



ST. WILLIAM OF YORK CATHOLIC SCHOOL Athletic Handbook | 2026-2027

Welcome to St. William of York Catholic school located in Stafford, Virginia. We are excited to welcome you to our school and parish. We look forward to working with you to provide athletic opportunities so that your student-athletes are able to fully realize their God-given potential and become people of faith and character. Within this handbook you will find the laws governing the operation of our program, details into the rights and privileges of each member of our program, and general information about the activities.

Contents

ST. WILLIAM OF YORK CATHOLIC SCHOOL Athletic Handbook 2026-2027	1
School Mission & Philosophy	2
St. William of York Catholic School Mission Statement	2
St. William of York Catholic School Philosophy	2
Athletic Department Mission & Philosophy	2
St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Department Mission Statement.....	2
St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Program Philosophy.....	3
Nondiscrimination Policy	3
Our Commitments: A Shared Responsibility.....	3
Our Commitment as the Athletic Program.....	3
Our Commitment as Coaches	3
Our Commitment as Parents and Guardians	4
Our Commitment as Student-Athletes	4
Registration, Financials, & Partnerships.....	4
Registration Information	4
Athletic Fees and Financial Responsibilities	5
Financial Aid and the St. Carlo Acutis Fund	5
Academic Eligibility: The Scholar-Athlete Commitment.....	6
Purpose & Philosophy.....	6
Academic & Conduct Expectations	7
Seasonal Grace Period & Academic Caution	7
Scholar-Athlete Progress Review	7
Student-Driven Review Process.....	7

Academic Probation.....	8
Probation Rules & Structure:	8
Restoring Academic Eligibility.....	8
Communication, Transportation, & Governance.....	8
Communication and Resolution of Concerns	8
Transportation & After-Care.....	9
Removal from Team: Parent Decision.....	9
Student-Athlete Conduct Beyond Competition	9
Uniforms, Dress Code, and Athletic Equipment.....	10
Interested in Coaching or Volunteering?	10
Administrative Authority and Policy Revisions	11
Conclusion	11

School Mission & Philosophy

St. William of York Catholic School Mission Statement

St. William of York Catholic School is a Christ-centered academic community instilling Catholic beliefs and Gospel values; nurturing students' gifts of faith and intellect by surrounding them with a family of faculty, staff, and volunteers whose vocation it is to serve.

St. William of York Catholic School Philosophy

St. William of York, as a Catholic school in the Arlington Diocese, views education as involving the whole person in an environment of faith, hope and love which is centered on the values of the Gospels of Jesus Christ. We recognize each student as unique in gifts, interests, and needs, as we strive to educate each child spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially, physically, and aesthetically.

St. William of York Catholic School is a community of learners, teachers, parents, staff and resource persons who strive to make Christian community not simply a concept to be taught but a reality to be lived and experienced daily. We believe we are called to create an atmosphere where each child is encouraged to grow and develop to his/her greatest potential, empowered to go forth and meet the challenges and needs of an ever-changing world.

Athletic Department Mission & Philosophy

St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Department Mission Statement

St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Program advances the mission of the school by supporting the efforts of teachers and staff by offering students with opportunities to use their God-given talents and to, alongside their peers and outside the classroom, develop morally, mentally, spiritually, socially, and physically in a safe, fun setting.

Through their participation in athletics, our student-athletes can learn discipline, practice perseverance, exercise humility, experience the rewards and challenges of teamwork, be offered leadership roles, and represent their school in inter scholastic competitions.

St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Program Philosophy

The St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Program believes that the formation of student-athletes is a shared responsibility among, our families, staff, coaches and volunteers, and the broader parish community. In accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Athletic Program affirms parents are the primary educators of their children and that our program exists to partner with families to afford students with athletic opportunities that foster their moral, mental, spiritual, social, and physical development.

“Parents are to cooperate closely with school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; teachers, in fulfilling their duty, are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem.”

Code of Canon Law, Canon 796 §2:

The St. William of York Athletic Program believes that all members of our community play an essential part in the operation of the athletic program. Therefore, St. William of York Athletic Program operates our athletic programs using the Catholic social doctrine of *Subsidiarity*. Our department encourages members of the St. William of York Catholic School community to address sports-related issues at the lowest level possible using transparent communication, accepting accountability, and exercising mutual respect.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The St. William of York Athletic Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, ethnicity, or religion in the administration of its participatory policies, admissions policies, or athletic programs. If a student-athlete or family believes they have been discriminated against, they are encouraged to submit a written concern to the Athletic Director or Principal detailing the circumstances.

