



Durban Girls' High School

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LEARNERS

1. Preamble

This Code of Conduct clarifies what is expected of a Durban Girls' High School learner. It is intended to foster a learning environment that is positive, progressive and ordered, that nurtures self-discipline, and provides every learner with opportunities to realise her potential in preparation for life in a democratic and multi-cultural society.

Durban Girls' High School learners are expected, in abiding by the Code of Conduct, to conduct themselves in a conscientious and responsible manner, and with honesty and integrity at all times. Such conduct entails:

- Respect for authority
- Respect for others
- Respect for the environment
- Respect for school property and resources
- Self-respect
- Loyalty
- Consideration of the needs of others
- Diligent attendance
- Punctuality
- The use of common sense

The implementation and upholding of the Code of Conduct are the joint responsibility of the Governing Body, the Principal and Staff, the Parents and the Learners of Durban Girls' High School, all of whom together make up a school community that aspires to excellence in all matters related to meeting the aspirations of the school mission statement.

2. Mission Statement

"In our pursuit of excellence, we adopt a holistic approach to the individual, which optimizes full potential for life in a multi-cultural society".

3. Scope of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is in force:

- On the school property of Durban Girls' High School, prior to, during and after regular school hours; and
- At all official school events, including school tours. This applies for the duration of these events, whether on the school property or elsewhere; and
- At all times when the learner is dressed in the school uniform or school sports kit or is recognisable as a learner of Durban Girls' High School, whether on the school property or elsewhere.

Acceptable norms of behaviour are expected from all learners at all times under the scope of this Code of Conduct.

4. Attendance

- 4.1. School attendance is compulsory for all learners on all official school days, for the full duration of the school day. The school may under special circumstances and from time to time, grant permission for girls not to attend school on specific days. Parents will be informed of this in writing. Learners may not be absent even with parental permission unless they are genuinely ill.
- 4.2. If a learner is ill and cannot attend school, it is necessary for a parent to telephone the secretary. The day the learner returns to school she must bring a letter from the parent and hand this in to the register teacher. The absentee letter must be addressed to the Principal and:
- Be dated and signed by a parent;
 - Explain the absence;
 - Give the date/s of the absence; and
 - Clearly indicate the learner's name and register class.
- It is the learner's responsibility to get the letter from the parent; and to catch up on the work missed during the absence.
- 4.3. A learner who needs to leave school for a period during the official school day must bring a letter, written by a parent, to school and give this letter to the Deputy Principal by 07h30. This letter must contain the contact number of the parent and state the reason for the request for a period of absence. The learner must be collected from the front office. If a parent is not fetching his/her daughter the parent must include the name and ID number of the person who is collecting her. This will be checked when she is fetched. When the learner leaves she must report to the front office. All exeat slips must be signed by the parent before the learner leaves the school premises. If a parent/identified representative cannot fetch the learner, the learner will not be granted permission to leave school on her own or to walk home alone.

Exeat permission will only be granted for reasons the school deems to be valid.

- 4.4. If a learner takes ill during official school hours, she must report to her teacher to get a "Permission to Leave the Room/Sickroom Permission" form which the learner must then give to the secretary in charge of the sickroom. The learner should not be accompanied to the sickroom, unless unable to walk by herself. If the secretary in charge of the sickroom assesses that the learner should go home, the school will contact a parent and issue the necessary exeat form. Learners may under no circumstances phone their parents and ask to be fetched.

Admission to the sickroom is not allowed during the first and last period of the day, nor during the two breaks.

- 4.5. Attendance at extra curricular commitments is compulsory.

5. Punctuality

- 5.1. For School:

The school day starts with a registration period and girls must be seated in their registration classes by 07h40. Classrooms can be entered if the registration teacher is present before 07h40.

Girls arriving late to school must either report to the Prefect on duty at the gate of entrance, or failing this, to the front office.

Coming late to school is disruptive and learners will be required to attend a 'late comers' punishment which could involve detention.

