

Junior Primary Sports Policy

Purpose – Sport is an important part of our curriculum and we see much value in children being active. Team sports are important for skills, both social and physical, as well as good preparation for life in general.

We aim to provide information regarding Sport in the Junior Primary, outlining the procedures and approach to sport.

Communication:

Communication with parents regarding sport may take place in the following manner:

- **Email** – all communication is sent out via email (beginning of term letters, match letters, invitations to galas and sports days etc.)
- **WhatsApp** – there is a Sports department cell: 073 215 8194
- **D6 school communicator (to be phased out once the App is launched)**
- **TMC App (watch this space)**
- **Google Forms** – all match details are sent via google forms and require parent response to enable a child to participate in each match.
- Parents who have any queries or concerns regarding sporting issues may either email or make an appointment to see the Foundation Phase Sport HOD.

Children's behaviour:

- At TMC, we pride ourselves on having **good sportsmanship and behaviour, both on and off the field**. We do not tolerate any behaviour which is not in keeping with our ethos and does not show good sportsmanship, or which is disrespectful.

Parent behaviour:

- We wish to inculcate a love for sport – allow your child to enjoy the game; be encouraging rather than negative.
- Parent and child both represent the school – please be mindful of your words and actions. Your behaviour, actions and comments could possibly affect the way that others perceive Thomas More College and potentially embarrass you, your child and the school. You are requested to exhibit positive behaviour and comments.
- Allow the coach to do his/her job rather than confuse your child by shouting different instructions on the side of the field/court. Praise children for their efforts and the way in which the game was played, not for good results only.
- We encourage children to play sport in good spirit and with sportsmanship in mind at all times, so that the game may be enjoyed by all.
- Parents or children making negative comments about the coach, referee, other team members or even other parents, is not acceptable.

- Coach's and referee's decisions are to be respected and not questioned.
- The correct channels of communication should be followed at all times. In the event of a query, the first call is directly to the teacher-in-charge.
- If there is a query involving an "outside" coach, the staff member coaching with the student /outside coach should be approached.
- If you still have concerns after step 1, please contact the FP HOD: Sport and then the FP Headmistress, should you have ongoing concerns.
- After a practice / match, or in a public area, it is not considered appropriate to enter into a discussion with teachers or coaches. Please make contact as explained above.
- Avoid "car park" chatter and rather approach the coach if you have a concern.

Dress:

- Each sporting code for Grades 2 and 3 requires specific match kit that must be worn for matches. Please refer to the A-Z booklet for the various sporting codes, or to the detailed termly letter sent out at the beginning of each term.
- We pride ourselves in looking neat and tidy at all times and in being proud of our uniform. We insist that shirts are tucked in at all times for matches and that socks are pulled up.
- The termly letter also refers to practice kit required. Should your child arrive incorrectly attired or, for example, without a gum-guard/shin-pads, they will not be allowed to take part in all the practice activities.

School Extra Mural Timetable:

- This is sent in advance before the term starts so that you can plan after school activities.
- We cannot guarantee that your child's sport will be on the same day each term as we have external factors such as coach availability as well as venue availability to consider.
- Participation in a school activity takes preference over private activities.

Private extra mural timetable:

- This is sent out at the beginning of the year. Please note that each activity on this timetable is privately run and is for your own account. Contact details for service providers will be on the timetable.

Private lessons:

- All private lessons should be scheduled after 15:00 each day (or well after school sport ends) or on a day that your child does not have a commitment to school sport. This will ensure that there are no clashes with our school Extra-Curricular Programme.

Commitment and Participation:

- Each child is required to participate in one extra mural per term. Once your child has chosen their extra mural activity at the beginning of the term, we expect a commitment for the term.
- It is essential for your child to attend practice in order to be included in matches. Should your child not arrive to play a match, it is impossible for the team to function properly and this may mean that your child's future match selection could be jeopardised.

Matches:

- Grade 1s focus on skills during practices in preparation for matches at a later stage.
- There are no weekly matches against other schools for Grade 1s. Internal matches will be facilitated when we feel the children are ready. This philosophy applies to all Upper Highway schools.
- Grades 2 and 3 weekly matches take place on a rotation basis in order to give every child an opportunity to play, however, in sports where a specific ability is needed, we do choose children whose skills are well developed as they play matches at a more competitive level. (eg. Weekly Inter-School Galas and U9A hardball cricket).
- In order for a child to participate in matches, he/she must attend practice.
- Parents are required to assist with transport to matches as there is no school transport provided.
- We encourage parents to watch your child's efforts on match days as often as possible.

Age Groups:

- There are no age groups in the Junior Primary. It is however, the general practice for children to fall into the U9 age group when in Grade 3. This means that children should still be 8 years old on 1st January of their Grade 3 year, in order to participate in the U9 age group.
- For *Interhouse* sports days and galas all children participate in their own grade.
- For Grades-2 and 3 *Interschool* cricket, soccer, hockey and swimming galas children participate in their own grade.
- Interschool sports that require children to participate in their own age groups are cross country races and rugby matches i.e. if your child is in Grade 3 but U10 on 1st January of their Grade 3 year, he/she will have to participate with the U10 age group for cross country races and for rugby matches.

Colours:

- No Colours or Honours are awarded in the Junior Primary. Should a child excel in a certain sport or activity and this is brought to our attention e.g. Levels in swimming, SA awards in a particular sport, then children may be awarded with a certificate of excellence or be recognised as a Weekly Achiever. Medals or certificates of recognition will be handed out in an informal assembly.

Rainy days:

- On days when the weather is inclement, parents will be notified of the cancellation of sport by approximately 11:30am so that alternate arrangements can be made for fetching or looking after children. Phone calls and messages to school or the FP HOD: Sport will not be necessary, as you will receive notification via email and WhatsApp.
- Non-sporting activities e.g. craft, dance club, robotics/coding club, board games, choir etc. will continue as normal on rainy days.
- If you cannot collect your child straight after school they will be kept in the coach's classroom until the sports practice is scheduled to end. If children have not been collected by the end of the scheduled practice time, they will be sent to Aftercare.
- Venues for collection, if sport is cancelled, will be communicated via email and WhatsApp.

Coaches:

- We do make use of outside coaches to help improve our standard of sport. They are all extremely competent and have been carefully chosen for each sporting code.
- Please note that no parent may contact an outside coach. Should you need any information or have any queries, please contact the Sports Co-ordinator or the teacher-in-charge of that particular sport.
- We expect our children to respect these coaches, just as they would respect a teacher.

Sports Houses:

- Your child will be placed in a sporting house on arrival in the Junior Primary.
- There are 3 houses namely: Dalberg (red), Savory (blue), Hurley (black).
- Once your child is allocated to a house you will need to purchase a swimming cap and T-shirt in the relevant colour for the house. These are available at the Stock Shop. The shirt and cap is used for the Inter-house Gala, Interhouse Cross Country as well as the Sports Day.

Inter-House Gala, Interhouse Cross Country and Sports Day:

- These events usually take place during school time and are compulsory school days.
- Should your child not be able to participate for any reason, a doctor's note must be provided to the FP HOD: Sport.

Social Media:

We have Facebook and Instagram pages that we post on from time to time.

- **Instagram account** – thomasmorecollege_kzn_sa
- **Facebook page** – Thomas More College

General

You are requested to help improve your child's skills by practising at home.

Compiled by: Lana van der Zee

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