

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LEARNERS

(APRIL 2009)

PREAMBLE

In accordance with the South African School's Act 1996, the Governing Body of Hillcrest Primary School has adopted the Code of Conduct in consultation with learners, parents and educators of the school. The Code of Conduct is aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process for all learners, and is the responsibility of all stakeholders. It reflects the principles of democracy, human rights and human dignity that underpin the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. It upholds the prohibition of corporal punishment and contains provisions for due process safeguarding the interests of the learners and any other party involved in disciplinary procedures. No stakeholder is exempt from the obligation to comply with the Code of Conduct.

1. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEARNERS

- 1.1 Each learner has the right to be educated in an orderly and disciplined environment, and the responsibility to be co-operative, attentive and not disrupt the rights of others to learn.
- 1.2 Each learner has the right to be treated fairly and with respect, and the responsibility to refrain from aggressive and abusive behaviour, respecting the personal, cultural, social and religious differences of others.
- 1.3 Each learner has the right to work in a healthy, secure and litter-free environment, and the responsibility to ensure that premises are kept clean and hygienic.
- 1.4 Each learner has the right to benefit from the good reputation of the school and the facilities that it offers, and the responsibility to respect and maintain these facilities and uphold the good name of the school.
- 1.5 Each learner has the right to freedom of expression in a polite and respectful manner, and the responsibility to listen to and consider the opinions of others.
- 1.6 Each learner has the right to enjoy the support of the school in his/her participation in cultural, sporting and academic matters, and the responsibility to abide by the norms of good sportsmanship, and to show loyalty and commitment to teams.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATORS WITH REGARD TO LEARNERS

- 2.1 There is an obligation to be professional at all times: to abide by the rules, regulations and procedures as set out by the School, the KZN Department of Education and Culture, and the Code of Conduct as set out by the South African Council of Educators (SACE).
- 2.2 The preparation, presentation, follow-up and development of the academic, sporting and cultural programmes which fall under their jurisdiction at Hillcrest Primary School must be of the highest of standards and be to the best of their ability.
- 2.3 There is an imperative to develop and maintain sound inter-personal relationships with all stakeholders.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS WITH REGARD TO LEARNERS

- 3.1 Protect and ensure the rights of their child to learn.
- 3.2 Support all the rules and regulations of the school, and ensure their child abides by them.
- 3.3 Provide their child with the resources, basic equipment and learning materials needed to complete school work.
- 3.4 Endeavour to promote positive inter-personal relations between learner, educator, other parents and the wider school community, in the best educational interests of their child.
- 3.5 Ensure they receive all academic reports from the school, regarding their child's progress.
- 3.6 Bring to the attention of the school authorities any personal circumstances or changes which affect the child in the school.
- 3.7 Provide all documentation required or requested by the school.
- 3.8 Pay school fees as determined by the school's Governing Body.

4 SCHOOL RULES

These rules specify what is expected in terms of behaviour, discipline and appearance from each Hillcrest Primary learner.

4.1 RESPECT FOR SELF

4.1.1 Personal Integrity: "Be the best that you can be."

No:

- vulgar language
- cheating
- lying
- dishonesty
- theft

4.1.2 Manners Above Reproach: "Be courteous and dignified."

Be:

- respectful
- punctual
- polite
- helpful

- No eating and / or drinking during lessons (water permitted)
- No chewing gum

4.1.3 Appearance: "Be neatly groomed and proud of your uniform."

Uniform:

- Clean and neat regulation uniform/sports kit
- Keep tracksuit tops zipped up
- No boxer shorts visible

Jewellery:

- Watches and Medic Alert bracelets only
- Cultural/ Religious symbols (at the discretion of Management)
- No body piercings or tattoos
- Earrings (girls only) – silver/gold sleepers or studs, only one earring in each ear

Hair:

- No outlandish hairstyles
- Hair to be kept clean and neat
- No peroxiding, tinting, streaking or gel
- Boys - Hair to be kept short and off the collar. (Facial hair to be shaved off)
- Girls - Hair at shoulder length to be tied up. Long fringes must be clipped away from the face. Hair accessories must be black, brown, dark green, white, burgundy or school tartan

