

Code of Conduct

THIS CODE OF CONDUCT HAS BEEN DRAWN UP IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT (ACT NO. 84 OF 1996) BY ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS AT AURORA PRIMARY SCHOOL VIZ. THE GOVERNING BODY THE MANAGEMENT TEAM THE EDUCATORS THE PUPILS VISION:

Aurora Primary School is a multi-cultural school which, while adhering to the sentiments imbued in “Mens Sana in Corpore Sano”, strives to develop the pupils in its care, through a sound holistic approach to education, into confident, well balanced individuals. It further strives to lead its pupils, whatever their religious convictions, on the road to individual excellence and personal discovery, with a sense of dignity and moral decency via Aurora.

GATEWAY TO A RESPONSIBLE FUTURE.

MISSION:

As a GATEWAY TO A RESPONSIBLE FUTURE

We undertake to realize our vision for each of our learners, as far as possible, by:
Meeting their individual needs both emotionally and educationally
Providing a dynamic, well-balanced curriculum with well-trained, motivated educators
Fostering self-worth, and a respect for the rights of others, their race and their culture
Providing a disciplined environment in which they can reach their full potential
Teaching them to take responsibility for their actions and choices
Providing them with the means to become productive, self-fulfilled, future citizens.

PREAMBLE

Learners must: acknowledge, uphold and promote the uniform norms and standards set out herein; acknowledge that their attitude, self-discipline, ideals and conduct at school will enhance and facilitate a culture of reconciliation, teaching, learning and mutual respect, and the establishment of a culture of tolerance and peace at Aurora; commit themselves to act in accordance with the principles as expressed in this code; and accept responsibility and commitment to attending school and receiving an education.

1. DEFINITIONS

In this code, unless the context indicates otherwise:

1.1. "educator" means - any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or provides professional therapy at any school, technical college of education, or assists in rendering professional services or educational auxiliary services provided by or in a department of education, (and whose employment is regulated by the Educator's Employment Act, 1994); and any other person registered with the Council.

1.2. "parent" means –

1.2.1. the parent or guardian of a learner;

1.2.2. the person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or

1.2.3. the person who usually has the care and control of a learner.

2. PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE CODE OF CONDUCT IS BASED

- 2.1. The School must protect, promote and fulfil the rights and democratic values of learners, as identified in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution as well as protecting and fulfilling the rights and democratic values of educators.
- 2.2. All learners and parents at the school have the democratic right to due process and to participate in decision making about matters affecting them at school and the responsibility to adhere to all the decisions which are made.
- 2.3. All learners have the right to equal treatment before the law and will receive equal protection and benefits of the law.
- 2.4. Every learner has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and has the responsibility to treat others likewise.
- 2.5. Disciplinary action will at all times be corrective, fair, just, consistent and educative.
- 2.6. The responsibility for applying discipline is reserved for educators and/or school governing bodies with the appropriate authority and responsibility.
- 2.7. Whenever practical, similar offences committed in similar circumstances will be treated equally through the application of similar disciplinary action.
- 2.8. Every learner has the right to freedom of expression, subject however to fair and reasonable limitations, so as to maintain order and discipline at the school.
- 2.9. Learners have the right to a clean and safe environment that is conducive to education.
- 2.10. Every learner has the right to education.
- 2.11. Every learner has the responsibility to respect the rights of others viz. educators, fellow pupils, or any other person with whom contact is made on the school premises or in the wider community.
- 2.12. Every learner has the right not to be subjected to the teachings of any religion or denomination, but has the responsibility to respect Christian principles.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUPILS

3.1. School and Classroom Rules Aurora Primary

Pupils must:

- be actively involved in the making of school and classroom rules;
- ensure that they know and understand these rules, and the consequences of breaking them;
- at the beginning of the school day, or at arriving at a classroom for the next lesson, line up in an orderly fashion outside the classroom and wait to be ushered in by the educator or the prefect in charge;
- when leaving a classroom, ensure that it is tidy and free of litter;
- when leaving a classroom, quietly form a line outside the classroom and advance to the next class or to assembly;
- at the end of break, advance swiftly and quietly to line up outside the classroom;
- remain in the classroom throughout the period unless permission is granted to go to the toilet or any other part of the school, whereupon a “hall pass” must be issued by the educator.
- at all times, strive to act in accordance with these rules.

3.2. Learning and Schoolwork:

- Attend to schoolwork during classes;
- Complete all assigned homework within the determined time period;
- Catch up on all the work missed during any period that they have been absent, so as to maintain the level of education of that class;
- Take necessary and reasonable care when using the assigned textbooks handed out for the year, and return them in the same condition in which they received them;
- Ensure that they have all the necessary stationery, school books and equipment needed to carry out their school work, clearly marked with their name and surname;
- Use appropriate language and behaviour in their interaction with educators and fellow learner, and act in such a way as to gain respect from educators;
- Recognize educators as partners in education, and respect their authority and the various responsibilities arising therefrom; and
- Recognize and respect the various cultures, customs and beliefs of fellow learners and educators, to ensure the smooth running of the educational institution;
- Respect the property of all persons;
- Refrain from – using drugs or alcohol, carrying dangerous weapons, becoming involved in criminal activities, bullying other pupils, sexual harassment, rape, victimization or being in possession of pornographic material.

3.3. Security and Care of School Property Learners must

- at all times take the necessary reasonable care when using all school facilities and equipment; remembering that they will be charged for the replacement of any article, should they be found guilty of wilful damage.
- at all times keep the school and its ground neat and tidy.

3.4. School Attendance Learners must:

- arrive punctually on every school day and for every school related activity;

- accept and acknowledge the responsibility to learn and to be educated to their full potential; this includes but is not limited to, academic, occupational, social, sport, spiritual and cultural potential;
- attend school during the regular school hours from Monday to Friday; and
- if absent, get their parent or legal guardian to notify the school as to the reason for the absence, and bring a signed note from their parent or legal guardian explaining the reasons for their absence;
- during test weeks or examinations, produce a doctor's note to explain the absence. Without this note, the learner will not be given marks for the test/exam.

3.5. School Uniforms

- All learners are required to wear the appropriate summer / winter Aurora School uniform at school.
- All items of clothing must be clearly marked.
- The school will not be held responsible for the loss of any of the learners' belongings

Girls Uniform

SUMMER	Short – sleeved white shirt with school badge Blue school skirt Short white socks Black lace-up school shoe
WINTER	Long-sleeved white school shirt with an Aurora school tie Blue school skirt/long pants Long grey Aurora socks Black lace-up school shoes Aurora jersey Blazer

Boys Uniform

SUMMER	Short-sleeved white shirt with school badge Short grey pants Long grey Aurora school socks Black lace-up school shoes
WINTER	Long-sleeved white school shirt with an Aurora school tie Long grey pants Long grey Aurora school socks Black lace-up school shoes Aurora jersey Blazer

SPORT WEAR

- White shorts & white sport shoes
- Aurora golf shirt Aurora tracksuit if necessary
- At all times when a learner is in school uniform, whether during or after school hours, they must always be neat and tidy in appearance.

This includes, but is not limited to, the following provisions in respect of:

3.5.1 Girls:

- must always keep their hair clean and neat, and if their hair is longer than shoulder length, it must be worn up in a ponytail or tied back;
- must always keep their nails clean and short;
- must ensure that their school dresses/skirts are the required length;
- must keep their school uniform clean and school shoes polished; and
- may not wear make-up to school, nor may they dye or tint their hair;
- jewellery – watches only , and where necessary a medical bracelet, and in pierced ears only small gold studs or rings.

3.5.1 Boys

- must always ensure that their hair is short, clean and neat; not tinted or dyed;
- must keep their nails short and clean;
- must ensure that their school uniform is clean and their school shoes are kept polished; and
- ensure that any facial hair is always kept clean-shaven;
- jewellery – watches only, and where necessary a medical bracelet. No rings or earrings.

3.6. General

During the scheduled break-time periods, all learners must behave themselves in accordance with the principles in this Code.

No learner may leave the school grounds at any time before the end of the school day, unless with the written consent of an educator.

Cell Phones – These may only be used before or after school. If taken out of a suitcase or used during school time, the cell phone will be confiscated by the educator and only returned to the learner at the end of the term.

4. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS

In accordance with the Aurora Code of Conduct, parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of their child/ward.

As one of the stakeholders in education, parents/guardians are expected to support the school, to require of the learner in their charge to observe all school rules and regulations and to accept responsibility for any misbehaviour on their part.

Parents/guardians are also expected to take an active interest in the learner's school work and to make it possible for the learner to complete assigned homework.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian with learner for whom they are responsible, to ensure that:

- * the learner's school fees are paid regularly;
- * the learner attends school regularly, is punctual and in cases of absence, the reason is communicated to the school, telephonically or in a letter;
- * the learner is sent to school in the correct school uniform, clean and presentable;
- * the learner's school fees as determined by the Governing Body, be paid regularly and punctually;
- * they bring to the attention of the school, any change in home circumstances which could affect the behaviour or the well-being of the learner;
- * they receive all academic reports from the school regarding the learner's progress;
- * they read all term circulars and information briefs sent out by the school;
- * they keep the school informed of any changes of address or personal details;
- * where necessary, they attend all the meetings necessary for the progress of the learner;
- * the learner be required to abide by all the rules and regulations of the school;
- * should it be necessary to remove a learner from the school property, during school hours, that the school be informed at least a day in advance, telephonically, or in the form of a letter;
- * should a learner be absent from school, a letter of explanation be written and in the case of a missed test or examination, a doctor's certificate be produced;

5. DISCIPLINE

In the event of misconduct, disciplinary action may be taken against the learner.

The precise nature of the disciplinary action to be taken will be dependent on the nature of the circumstances of each case.

Educators (and principals or school governing bodies in cases of serious misconduct) are responsible for determining, according to the degree of transgression, the disciplinary action which will be initiated, and consequently the remedial action or sanction to be applied.

Hidings will not be administered.

A schedule of offences and their grading is annexed hereto, but it is emphasised that this is not a complete schedule.

Educators, principals and school governing bodies have the right to determine which other actions or omissions constitute offences which require disciplining.

5.1 Prevention, Proactive Advice, Counselling, Penalties and Corrective Measures

In cases of certain offences, corrective measures may be applied.

These measures may include one or more of the following:

- a verbal warning, or a written reprimand by an educator or principal in the discipline file;
- a letter of complaint to the parent/guardian from the Grade Head ;
- attending a detention class, to complete supervised school work that will contribute to the learners' progress at school or to the improvement of the school environment, provided that the parents or guardians are timeously informed and the safety of the learner is assured;
- performing tasks that would assist the offended person;
- agreed affordable compensation; • replacement of damaged school property; and
- suspension from some school activities, e.g. sport, cultural activities.

Suspension will only be considered after other disciplinary action has failed to correct the behaviour of the learner.

5.2 Offences that may lead to Suspension or Expulsion

When in the educator's, principal's or school governing body's opinion:

- the transgression concerned is of such a nature that the implementation of the sanctions stated above would be too lenient; or
- the learner's behaviour has not been successfully modified as a result of those measures;

The educator, principal or school governing body must, before taking disciplinary action, which may result in the suspension and/or expulsion of the learner, arrange for a fair hearing to be held.

The principal must inform the parents or guardians and the governing body in writing of the complaint, and the governing body must arrange for a fair hearing by a disciplinary

committee, consisting of members of the school governing body or their authorised representatives.

For the hearing, the learner must:

- be informed of charges against him / her and be given at least 5 days written notice of the time, place and date of the hearing;
- receive such particulars on the charges that he / she are entitled to by law, if he / she or their representative requests them;
- be given the opportunity to tell their side of the story and present his / her version; • be given the choice of being represented either by a lawyer, a member of the Education Labour Relations Council, a parent, guardian or educator;
- be heard by an impartial disciplinary committee; and
- be treated with dignity throughout the process.

A tape recorder may be used to tape the hearing, and a summary of the minutes will be prepared once the hearing has been concluded.

Once the disciplinary committee has reached a decision, the chairperson must inform the learner in writing whether or not he / she is are guilty of misconduct, and the sanction to be imposed.

The disciplinary committee must keep a record of the proceedings of the hearing and must:

- inform the Provincial Head of Department in writing if its decision is to suspend the learner; or
- inform the Provincial Head of Department, within 24 hours, if its decision is to recommend the expulsion of the learner.

A learner may only be expelled by the Provincial Head of Department on the recommendation of the school governing body.

A learner has the right to appeal:

- against a decision of the disciplinary committee to the chairperson of the governing body;
- against a decision of the disciplinary committee to suspend and/or expel them, to the Provincial Head of Department; or
- against a decision of the Provincial Head of Department to suspend and/or expel them, to the Member of the Executive Council;

If a learner or his / her representative feels that:

- the decision is wrong or unfair;
- the punishment is not commensurate with the offence
- new evidence and/or witnesses are available which may materially influence the outcome of the hearing;
- the disciplinary procedure as set out herein has not been followed;
- the chairperson of the hearing was not impartial; and/or
- any other reason exists which resulted in an unfair hearing.

A learner who, after a fair hearing, has been found guilty of contravening the Code, may be suspended for:

- a period of 1 week; or
- a reasonable period not exceeding 1 week,

pending the decision of the Provincial Head of Department, on the recommendation of the school governing body, as to whether or not the learner is to be expelled.

In cases of offences that may lead to suspension or expulsion, the following corrective measures may be considered, in conjunction with a school psychologist and/or social worker and/or the Department of Education:

- re-assigning the learner to another class;
- sending the learner to correctional education under supervision after school hours;
- re-assigning the learner to a special school for learners with behavioural disorders; or
- any other measure that achieves the desired result in correcting; alternatively, preventing the learner from: – repeating the offence; – harming themselves, educators / non-educators, fellow learners or damaging property; or – disrupting classes, the school and/or school related activities.

SCHEDULE – GRADES OF OFFENCES

1. MINOR OFFENCES

Offences which usually fall within the category of minor offences, depending on the circumstances of each case, include but are not limited to the following:

- 1.1. Failure to do/complete homework.
- 1.2. Disorderly behaviour during school classes.
- 1.3. Disorderly behaviour on school grounds.
- 1.4. Use of insulting or abusive language.
- 1.5. Failure to exercise proper care when using school equipment or school property.
- 1.6. Insolence towards an educator or superior, shown by demeanour, action or words.
- 1.7. Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission.
- 1.8. Involvement in any form of gambling.
- 1.9. Failure to adhere to the rules pertaining to the school.
- 1.10. Failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

2. OFFENCES THAT MAY LEAD TO SUSPENSION / EXPULSION

Offences which may lead to suspension include, but are not limited to, any one or any combination of the following acts or omissions:

- 2.1. Conduct which endangers the safety and violates the rights of others
- 2.2. Possession, threat or use of a weapon and/or firearm.
- 2.3. Possession, transmission or visible evidence of pornographic material.
- 2.4. Possession, use, sale, transmission or visible evidence of narcotic or unauthorised drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or intoxicants of any kind.
- 2.5. Possession, use, sale, transmission or visible evidence of dangerous substances of any kind.
- 2.6. Fighting, assault or battery.
- 2.7. Immoral behaviour or blasphemy.
- 2.8. Falsely identifying oneself.
- 2.9. Harmful graffiti, hate speech, sexism, racism.
- 2.10. Theft or possession of stolen property, including test or examination papers prior to the writing of tests or examinations.
- 2.11. Unlawful action, vandalism, or destroying or defacing of school property.
- 2.12. Disrespect, objectionable behaviour and verbal abuse directed at educators or other school employees and learners.
- 2.13. Repeated violations of school/classroom rules or the Code of Conduct.
- 2.14. Criminal and oppressive behaviour such as rape and gender-based harassment.
- 2.15. Victimisation, bullying and/or intimidation of others.
- 2.16. Infringement of examination rules.
- 2.17. Knowingly and wilfully supplying false information or falsifying documentation to gain an unfair advantage at school.
- 2.18. Gangs and gang-related activities