Our Commitments: A Shared Responsibility

Our Commitment as the Athletic Program

The St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Program views athletics as a means to further the educational mission of the school. The aim and purpose of our athletic program is not limited to fielding championship teams, but to help form young men and women who reflect the values of our Christian faith. Therefore, our Athletic Department commits to:

- Clearly communicate our expectations, schedules, policies, and other important information in a timely manner.
- Charitably administer our athletic policies.
- Provide all our coaches and volunteers with the support, guidance, and resources needed, as able.
- Foster a welcoming environment where student-athletes of any skill level can participate, contribute, and experience the benefits of being part of a team.
- Ensure that athletic programs embody the Catholic identity and advance the mission of St. William of York Catholic School.

Our Commitment as Coaches

St. William of York Catholic School entrusts our coaches with the safety and security of our student-athletes and with conforming their teams' culture to align with the mission and core values of St. William of York Catholic School. Guided by the principle of subsidiarity, we entrust our coaches and dedicated volunteers with creating team-specific instructions, team strategies, player development protocols, ensuring equitable play, and with general team management.

As such, our coaches will commit to:

- Provide student-athletes and visitors with a safe, secure, and welcoming environment for both training and competition.
- Create team-specific season plans to ensure equitable play, provide age- and skill-based appropriate instruction, and prepare teams for interscholastic competitions.
- Strictly adhere to, and enforce, parish, school, and diocesan policies.
- Ensure their teams represent St. William of York Catholic School with the highest standards of integrity, charity, and respect.
- Clearly communicate team and relevant school expectations, schedules, responsibilities, and procedures.
- Notify the school staff in a timely manner about any concerns related to their teams.

Our Commitment as Parents and Guardians

Recognizing parents as the primary educators of their children, the Athletic Department seeks to work collaboratively with families to support the growth of each student-athlete. When families and coaches work together in trust and partnership, student-athletes are best positioned to grow and succeed. To assist the department in its mission, parents and guardians commit to:

- Support their student-athlete in meeting academic, attendance, and team responsibilities.
- Encourage their student-athlete with patience, perspective, and support.
- Respect the role of coaches and allow them to lead the team.
- Communicate concerns respectfully and through appropriate channels.
- Model good sportsmanship and remember that their words and actions reflect upon their student-athlete, family, school, and parish community.

Our Commitment as Student-Athletes

Student-athletes are given the honor and privilege to represent their school, classmates, teammates, families, and the broader St. William of York community. Student-athletes should not undertake the decision to join an athletic program at St. William of York Catholic School lightly, however, as participation requires maintaining higher standards than classmates both in and out of the classroom. This significant undertaking requires a measurable commitment of time, effort, and personal sacrifice. Student-athletes commit to:

- Making prudent choices off the field on issues concerning their playing potential and take ownership for the consequences of their choices.
- Treating justly their teammates, opponents, spectators, officials, and coaches.
- Representing Christ, St. William of York Catholic School, and the parish community with the highest standards of integrity and respect.
- Humbly accept correction and feedback
- Maintain academic standards and seek help as soon as challenges arise.

Registration, Financials, & Partnerships

Registration Information

Before participating in any athletic program, student-athletes and families must complete all required registration materials and acknowledge the expectations and responsibilities outlined in this handbook. Sport packets will be distributed to families at the beginning of each athletic season. Registration materials will also be available through the school website.

A student-athlete becomes a full, participating member of a St. William of York athletic team upon completion of the following requirements:

1. The student-athlete and parent/guardian have completed and returned all required forms.
2. All required fees have been submitted.
3. The student-athlete and parent/guardian have reviewed and signed all required athletic and team agreements.

Athletic Fees and Financial Responsibilities

St. William of York Catholic School views athletics as an extension of our educational mission. We offer our programs as a service to our students and families and do not generate profit from them. Nevertheless, seasonal athletic fees are collected to offset the operating costs associated with each program, including but not limited to:

- Officials and referees.
- League, tournament, and competition fees.
- Uniforms, equipment, and supplies.
- Facility and routine operational expenses.