- 5.2. For Lessons and Meetings:

Changes between lessons must be effected via the fastest route. Learners must leave the playground promptly as the bell rings at the end of break.

- 5.3. For extra curricular activities: learners must report timeously.

6. General Behaviour

A learner at Durban Girls' High School

- 6.1. takes responsibility for her actions, choices and decisions;
- 6.2. shows respect for the cultures, traditions and religions of others;
- 6.3. is worthy of the confidence that others place in her;
- 6.4. should always tell the truth;
- 6.5. is always honest and sincere;
- 6.6. takes pride in her appearance within the framework of the prescribed dress code;
- 6.7. takes care of her personal hygiene and cleanliness;
- 6.8. obeys traffic regulations inside and outside the school, whether as a pedestrian or otherwise;

- 6.9. may not be in possession of or use cigarettes, any smoking materials, lighters, matches, alcoholic beverages, drugs, pornography or any other offensive material;
- 6.10. does not come to school or school functions having consumed alcohol or having used any other abusive substance (including cigarettes and drugs);
- 6.11. does her homework promptly, meets given deadlines, obeys instructions and is prepared for lessons with the necessary resources;
- 6.12. takes part in class and extra curricular activities with enthusiasm and interest;
- 6.13. does not speak or sing unnecessarily loudly;
- 6.14. does not stand or sit in a designated restricted area;
- 6.15. sees each member of staff as a senior to whom the necessary respect must be shown, and as a professional who teaches and educates and in whose classroom or workspace no form of misbehaviour or disruption may take place;
- 6.16. observes all the regulations pertaining to assessment policies of the school, the Department of Education or any other designated body;
- 6.17. does her own original work, does not copy, plagiarise or get any other person to do the work on her behalf;
- 6.18. does not eat in the streets, on buses or at public performances while wearing school uniform;
- 6.19. respects the authority, privileges and rights of fellow learners, learner leaders, members of staff, parents and the wider community;
- 6.20. is hospitable and greets staff members, fellow learners and visitors politely;
- 6.21. asks politely for assistance when required;
- 6.22. treats fellow learners with respect and dignity;
- 6.23. does not
 - use vulgar language
 - involve herself in derogatory scandal, including via any social communication networks
 - call people names
 - become physically aggressive
 - threaten anyone
 - bully anyone, either emotionally, verbally or physically
 - vandalize any property or deface any property e.g. graffiti;
 - involve herself in any unacceptable antisocial behaviour;
- 6.24. does not bring a weapon of any description to school;
- 6.25. never takes anything which does not belong to her;
- 6.26. will, within the classroom and in speaking to staff members, only be permitted to communicate in English. In the language classes other than English, the language being taught should be spoken, with the use of English for clarity;
- 6.27. shows good manners and is courteous and considerate to all who are associated with Durban Girls' High School, and the public at large, particularly when using public transport;

- 6.28. at assemblies enters the hall in silence, applauds appropriately and sings the required national anthem, school song and other songs as required, and leaves the hall in silence;
- 6.29. is silent in any situation where a member of management or staff, or an invited guest is addressing her;
- 6.30. regards it as a pleasant duty to attend debates, concerts, sport fixtures, fashion shows and other activities and does not talk, move around, eat or leave before speeches are completed and the function is officially over, i.e. acts as a refined and dignified member of the audience;
- 6.31. never questions the decision of a referee, umpire, adjudicator or moderator, and further does not criticize these officials;
- 6.32. does not expect teachers to take responsibility for her valuables and does not leave them in any classroom;
- 6.33. does not bring chewing gum onto the school premises or chew gum in school uniform;
- 6.34. does not litter or walk past litter without picking it up;
- 6.35. works towards an economically sustainable environment;
- 6.36. adheres to the school's policies for special venues;
- 6.37. looks after all property, that of the school, others and her own;
- 6.38. ensures that all her possessions are clearly labelled with her name.

7. Phones including all electronic equipment

7.1. Public Telephones

- 7.1.1. A learner may not use the public telephones during lesson, assembly or registration times;
- 7.1.2. Public telephones may only be used before and after school and at breaks;
- 7.1.3. Calls should be limited to emergencies and essential business;
- 7.1.4. These public telephones are not for social calls;
- 7.1.5. A learner using a public telephone must line up quietly.

