

LEARNER CODE OF CONDUCT

Date original approved:	January 2013	Date Revised:	02/05/2024	Date of next review:	2027
Developed by:	Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC) of the School Governing Body (SGB)				
Approved by:	School Governing Body				
Responsible body:	School Governing Body				
Supporting documents, procedures and forms for this policy:	Legislation (see below) Relevant legislation				
References and legislation:	<p>The South African Schools Act, 1996. (Act No. 84 of 1996) as amended</p> <p>The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996) as amended</p> <p>National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996)</p> <p>The Gauteng Schools Education Act, 1995 (Act No. 6 of 1995)</p> <p>Regulations for Misconduct of Learners at Public Schools and Disciplinary Proceedings, 2001 (General Notice 2591 of 2001)</p> <p>Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools Government Notice No. 1040, October 2001, as amended</p> <p>Guidelines for the Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners, General Notice 776 of 1998</p>				
Scope:	SGB, School Management Team (SMT), Educator Staff, Learners, Parents				
Expiry date of the policy:	2027, provided there are no amendments or updates.				
Objectives of policy:	Promote awareness of the School's code of conduct to all stakeholders.				

ARBOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNER CODE OF CONDUCT

1. DEFINITIONS

GDE	The Gauteng Department of Education.
SGB	School Governing Body.
SASA	South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996)
The School	Arbor Primary School; that is declared a public, fee paying school in terms of SASA and advocates English as its main medium of instruction with a Christian Based Ethos.
Educator	Any person who teaches, educates or trains learners at the school who has been appointed by the GDE or the SGB of the school.
Principal	Person, usually an educator, appointed by the GDE to manage all educational and administrative functions of the school who is accountable to the GDE and SGB as determined by SASA and other legislation. The professional management of the school lies with the principal.
Deputy Principal	An educator appointed as the Academic Manager of a school.
Learner	Any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of SASA.
Parent	a) The biological parent or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a learner; or b) The person legally entitled to custody of a learner.
SMT	The School Management Team which consists of the Principal, Deputy Principal and Department Heads.
GH	Grade Head – educator who oversees a grade.
DC	Disciplinary Committee composed of members of the SGB and SMT.

2. PURPOSE OF THE LEARNER CODE OF CONDUCT

The main purpose of the Learner Code of Conduct is to ensure that all learners, parents, educators, School Management Team and School Governing Body members are informed of the rules and regulations contained in the Code. Furthermore, all stakeholders must be informed of the disciplinary procedures that may be taken against learners who do not adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Educators at the school subscribe to the Educator's Code of Conduct and undertake to:

- a) Be punctual.
- b) Manage learner performance effectively and motivate learners to achieve realistic and meaningful personal goals.
- c) Always show respect and be professional towards colleagues.
- d) Administer discipline correctly and with dignity.
- e) Be sensitive to the needs of their learners and address learning difficulties in a positive manner.

- f) Praise, encourage, recognise and reward learners who strive to achieve.
- g) Create a classroom climate which is based on a learning partnership that makes education both relevant and stimulating.
- h) Set a positive example for their learners to follow.
- i) Be aware of camera surveillance in the classrooms, corridors and play area and action can be taken according to visual and verbal evidence.

Our school prides itself on having good relations with the community, its learners and their parents. While parents may expect the school and its educators to provide the best education possible with the resources available to the school, parents must also assume responsibility for their children to assist the school in achieving this goal.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS:

Parents have the responsibility to:

- a) Actively support the efforts of the school and its educators to teach their children.
- b) Fully involve themselves in school activities.
- c) Make positive suggestions and contributions to improve the school's educational process and the learning environment.
- d) Support the disciplinary structure and procedures of the school.
- e) Encourage their children to participate fully in school and extra-mural activities.
- f) Participate in the learning process and assist their children with homework, provide encouragement, check results and communicate freely with the school.
- g) Not expect the school to meet their child's every need.
- h) Ensure that the learner is in attendance of all compulsory attendance functions and activities, and that timekeeping requirements are observed.
- i) Teach their children to accept responsibility for their actions.
- j) Read and discuss all communication from the school with their child/ren.
- k) Ensure that their child attend school regularly and arrives on time for school.

