

1. The Code of Conduct

The main purpose of this Code of Conduct is to promote constructive, respectful, and inclusive behaviour in our learners through ongoing positive reinforcement by staff. Reward for good behaviour is intended to encourage the pupils to realise their full potential within a healthy, balanced, and safe environment.

In line with the philosophy of a commitment to excellence, mutual respect between the school and its pupils and an age appropriate and dignified interaction is always expected. This code applies to both Pre-primary and Foundation Phase and the age of the child will always be taken into consideration as behaviour is managed. The aim is always to develop the skills of children in managing their behaviour in a respectful and inclusive manner.

The School supports a partnership between pupils, teachers, and parents/guardians to fulfil the obligations to teach learners the role of responsible citizenship in a school community.

Pecanwood College prides itself on having good relationships with parents. Education is a partnership that involves parents, teachers, and the school community. The importance of a good working relationship is a critical component in ensuring children receive the best education possible. We welcome parents to participate fully in school life.

2. Value and brand statement

Pecanwood Colleges inspires and creates opportunities for the child to achieve their best. The schools aim to create an emotionally intelligent and caring learning culture providing a solid foundation for the future of the pupil. There is a focus on positive behaviour and high ethical conscience.

Celebrating the diverse multicultural South African community, pupils have the opportunity to widen their view of South Africa and the world. The values of inclusion and the rejection of harm to others, discrimination and prejudice lies at the centre of the education we offer. We enable each child to enter into and engage with life as an independent and well-rounded human being.

3. Applicability

The Code of Conduct applies to all pupils who are registered at the school whether they are on the school premises, representing the school or identified as a member of the school

community in their personal capacities, in person or online, including social media. References to the School include all the school's activities and places of presence – physically and digitally.

4. Rationale for the code and its provisions.

The Code of Conduct seeks to protect the learning environment and the well-being of those at the school so that positive learning and development can take place. The Code of Conduct aims to maintain or restore just, inclusive relationships and maintain an engaged, respectful learning environment.

As such, engagements in terms of the Code of Conduct as well as violations of that code draw on the principles of restorative justice. This always means that the process of managing the Code of Conduct is guided by the following:

- a) The processes will be guided by competent and impartial adults who enjoy the trust of the school community and who are conscious of, and responsive to, power imbalances, discrimination, and the developmental needs of young people. The sanctions imposed by adults are equally limited and applied with high levels of transparency.
- b) Those that have been harmed will not be compelled to participate in processes they do not wish to participate in and will be protected and supported when they do, except where a law compels otherwise; in which case, full support will be given for their participation.
- c) The details of any process are confidential, although the sanction may not be. Consent is needed to share information provided, other than the sanction.
- d) The process will be respectful.
- e) The Code of Conduct seeks to ensure a healthy teaching and learning environment characterised by respect, diversity, and inclusion; violations of the code undermine the rights of others to enjoy such an environment. In considering sanctions, it is imperative to consider how the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of those impacted by the violation will be protected or restored.
- f) The process will give attention to genuine remorse and personal growth and development.
- g) The process will make the obligations of the offending pupil clear to both those more immediately impacted and the community where appropriate and necessary for the restoration of an inclusive and respectful environment.



- h) The process will aim to achieve transformative outcomes that equip pupils for their futures and that best serve societal interests.
- i) There are some offences where the penalty cannot be reintegration into the school environment of the pupil who offended because it does not serve the needs of the dignity, safety, or emotional wellbeing of others in the school community.

5. Expectations

5.1 Respect

- Treat everyone with kindness and consideration.
- Listen when others are speaking and wait your turn.
- Use polite words such “please”, “thank you”, and “excuse me.”

5.2 Responsibility

- Take care of your belongings and school property.
- Complete your tasks and homework to the best of your ability.
- Be punctual and prepared for school and class activities.

5.3 Safety

- Follow school rules and directions from teachers and staff.
- Play safely and be mindful of others on the playground.
- Report any dangerous situations to an adult immediately.
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5.4 Honesty

- Always tell the truth.
- Admit when you make a mistake and try to make it right.
- Do your own work and avoid cheating or copying.

5.5 Kindness

- Be a good friend to others.
- Include everyone in games and activities.
- Help those who are in need or who may be feeling sad.

6. General Rules and requirements



Presence at school

- a) Pupils are required to attend school on every official school day unless incapacitated and authorised to stay away by a parent/guardian.
- b) Pupils must arrive punctually at school, each class, and all scheduled activities, and remain until the official end of that activity.
- c) Pupils must follow the school protocols on late coming or absence from a scheduled activity or school day.
- d) Pupils may not leave the school premises without permission when they are expected to be on the premises.
- e) Pupils may not leave events or activities without permission until they have officially concluded.