Other: No make-up, lip-gloss or nail varnish

4.2 RESPECT FOR OTHERS

4.2.1 Cultural, Religious and Gender Tolerance: "Be tolerant of the differences of others."

No:

- prejudice
- stereotyping
- bullying
- verbal, physical, emotional abuse (teasing etc)

- 4.2.2 Rights of Others to Work and Learn: “Be considerate in all working areas at all times.”
- No disruptive behaviour in the school environment
 - Maintain an organized, structured environment
- 4.2.3 Respect for the Property of Others: “Treat others’ belongings as you would your own.” No:
- borrowing
 - vandalizing
- 4.2.4 Sportsmanship: “Win and lose graciously.”
- No:
- unsporting behaviour
 - questioning the referee’s decision
 - bad language
 - unnecessary aggression
 - humiliating comments
 - booing

4.3 RESPECT FOR ENVIRONMENT

- 4.3.1 School Facilities and Equipment: “Treat with care at all times.”
- No:
- deliberate damage to property/equipment
 - unauthorized use of equipment
 - unsupervised use of facilities
- Report accidental breakages/damage promptly
- 4.3.2 School Campus and Immediate Surrounds: “Be proudly HPS.”
- No:
- litter
 - vandalism
 - graffiti
 - trespassing after hours
- Keep away from out-of -bounds areas
- 4.3.3 Fauna and Flora: “Look after all living things.”
- nurture nature, do not destroy it
 - keep out of flower beds
 - no climbing trees or breaking branches
 - keep off the banks

5 POSITIVE REWARD SYSTEM

5.1 INDIVIDUAL REWARD SYSTEM

Learners who display positive attitudes, a sound work ethic, self-discipline and who contribute to the general ethos of the school are positively rewarded. Recognition includes the following:

- Principal’s stamps and letters of commendation
- Verbal / written praise
- Certificates
- Tuckshop vouchers
- Classroom-based incentives
- Assembly mentions

- Target points
- Performance charts
- TOP APPLE AWARD (Foundation Phase only) Awarded weekly to a child in each class for exemplary conduct / performance / appearance in general. The recipient receives a certificate and badge, and is given the opportunity to sit on stage and receive acknowledgement at a full Foundation Phase Assembly.

5.2 GROUP REWARD SYSTEM

A target point system is used to encourage positive attitudes, a sound work ethic, self-discipline and team work. Recognition is given to class groups in the form of points for adherence to various nominated behaviours. Learners work towards achieving a target each term for which the class will be rewarded.

Learners who consistently do not co-operate with the team will be excluded from the target system and will not receive the group reward. However, the aim is to get all learners to participate positively so they will be encouraged to work towards individual rewards for the remainder of the term, when they will be able to rejoin the group with a clean slate. In the event of this happening parents will be notified at the point of exclusion.

5.3 FOUNDATION PHASE GROUP REWARD SYSTEM

TARGET BEHAVIOURS:	
1.	The class lines up in an orderly fashion
2.	The class walks quietly in line from venue to venue
3.	The class falls silent when there is a message on the intercom
4.	The class leaves the classroom tidy at the end of the day
5.	The class is quiet when the Educator is busy with a visitor
6.	The whole class is in the classroom by 07:25
7.	The class greets adults on the corridor
8.	The class sits silently in Assembly
9.	The class brings their full, correct P.E. kit on P.E. days
10.	The class behaves and co-operates during specialist lessons
BONUS POINTS – SPOT CHECKS:	
1.	The whole class is wearing their uniform correctly (labels / earrings / hair styles and colour / hair accessories / shoes)
2.	The whole class returns reply slips (e.g. raffle sheets / walkathon forms, etc.) by the due date.
3.	The children keep their surrounds and fields free of litter.
GRADE TARGETS	
The target amounts for each grade have been carefully calculated, taking into consideration the number of times the children move from one venue to another, meet visitors, hear intercom messages, etc. These may vary from term to term.	

