

Blazers Baseball



2015 Team Handbook

I. What it means to be a BLAZER:

Being a Blazer baseball player is an honor and a privilege. We expect our players to conduct themselves in a professional matter. Coaches will hold players to a high standard and treat them like young men, not boys. Listed below are guide lines that every player is expected to follow:

- Have a passion for the game and love being at the field everyday
- Leave it all on the field
- Never finish a game OR practice knowing you could have given a better effort
- Never talk bad or put down a fellow teammate
- Always expect the best out of yourself and teammates
- Hold each other accountable
- Come mentally and physically ready to perform your best every day
- Take pride in your facilities
- Help without having to be asked
- Take every assigned job serious
- No player is more important than another

II. Practice

1. All practices are scheduled at the field or indoor facility at the designated time. Any changes in scheduled practices will be announced by email and/or text message.
2. Practices are just as important as games. The coaching staff expects every player to give 100% at all times and push themselves to be better baseball players. There will be zero tolerance to players that are lazy in practice and do not give their all. If individuals are not hustling, paying attention, or goofing off in practice, the player or the entire team may be punished by running or performing burpees.
3. Players should be fully dressed (with the exception of cleats) when they walk in the dugout. Players may not wear sandals, flip-flops or open toed shoes into the dugout. Players must come to the field wearing turf shoes or tennis shoes. There may be times that practice will be inside and tennis shoes or turf shoes will be worn instead of cleats. Players may not practice in sandals, flip-flops, or any other open toed shoes.

4. Every player will be expected to wear socks, practice pants, t-shirt, and baseball hat to every practice. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Players may not wear sleeveless shirts, backward hats, or any apparel from any other school in practice. If we practice indoors, players may wear sweats, shorts, t-shirt, or long sleeve shirt.

5. All schedule outdoor practices will be held outside if at all possible. This means that we may be practicing outside on cold, wet days. Any time that the temperature is above 32 degrees and the field is dry enough, we will practice outside on scheduled outdoor days. Players are expected to come prepared to be outside in cold weather. This means bring long sleeves, jacket, etc. If the field is too wet, or the temperature is too cold, practice will take place indoors at Orthopedics Plus Physical Therapy.

6. The practice schedule will be posted prior to every practice. Each player is expected to know what is on the schedule for the day. Also, each player will have jobs that they are assigned to perform prior to practice. The jobs are expected to be finished BEFORE the assigned practice time; therefore, players must arrive early to have these tasks finished prior to practice.

7. Practices will start and end on time. Our standard weekday practice time for varsity/JV programs is Tuesday from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, Thursday (2 groups for 45 minutes) at 6:00 and 6:45 and Saturday from 10:00-12:00 AM. Please keep in mind that these times/locations could change depending on weather. The coaching staff will notify families via email and/or text message.

8. At the conclusion of practice, each player will have an assigned job to do. After ALL post practice jobs are completed the team will meet and then be dismissed. If any player finishes their assigned job before other teammates, he is expected to help with other jobs until all tasks are finished.

9. Individual players/groups may be required to report to practice a few minutes early or stay a few minutes late for additional position-specific skill work. The coaches will notify these individuals at least one day in advance and it will be posted on the practice schedule the day prior.

10. Cell phones are to be out of sight and sound during practice. If there is family-related reason why your phone needs to be on or why you may need to make a call during practice time, please discuss this with a coach.

11. For baseball players finishing basketball season, it is understandable that they may need a day or two to unwind from and transition to another sport. Therefore, once basketball season ends, basketball/baseball players may take up to two practice days off before reporting to baseball practice. However, they are encouraged to report the next day.

III. Attendance

1. Attendance at all practices and games is extremely important; however, the coaching staff understands that unavoidable situations arise that may cause a player to miss a practice or game. There are five acceptable situations for missing practice:

- a.) Official school-required activities that have an academic purpose.
- b.) Milestone family events such as births, deaths, weddings, etc.
- c.) Sickness or health-related issues impacting the player or his family.
- d.) Primary church attendance.
- e.) One weeks' notice given to coaches for scheduled commitments.