Athletic fees are determined annually by the Athletic Director and Principal based on the projected needs and operating costs of each program. Fees may vary by sport, season, and program requirements.

Most athletic registration fees will be billed through the family's FACTS Tuition Management account made payable to St. William of York Catholic School. Some programs offered through outside organizations may require direct payment to the vendor. Depending on the sport and expectations established by the coach, families may also be responsible for providing personal equipment necessary for participation, including items such as but not limited to

- Cleats
- Shin guards
- Mouthguards
- Other sport-specific equipment

The Athletic Department appreciates the generosity and commitment of our families in supporting St. William of York Athletics. These fees allow us to provide meaningful opportunities for our students to grow morally, mentally, spiritually, socially, and physically beyond the classroom.

Financial Aid and the St. Carlo Acutis Fund

St. William of York Catholic School believes that financial circumstances should not prevent a student from experiencing the many benefits of athletic participation. Therefore, the Athletic Program is developing the **St. Carlo Acutis Fund**, a donor-restricted scholarship and capital improvement initiative supporting St. William of York Athletics.

The purpose of the St. Carlo Acutis Fund is twofold:

1. To render targeted monetary assistance so that financial limitations do not prevent a student-athlete from participating in athletics.
2. To support the long-term growth, sustainability, and improvement of our athletic programs and facilities.

St. Carlo Acutis, understood to be the first “Millennial” generation saint died in 2006 at aged 15 from Leukemia. Carlo was an English-born Italian Catholic teenager and computer programmer known for using technology to evangelize. When not devoting his time to his faith life, St. Carlo Acutis spent time pursuing his love of soccer. He was an avid AC Milan fan and loved playing the sport. His life reminds us that sports brings together communities, can positively develop each of us, and is a way we can use our talents in service of God and others. The St. Carlo Acutis Fund reflects our athletic department’s commitment to offering opportunities to our students to use their God-given talents and to realize their full God-given potential. Additional information regarding scholarship assistance, opportunities to support the fund, and program details will be communicated to the St. William of York community as the initiative develops.



Saint Carlo Acutis poses with teammates. (photo: Courtesy photo / Castletown Media)

Academic Eligibility: The Scholar-Athlete Commitment

Purpose & Philosophy

The purpose of our academic eligibility standards is to encourage responsibility, accountability, perseverance, and growth. Guided by **Canon 796 §2 of the Code of Canon Law**, St. William of York Catholic School works through collaborative partnerships between student-athletes, parents, teachers, coaches, and administrators to support each student-athlete in reaching his or her God-given potential both on and off the field.

“Parents must cooperate closely with the teachers of the schools to which they entrust their children to be educated; moreover, teachers in fulfilling their duty are to collaborate very closely with parents, who are to be heard willingly and for whom associations or meetings are to be established and highly esteemed.” > — Canon 796 §2 of the Code of Canon Law

Academic & Conduct Expectations

Student-athletes represent St. William of York Catholic School both in the classroom and on the field. Student-athletes are expected to:

- **Academic Standard:** Maintain a grade of **"B" or higher** in all individual courses
- **Conduct Standard:** Demonstrate classroom conduct consistent with the expectations outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook and the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- **Personal Ownership:** Take active ownership of their academic progress, communicating directly with teachers regarding pending assignments, upcoming assessments, and missing work.

Seasonal Grace Period & Academic Caution

To ensure academic evaluations are based on a fair representation of a student's work, **formal Scholar-Athlete Progress Reviews begin during the fourth (4th) week of each athletic season.**

- **Weeks 1–3 (Grace Period):** Official probation will not be enacted during the first three weeks of a season. This allows students sufficient time to establish a baseline of grades across multiple assignments and assessments.
- **Academic Caution:** If a student-athlete's grade drops below a "B" (80%) during this initial window, the student will receive an informal **Academic Caution**. This serves as an early notification to the student, parent, and coach so the student can seek assistance before formal eligibility reviews begin.

Scholar-Athlete Progress Review

Starting in Week 2, academic progress is reviewed on a **bi-weekly schedule** throughout the remainder of the athletic season to promote fairness, transparency, and personal accountability.

Student-Driven Review Process

1. **Bi-Weekly Verification:** Every two weeks, each student-athlete must take a physical **Scholar-Athlete Progress Form** to their teachers to confirm they are currently meeting academic and conduct standards.
2. **Proactive Communication:** This process requires student-athletes to speak directly with their teachers regarding pending grades or ungraded work *before* grades are finalized in the system.
3. **Submission Deadline:** Completed, signed forms must be submitted by the student-athlete to the **School Main Office** by **3:00 PM on designated Review Fridays.**
4. **Administrative Verification:** Main Office staff logs received forms and notifies the Athletic Director of non-compliant student-athletes.

Important Note: Failure to submit a completed Progress Form by the deadline will result in an automatic pause from interscholastic contests until academic and conduct status can be officially verified by the Main Office.

Academic Probation

A student-athlete will be placed on **Academic Probation** if their grade in any course falls below the required standard, if classroom conduct is flagged by a teacher, or if they fail to submit their Progress Form by the deadline.

Academic probation is designed to provide a structured, supportive grace period focused on academic recovery.

Probation Rules & Structure:

- **Fixed Duration:** Academic probation lasts for exactly **two calendar weeks (10 school days)**, beginning on the Monday following a Progress Review.
- **Game Ineligibility:** The student-athlete **may not participate in interscholastic contests, matches, or games** during the probationary period.
- **Practice Participation:** The student-athlete may continue to attend and participate in team practices at the discretion of the Head Coach.
- **One-Time Provision:** A student-athlete may be placed on academic probation **only once per athletic season**.

Restoring Academic Eligibility

At the conclusion of the two-week probationary period (on the 10th school day), the student-athlete's status will be re-evaluated.

- **Criteria for Restoration:** Eligibility will be restored only when the student-athlete submits an **Eligibility Restoration Form** signed by the applicable teacher(s), confirming that the deficient grade has been raised to a **"B" (80%) or higher** and/or conduct expectations have been fully satisfied.
- **Full Ineligibility:** If the student-athlete fails to meet the required academic or conduct benchmark at the end of the two-week probationary period, they become **Academically Ineligible** for the remainder of the athletic season.
- **Ineligible Status Rules:** An academically ineligible student-athlete may not practice, compete in contests, travel with the team, or participate in team-related activities for the remainder of that season.
- **Future Seasons:** Eligibility may be restored for a subsequent athletic season once all standard academic and conduct expectations are fully met.

Communication, Transportation, & Governance

Communication and Resolution of Concerns

St. William of York Catholic School believes that timely, transparent, and clear communication is the bedrock of a successful athletic partnership and that concerns are best resolved when communicated through the appropriate channels and with the individuals most directly involved. The recommended process for addressing concerns is outlined below:

- **Step 1: Student-Athlete and Coach Communication** Whenever appropriate, student-athletes should first communicate directly with their coach. This encourages responsibility, maturity, self-advocacy, and respect for the coach-athlete relationship.
- **Step 2: Parent/Guardian and Coach Communication** If a concern remains, parents or guardians may contact the coach. To allow appropriate time for reflection, families are asked to observe a **24-hour period** before contacting a coach regarding concerns arising from a practice or contest.
- **Step 3: Athletic Director Communication** If a concern cannot be resolved through communication with the coach, the Athletic Director may be contacted for guidance, policy enforcement, and support.
- **Step 4: Administrative Review** Matters involving significant policy concerns, unresolved disputes, illegal or immoral activities, or appeals may be brought to the Principal for review.

Transportation & After-Care

Transportation to and from all practices and athletic contests is the sole responsibility of parents or guardians. Families must ensure that student-athletes are picked up promptly at the conclusion of each practice or contest. For the convenience of families and safety and student-athletes, After-Care is available from 3:30 through 6:00 p.m. ***Please note: If a student-athlete is not picked up promptly at the end of a practice or home contest, they will be escorted to extended care to ensure their safety until a parent or guardian arrives.***

After-Care Requirements:

- Requires separate registration.
- Is subject to the school's published After-Care fees.