6.1 Duty of care including the duty not to cause hurt or offence or exclusion or to damage dignity.

- a) It is the responsibility of each member of the community not to cause or allow hurt, offence, exclusion, or any action that would damage the dignity of any other person.
- b) Engagement and disagreement are encouraged but must be expressed in such a manner as to remain focused on the topic of the disagreement and not on the person with whom the disagreement is. As such, labelling/name calling or ridiculing of an individual for their actions or statements is prohibited.
- c) Pupils should refrain from the use of profanities, including those terms which would cause offense to members of religious groups.
- d) Slurs are prohibited. It is recognised that previously weaponised slurs have been adopted in groups they were used against, to remove their power to hurt. But, in these instances, they are not then intended to be used to cause hurt, offence or exclusion to anyone else. This will be taken into consideration when the use of slurs is managed.
- e) Pupils should establish the truth/authenticity/veracity of information before sharing it and are accountable if the information they share is later shown to be false.



- f) Pupils are not prohibited from sharing information of an individual already shared by that individual; however, when sharing information, pupils are required to do so in a manner that is respectful. Privacy is important and thus pupils should get permission to share information that was originally privately shared.
- g) Pupils must not damage, steal or alter the property of the School or others whether through neglect or deliberate acts of damage or vandalism.
- h) Pupils must not steal the property of others – including their intellectual property through acts such as cheating, copying and plagiarism.

7. Inclusion, justice, and dignity

Anti-stereotype, anti-discrimination, and anti-prejudice

- a) The School requires members of its community to, in particular, actively work against the legacy of racism and thus will not tolerate any conduct that seeks to undermine the dignity of any person based on race or that actively discriminates against or prejudices any person on the basis of race.
- b) The School requires the same standard of care in relation to other stereotypes, prejudices, biases, and discrimination. The School is an environment of respect, diversity, and inclusion.
- c) Any discriminatory conduct, in person or online, including bullying, intimidation, victimisation, demeaning and belittling, exclusion and other forms of bigotry and prejudice will not be tolerated.
- d) No person can be discriminated against, as a result of prejudice or stereotype or bias, on the basis of any personal characteristic including but not limited to race, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, ability/disability, religion, health status, language, socio-economic status and culture.
- e) Any conduct is prohibited which targets the characteristics of a person and demeans, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, or shames them.
- f) Any bullying activity is prohibited. This includes any behaviour that intends to make others submit through threats of violence or social or other exclusion.
- g) Any exclusion or preference on any unfair grounds, whether formal or informal, is prohibited.

8. Academic Conduct

- a) Pupils must comply with any specific academic policies of the School that may exist in addition to this Code of Conduct.
- b) Pupils must be respectful to teachers and other instructors including, but not limited to, following reasonable instructions, and conducting themselves as required by the person in charge so as not to undermine their own learning or that of anyone else.
- c) Pupils are expected to devote appropriate time and effort to academic studies.
- d) Active participation in class and class activities is required, including necessary participation in group activities.
- e) Deadlines and standards for homework and assignments must be met.
- f) Pupils may not disrupt the learning of others.

9. Coherence between at school and out of school conduct

The School holds a student's off campus conduct to the same standards and requirements as for their conduct at school. It follows that any conduct not permitted at school, which is carried out outside of school and could in any way result in harm to the reputation of the school or the wellbeing of any member of the school community or broader society is considered a violation of the code.

10. Bullying, campaigns of exclusion or marginalisation, belittling, physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual assault or threats of any of these.

- a) Bullying is not permitted. Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.
- b) No one may assault, harass, intimidate, or threaten to assault, harass, or intimidate anyone.



- c) Any unwanted, repeated, direct, or indirect verbal, physical, social, sexual, or psychological behaviour that is intended to cause another pupil emotional and/or physical harm is not permitted.
- d) Any efforts to influence others to behave negatively towards other people will be considered as equivalent to having acted accordingly oneself.

11. Inappropriate Play

Inappropriate play is any behavior that is deemed harmful, hurtful, infringes on the privacy rights of an individual child and that goes beyond normal sexual development.

Action on first incident:

1. Parents of the children involved are informed by the teacher.
2. A meeting will be set up with the parents, class teacher and HOD to discuss the incident.
3. Parents will be encouraged to discuss issues around privacy and appropriate behaviour with their children.
4. The teacher will address privacy in class discussions.
5. Each incident will be dealt with individually and addressed appropriately, making the approach case specific. The protection of both children is important, and confidentiality will be maintained.
6. The teachers will be tasked with close supervision of the children involved.
7. The parents will be contacted regularly to establish if a further meeting needs to be rescheduled. If the children are still talking about the incident, Play Therapy may be recommended by the Principal.
8. The incident, communication and meetings with parents will be documented and kept on record.

Action should another incident occur:

1. Parents of the children involved will again be informed by the teacher /HOD.
2. A professional may be consulted depending on the nature of the repeated behaviour.
3. Any outside assessment will be for the parent's account.
4. The duration and process will be advised by the professional consulted.