7.2. Cell Phones (and all electronic equipment)

- 7.2.1. A cell phone is to be switched off from arrival at school until the end of the official school day;
- 7.2.2. A cell phone will not be on in any mode or for any purpose during the school day;
- 7.2.3. The learner understands that the use of a cell phone will lead to the confiscation of the cell phone including the sim card until the end of the term. A cell phone confiscated in the last two weeks of any given term will only be returned on a date to be specified the following term. A learner with a cell phone which is visible or switched on, or whose alarm goes off, or who is using it for any purpose is considered to be 'using the phone';
- 7.2.4. A learner may not use her cell phone as a radio or music player while in school uniform;

- 7.2.5. iPods and electronic devices may not be brought to school;
- 7.2.6. A learner who is in the school building after official school hours eg. in the Media Centre, attending extra lessons or taking part in the co-curricular programme may not use her cell phone, neither may it be visible;
- 7.2.7. The learner and her parents/guardians understand that the Governing Body and employees of Durban Girls' High School do not accept any responsibility for any confiscated cell phones;
- 7.2.8. The learner and her parents/guardians understand that the use and/or activation of a cell phone in any way during any form of assessment process i.e. examinations, class tests, etc. will not only lead to the confiscation of the cell phone but will also result in the learner being given zero for the work being assessed;
- 7.2.9. All the regulations of any external assessment, laid down either by the Department of Education or any designated body will be observed and the learner will accept the consequences of any breach of these rules. Learners must not be in possession of a cell phone during an official examination;
- 7.2.10. The safety of cell phones brought to school is entirely the learner's responsibility and the Governing Body and the members of Durban Girls' High School will not be held responsible.
A learner and her parents/guardians should note the following;
 - 7.2.10.1. It is preferable not to bring a cell phone to school;
 - 7.2.10.2. The school has two pay-phones which are regularly maintained for use during school hours;
 - 7.2.10.3. Individual safety is not guaranteed by the carrying of a cell phone. Learners are vulnerable if they are known to be carrying cell phones, particularly in any public place. A learner should not use a cell phone in the public eye. This is a safety risk;
 - 7.2.10.4. Genuinely urgent messages can be relayed through the front office from 07h00-14h30.
- 7.2.11. The use of cell phones for the purposes of teaching and learning will be considered under teacher supervision. Permission should be granted by the Principal/Deputy Principal.

8. Dress Code

- 8.1. Summer Uniform: Navy blue blazer, navy skirt, white short-sleeved open neck blouse with the school badge, white ankle socks, regulation black shoes with a bar and buckle, name badge.
- 8.2. Winter uniform: Navy blue blazer, navy skirt, long-sleeved white shirt, buttoned at the neck, school tie, non-sheer black stockings only or white ankle socks, regulation black shoes with a bar and a buckle, name badge.

8.3. Regulations for the summer and winter uniform

- 8.3.1. The blazer is an outer garment and may be worn with a regulation plain V-neck navy jersey underneath.
- 8.3.2. In the winter uniform it is compulsory to wear a blazer to and from school.
- 8.3.3. It is compulsory to wear a blazer to assembly with the winter uniform.
- 8.3.4. Jerseys may only be worn under the blazer. However, in the classroom blazers may be taken off.
- 8.3.5. Long shirt sleeves may be neatly folded up in hot weather.
- 8.3.6. Skirts may be no shorter than 8cm above the knee from the ground, when kneeling.
- 8.3.7. Skirts may not be rolled up at the waist and must be worn on the waist.
- 8.3.8. Black stockings must be presentable, i.e. ladders and holes are unacceptable.
- 8.3.9. A pair of socks must be brought to school when wearing stockings.
- 8.3.10. Socks must be folded over at the ankle.
- 8.3.11. Shoes must be polished and presentable.
- 8.3.12. A regulation scarf may only be worn with the winter uniform. The scarf may not cover the school tie.
- 8.3.13. A Grade 12 learner may wear the matric sleeveless pullover, under her blazer. The sleeveless pullover may not be worn over the jersey.
- 8.3.14. All items of school uniform must be clearly marked with the learner's name.
- 8.3.15. No make-up whatsoever is allowed; this includes lip gloss/anything shiny on the lips.
- 8.3.16. The school tie must be knotted correctly at the neck and the end of the tie must touch the skirt at the waist.
- 8.3.17. Underwear must be appropriate: plain white or beige bras. No undergarments or shorts may be visible.

