

# CODE OF CONDUCT

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## CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Code of Conduct revolves around the word Respect.

### Mission Statement

#### St Ursula's School Believes:

- In creating Catholic/ Christian atmosphere, in which principles of truth, love, justice and reverence become the criteria in life's decisions.
- In working to achieve academic excellence and the development of the whole person in all facets of his/ her potential.
- In high standards of behaviour and discipline.
- In the importance of the individual and his/ her creative self-expression.
- In the dignity of all persons and in respecting the rights of others.
- In an open environment where all persons of our richly diverse society may grow in mutual understanding and acceptance.

All learners, educators and parents are required to study and understand this document.

#### 1. Introduction:

##### 1.1. Definitions

'Code'	shall mean a set of rules.
'Conduct'	shall mean the way one behaves or treats others.
'Code of Conduct'	shall mean the code for the learners as stipulated in the South African Schools Act 84/96. Section 8.
'Learner'	Shall mean any person receiving or obliged to receive Education as defined in South African Schools Act 84/96 Section 1(ix).
'Educator'	shall mean a person appointed as defined in Proclamation 13 of 1994(xii) Educators Employment Act 1994
'Parent'	shall mean the biological parent, adoptive, or guardian of a Learner.

## 1:2 Points of Departure

The Code of Conduct embraces the following:

- The tenets of Bill of Rights in Chapter 2 of the Constitution.
- The philosophy and principles of the Preamble to the South African Schools Act No 84/1996.
- The requirement of Section 8(1) of South African Schools Act 84/1996 that a code of conduct adopted after consultation with learners, parents and educators of the school.
- Section (4) of the South African Schools Act 84/1996 which states that, *“Nothing contained in this Act exempts a learner from obligation to comply with the Code of Conduct of the school attended by such a learner”*.
- The views and the collective will of the parents, educators and learners on how the learners should conduct themselves.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct must be aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process.

The school will contact parents/ guardians when a learner’s behaviour becomes a cause for concern and will endeavour, in a spirit of constructive partnership, to resolve the problem.

To encourage everyone at St Ursula’s School to reach a point where:

- The learners of St Ursula’s School are proud of their disciplinary standards.
- The learners have developed a clear idea of right and wrong and uphold these standards with responsibility.
- The learners have a keen sense of justice and fair play and acknowledge those that are guilty of misconduct should own up and be disciplined accordingly.
- To take responsibility for their actions as mature citizens.
- St Ursula’s School is a happy, tolerant and disciplined school.

## 2. Rights and Responsibilities of Learners:

### 2.1 Introduction

Each learner has a right to be educated in an orderly and disciplined environment. This implies that:

- Each individual has the right to develop their potential.
- Learners shall respect one another’s convictions, religious and cultural traditions.
- Learners shall respect the inherent dignity of others.
- All learners shall enjoy equal treatment before the law and shall receive equal protection and benefits of the law.

### 2.2 Guidelines for Interpersonal Relationships

- Learners must be treated with courtesy, tolerance and consideration and treat others accordingly.
- Any form of aggressive and abusive behaviour, intimidation, bullying, victimization, physical or verbal abuse is unacceptable.
- Learners have the right to be protected from substance abuse and the responsibility to discourage those actively involved with it.
- No learner has the right at any time to behave in a manner that will disrupt the learning activity of other learners, or will cause another learner physical or emotional harm.
- The learner will respect the beliefs, culture, dignity and rights of other learners, as well as their right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Language which is deemed to be derogatory, discriminatory or racist is prohibited.
- Any act that belittles, demeans or humiliates another learner’s culture, race or religion is prohibited.
- Sexist behaviour, racial behaviour, political activism, intimidation of others, lobbying, bullying, disruption of classes, persistent rude or militant behaviour or any action deemed by the Principal likely to bring dishonour to the school’s name and/or impair the academic progress of learners, will lead to disciplinary action.

- All learners have the right to an education free of interference, intimidation and/or physical abuse. The learner will respect the safety of other learners. Fighting or threatening other learners is forbidden.
- The learner will respect those learners in positions of authority. A learner who is in a position of authority will conduct him/herself in a manner befitting someone in authority. S/he will respect the rights of other learners and will not abuse such authority bestowed upon him/her through his/her position.
- The carrying, copying and/or reading of offensive material is prohibited.
- Smoking is strictly forbidden. Learners who are found to be smoking on the school premises, or in St Ursula's uniform outside the school grounds, or on any school outing or tour, or in any situation where they may be identifiable as St Ursula's learners, will be subject to disciplinary action. Learners caught in possession of cigarettes, or holding a cigarette, lit or not, will be deemed to be smoking.
- The use of drugs and alcohol is strictly forbidden. Any learner found in the possession of, or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, or participating passively or actively in activities relating to drugs and/or alcohol will be suspended and a disciplinary hearing will be held.
- Any learner found in the possession of a dangerous weapons, such as and not limited to firearms, knives, tazers etc, will be suspended and a disciplinary hearing will be held.

