

Practice-related topics

Practice Guidelines

Unless announced otherwise, after-school practice is at Seneca Park. We ask the older girls on the team and any available parents to help carpool everyone over to Seneca Park. After-practice pick-up occurs in the grassy area by the tennis courts and playground, between 4:45 and 5:00pm.

- On school days, anyone needing a ride or capable of providing a ride should report to the gym by 3:00-3:05 (where rides to practice are arranged).
- On 12:30 Tuesdays, we cannot start right after school. Practice will be delayed until about 2:00. Girls needing rides should be at Assumption by 1:40 (meet by the CAC).
- Before practice, each girl should “check in” by placing a check mark by her name on the roster. After practice, she should “check out” by drawing a line through her original check mark and making it into an “x”. I.e., going from this “✓” to this “✕”
- Once indicated by a coach, the entire team starts the warm up together as a group. Please avoid using the path on warmup, and (instead) run on the grass.
- Each day’s practice routine is posted at the start of practice and distributed via email.
- Each runner should always run the route and/or do the workout given to her by a coach.
- Each girl on the team should always run in such a way as to ensure her own safety and the safety of those running with her. That is, each runner should follow all traffic laws, stay off the road whenever possible, not jaywalk, etc.
 - practice is not the place to be advancing one’s social life - we do not allow girls to meet or run with non-teammates during practice, run with a cell phone, etc.
 - on distance runs or when running in an area where you cannot be observed by a coach, you should run with another person whenever possible and not alone.
 - do not enter someone’s home, any business establishment, etc., or go anywhere without permission from a coach.
 - please report any unsafe, or potentially unsafe situations to a coach.
- If an accident occurs and we believe it’s appropriate to call EMS, police, etc., then the coaches will do so at the earliest possible opportunity. In such situations, we will contact parents, immediately after we contact the appropriate authorities.

Attendance Guidelines

We expect regular attendance at practice. The time commitment associated with Cross Country can be significant and is something you should carefully consider prior to joining our team.

- If you cannot attend practice on a school day, then – unless you were absent from school or left early – please tell a coach. Skipping practice and saying nothing on one occasion will get you in trouble. After multiple occasions, you may be dropped from the team.
- We will allow girls on the team to have one excused absence per month for things like club or student government meetings. This does not include girls in our Elite Group. If girls in our Group B miss more than once per month, then they must make up those absences. Girls in Group A risk being dropped from Group A to Group B.

- We are willing to work with girls who, during the season, struggle academically - but there is a minimum participation level where we would drop a girl from the team if she cannot successfully juggle athletics and academics.
- Any girl with an excessive number of absences does risk being dropped from the team. This includes girls who go on Academic Suspension.

Practice and Bad Weather

We do not cancel practice unless conditions are expected to be unsafe and we are unable to delay or adapt practice. We practice in rain, heat, snow, etc., and will always first consider whether it's possible to wait out any bad weather. On bad weather days, we proceed as follows:

- The Cross Country coaches will consider the current weather and expected conditions and then determine whether it is safe to proceed with practice. Any weather-related changes will be announced at school and via email as early as possible.
- On days when specific parents may believe that weather conditions are inappropriate for their daughter, we allow those parents the right to withhold their daughter from practice. We do ask, however, that parents communicate these concerns with a coach – rather than simply pull their daughter from practice without saying anything.

General Guidelines for Behavior

When it comes to the girls who join our team, we are generally blessed with girls who possess great character, girls who adhere to very high standards of behavior and girls who exercise good judgment. Any and all rules governing the behavior of Assumption students as a whole also applies to the Cross Country team, but there are two areas where we build upon those rules.

- Honesty is what binds everything together. Honesty is not always an easy option, but it is the best option. Given that situations can and do arise at Cross Country practice where the girls are practicing outside of our ability to observe them directly, it's critical that our girls behave in a trustworthy manner. Dishonesty can tear apart the fabric of team unity and possibly lead to situations where someone could get hurt or worse. Therefore, we will not tolerate dishonesty in any sense on this team. Depending upon the situation, dishonesty may even be grounds for dismissing a girl from the team.
- In signing the Drug-Alcohol-Tobacco form, Cross Country girls agree to abstain from drugs, alcohol and tobacco during the season. The Cross Country coaches believe it is best for our girls to simply avoid situations where this behavior occurs. Attending such events can send a bad signal about oneself or the team as a whole, and may also expose a girl to potential harm. We build upon the Athletic Department's policy for dealing with drug and alcohol use as follows.

If, during the season, we learn that a Cross Country girl was in attendance at an event where drugs were taken or underage drinking occurred, then we will automatically suspend that athlete from participating with the team until we can determine the extent of her involvement. If she was not involved, then we will meet with that athlete and ultimately allow her to return to the team. If she is guilty of breaking the drug and alcohol rules, then we'll proceed with the Athletic Department's policy for such situations AND contact any appropriate legal and school authorities to report the matter.