

## **INTRODUCTION**

Athletics are an integral part of a student's educational experience and contribute positively to the school environment. This handbook is organized to provide helpful information about the Village Christian Academy (VCA) athletic program as well as the responsibilities and privileges of our student-athletes. It is important that each student-athlete and their parent/guardian familiarize themselves with the handbook as they will be held accountable for its content. Any questions concerning the athletic handbook or policies of the athletic department should be addressed to the athletic director.

## **PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

VCA is committed to the value of a well-rounded Christian education as expressed in our school mission statement. The development of Christian character through competition is the focus of our athletic program. The athletic department strongly supports the spiritual, academic, physical and social development of all students. VCA coaches and student-athletes have the obligation to draw others to the Lord through their testimony on and off the field of competition.

## **SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

- VBC Church Administrator – Lou Nelon
- VCA School Superintendent –Lena Scott
- VCA Athletic Director – Harold Morrison, Jr.
- VCA Assistant Athletic Director – Mike Sublett
- VCA Head Coaches, Varsity
- VCA Head Coaches, Junior Varsity and Middle School

The athletic director is responsible for the over-all operation and development of the athletic program. The athletic director meets with all coaches on a regular basis to provide assistance and encourage the development of their respective programs.

## **NCISAA**

VCA is a member of the North Carolina Independent School Athletic Association (NCISAA), which is the governing body over independent school athletics. We are currently a 2A school (enrollment of more than 125 students in grades 9 – 12) and a member of the Cape Fear Independent Conference (CFIC).

### **CFIC Members**

- Village Christian Academy
- Fayetteville Academy
- Fayetteville Christian School
- Harrells Christian Academy
- Cape Fear Academy (Wilmington)
- O'neal School

## **“KNIGHTS” – CODE OF CONDUCT**

The scripture that serves to guide VCA athletic competition is Matt 5:16:

*“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”*

Conforming ourselves to Christ’s image and openly expressing Christ-like character through athletic competition is the foundation of VCA athletics. “KNIGHTS” is a symbol of honor and humility. VCA Knights pledge an oath of loyalty to their Lord and King and conduct themselves as champions in every aspect of their behavior. They bring honor to Christ, their school, their team, and their parents in every aspect of their life. A Knight’s commitment is the basis for our Code of Conduct:

**V**irtuous  
**C**hristian  
**A**thlete

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

All student-athletes, parents, and spectators realize that our actions reflect our Christian testimony. The principles of good sportsmanship and the ethics of competition must guide our actions and words. We exhibit Christ-like character by showing respect and integrity toward all with whom we come in contact during athletic competitions. VCA athletics present an invaluable opportunity to witness to their desire to first serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

Should conduct unbecoming a VCA Knight occur, the student-athlete will be removed from the contest immediately and will not return until the coach is convinced the athlete understands the serious nature of his/her actions and that it will not be repeated. A second offense during the same contest will result in the student-athlete being removed for the duration of the contest and declared ineligible for the next contest.

The head coach is responsible for managing this situation and must keep the athletic director informed. Additional disciplinary action may be taken after discussions with the athletic director.

The role of VCA parents and spectators is to encourage and support VCA teams while appreciating the abilities and effort of our opponents. Remember your responsibility as a Christian role model and realize that your actions directly reflect upon our Lord, our teams, your child, and the reputation of VCA. Conduct unbecoming a VCA parent or spectator will be brought to the attention of the athletic director.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY**

All student-athletes are subject to the eligibility requirements established by the NCISAA, CFIC, and VCA.

### **A. Academics**

VCA athletes are students first. Their performance and conduct in the classroom and while attending VCA activities may impact their participation in athletics. The athletic director will closely monitor the grades and conduct of all student-athletes.

At the end of a quarter, a student-athlete must maintain a GPA of at least 2.0. Any student averaging below a 2.0 GPA on their report card is immediately ineligible to play in games.

Per VCA guidelines, any student who receives an “F” on their quarterly/semester grades is ineligible to play in any athletic contest. The student-athlete can continue to practice during this time, with parental, coach, and principal approval.