5.4 SENIOR PRIMARY GROUP REWARD SYSTEM

TARGET BEHAVIOURS:	
1.	Punctuality – everyone in the classroom by 07:30
2.	Courtesy – respect for adults, peers and juniors
3.	Responsibility – handing in books / meeting deadlines
4.	Cleanliness – keeping the classroom tidy / litter free
5.	Orderliness – lining up / leading to class quietly (x3)
6.	Litter – school grounds to be litter free
7.	Specialist lessons
POINTS ARE AWARDED WEEKLY FOR:	
1.	Good behaviour in the hall
2.	Recycling – everyone to be involved
POINTS ARE AWARDED INCIDENTALLY FOR:	
1.	Returning sponsorship forms / raffle sheets on time
2.	Appearance – correct uniform / shoes / accessories etc.
3.	Returning media books / paying fines by due date

6. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Learners are accountable for their actions. Breach of the Code of Conduct will lead to consequences. These procedures are designed to educate the learners to make better choices in the future and to give them strategies for self-discipline.

6.1 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- 6.1.1 To provide all individuals with the right to due process
- 6.1.2 To apply discipline objectively and consistently
- 6.1.3 To emphasize pro-active and preventative discipline, rather than punitive and reactive discipline
- 6.1.4 To ensure that learners are aware of clearly defined boundaries with known consequences

6.2 CATEGORIZATION AND CONSEQUENCE GUIDELINES

All punitive measures will focus on teaching more appropriate behaviour. Warnings and categorizations of misdemeanors will be given at the discretion of the Authority Figure, (Educator, Management, Principal) based on the following:

- Age of the learner
- Severity of the offence
- Number of previous warnings/offences
- Personal circumstances of the learner
- Context of the misdemeanour
- All serious offences must be brought to the attention of the Principal. Repeat offences are likely to lead to a Disciplinary Hearing.
- Punishment options for time-out / detentions include a letter of apology, “community” service (e.g. help tidy classroom, picking up of litter) or essay writing on how to improve (SP).
- Informal and formal counselling and guidance by Educators will be a feature of all consequences

6.3 MINOR OFFENCES: (FOUNDATION PHASE / SENIOR PRIMARY)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All minor offences will be reprimanded and appropriate guidance / counselling given at the time of the offence ➤ Learners may be given a break “time-out” session (FP) / break detention (SP), where they sit quietly in a classroom, supervised by an Educator, and complete punishment tasks, e.g. write letter of apology / complete written tasks / write out rules. ➤ A verbal apology may also be requested at the Educator’s discretion ➤ Children will be permitted to eat during the eating period before attending Break “Time Out” / Detention ➤ Children will be permitted to go to the toilet during Break “Time Out” / Detention 		
EXAMPLES		
➤ Incomplete homework	➤ Break “Time Out” / Detention	➤ Complete homework
➤ Incomplete class work	➤ Break “Time Out” / Detention	➤ Complete class work
➤ Disruptive behaviour	➤ Break “Time Out” / Detention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No playing during break. ➤ Write out applicable school rule.
➤ Talking in Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children made to stand up ➤ Break “Time Out” / Detention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No playing during break. ➤ Write out Assembly rule.

6.4 MAJOR OFFENCES: FOUNDATION PHASE

BEHAVIOUR	OFFENCE 1	OFFENCE 2	OFFENCE 3
Stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents advised by official letter, sign copy and return ➤ Signed copy to be placed in child’s file ➤ Child to write letter of apology to victim in own time and replace stolen item ➤ Counselling by class Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting with parents ➤ Child to receive formal counselling (Internal) 	➤ Formal Disciplinary Hearing (with Governing Body)
Truancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents advised by official letter, sign copy and return ➤ Signed copy to be placed in child’s file ➤ Child to be denied appropriate privileges ➤ Counselling by class Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting with parents ➤ Child to receive formal counselling (Internal) 	➤ Formal Disciplinary Hearing (with Governing Body)

Physical Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents advised by official letter, sign copy and return ➤ Signed copy to be placed in child's file ➤ Child to write letter of apology to victim in own time ➤ Counselling by class Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting with parents ➤ Child to receive 1 day suspension from field / classroom ➤ Child to receive formal counselling (Internal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Principal intervention
Swearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents to be contacted telephonically ➤ Child to tell parent what they said / words used ➤ Child to do break "time out" and write a letter of apology to Educator dealing with case ➤ Counselling by class Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting with parents ➤ Child to receive formal counselling (Internal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Principal intervention
Consistent, ongoing disruptive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents to be notified in writing ➤ Child to be excluded from Target Point System ➤ Child to do break "time out" and write letter of apology to Educator / class at Educator's discretion ➤ Counselling by class Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting with parents ➤ Child to receive formal counselling (Internal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Principal intervention