** These five guidelines will be used when evaluating missing practices. In addition to these four acceptable absence situations there are always situations that may fall slightly outside these lines. The situation must be presented to the head coach and he will make a decision based on the information given if it is an acceptable reason for not attending practice.

2. If practices or games are missed that do not fall within these guidelines as determined by the coaching staff, then consequences may be given at the discretion of the head coach which may include suspension from games and/or practices.

3. It is important to remember that even in cases where the reason for absence clearly falls within the accepted guidelines, the player is still missing valuable playing opportunities. Likewise, absence gives playing opportunities to other players who are competing for playing time.

4. It is the player's responsibility to notify Coach Shifflett in advance if they will not be able to attend a practice or game.

5. An excessive number of missed practices or games, excused or not, can adversely impact playing time. Excessive unexcused practices or games may lead to suspension and/or dismissal from the team.

IV. Uniform Policy

1. Shirt tails are to be tucked in during all games and hats must be worn forward in the correct position.
2. Pants can either be worn up by the knee or down by the ankles. Players are NOT allowed to hook pants over back of spikes, tuck pants into spikes, or attach any sort of elastic band to pants to be worn over spikes. Players are not allowed to make any modifications to uniforms.
3. Please report any uniform damages to the coaching staff as soon as possible.
4. Please make sure that uniforms have a “clean” appearance before all games. This means that they must be washed before all games.
5. Once uniforms are assigned, they will become the player's responsibility to maintain and keep up with throughout the year.

V. Personal Appearance Policy

1. Players must keep facial hair neat and trimmed at all times.
2. Hair will not be allowed to be longer than bottom of the ear length.
3. If any individual chooses to dye their hair, the color must be a natural hair color.
4. Mohawks will not be tolerated.
5. Tattoos must remain covered at all times.
6. Any piercing jewelry will not be tolerated in practice or games.
7. “War paint” eye black will not be tolerated. Eye black may only consist of one straight stripe under each eye.
8. Failure to comply with any of the listed policies will result of suspension of the player from practice and games until appearance is changed to meet Personal Appearance Policy standards.

VI. Dugout Rules / Procedures for all Home Games

1. Unless directed otherwise, all varsity players should be at the field dressed and ready to start pregame warm-up at least 60 minutes before home games and 45 minutes for away games. The coaching staff will notify players at least one day in advance of the change in start time.
2. During games/practices players must behave in a manner outlined in section VIII. Remember, our team and organization is still being represented regardless of whether or not the athletes are on the field, in the dugout, or in the stands.
3. Foods other than light snacks (sunflower seeds, fruit, granola bars, power bars etc.) are not permitted in the dugout or within the confines of the playing field during games or practices. Players will have 10 minutes in between double headers to leave the dugout and get something to eat. After 10 minutes every player should be in the dugout ready to prepare for the next game.
4. Cell phones are to be turned off or placed on silent and out of sight during all games and practices except in cases of an emergency. Players must notify a coach in advance if that is the case.
5. Players must not ask parents for food or drink to be brought to the dug out during games. Water will be provided in the dugout for players at every game. If the player would like to bring his own drink it is important that he brings it before the game begins so he does not have to ask for it.
6. Players are not allowed to talk to fans during the game unless there is an emergency. We have a job to do and we must remain focused on that job.

VII. Behavior Guidelines Team & Academic

1. Academic success is valued and important. Being a homeschool program, parents oversee their child's academic progress. If the parent(s) of a player feels that their child's grades are not at an acceptable level, the parent may consult with coaching staff and decide an appropriate academic suspension from the baseball program until their child's grades reach a satisfactory level.
2. Players are expected to act appropriately off the field. Behavior incidents off the field may result in disciplinary action on the team. Likewise, other serious infractions, both criminal and non-criminal, may result in dismissal from the team. Those decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Players should immediately inform the coaches of behavior incidents and not wait for a coach to hear about it from a secondhand source.