In terms of the S.A. Constitution, every learner has the right to education. The school strives to provide the educational opportunities that its learners and the community deserve. Learners, however, must also recognise that they have responsibilities to their parents, the school, educators, their fellow learners, and themselves.

RESPONSIBILITY OF LEARNERS:

Learners, therefore, must also recognise, accept and comply with the school rules and conditions of enrolment. Learners must:

- a) Comply with instructions and general rules of the school.
- b) Behave responsibly and not endanger the safety, welfare and rights of others.
- c) Respect and care for the property of the school and others.

- d) Maintain sound relations with others at school, be courteous and respect the dignity and self-worth of others.
- e) Be punctual and observe the timekeeping practices of the school.
- f) Demonstrate a positive attitude towards the opportunity to learn and be diligent in their efforts to learn.
- g) Behave honestly and conduct themselves with integrity.
- h) Students are expected to demonstrate good behaviour and courtesy.
- i) Accept legitimate disciplinary action taken against them as being necessary and corrective.
- j) Ensure that they arrive at school on time and attend school regularly and don't take absent days unless genuinely sick.

The school has several rules which define the kinds of behaviour expected of its learners. Learners are advised of these rules and are expected to conduct themselves within the rules provided.

3. SCHOOL RULES

3.1 SCHOOL HOURS

School gates opens at 07:00 and parents are requested not to drop learners at school before this time. Gates are closed at the official start of school at 07:30. Parents are requested to drop their children off on time.

The school day starts at 07:30 and the first bell rings at 07:28.

The school day ends for:

Grade 1 & 2	13:00
Grade 3	13:20
Grade 4 – 7	13:50

At the end of the school day:

- Learners may **NOT** wait outside the school gates.
- Learners must wait in the allocated areas after school hours.
- Learners must be collected by 14:15 after school unless involved in an extra mural activity.

3.2 TRAFFIC

- The riding of bicycles, skateboards, etc. on school property is forbidden.
- Learners are not allowed to be near the car park during the school day, before or after school.

3.3 ETHOS

- Learners must uphold and maintain the ethos of the school.
- Learners need to show basic good manners towards their peers, educators and visitors to the school.

3.4 RELIGION

The school recognises the diverse culture and religion and makes every attempt to facilitate understanding and acceptance of beliefs. We are always open to discussion and growth in

understanding of culture. The CAPS syllabus incorporates the study of various religions and as thus is part of the National Policy, therefore we expect learners to participate in the programme.

3.5 CLASSROOMS

- Learners must greet an educator who enters their classroom.
- Learners must show respect for others and their property, both personal and communal.
- A learner will be held responsible for any damage incurred to school property and property of others.

3.6 BREAK TIME

- Learners may only play in the demarcated areas during breaks.

3.7 GENERAL BEHAVIOUR

- Rough playing is not allowed.
- Bullying is strictly forbidden.
- Any form of initiation will not be tolerated.
- Littering is not allowed.
- No eating or drinking during lessons or on corridors and netball courts. The chewing of gum at school is not permitted.
- Tuck shop visits only at break.
- **LEARNERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE CELLPHONES OR ANY OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, i.e. SMART WATCHES ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES.**

3.8 HOMEWORK

- Must be done daily.
- Reading cards or diaries must be signed by parents daily.
- Diaries must be shown to parents daily.
- Newsletters or any other correspondence to be read must be passed on to parents.
- Revision and studying for tests and exams form a vital part of the homework process.

3.9 ABSENTEEISM

- Learners are not permitted to be absent without permission. If absent, parents need to inform the office of the school by no later than 09:00 on the same day.
- A letter of explanation from the parent is expected. Space is also provided in the diary to leave a note on absence.
- Medical and dental appointments must be made outside school hours where possible.
- A learner will not be excused from classes for holiday reasons, unless the parents have applied in writing to the Principal and have received permission.
- Medical certificates are expected if the learner is absent from tests or exams or from school for more than 2 days.
- Parents are requested to inform the school in writing, in advance, of intended absence for religious holidays. The learner will be marked absent.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that educators are informed of time missed to ensure all work missed is completed or done prior to their return to school.

3.10 HAIR

The image of the school is more important than the fashion consciousness of the individual. In an open and democratic society, we like to acknowledge diversity to the greatest possible extent, so we do make provision to recognise our diverse religious and cultural beliefs.

