

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Sports Department Policy</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	<b>A16</b>

<b>Staff member responsible</b>	<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Jonny Smith (Director of Sport)	November 2023	Deputy Head	November 2023	Inclusion of guidance for "Keeping Children safe in Sport"
Jonny Smith (Director of Sport)	September 2024	SLT	September 2024	Updated
Jonny Smith (Director of Sport)	September 2025	SLT	September 2025	Updated

*This policy is applicable to the whole school including Early Years*

## **Shaping Brighter Futures**

*We provide an inspiring and joyful education that will be remembered for a lifetime and which empowers our children with the confidence, knowledge, skills and character to thrive. We are shaping brighter futures.*

### **School Aims:**

*At St Neot's education is full of fun and good humour. We want every child to enjoy their time at school, to feel part of a community that holds family values at the core. We are determined that our children not only learn outdoors but learn about the outdoors. We want to create well-rounded, independent thinkers that are not only confident in their academic ability but hold the soft skills necessary for Senior School and the world ahead.*

### **The St Neot's Way is:**

- *Where we promote a true sense of community, family values, a love of the outdoors and a commitment to having fun.*
- *Where every child comes into school feeling safe, valued and with a broad smile on their face; and who returns home with uplifting stories to tell.*
- *Where a first class, personalised, rigorous academic journey is matched by an enriching, broad and challenging co-curricular programme.*
- *Where the children's character, contribution and service is as valued as their academic success.*
- *Where the children's physical wellbeing is surpassed by their mental wellbeing.*
- *Where highly skilled, passionate and dedicated teachers, working in first class facilities, are full of ambition for themselves and the children in their care.*

### **St Neot's Values**

*Happiness   Kindness   Self-Belief   Honesty   Respect*

### **St Neot's Sport**

#### **Aims and Expectations**

The main aims of the Sports Programme for pupils at St Neot's is to:

- Be physically active in a range of different activities
- Be good sportsmen and women, gracious in defeat or victory
- Strive to achieve our very best in every task, be it competitive or friendly games
- Foster a lifelong love of physical activity, leading to benefits in health, wellbeing and self-confidence

When participating in fixtures or events pupils should always try to represent themselves and their school in the best light, adhering to the school values at all times. Positive communication to teammates and opposition players is praised. Pupils should strive to succeed but not at all costs and sportsmanship is placed at a high value.

Match tea is a very important part of the fixture experience, with pupils acting as hosts and looking after their opposition. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils to forge friendships with pupils from other schools; very often they become teammates when they go to their senior school and experiences at former fixtures are often remembered.

## **Team selection**

Competition against other schools forms a huge part of what St Neot's does and one of the strengths of the independent school sector in general. Matches and tournaments are played in the major sports, football, rugby, cricket, netball, hockey as well as events in swimming, cross-country and athletics amongst others.

Our aim is to give every pupil as many experiences to represent the school as possible; indeed there are teams for all abilities at all ages. All teams are seen as important as each other, with an emphasis being placed on how to play rather than winning at all costs.

Team selection is always considered very carefully and is based on what the teachers have seen during recent lessons.

Below are a series of points that staff are encouraged to consider when picking teams.

- Children are to be selected on merit, determined by their skill levels and attitude in training. Resilience and ability to cope with pressure is also considered.
- Children are constantly being assessed throughout the term and further to initial lessons, there is always scope to move players between the teams, understanding that children develop and mature at different rates.
- Conversations between the different groups' coaches happen on a weekly basis to ensure children are placed appropriately.
- If a child is moved across to a different team, the rationale behind the decision will be explained to them by the coach, with advice provided on where improvements could be made.

Occasionally, children may be deselected from teams for reasons of attitude and/or behaviour as well as for sporting reasons. Misconduct during games lessons or fixtures may result in pupils being excluded from matches and tournaments or being moved to a different team. This decision can be taken during a fixture and with immediate effect. An example of this could include displaying negative or unsupportive behaviour towards teammates or officials. It is important that pupils demonstrate not only the skills to be selected but also the right attitude and mental resilience to play at higher team levels. Representing the school and its values as well as personal emotional wellbeing is of greater importance than the individual or team performance.

If there are any queries about selection decisions, in the first instance parents should liaise with the respective coach. The coaches are teachers who are trying to do their best, picking teams using their professional judgement based on what they see in school. Whilst a child playing sport outside of school is warmly encouraged, it does not necessarily influence a teacher's decision on playing positions or indeed, overall selection. Where possible, trials are held at the start of the season to assess all of the children objectively. As may be expected, often the stronger players/athletes are able to transfer their skills across the sporting spectrum so there is inevitably some crossover between the sports.

## **Parent Expectations**

Parental support is always appreciated, but we do ask that you support all the pupils who are playing, both St Neot's and the opposition. It is also important to remember that the pupils are only young and are still learning

the game. Please encourage but do not try to coach or criticise from the touchline; the pupils will respond best to positive words during matches.

Team Selection is often an emotive issue for both pupils and parents. Teachers do their best to select based on what they have seen and there will often be changes throughout the season. Coaches are happy to discuss with parents the reasons for team selection, but immediately after a match is not always the most appropriate time to raise questions. Please arrange a more suitable time for both parties.

When watching fixtures please follow the guidance offered below by the IAPS.