### **2.3 School and class attendance**

Parents/ guardians, learners, teachers and Board of Governors are jointly responsible for ensuring that all learners attend school.

- If a learner does not attend school regularly, the relevant register teacher will report the absence of the learner to the office. The register teacher must keep an accurate register of the learner attendance. The office will contact the parents/guardians of the learner that is absent.
- All learners are to arrive before the official starting time at 07:30 (High School and Primary School). Learners who are late for school will be marked late / absent (after 09:00) as registers are completed at the beginning of each day.
- Absence from a class, without the permission of the relevant register or subject teacher, is prohibited.
- Any absence from school must be covered by an absentee note from a parent/guardian.
- Should a learner be absent for a period of 3 days or longer, this leave of absence must be supported by a letter from a medical doctor.
- Any absence from a formal examination, test or task must be supported by a letter from a medical doctor. The learner will write the test/examination missed on a day arranged by the teacher which could be after school.
- Learners who fail to produce a medical certificate after absenteeism during formal examinations/test/assessment tasks will obtain a mark of "0" (nought) for the particular examination/test/assessment task.
- No learner may leave the school during school hours without a letter from a parent/guardian requesting the release of their child and the permission of the principal/deputy principal.
- Truancy from school is prohibited.
- Attendance of all school masses as well as assemblies is an integral and compulsory part of schooling at St Ursula's.
- Holidays and other appointments should not be arranged during school hours.

### **2.5 Guidelines for an Orderly Environment**

Learners have the right to be taught and the responsibility to:

- Be punctual for school and class.
- Not absent themselves from school or class without permission being sought. Permission will be granted if based on valid reasons.
- Obey school rules and regulations.
- Be correctly attired and groomed in accordance with the school rules.

## 2.6 Guidelines for Learning Environment

Learners have the right to:

- Be taught, to learn, to be informed.
- Be heard and express their own opinions.
- A discrimination and prejudice-free environment and the responsibility to:
  - support the effective learning process.
  - strive towards being proactive, independent, critical, disciplined and creative thinkers.
  - observe, respect and uphold the school rules.
  - display a proactive attitude and enhance the reputation of the School whenever possible.
  - encourage a disruption free learning process.
  - attempt to complete work assigned to them on the time and to the best of their ability.

## 3. Rights of Educators:

### 3.1 The classroom

In the classroom the educator has the right to:

- Respect, which includes:
  - common courtesy
  - greetings
  - attentiveness during lessons
  - use appropriate language at all times
  - no eating, drinking, chewing in the classroom or the corridors
- A classroom environment which is conducive to learning and teaching.
- Learners who commit themselves to the Learning environment.
- Punctual and regular attendance by learners.
- Have their classroom and physical resources (e.g. Notes, textbooks, chalkboards, etc) respected by learners.
- A graffiti and litter-free environment.
- Loitering and/or playing in and around the corridors, stairwells and toilets are forbidden.
- Cheating during examinations, tests and class work is strictly forbidden. Plagiarism either from the Internet or from reference books is also cheating and is a serious offence.

### 3.2 The Sports Field/ Extra-mural activities

Involvement in activities making up the extra-mural programme forms a valuable and integral part of the holistic education of every learner. All learners are therefore expected to become actively involved in at least one sport or cultural and/or service activity.

On the sports field the educator/coach has the right to:

- Respect
- Conservation and maintenance of resources and equipment.
- Expect players to behave in a courteous and sportsmanlike manner – when winning, losing or in the case of alleged bad decisions by the umpire/referee.
- Players who uphold and enhance the reputation of the school at all times.
- Players who respect their opponents.
- Learners who are expected to adopt the correct etiquette pertaining to the specific activity at all times.
- A Learner that has committed him/herself to an activity, is bound by the rules and obligations related to that activity.
- Learner's involvement in a particular activity or sporting code that will span the entire season/duration in which that activity takes place.
- Compulsory attendance of all practices by all learners. Missing a practice without a valid excuse from the learner's parents may result in the learner being suspended from participation in one inter-school league fixture.

- Appropriate kit/uniform will be worn to practices by learners.
- The correct match kit/uniform will be worn to inter-school league fixtures by learners
- Sports and other kit must be carried in an appropriate bag.
- Learners playing in home league fixtures that arrive at the venue in their appropriate sports kit/uniform with their school blazer.
- No valuables must be given to coaches for safe-keeping.

### **3.3 Cultural and Academic Excursions and Activities**

While away on excursions or participating in activities of a cultural or academic nature, the educator has the right to:

- Expect learners to uphold the positive image of the school in dress, behaviour and speech.
- Expect a parent to collect their child when contacted if the learner is suspected of misconduct.
- Expect the learner to abide by the Code of Conduct.
- Invite the learners to participate in the activity. It is the right of the educator to include or exclude any learners by invitation for whom the educator has assumed responsibility.

### **3.4 Transport**

Learners wishing to park motor cycle/motor vehicles on the school grounds must first obtain permission from the school to do so and make use of the areas specifically demarcated for this purpose.