No substance (gel, hairspray, wax, sugar water, conditioner, cream, colouring, highlights, etc.) may be worn to school. Hair may not be dyed or bleached.

The school prefers not to enter into arguments about hair.

Boys

- Hair should be cut in a schoolboy style of short back and sides. Neat with no exaggerated or fashion hairstyles.
- Facial hair to be shaved when becoming prominent.

Girls

- Hair should be neat, tied up and worn away from the face. Hair control devices (alice bands, ribbons, bobbles, etc.) should be white, purple or black in colour. Braided hair must be tied up.
- No fashion hair accessories to be worn to school.
- No makeup is to be worn to school. No nail polish on fingers or toes.

3.11 BATHROOMS

- Learners may not eat or play in the bathrooms.
- Learners are to use the toilets on their floor during school time. They must use toilets designated to their grade at breaks. After school, only downstairs bathrooms may be used.

3.12 STAIRWELLS AND BUILDINGS

- No running is allowed in the school building, on corridors or on the stairwells.
- Learners may not play on corridors, stairs or in the classrooms. The playgrounds are there for this purpose.
- Learners are not allowed to eat on the corridors, stairwells or netball surfaces.
- If learners drop their lunch / tuck, it must be picked up immediately before it gets tramped on and becomes untidy.
- Learners are not allowed in the hall or on the stage unless under the direct supervision of a responsible adult.
- Learners may not be at the cleaner's quarters unless sent by an educator.

3.13 PLAYGROUND

- Playgrounds must be kept tidy and learners must pick up litter when they see it.
- Dangerous games are not allowed. Due consideration must be given to others using the playground.
- Learners may not bring toys, footballs, rugby balls, bats, computer games, etc. to school. They are bound to get lost. No ball games are allowed at break time with the exception of four square in allocated areas.
- Swapping and selling and other 'trading' is not allowed at school, unless learners belong to the entrepreneurs' organisation, and have prior permission from the responsible educator.

3.14 CAMERA SURVEILLANCE

All classrooms, corridors and play areas are under camera surveillance.

3.15 AFTER HOURS

- Learners are not allowed on the school premises after hours or on weekends, unless otherwise arranged by an educator or the Principal.

3.16 EXTRA-MURALS

- Learners must wear the prescribed kit to matches and PT uniform to practices.
- Parents must supply a letter if a child cannot attend a practice or match.
- Kit supplied by the school for matches must be returned clean and timeously.

4. COLLECTIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Alleged misconduct by a group of learners, where the infringements are of a similar nature or with a related intent, is considered as being collective misconduct.

4.1 Generally, collective misconduct is more effectively dealt with on a collective basis. An (informal) investigation into the alleged misconduct is conducted initially with all the learners concerned. Dependent upon the outcome of this investigation, informal or formal disciplinary action may be considered appropriate by the responsible person at the school.

4.2 Should the infringement be serious, a single **disciplinary hearing** will be conducted with the learners concerned and their parents present. The same procedures are provided for in the Disciplinary Process and are followed in a collective hearing.

4.3 Despite the use of collective procedures, individual learners will still be provided (during or immediately after the hearing process) with the opportunity of demonstrating that their own circumstances may be different to that of the group, and to indicate why they should be treated differently.

In certain cases, however, it might be considered appropriate by the school to conduct separate investigations or hearings with individual learners. The school reserves the right to exercise its option to conduct individual or collective procedures.

4.4 The same provisions set out regarding **appeal procedures** applies in the case of collective disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to initiate a separate or collective / group review process to deal with any appeals received.

5. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

This guideline and the attached Disciplinary Code set out the broader principles of fair discipline at the school. The Disciplinary Code clearly defines the appropriate action to be taken regarding various misconduct or infringement by learners.

The School Principal and educators are entitled to apply disciplinary action that they believe is appropriate in the circumstances, within the guidelines provided in this procedure.

Various forms of informal and formal disciplinary measures may be initiated by the school. The severity of the action by the school will depend on the circumstances, the seriousness of the infringement and any mitigating or aggravating factors being of relevance.

The disciplinary measure or penalty applied in response to the learner's misconduct will, therefore, generally require the educator or Principal to exercise their judgement in deciding on the appropriate and fair action to be taken.

Disciplinary action that may be applied by the school, in order of severity, includes:-

5.1 INFORMAL ACTION

- a) Counselling of the learner by the educator, Grade Head or Department Head.
- b) Detention of time punishment for the learner.
- c) Parental assistance requested in the matter.
- d) Informal action is generally applied at educator level, without a formal investigation being necessary.
- e) Repetition of a minor, similar or related offence will, however, result in progressively more severe action being taken; particularly where a clear pattern or behaviour trend is indicated by a learner's continued misconduct.
- f) Nevertheless, a serious first incident may justify a formal and severe penalty and mitigate against the imposition of a lesser form of action. Such formal action will depend on the nature of the incident.

5.2 FORMAL ACTION

- a) Daily report from educators.
- b) A warning recorded in observation file of the learner or written monitoring in the learner's homework diary.
- c) Parental contact and an interview with parents, generally after the school has conducted an investigation.
- d) Suspension of the learner for a period of time from classes or from attending school pending the convening of a formal disciplinary hearing.

Discipline will, wherever feasible and effective, be applied progressively.

Warnings issued by the school will be noted on the learners' record. Copies of warnings issued will also be provided to the parents wherever possible.

6. DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

The procedure summarises the disciplinary process that will be followed by the school when disciplinary action is considered appropriate.

- 6.1 Infringements that are not considered serious, or do not require formal disciplinary action in the opinion of the learner's responsible educator, can be dealt with directly by the educator. These are

not generally recorded on the learners' record but may still require communication with the learners' parents.

Various forms of informal action, or punishment available, are outlined in Disciplinary Measures and can be implemented by the educator without the consent of the Department Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.

- 6.2 When an infringement occurs, which requires formal disciplinary action, the educator concerned (or another complainant) will generally initiate the disciplinary process by completing a **NOTICE OF COMPLAINT**. This document may be supplemented by any additional information or statements to clarify or adequately detail the facts surrounding the infringement.
- 6.3 The educator, Grade Head or Department Head, if required, will investigate an infringement reported or a Notice of Complaint received to decide upon appropriate corrective measures. This investigation generally takes the form of an **INFORMAL INQUIRY**, which includes an opportunity for the learner to state his / her response to the complaint. If, after investigation, the infringement is confirmed and considered to be of a nature which does not indicate that severe action may be appropriate, the responsible educator, Grade Head or Department Head may counsel the learner and issue an **appropriate WARNING** to the learner(s) concerned.
- 6.4 When a serious infringement occurs, or in the case of repeated lesser infringements and formal disciplinary action not having the desired effect, a **NOTIFICATION OF A FORMAL DISCIPLINARY HEARING** is given to the parents of the learner concerned. This notification must provide sufficient information to ensure that the learner / parents are properly informed of the alleged complaint, the seriousness of the allegations, and the schools intention to convene a formal hearing to investigate the infringement. This hearing will be handled by the Disciplinary Committee of the school.
- 6.5 The conducting of the formal disciplinary hearing is of great importance and is chaired by an objective member of the Governing Body. The chairperson will be responsible for leading and managing the hearing process, and making the critical decisions as to:
 - 6.5.1 The guilt or innocence of the learner relative to the allegations made;
 - 6.5.2 The appropriate penalty / action to be taken, after due consideration of mitigating and aggravating factors.
- 6.6 After the completion of the hearing, any decision made (regarding guilt or innocence and whether to impose disciplinary action or not) will be formally communicated, and supported, by the hearing chairperson. This notification of the outcome, preferably distributed within 5 days of the hearing being completed, will include a reminder that the learner / parents have the **right to appeal** against any action decided upon, within another 5 days of the hearing.
- 6.7 There are cases of severe misconduct by learners of such a nature that the Disciplinary Committee does not have the jurisdiction to implement disciplinary procedures. In such cases, the matter will be referred to the District Office of the GDE for further investigation.

Copies of all documentation must be retained by the school for record and safekeeping purposes.

Disciplinary Code

This code will keep a record of misdemeanours and infringements on the rules and expectations of acceptable behaviour of learners. Parents must see this as a notification that their child needs assistance and support in these areas of concern.

Each year a learner starts on a clean slate with a score of 0 points. Each time the learner violates a code of conduct, a negative score will be attached to a running total.

Level of Discipline and Possible Forms of Discipline

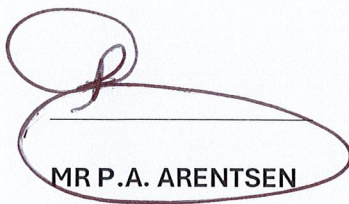
One or more of these forms of discipline may be given at the discretion of the educator or SMT.

- 15 Points – Department Head. Issue letter with punishment. Parent contact. Break detention, removal of social functions.
- 20 Points – Deputy Principal. Issue letter with punishment. Parent contact. Detention. Removal of social functions. Counselling.
- 25 Points – Principal. Issue letter with punishment. Parent contact. Principal detention. Removal of social functions, tour & farewell. Recommendation for disciplinary / suspension.

Violations


LEVEL 1 (-1 Point)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence from extra-murals without valid reason / letter • Appearance: Jewellery / Hair / Nails / Clothing • Arrogant / bad mannered / discourteous • Blatantly disobedient • Chewing gum • Disregard for instructions • Disrespect towards others • Disruptive / noisy behaviour • Eat in classroom / passage • Excessively noisy or unruly behaviour • Found in a prohibited area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improper use of school property / property of others • Keeps talking in class • Late for class • Leave suitcase at wrong location • Littering • Misbehaving in assembly • Riding skateboard / bicycle on school grounds • Running on passages • Shouting out • Unsuitably dressed for sports match • Throwing objects in class
LEVEL 1 (-2 Points)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backchat educators • Bad manners in public / at school activity • Baiting an educator • Dishonest / lying / unfair play • Fails to attend classes during the day • Interrupt lessons • Leave class without permission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost diary • Mocking friends / trying to be funny / malicious teasing • Playing in classroom • Poor sportsmanship • Spitting • Throwing objects from balcony or outside • Unhygienic habits & improper use of toilet area • Misconduct during detention

LEVEL 2 (-3 Points)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bunking (including subs) • Cell phone / electronic devices at school • Damaging school property / textbooks • Dangerous behaviour / endangering others • Fraud – forgery of parent’s signature or any documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimidation / other forms of invasive behaviour • Leave school premises without permission • Playing obscene / demeaning games • Swearing / abusive language
LEVEL 3 (-5 Points)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault / fighting • Bullying • Cheating in test / exam • Inappropriate material, literature or behaviour • Pornography • Possession of dangerous weapons • Possession or use of drugs/alcohol/vape/e-cigarettes • Racism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual harassment • Smoking / Vape / e-cigarettes on premises in or out of school uniform • Smoking / Vape / e-cigarettes outside premises in school uniform • Theft • Vandalism • Use of any substance that has impact on learner’s cognitive and emotional behaviour



MR P.A. ARENTSEN

PRINCIPAL



MR S.C. MDLALOSE

SGB CHAIRPERSON



MRS K.P.N. MORIFI

IDSO

ADDENDUM TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LEARNERS

As per BELA ACT

1. Corporal Punishment

The act clarifies the prohibition on corporal punishment by expanding its definition to include acts causing physical discomfort, not just overt physical violence.

2. Inclusive Code of Conduct

To ensure an inclusive environment for all learners. A public school's code of conduct must accommodate diverse cultural backgrounds, different religious practices and be considerate of each learners' medical needs. If a child needs to deviate from the code of conduct due to religious or cultural reasons, an application must be made in writing to the SGB.

3. Age-Appropriate Discipline

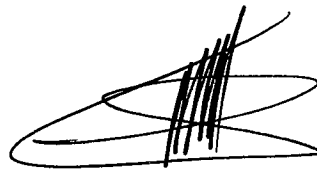
Disciplinary action should be handled in a manner that is suitable for the learners' age and prioritises their well-being.

4. Substance Abuse / Suspension and Expulsion from Public Schools

Refined the provisions relating to drug possession, dangerous objects and other harmful activities on school grounds, providing clear penalties for violations / non-compliance that should include suspension or dismissal from their positions.

Approved:


Mrs C.J. Liebenberg
Principal



Mr S.C. Mdlalose
SGB Chairperson