3. Players are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner on the baseball field at all times. This includes practice and games. Players may not talk back inappropriately to umpires, fans, or other players.

4. **Tobacco is strictly prohibited and is against team policy.** Please remember that if the individual is choosing to use tobacco and is under the age of 18 it is **illegal**. Any players caught using tobacco **or carrying tobacco** during any baseball related function will have the tobacco confiscated by the coaches and punished at the discretion of the head coach.

5. Hazing will not be permitted in any form and will result in disciplinary action or possible dismissal from the team.

VIII. Playing Time/Roster Spots

1. Playing time will be determined by the coaching staff based on which individuals give the team the best chance to win **that day**. The line up may change day-to-day depending on the team that we are playing.

2. During any given game, the coaching staff may use as little as nine players, or the whole roster depending on the situations that arise.

3. Factors other than skill will effect playing time. The coaching staff will look at the attitude and effort of the player as well as the game situation to determine who plays and who does not.

4. Our 2015 goal is to achieve further development of the players so they will be better players for the future; however, this does not mean that it will not be competitive. Our goal is to compete hard and win any game that we play.

6. If a player has an issue with playing time, position, or any other concerns, he is to talk to the coach about these issues, **not the parents**. Our goal as coaches is to develop men of character and prepare them for life. Being able to speak with coaches face-to-face about any issues the player may have with the team, a coach, or playing time, is critical to developing character.

7. Playing time will be determined by the individual's attitude, effort, and skill. Roster positions will not be based on a player's age, grade, or parents. This may mean a 6th grader could player over a 10th grader if the coaching staff feels that he is the best option for the game being played that day.

IX. Player Field Duties

1. Every player will have an assigned job to do before and after every practice or game. These jobs will be listed in the dugout.
2. Every player is expected to perform their field duty correctly and take pride in their work. The coaching staff **will not** accept jobs that are done with half effort.
3. If any player finishes his job before others, he is expected to help with other jobs until all the work is done.
4. The team will meet when every individual's job has been completed. No player may leave the field, unless they have permission from the coaching staff, before all the work has been finished.
5. If any individual or multiple players are performing a job with half effort it may result in the form of punishment in the form of running or extra field work for the individual or team.

X. Coaching Staff

1. Thomas Shifflett: Head Coach. Coach Shifflett will oversee all on coaching aspects of the program. Contact info: Cell- (270)-847-8266, Email- Thomas.Shifflett@hotmail.com.
2. Kelly Holman: Assistant Coach/Assistant General Manager. Coach Holman will assist with the coaching of team and also assist in administrative duties. Contact info: Cell- (270)-996-7969, Email- Jickle30@yahoo.com.
3. Kevin Winn: General Manager. Kevin oversees administrative duties of the Blazers program including but not limited to: scheduling, uniforms and field rental. Contact info: Cell- (270)-792-0227, Email- Kwinn7@yahoo.com.

XI. Handbook Confirmation and Acceptance

1. Please read and review all of the information (guidelines, rules, procedures, etc.) in this handbook with your parents. In fact, being a member of this team requires that you and your parents agree to all of the provisions of this handbook.
2. Due to these factors, the coaching staff encourages all players to review the handbook closely to make sure they are willing and able to make the personal commitment that is required to be a part of this team.
2. If, for whatever reason, you are not willing or able to make this commitment to the team, then we wish you all the best in your future plans. On the other hand, if you are reading for an exciting season of baseball and an ultimately rewarding challenge, then we welcome you to the 2015 edition of the Blazers baseball team.
3. The Handbook Confirmation and Acceptance Form, included in this handbook, must be signed and returned prior to our first game on March 10.

Blazers Baseball 2015

The signature of the player, parent, and head coach at the bottom of this page indicates that these individuals have read, understand, and agree to all provisions, rules, and guidelines of the 2015 Blazers baseball team Handbook. This signed confirmation sheet is due no later than March 10, 2015.

Signature of Player:

_____ **Date:** _____

Signature of Parent(s):

_____ **Date:** _____

Signature of Head Coach:

_____ **Date:** _____