12. Biting (Pre-Primary)

- Biting is a common behaviour that may occur amongst young children. The need or motivation for one child to bite another is just part of some children's developmental journey, where they do not yet have the words to sufficiently communicate common emotions such as anger, frustration or need.
- Young children often do not have the coping mechanisms, nor the self-regulation skills which adults and older children have that help us to diffuse and express our emotions in socially acceptable ways. Young children may resort to biting, which is upsetting for adults, but at the same time, developmentally normal.
- Children bite for many reasons and we aim to handle any biting incident with respect and sensitivity for all involved. It is the school's policy to deal with each biting incident on a case-by-case basis making sure that parents involved are kept up to date with what is happening, but at the same time respecting the confidentiality of the children involved. This ultimately means that we are not able to divulge the identity of any child involved in a biting incident.

The most common reasons for biting are:

- Teething and Painful Gums – swelling gums can be painful and cause discomfort; this can be relieved by biting or chewing.
- Physical Exploration – Young children explore the world around them using their senses and do not always know the difference between gnawing on a toy and biting someone.
- They do not yet have the words to sufficiently communicate common emotions such as anger, frustration or need.
- Understanding cause & effect; bite to get a reaction.

Procedure:

We aim to act quickly and efficiently when dealing with any case of biting.
In the event of a biting incident:

1. The child who has been bitten will be the priority and should be comforted and given reassurance.
2. Once the child is calm staff should check for any visual injury and the child should receive any necessary first Aid treatment such as disinfectant and icepack
3. The staff member who witnessed the incident needs to document the incident for all children involved.
4. The HOD needs to be informed.
5. Parents of both children involved will be informed.
6. Staff are not allowed to disclose the biter or who your child has bitten. Very young children do not bite maliciously, they bite because they do not know how else to act or react. Whilst most parents understand this, there are cases in which parents of the bitten child feel angry about the incident. Conversely, the parents/carers of a child who bites

feel very upset and sometimes guilty about the situation. Revealing identities in these emotionally charged circumstances would be unfair and serve no real purpose.

Action to be taken for repeated incidents:

1. If biting persists, parents will be called in to discuss the behaviour.
2. If parent counselling is deemed necessary, a referral can be made for a session with the School counsellor.

13. School dress codes, uniforms, school symbols and associated matters.

13.1 Activity specific

- a) The School reserves the right to have more stringent requirements for events where safety is an issue, such as sport. These must be complied with.
- b) The School reserves the right to have more stringent requirements for pupils representing the School in events and activities and for formal occasions. Where these exist, they must be stipulated.
- c) Pupils are expected to comply with the requirements set and communicated.

13.2 Hair

- a) Hair or braids should not impede a pupil's ability to engage academically or safely in sport, so it should not cover the eyes, and should not swing freely with beads or other attachments if there is possibility of, for example, beads hitting another player in the eye.
- b) Hair colour should be a natural shade. Where a pupil dyes their hair, the colour should be a naturally occurring hair colour such as black, brown, auburn, blonde.

13.3 Jewellery

- a) A single simple earring may be worn in each ear.
- b) Pupils who are required or wish to wear a bracelet, necklace, or other item of clothing for

religious or cultural reasons may do so.

13.4 Uniform

- a) Uniform and “home/personal clothing” should not be mixed unless expressly permitted by the school uniform guidelines.
- b) Uniform should be worn in line with the stipulated requirements and must be clean and neat.
- c) Pupils can select the items of clothing they wish to wear from the approved list of voluntary items, but they are expected to have all required compulsory uniform items.

13.5 Disruptive Behaviour

Disruptive behaviour detracts from the full benefit of the school programme and will result in consequences. The following behaviours are considered disruptive:

- Requires constant individual attention from staff.
- Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults or self.
- Disrespects people.
- Disrespects school property.
- Consistently disobeys school and classroom rules.
- Verbally threatens other students/staff.
- Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the group.

13.6 Responsibilities and rights of the School

- a) Documenting all negative behaviour.
- b) Reminding children of expectations and limits.
- c) Facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes.
- d) Redirecting behaviour when this seems potentially effective.
- e) Removing a child from the situation in order to diffuse it.

- f) Responding sympathetically and acknowledging feelings.
- g) Counselling children individually about their behaviour.
- h) Establishing natural, logical consequences.
- i) Having a formal or informal parent meeting to discuss concerns and develop a plan of action.
- j) Accessing outside resources for help such as Educational psychologist or other allied professionals.
- k) Depending on the severity of the behaviour, the school reserves the right to suspend the child for a time to be determined.
- l) Further to this, should the behaviour not be remediated, the school may ask the child to leave.

Rewards

Positive behaviour and adherence to the Code of Conduct will be recognised through:

- Praise and encouragement from teachers.
- Stickers, stamps, or other small rewards.
- Special privileges or responsibilities.
- Recognition in class or school assemblies.

This Code of conduct must be cognizant of the procedures and processes followed by the Intersen Phase and High school phase Code of conduct.