hot and inclement weather.

Hot weather

When the weather forecast is 36 degrees or above, games in the open air will be abandoned. Activities conducted indoors or under cover will proceed, with frequent breaks for drinks and modifications to activities as required.

Inclement weather

The decision to abandon training because of inclement weather will be made by the relevant sport coordinators by 3:00pm on the day. Parents seeking confirmation may ring the Sports Office on 8372 3249 or Administration on 8372 3200.

Awards

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.

Team Sport

In team sports, two awards per team will generally be given.

Coaches Award

Criteria include:

- Improvement
- Sportsmanship
- Teamwork
- Attendance at training
- Dress
- Punctuality
- Attitude.

Most Outstanding Player Award

Criteria include:

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

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 McAuley 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. Thereafter, those selected will present PE Staff with copies of speeches prior to the respective assembly for vetting. 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.

Applications and role descriptions for Sport Captaincy can be acquired from the McAuley Office and must be lodged by the advertised due date. These positions are appointments made by the PE staff.

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

Sporting Association Affiliation

Years 3-7

ISSA	Independent School Sports Association
Life Be In It	Unley High
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
ISSA	Independent Schools Sports Association
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.

Further information regarding sporting activities is available in the College Handbook