8.4. Physical Education

- 8.4.1. Regulation school shorts and shirt.
- 8.4.2. Swimming: Regulation school costume, cap and towel.
- 8.4.3. Shoes: Must be lace-up trainers and socks.

8.5. Sports Uniform

- 8.5.1. Co-curricular sports practices and life style classes: Regulation school shorts or sports skirt, T-shirt or regulation sports shirt with lace-up trainers and socks.
Swimming: Regulation school costume, cap and towel.

8.5.2. Matches/Galas/Festivals/Tours/Tournaments:

8.5.2.1. 1st Team players wear regulation 1st team kit as per the sports code with lace-up trainers, socks and regulation tracksuit.

8.5.2.2. All teams, other than the 1st team, wear the regulation sports team shirt, regulation shorts/skirt and trainers with socks.

8.5.3. Cycling shorts (short leggings) may be worn under skirts or shorts but **must** be the same colour as the skirt or shorts and should not be visible.

8.5.4. A learner must leave a sporting activity in full sports uniform. School shoes **may not** be worn with sports kit. The official tracksuit may be worn. Alternatively the learner may leave school in her full school uniform.

8.5.5. Only official sports togbags may be used.

8.6. Official School Functions

Full winter uniform must be worn with stockings, unless instructed otherwise by a member of the school management.

8.7. Bags

8.7.1. Only regulation school bags or sports bags may be used.

8.7.2. Bags must be clearly labelled with the learner's name and grade.

8.7.3. No graffiti or any decorative item is allowed on school bags and/or sports bags.

8.8. Badges

8.8.1. A learner must wear her own name badge on the left side of her uniform, near the shoulder.

8.8.2. Name badges must be visible at all times.

8.8.3. Name badges may not be decorated or defaced in any way.

8.8.4. If a name badge is lost or broken a replacement badge must be ordered immediately. A suitable substitute must be worn until the new badge arrives.

8.8.5. Only official school badges may be worn.

8.8.6. Medic Alert bracelets may be worn.

8.9. Hair

8.9.1. Hair must be clean and kept neatly away from the face at all times.

8.9.2. Hair that touches the collar must be tied up.

- 8.9.3. Hair may not be dyed. Hair colour must be natural, with no highlights, bleaching or dyeing. The use of any product that changes the colour of the hair is not allowed.
- 8.9.4. Appropriate braiding and hair extensions are allowed, but must be single thickness. No dreadlocks, hot water curls, etc. are allowed.
- 8.9.5. Extensions must be the same as the natural hair colour.
- 8.9.6. No extreme hair styles are allowed.
- 8.9.7. Hair accessories, bands and clips must be navy blue or black.
- 8.9.8. No wigs or hair pieces are permitted, unless for medical reasons.

8.10. Nails

- 8.10.1. Nails must be clean and not extend beyond the tips of the fingers.
- 8.10.2. No nail polish or varnish whatsoever is allowed.

8.11. Jewellery

- 8.11.1. One pair of plain sleepers or stud earrings in silver or gold may be worn, one in each ear in the centre of the lobe.
- 8.11.2. Sleepers must be standard size, approx. 1cm in diameter, not more than 2mm in thickness and with no patterns.
- 8.11.3. No jewellery may be worn in any body piercing other than the earlobe e.g. no tongue rings, nose studs, eyebrow rings, bellyrings etc. No bristles are allowed.
- 8.11.4. Only appropriate watches and medical alert bracelets may be worn. No swatch watches or fashion watches may be worn.
- 8.11.5. No tattoos or body graffiti are allowed.
- 8.11.6. Non-regulation jewellery worn with the school uniform will be confiscated until at least the end of the term.