IAPS Code of Conduct for Parents/Spectators IAPS Sports events are held in high regard by member schools. In 2016-2017, 23,000 children took part in over 100 events across 26 different sports. IAPS's code of conduct is a set of behaviours we expect at our events. The code aims to ensure that all IAPS events are enjoyable and fair for all children involved. As a parent/spectator at an IAPS sports event, you have a responsibility to:

1. Fully commit to this code of practice.
2. Ensure that you have read and understood IAPS safeguarding policy and procedures.
3. Be a positive role model and lead by example.
4. Remember that children are involved in sport for their enjoyment; they are not playing to satisfy your ambitions.
5. Encourage children to play by the rules.
6. Applaud good play by members of all teams, not just your own.
7. Not question publicly the officials' judgement and never their honesty.
8. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's sport.
9. Recognise the value and importance of coaches. Allow them to decide what is best. They give their time, energy and experience to provide guidance for children.
10. Set an example by being friendly to the opposition parents.
11. Emphasise enjoyment and fun. Praise and reinforce effort and improvement.
12. Be aware of the physical demands that sport places on children.
13. Do not harass or swear at players, coaches or officials.
14. Never ridicule or shout at any child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
15. Condemn the use of violence in all forms.
16. Teach children that effort and teamwork are as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
17. Turn defeat into victory by helping children work towards skill improvement and a positive sporting attitude.
18. Relax and enjoy the game whether your team wins or not. If you fail to comply with IAPS Code of Conduct, you risk being removed from the IAPS sports event immediately.

### **Rewards**

Rewarding individual pupils and teams as a whole is a fantastic opportunity to highlight success both in results but also improvement. Pupils can receive a "Team of the Week" award in the weekly celebrating success assemblies if their coach believes the team have either performed or represented the school to a high standard. Each month 1 pupil in Years 3&4, Years 5&6 and Years 7&8 will receive the "Sportsperson of the month award". This is given for a pupil's personal progress or attainment in that specific month, relative to their ability.

Pupil's can also receive awards in the end of term Sports assemblies, which include Most Improved Player and Player of the Season for each team in the school. These awards are chosen by each team's coach based on who has been the most influential member of the team (Player of the Season) or the pupil that has shown the most progress in their performance (Most Improved Player).

Some pupils may receive “Colours” which are rewards for demonstrating their skills in the 1st team to a high level. Colours are usually awarded to Year 8 pupils although pupils competing at national or international level may impact this decision.

Sporting colours can be awarded for any of the sports that are played at school. The awarding of colours is at the discretion of the coaches but several of the below criteria must be fulfilled.

- Outstanding performances in fixtures
- Consistency, showing a high standard, through a whole season, the senior years, or the time at the school
- Leadership qualities and being an excellent role model.
- A very good team member, showing the right attitude in training sessions and matches.
- Sportsmanship, determination, commitment and any other attributes which are exceptional.

### **Sports Enrichment**

At St Neot’s we highly endorse participation in team activities, which can be found in both the PE and Games curricula as well as in many academic lessons. In the Games curriculum the academic year is split into a number of activity areas where fixtures are arranged for the children to play in, with the Girls playing hockey, netball and cricket and the Boys playing football, rugby, hockey and cricket. The skills of working within a team are vital in these areas and add value to the pupils’ enjoyment of sport.

There are times when a child may not be suited to an activity or has a specific medical condition which affects their participation in that activity when playing competitive fixtures. In this event, a parallel activity called Sports Enrichment is offered. During Sports Enrichment, pupils often participate in non-competitive or individual pursuits, rather than a competitive team sport fixture, allowing those who do not thrive in team environments to achieve success in an alternative physical activity.

### **Participation in Sports Enrichment on a Fixture Afternoon**

Pupils in Year 3 & 4 all participate in mainstream games, with no option of Sports Enrichment. Pupils and parents in Year 5 can request to take part in Sports Enrichment, but this discussion is guided by the Sports Department and the member of staff in charge of Sports Enrichment. If it is felt that the child would continue to benefit from a team environment, then the pupil would continue participating in the mainstream sport.

Pupils and parents in Y6, 7 & 8 have more ownership over their involvement in Sports Enrichment and can discuss their involvement with the Sports Department and the member of staff in charge of Sports Enrichment.

#### Exceptions to the participation guidelines

There will always be times where special circumstances arise which may lead to a child taking part in Sports Enrichment outside of the normal guidelines; this will be considered on a case by case basis.

### **Sports Injuries**

At St Neot’s there is a wealth of different sporting and physical activities on offer to pupils. At times pupils may suffer an injury and if so the member of staff will determine if they are able to perform 1st aid or instead send the pupil to see the Nurse. If a pupil suffers a head injury pupil’s parents will be notified and the for School [Head Injury Policy](#) will be adhered to. If for any reason a pupil is off games and unable to participate parents should notify the school via email [offgames@stneotsprep.co.uk](mailto:offgames@stneotsprep.co.uk).

## **Keeping Children Safe in Sport - NSPCC**

Sport is a fantastic thing for children and young people. It helps them socialise, keeps them fit and more importantly can introduce them into an interest for life. One which will increase their quality of life far into the future, setting good habits and instilling values and self-discipline. Engaging with them in this manner can show them new directions for their lives and expand their opportunities. Unfortunately there are, like with anything, risks attached. Away matches, interactions with non-school staff such as coach drivers, out-of-school coaches and other personnel can create vulnerability windows that could be exploited. To help head off these potential problems, the NSPCC has created a page dedicated to offering guidance on how to keep pupils safe in sporting environments. The school makes due regard of this. Guidance is shared with parents. To find out more please follow the link below: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/parents>