Eligibility can be reinstated when the mid-quarter progress reports are complete. Progress reports cannot make a student ineligible but can restore playing status if the situation that caused the loss of eligibility has improved to the acceptable level. Playing status can be restored at any time by athletic director and principal if the situation that caused the loss of eligibility has improved to the acceptable level. The athletic director will notify the respective coach of all eligibility issues.

### **B. Attendance**

In order to represent the school in any athletic activity, a student-athlete must be enrolled in grades 7-12 and in regular attendance. Student-athletes must be in school for a minimum of four hours in order to participate in that day’s practice or athletic contest. Circumstances such as doctor appointments and family emergencies will be considered on an individual basis. Families are encouraged to schedule appointments so as not to conflict with published schedules.

### **C. AGE**

No student-athlete shall have reached his/her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday on or before August 1 of current school year.

### **D. FINANCIAL AID**

No student-athlete may receive any form of financial aid for athletic participation.

**E. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**

No student who has received a diploma or its equivalent from a school in the United States is eligible unless every team in any conference in which the student competes endorses his/her eligibility. All student-athletes must be successfully progressing toward graduation with the expectation of meeting all graduation requirements.

**F. SIX SEMESTER RULE**

Student-athletes may participate in no more than six consecutive semesters or nine trimesters after enrolling in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of any NCISAA member school, no more than four consecutive semesters after enrolling in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade of any NCISAA member school, and no more than two consecutive semesters after enrolling in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade at any NCISAA member school, regardless of whether he/she remains continuously enrolled. A student-athlete transferring from one NCISAA member school to another at mid-year would be considered to have used one semester of athletic eligibility for that school year.

**REQUIRED FORMS**

The following forms must be turned into the athletic office prior to participating in practice. All forms are available on the school web-site: [www.vcanc.com](http://www.vcanc.com)

**Physical Exam** – All student-athletes must have a physical exam by a physician, and this form must be on file with the school. This form can be no more than one year old.

**Participation Form** – Provides the school with names and numbers to contact in case of an emergency.

**TEAM ROSTERS**

All students, after meeting eligibility requirements and submitting required forms, are encouraged to try out for a VCA team. The number of players on each team will vary, as will the method of selecting a final team. Each athlete will be given sufficient opportunity to display their skills and each head coach will establish guidelines for team selection. If necessary, the head coach may make cuts to ensure the optimal teaching environment for his/her team. Every student-athlete should honor the coach's decisions and work diligently in whatever role they are asked to serve for the good of the team.

## PRACTICE SCHEDULES

Practice schedules are established and issued by the head coach prior to the beginning of each season. Schedules are subject to change and, should a change take place, every effort will be given to inform the appropriate parties. Generally, practices will be from 3:15/30-5:15/30. However, some teams may have to stagger practices due to space limitations.

*Practices/Tournaments will be conducted over holiday breaks, spring break and weekends as the coach deems appropriate.*

## ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICES/CONTESTS

Student-athletes are expected to be on time and in attendance for all **team** meetings, practices, and contests. Other school activities such as band, chorus, drama, etc., that may conflict with any **team** activity, must be discussed and cleared with the head coach in advance by the respective student-athlete. *The head coach must approve all absences.*

We encourage and support our student-athletes' involvement in these programs and will work together to meet the needs of all parties. Some unacceptable reasons for missing a **team** activity would include, but not be limited to, working, class project, studying, social activities, other appointments, or injury. A student-athlete unable to practice due to an injury should continue attending all **team** activities *unless excused by the head coach.* Consequences for tardiness and unexcused absences come under the discretion of the head coach. Excessive absences may result in the student-athlete not receiving their varsity letter.

## QUITTING A TEAM

Quitting a team is highly discouraged. The student-athlete makes a commitment to their **team** and any decision to recant that commitment should be discussed with their parents and their coach. If necessary, the athletic director is available for counsel. We want the best for all student-athletes and will work together to resolve any difficulties. When a student-athlete decides to quit a **team**, it may prevent them from participating in another sport for that year. Therefore, please enter into prayer and discussion with the appropriate parties before making any decisions concerning participation.

## PLAYING TIME

Playing time is a privilege earned not a right owed. The varsity head coach will determine playing time based on skill level, attendance, knowledge, attitude, competition, and game situation. While a strong effort will be made to play as many team members as possible on the JV level, the above factors may also affect playing time.

## CANCELLATION

The athletic department notifies the front office as soon as possible when a contest or practice is canceled. We attempt to make these decisions prior to 1:00pm, but the weather is often a factor. If possible, canceled contests are rescheduled and your student-athlete, as well as the office, will be notified. All student-athletes should come prepared to participate for scheduled contests and practices.

## UNIFORMS

All team uniforms are the property of VCA and are in good condition. Each student-athlete is responsible for the proper care and treatment of their uniform. The uniform is a symbol of our school represented by the color purple, which expresses the royalty of our Lord Jesus, and white, which expresses purity and our cleansing from sin. Each student-athlete should remember the price paid for us by our Lord Jesus Christ, as we prepare to compete and represent our school. The uniform is to be worn as it was designed with *no alterations or additions*. All tops must be tucked in and pants worn at the waist.

**All uniforms are to be returned no later than the Friday following the last contest. An assessment of \$10.00 per day will be charged on all late returns. Any lost or damaged uniform must be replaced at the expense of the student-athlete. Grades will be withheld and participation in the next sport not allowed until the complete uniform/fines are collected.**

## GAME DAY DRESS CODE

All student-athletes must purchase an athletic polo from the School Store prior to their season beginning. This polo is to be worn to school on game days, in lieu of the game jersey, with clothes that comply with the school dress code. This is also the uniform to be worn to all home and away contests. *This polo is to be worn only on game days during the student-athlete's respective season.*

## EARLY DISMISSAL

Because of travel concerns for VCA and our opponents, student-athletes may be dismissed from some classes before 3:00PM. A schedule will be posted listing the dismissal time. **Student-athletes are responsible for all work due during missed classes and should make arrangements with their teachers in advance to complete such work or tests.**

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The school provides round trip transportation from VCA to most scheduled athletic activities. Student-athletes may return from an away contest with their parent/guardian with prior approval from their head coach. If a student-athlete wants to ride home with someone other than their parent/guardian, they must provide written permission from their parent/guardian to the head coach. *Students are not to drive themselves or drive with other students to scheduled athletic contests.*

A transportation schedule is available at the school, with most recent updates, in the front office. While departure times rarely change, return times often do. Coaches will have their respective student-athletes contact their parents by cell phone to notify them of the corrected time of arrival at school. We ask that parents be on time to pick-up their children after practice and games so that coaches can be released.

## **MEAL MONEY**

Since many of our away trips last through the dinner hour, we usually stop for a meal during the return trip. Please make sure your child has money to purchase a meal.

## **DIRECTIONS**

Directions to the locations of away games are available at the school main office.

## **ATHLETIC BANQUETS/AWARDS**

At the conclusion of each sport season (winter, fall, spring), an awards ceremony will be held to honor our varsity student-athletes. This is a special event so we ask everyone to “dress up” and enjoy the evening. Boys wear dress slacks and shirt and tie, while the girls wear a modest dress, skirt, or slack outfit.

## **KNIGHTS ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB**

The Knights Athletic Booster Club is a volunteer organization founded on the belief that athletics are an integral part of the educational process at VCA. That belief encourages booster club members to become active in the development of the overall athletic program. They provide spiritual and financial support to further develop our athletic programs at VCA, handle all admissions and concessions throughout the year, and sponsor the Pig-Pic'n event held in the fall.

We strongly encourage the parents/guardians of all athletes to join the Knights Athletic Booster Club and support the many VCA teams. Because the bulk of booster club funds are generated through admissions and concessions, parents will be scheduled to volunteer in these areas during their child's season. A schedule of volunteer assignments will be available the week before the first game of each season. If a parent is unable to serve during their scheduled time, and fails to get a replacement, a fee will be assessed by the athletic department.