8.12. Contact Lenses

Only clear contact lenses may be used.

8.13. Application for exemption from the Code of Conduct

In the event that a learner wishes to apply for an exemption from any provision of the Code of Conduct on religious or cultural grounds, the following procedure shall be followed:

- 8.13.1. the parent/s shall apply in writing to the Governing Body or its duly authorised representative, setting out:
 - 8.13.1.1. how the learner wishes to deviate from the Code;
 - 8.13.1.2. the religious or cultural basis for the application.
- 8.13.2. the learner may be required by the Governing Body or its duly

authorised representative to submit a written submission herself, setting out the personal significance of the religious or cultural practice.

- 8.13.3. the Governing Body or its duly authorised representative may discuss the application with the learner.
- 8.13.4. the Governing Body or its duly authorised representative may decide on the application summarily.
- 8.13.5. the Governing Body may convene a meeting of a sub-committee, in which case:
 - 8.13.5.1. the sub-committee may request the learner and/or her parent/s to attend a meeting and to answer questions;
 - 8.13.5.2. the sub-committee shall report its findings to the Governing Body, and make recommendations;
 - 8.13.5.3. the Governing Body shall decide on the application, and shall then notify the learner's parent/s in writing of its decision.
- 8.13.6. the learner shall not deviate from the Code of Conduct unless the Governing Body or its duly authorised representative has granted her an exemption.

Disciplinary Procedures

Disciplinary procedures must fit the misdemeanour and should be implemented appropriately and fairly. The purpose of discipline is to correct future behaviour on the part of the offending learner and to act as a deterrent. Discipline procedures should be put in place in cases of the infringement of the Code of Conduct after guilt has been established. A learner must be given an opportunity to be heard in a mutually respectful manner. Corrective measures should include counselling when this is necessary.

Any breach of the Law of the Republic of South Africa could lead to the South African Police Services being called in.

Disciplinary Procedures are categorized in terms of misconduct as follows:

Internal School Procedures

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Procedures for misconduct in terms of South African Schools Act of 1996

- Schedule 1
- Schedule 2

Classification of Offences and Consequent Disciplinary Action

No corporal punishment may be administered to any learner, even if parents request this and give their permission.

Level 1

Offence:

- Failing to be punctual
- Leaving class without permission
- Failing to complete assigned work
- Failing to comply with reasonable instructions of a member of staff
- Failing to comply with school policies
- Dress code violations
- Littering
- Chewing gum
- Insolence both verbal and with the use of body language.

Disciplinary Action:

Agent: Any member of Staff or School Prefect

Sanctions:

- Verbal warning
- A reprimanding look
- Withdrawal of classroom privileges
- Extra work
- Small menial tasks
- Repeated offences will be dealt with by placing learners on detention or requiring community service. Learners may be detained during break or after school
- Dress code violation to be corrected before a learner returns to class.

If a learner is given school detention/community service outside of official school hours

- The parents must be given fair warning in writing
- Learners must be supervised during detention.

Level 2

Offence:

- Repetition of Level 1 offences, where disciplinary action by class teacher is deemed ineffective
- Truancy from any class or the school day
- Using abusive or profane language
- Verbally threatening the safety of another person
- Disrespect towards another person
- Dishonesty
- Leaving school without permission
- Possession or use of tobacco
- Being found in an area designated "out of bounds"
- Writing graffiti on school or other learners' property
- Unacceptable behaviour at a school function or activity.

Disciplinary Action:

Agent: Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of Grade, Member of School Management.