Removal from Team: Parent Decision

As a Christ-centered institution, St. William of York Catholic School affirms that parents are the primary and principal educators of their children. Accordingly, the Principal, Athletic Director, coaches, and staff will respect and support a parent's decision to withdraw his or her child from an athletic team for any reason. However, a student-athlete who is withdrawn from a team by a parent or guardian will not be eligible to rejoin that team for the remainder of that sport's season, and registration fees will not be refunded.

Student-Athlete Conduct Beyond Competition

The responsibilities of being a St. William of York student-athlete extend beyond practices and contests. Student-athletes are expected to represent the school appropriately at school, during athletic events, during travel, at opposing schools, and during interactions with teammates, coaches, and members of the community. Because student-athletes represent more than themselves, their choices and behavior should reflect the dignity of their school, parish, families, and faith community. Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate respect, responsibility, integrity, self-control, and charity toward others.

Addressing Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike conduct during practices, contests, or team activities will be addressed by the coaching staff in consultation with the Athletic Director.

Responses will be appropriate to the circumstances and may include:

- A conversation with the student-athlete.

- Loss of playing time.
- Suspension from competition.
- Other appropriate consequences.

In cases involving serious misconduct, including but not limited to ejection from a contest, repeated unsportsmanlike behavior, disrespect toward others, or actions inconsistent with school values, further consequences may be necessary (including suspension from multiple contests or removal from the team). The Athletic Director and Principal will determine appropriate action in significant disciplinary matters following communication with the student-athlete, coach, and parent/guardian. The purpose of addressing unsportsmanlike behavior is to help student-athletes grow in virtue, responsibility, and their understanding of what it means to be a disciple of Christ and a representative of St. William of York Catholic School.

Uniforms, Dress Code, and Athletic Equipment

As student-athletes are among the most visible representatives of our school and parish community, they are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects our Catholic identity and brings honor to St. William of York. Student-athletes are expected to wear uniforms and athletic attire with pride, respect, and proper care. Game uniforms must be worn as intended. Practice attire must be appropriate for participation and consistent with the standards of St. William of York Catholic School.

Student-athletes commit to:

- Wear school-issued uniforms and athletic attire as intended.
- Maintain uniforms and equipment with appropriate care.
- Wear practice attire that is modest, appropriate, and consistent with the values of our Catholic community.
- Ensure personal clothing, equipment, and accessories do not contain offensive, inappropriate, suggestive, or disrespectful words, images, or messages.
- Make no alterations or modifications to school-issued uniforms.

Care and Return of Uniforms and Equipment

Student-athletes are responsible for the proper care and timely return of all school-issued uniforms and equipment. Any uniform or equipment that is lost, damaged beyond normal wear, or not returned will result in a replacement fee. Uniforms and assigned equipment must be returned:

- Clean.
- In good, wearable condition.
- Within seven (7) business days following the conclusion of the athletic season.

All uniforms and assigned equipment must be returned to the Athletic Director through the Front Office.

Student-athletes with outstanding uniform or equipment obligations may not participate in future athletic seasons until the obligation has been resolved. Failure to return school-issued items or resolve outstanding replacement fees may result in further sanctions until the obligation has been satisfied.

Interested in Coaching or Volunteering?

Our athletic programs are only possible through the generosity and dedication of coaches and volunteers who share their valuable time and talents. If you are interested in, serving as a coach or volunteer with St. William of York Catholic School Athletics, we would love to hear from you. Please contact the Athletic Department at swoyathletics@stwillsschool.org or stop by the Front Office for more information.

Administrative Authority and Policy Revisions

St. William of York Catholic School reserves the right to revise, modify, or update the policies and procedures contained within this Athletic Handbook as needed. Any significant changes will be communicated through official school channels (e.g., weekly newsletter, team announcements).

The Principal, in consultation with the Athletic Director, has final authority regarding the interpretation, application, and modification of athletic policies, as well as decisions involving significant athletic program concerns.

The Principal retains the authority to address situations that may require:

- Removal of a student-athlete from participation.
- Suspension or modification of athletic activities.
- Cancellation of a contest, program, or season.
- Other actions necessary to protect the mission, safety, and standards of St. William of York Catholic School and Parish.

Conclusion

The St. William of York Catholic School Athletic Program exists to serve our students, families, school, and parish community using a collaborative approach and to ensure that all athletic endeavors advance the Christ-centered educational mission of our school.