6.5 MAJOR OFFENCES: SENIOR PRIMARY

	MAJOR MISDEMEANOURS: afternoon detention	SERIOUS OFFENCES: Consequence: INTERNAL SUSPENSION / DISCIPLINARY HEARING / EXTERNAL SUSPENSION / APPLICATION TO HEAD OF DEPARTMENT (EDUCATION AND CULTURE) FOR EXPULSION
EXAMPLES:	➤ Inappropriate use of cell phones	➤ Truancy
	➤ Bullying	➤ Possession / Use of alcohol, drugs, dangerous weapons, pornographic material
	➤ Cheating	➤ Assault, with intent to do grievous bodily harm
	➤ Flouting basic rules	➤ Indecent Behaviour
	➤ Dishonesty	
	➤ Insubordination	
	➤ Theft	
	➤ Vulgar Language	
➤ Fighting		
➤ Vandalism		
➤ Repeated Major misdemeanors could lead to a disciplinary meeting / hearing.		

6.6 DETENTION PROCEDURE (SENIOR PRIMARY)

6.6.1 Learners will be given at least 3 school days notice before attending a detention.

6.6.2 The notice signed by the parent to acknowledge the detention is to be returned to the class educator promptly.

6.6.3 The Detention Educator must be informed in writing if a learner is unable to attend. Only long-standing appointments / arrangements or exceptional circumstances will be considered for postponement.

6.6.4 Failure to attend an afternoon detention without notification will result in two consecutive afternoon detentions.

6.6.5 Three afternoon detentions will result in a disciplinary hearing with the Principal and Parents.

7. DUE PROCESS

7.1 Serious disciplinary offences will be referred to the Governing Body for sanction. At Governing Body disciplinary enquiries, learners will be granted a fair hearing (tribunal). To help ensure this, the Governing Body disciplinary committee will usually consist of:

- The Chairperson
- One other nominated parent member of the Governing Body
- The School Principal
- The investigating officer, if this is not the Principal
- A translator if this is necessary.

7.2 Any learner alleged to have violated any rule that may require suspension or application to the MEC for expulsion, must be brought to the Principal.

7.3 The Principal shall hear the evidence and then decide on the action to be taken.

7.4 Such action must include that the Principal must inform the parents in writing of the proposed action and arrange for a fair hearing by a small disciplinary committee (tribunal) consisting of members designated by the Governing Body. This tribunal must not be intimidating to the learner.

7.5 The parents or guardians should represent the learners.

7.6 For the hearing the learner will:

7.6.1 Be informed of and understand the charges of which written notice will be given at least five days before the time also indicating the date, time and place of the hearing.

7.6.2 Receive such particulars on the charges as he/she may be entitled to according to law, if he/she so requests.

7.6.3 Get the opportunity to be heard and tell his / her side of the story and to present the relevant facts

7.6.4 Not be prohibited from being represented by legal counsel, in which case written explanation of the charges will be given.

7.6.5 Be heard by an impartial person(s)

7.6.6 Be treated with dignity during the process

7.6.7 Be informed in writing of the decision of the Governing Body on whether or not he/she is guilty of serious misconduct, and the penalty to be imposed in the case of suspension or application for expulsion from the MEC.

7.6.8 Have the right to appeal to the MEC if he/she is aggrieved by the decision of the Governing Body.

8. JURISDICTION AND SCOPE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct is in force:

- on school property prior to, during and following regular school hours;
- at all official school events, both within and outside the regular school hours, where such school events are held under the auspices of the school management structures;
- at all official school events which are held off the school property;
- at all times when the learner is dressed in the school uniform and is recognizable as such, both on the school property or in the public view outside the school;

9. PARTNERSHIP:

In a mutually reinforcing system of values and discipline both at school and at home, every child can thrive in their safe, secure and predictable environment. We owe this to them.

We look forward to Parental support and reinforcement at home.