



**AVON GROVE WILDCATS
PARENT/PLAYER HANDBOOK**

AVON GROVE WILDCATS FOOTBALL PROGRAM GOALS

The Avon Grove Wildcats Football Program is based on PRIDE, HARD WORK, GOOD CITIZENSHIP, RESPECT, LOYALTY and ACADEMICS.

A tradition of winning and excellence is being established for Avon Grove Wildcats football. Our program's goal is to field the top football teams in the Bert Bell League in each weight class and at each level of competition (Flag, Varsity and JV).

The primary goal is to provide an enjoyable, competitive football experience for youths who voluntarily choose to participate. The football program is designed to ensure that each player will grow physically, mentally and socially. An emphasis will be placed on building character, working hard, playing the game well and having fun. It is the coaching staffs' goal that each Avon Grove Wildcats football player will learn – RESPONSIBILITY, COOPERATION, SELFLESSNESS, RELIABILITY, COMMITMENT, WORK ETHIC, LOYALTY and ACCOUNTABILITY.

For an athlete to join the Avon Grove Wildcat football program, he or she must first commit to proper and appropriate behavior on and off the field, by exhibiting a sense of pride, loyalty and respect for his or her team, school, family, and community.

Fundamentals of Good Sportsmanship:

1. Show respect for the opponent at all times
2. Show respect for the officials
3. Know, understand, and uphold the rules of the game
4. Maintain self-control at all times
5. Recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation
6. Maintain a positive attitude

Equipment:

Prior to the beginning of training camp, the organization will issue each player a helmet, shoulder pads, game pants and game jersey. At the conclusion of the season, each player **MUST** return the issued equipment to the equipment manager at a date and location specified by the organization.

Team Placement:

Each weight level (80, 100, 120, and 150 pounds), depending on the number of players, will have both a Varsity and Junior Varsity (JV) team. The teams will be split into Varsity and JV during the 1st or 2nd week of training camp beginning in August. **It is absolutely essential that players be present for the entire training camp. Extended absence from training camp prior to team splits may result in a player being placed on the JV team.** Placement on a team will depend on many factors. Some of the factors the coaching staffs consider include, but are not limited to: practice attendance, attitude, work ethic, and ability. **Placement decisions are left to the sound discretion of the**

coaching staffs and those decisions are final absent extraordinary circumstances. Moreover, neither players nor parents may request a certain team or coach.

The main emphasis of the JV program will be to learn and get playing experience. While the JV teams will work hard to win games, **the emphasis is on player development.** Every player that is assigned to the JV program will receive, as nearly as possible, equal playing time during games. That does not mean, however, that all JV players will play both offense and defense because their individual skill set, as determined by their coaches, may fit better on one side of the ball or the other but not necessarily both. That being said, no JV player will be utilized purely as a special teams player.

The Varsity program consists of our more experienced and skilled players as determined by the coaching staffs. The primary goal of the Varsity teams is to win games and compete for the Bert Bell Championship. At the Varsity level, playing time will not always be equal, though each player will, to the extent possible, get meaningful playing time. As with the JV, no Varsity player will be utilized purely as a special teams player.

Communication:

Communication is very important! When necessary, coaches will communicate with parents via email and text messaging. The designated Team Parent will also communicate with the parents regarding events, fund raising and changes in practice times/location, etc. Such information can also be found on the Wildcats Web Page and through emails from the organization. If a player has concerns or an issue with any aspect of the football program, parents/guardians should discuss all issues with your player first, then contact the head coach if necessary. Head coaches have an open door policy but we want to make sure the player and parents/guardians have discussed the issue first before contacting the head coach.

No player or parent should approach coaches immediately before, during, or after a GAME to discuss an issue, unless the issue is an injury.

Parents should discuss any issue with their son or daughter before contacting a coach or the Athletic Director.

After talking to your son or daughter, parents may request, via email or telephone, to speak with the head coach.

If the issues have not been resolved, the Athletic Director will be consulted.

If the issues are still not resolved, the President of the Board of Directors will be consulted.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches:

- Ways to help your player improve
- Concerns about your player's behavior • Injuries
- Your player's well being

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches:

- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other players

Attendance & Punctuality

IF YOU CANNOT PRACTICE YOU CANNOT PLAY!