Sanctions:

- Any disciplinary measure proposed for Level 1 offence
- Conference with the learner
- Conference with the parent of a learner
- Written warnings
- Withdrawal of privileges and/or school related activities
- Behavioural contracts
- Daily report
- Detention
- Duties that contribute to the school environment (e.g. cleaning, gardening, administrative tasks)
- 1-3 Principal's Detentions

Level 3

Offence:

- Repetition of Level 2 offences, where disciplinary action by the school authority is deemed ineffective
- Distribution of offensive material e.g. racist or sexist propaganda publications
- Bullying

Disciplinary Action:

Agent: Principal, Deputy Principal, School Governing Body

Sanctions:

- Any disciplinary measure proposed for Level 2 offences
- Suspension from school related activities e.g. sports, extra-curricular activities
- Written final warning that out-of-school suspension may be implemented
- Referral to psychologist/counsellor/clinic/community or social worker
- Approved community service
- 2 or more Principal's Detentions

Schedule 1

Offence:

A learner will be guilty of serious misconduct if she, intentionally and without just excuse –

- Seriously threatens, disrupts or frustrates teaching or learning in class
- Engages in a conspiracy to disrupt the proper functioning of the school through collective action
- Insults the dignity of or defames any learner or any other person. This includes making racist remarks
- Engages in any act of physical violence, be it as the aggressor or in defence
- Distributes, or is in the possession of any test or examination material that may enable her or another person to gain an unfair advantage in a test or examination
- Cheats in a test or examination or any other form of assessment such as assignments
- Plagiarises any given assessment
- Engages in any act of indecency
- Sexually harasses another person
- Is found in possession of or distributes pornographic or offensive material
- Is under the influence of or in the possession of alcohol.

Disciplinary Action:

Agent: Principal, Deputy Principal, School Governing Body

Sanctions:

- Any of the sanctions referred to in Level 3
- Suspension from school

Schedule 2

Offence:

- Serious misconduct that may lead to expulsion

A learner will be guilty of serious misconduct if she –

- Is found guilty of misconduct as contemplated in Schedule 1 after having been found guilty of the same or similar misconduct on two previous occasions
- Fails to comply with a punishment of suspension as a correctional measure; or
- Intentionally and without just excuse –
 - Forges any document or signature to the potential or actual prejudice of the school
 - Trades in any test or examination question paper or in any test or examination material
 - Attempts to bribe or bribes any person in respect of any test or examination to enable her or any person to gain an unfair advantage therein
 - Engages in fraud
 - Maliciously damages property
 - Engages in theft, or otherwise acts dishonestly to the prejudice of another person
 - Is in the possession of, consumes or deals in any illegal substance or other harmful substance
 - Is in the possession of, uses or transmits narcotic or unauthorised drugs or has visible evidence of such possession, use or transmission
 - Is in possession of a dangerous weapon
 - Holds any person hostage
 - Engages in any sexual activity which amounts to an offence in law; or
 - Murders any person.

Agent: Principal, Deputy Principal, School Governing Body

Sanction:

- Any sanction referred to in Level 3
- Suspension from school
- Expulsion from the school

ADDENDUM TO CODE OF CONDUCT

APPLICATIONS FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE CODE OF CONDUCT

In the event that a learner wishes to apply for an exemption from the Code of Conduct on religious or cultural grounds, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent/s shall apply in writing to the Governing Body or its duly authorised representative, setting out:
 - 1.1 how the learner wishes to deviate from the Code;
 - 1.2 the religious or cultural basis for the application.
2. The learner may be required by the Governing Body or its duly authorised representative to submit a written submission herself, setting out the personal significance of the religious or cultural practice.
3. The Governing Body or its duly authorised representative may discuss the application with the learner.
4. The Governing Body or its duly authorised representative may decide on the application summarily.
5. The Governing Body may convene a meeting of a sub-committee, in which case:
 - 5.1 the sub-committee may request the learner and/or her parent/s to attend the meeting and to answer questions;
 - 5.2 the sub-committee shall report its findings to the Governing Body, and make recommendations;
 - 5.3 the Governing Body shall decide on the application, and shall then notify the learner's parent/s in writing of its decision.
6. The learner shall not deviate from the Code of Conduct unless the Governing Body or its duly authorised representative has granted her an exemption.