- Learners must hand in a copy of their driver's licence and a letter from their parents requesting permission from the school for the learner to park on the school premises.
- No learner is allowed to transport other learners in his/her vehicle without express permission from the passenger's parents.
- All learners park their vehicles and bikes (pedal or motorised) on the school premises at their own risk.
- Specific areas are provided for the safekeeping of bikes, etc. and must be used by learners.

### **3.5 Valuables and personal belongings**

The school will not be held responsible for theft of or damage to personal belongings on school premises (e.g. cell phones, bags, books and clothing).

- Learners should avoid bringing cell phones, large sums of money, and valuables to school. Cell phones may not be switched on during school hours and must be locked away in the locker, or kept in the school office during the day. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary measures as deemed appropriate by the Principal/deputy principal.
- No cell phones are allowed in class, and will be confiscated for the period of one term. Learners may make use of the office telephone if needed.
- If a parent requests a learner to pay school fees on his/her behalf, such school fees should be paid before the start of the school day.
- All valuables must be locked in the lockers during extra-murals.
- Learners may not bring computer games, iPods, tablets, smart watches or similar electronic devices to school.

#### **4. Responsibilities of Educators:**

The responsibilities of the Educators have been negotiated at international Forums and a Code of Conduct has been established by the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

#### **5. Uniform and Appearance:**

##### **5.1 Dress Code**

- When wearing the school uniform to and from school, the full uniform, including the blazer, must be worn.
- For all sporting extramural activities learners must wear the full school regulation tracksuit and the school regulation golf shirt or the school regulation bottle green shorts and the school regulation golf shirt. For league matches and friendly matches, the learners must wear the appropriate full school sports uniform.
- Skirt length – when kneeling – four fingers from the floor.
- Uniform to be well maintained – no missing buttons, hems, undone, split zips, etc.
- Pants may not be tailored to “skinny fit” style.
- All possessions must be clearly marked. The school cannot be held responsible for the loss, damage, or theft of a learner’s personal belongings.

##### **5.2 Shoes**

- Only regulation black school shoes to be worn, and kept polished and maintained in good repair.
- On days when the learners wear PT uniform plain white takkies / plain white track shoes must be worn.

##### **5.3 Hair**

- GIRLS: hair to be tied back neatly if below collar length. Hair must be clipped back off the face and no heavy fringes are to be worn. All hair slides and ribbons must be the regulation school bottle green/black or white. No gel or oil-based hair products are allowed. Unsuitable hairstyles, dyed or coloured hair will be moderated and rectified at the Discretion of the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- BOYS: short back and sides. No gel or any oil-based hair product is allowed. Unsuitable hairstyles, dyed or coloured hair will be moderated and rectified at the Discretion of the Principal/ Deputy Principal.

##### **5.4 Jewellery**

- No Jewellery other than a plain watch and a medic-alert may be worn.
- Body piercing, other than pierced ears, will not be allowed. Pierced ears: girls may wear studs or sleepers (gold or silver) in pairs with only one earring in each ear lobe.

##### **5.5 Badges**

- Only official school badges and badges of public office may be worn. Badges should be worn on the left lapel of the blazer.
- All high school learners must wear a name badge (supplied by the school).

##### **5.6 Make Up**

- No make-up, coloured nail polish or lip-gloss may be worn.
- No nail polish is allowed in primary school.
- Fingernails must be kept short.

### 5.7 Suitcases

- Learners must have a school regulation black St Ursula's suitcase. No graffiti or decoration on a suitcase is permitted.

### 5.8 Civvies Day

- Learners should be neatly and appropriately dressed. Bare midriffs, strappy tops, short shorts, inappropriate hairstyles and make-up will not be allowed. High heels in Primary school are also prohibited.

### 5.9 Personal Grooming/Hygiene

- Boys must be clean-shaven and no sideburns are allowed.
- Learners are expected to maintain a reasonable standard of hygiene.

## 6. Social media

- The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1988. (COPPA)  
Parents/Guardians should not allow their children under 13 years of age to have any social media accounts or access to any social media accounts. By law, no online company is allowed to gather information from persons under 13 years of age. Facebook has a facility where parents/guardians/teachers can report underage accounts.
- All parents, staff and learners must be aware that any posts on any social media platform are their responsibility and any negative comments and remarks harming the school's image will be dealt with by the disciplinary committee and might have legal repercussions.
- No parent WhatsApp information groups are permitted at our school. All relevant information will be available on the D6.

**DEPUTY PRINCIPAL**

**PRINCIPAL**

#### **Policies pertaining to this document:**

- Discipline Policy
- School Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Policy on Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Plagiarism Policy
- Field Trip Policy
- Pregnancy Policy

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN AS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF READING AND UNDERSTANDING THE CODE OF CONDUCT.ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT

Learner's Full name:	
Grade:	
Signature of Learner (Grade 8-12):	
Signature of Parent/Guardian:	
Date:	