Avon Grove Wildcats football players must learn to **always be early**. If you are **always early**, you will never be late!

Parents **must** notify the head coach **in advance** that a player is going to be **tardy or absent**.

Any player who is **tardy or absent** for a reason determined by the head coach to be “unexcused”, will be held accountable. Accountability can range from decrease in playing time to game day suspension.

Absence/Tardy Rule:

Excessive absences and tardiness will jeopardize an athlete’s playing time. The athlete and his parent/guardian are **strongly** encouraged to understand the vital importance of practice time to the preparation of each individual player and the team as a whole. Even if an absence is “excused”, it has a **negative** effect on the team’s opportunity for success.

The coaching staffs will always award playing time in favor of those athletes who have attended practice as opposed to those who have not.

Parent/guardians are respectfully requested to always assist their player in remembering the commitment he or she made when he or she became part of the Avon Grove Wildcats Football Program!

Injuries and team participation:

A player who is injured during the course of practice or a home game will be evaluated by medical personnel designated by the organization’s Medical Directors. If the injury is serious enough to preclude the player’s participation in subsequent practices or games, the player must consult his or her own physician and receive written clearance to play. The sufficiency of the written medical clearance will be left to the discretion of the organization’s Medical Directors.

General expectations:

- All players must demonstrate self-discipline on the practice and game fields.
- Any player who demonstrates disrespect or insubordination towards a teammate, coach, official, team parent, or medical personnel will be held accountable for his or her behavior.
- Players must always be properly dressed in the “uniform of the day” as designated by the head coach.

- Players will be completely dressed in proper uniform before entering the practice or game field. Football helmets will be worn **at all times**. For other than a water break, a player must ask permission of a coach to remove his helmet while on the practice field. A player must **never** sit on his helmet.

- A player's shirttail must always be tucked in during games.

Players are not permitted to alter their practice or game uniforms in any way with the exception of wearing organization sanctioned pink accoutrements in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Helmet Policy

Note that although the Wildcats provide its players with quality helmets - some families still choose to purchase their own helmets. This is permitted by the organization under 2 conditions:

- 1) The color should match the color of the Wildcats' helmet which is "Vegas Gold"
- 2) The helmet needs to be certified as reconditioned every other year (to be extra safe - the Wildcats organization reconditions its helmet every year). This is a USA Football, Bert Bell and Insurance requirement. The helmet will need to have a valid reconditioning sticker on it.

Dual Enrollment Policy

Fred S. Engle Middle and the Avon Grove Wildcats are offering players who are eligible to play for both the Middle School and the Wildcats the opportunity to do both without having to do double the practices. The hope is that this will allow kids to freely participate in both organizations. It will also give kids the opportunity for more playing time. It will also enhance the skill level across both organizations—so we think it will be a win-win-win.

Players who play both will attend all of the practices for the Middle School Team. They will then attend one full Wildcats practice on Mondays plus the pre-game walk through on Saturday mornings.

Physical Form Policy

Fill out and sign the parent section and have your doctor fill out and sign the physician section. The form will be valid for 12 months and must be valid through the remainder of the season (11/30). No equipment will be distributed without the submission of a completed Sports Physical Exam. Therefore, your child will not be permitted to practice until the completed documentation is handed in.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

The Avon Grove Wildcats organization expects all parents to represent the organization properly by following our “Code of Conduct”. This “Code” must be adhered to while at any Avon Grove Wildcats or Bert Bell sanctioned event.

- Abusive, violent or sexual contact with any child, staff member, fan, referee or any participating person will result in immediate dismissal.
- Sexual or vulgar conduct or language is prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- Language that is considered offensive from a racial, ethnic, religious or gender perspective is prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- Sexual harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- Drinking alcoholic beverages, using illegal substances or coming to any Avon Grove Wildcats or Bert Bell sanctioned event intoxicated or under the influence of an illegal substance is grounds for immediate dismissal.
- The act of gambling, betting or placing a bet is prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- Cursing or abusive, demeaning or intimidating language in the presence of children, staff members, fans, referees or any participating person is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By affixing my signature below, I attest that I have read and understood the Avon Grove Wildcats Parent/Player Handbook and the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct. I further attest that I have discussed the contents of the Parent/Player Handbook with my player(s):

Parent Signature _____ Date: Parent
Signature _____ Date: