



GRASSROOTS
PREPARATORY

Code of Conduct

School pledge

At Grassroots Prep, I will do my best,
to be happy, to be kind and full of respect.
For my teachers, for my classmates and all at school.
We are different but the same,
under God's rule.

The Code of Conduct clarifies the rules regarding learner behaviour at the School and describes the disciplinary system to be implemented by the School concerning transgressions by learners. The Code of Conduct applies to all learners while they are on the School premises or when they are away from the School representing it or attending a School function. The objective of formulating the Code of Conduct is to formalise the rules and regulations of conduct that pertain to teachers, parents, and learners.

Section 8(4) of the SA Schools Act provides that all learners attending a School are bound by the Code of Conduct of that School. All learners attending the School are expected to sign a statement of commitment to the Code of Conduct (Annexure A).

Educators, learners and parents of Grassroots Preparatory should abide by the Code of Conduct.

It should be adhered to:

- On the school premises before, during and after the school hours.
- At all official School events, both within and outside regular school hours.
- In any situation, on or off school property, where the learner is recognisable as a learner from Grassroots Preparatory.

1. School Rules

The School rules are intended to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective teaching and learning at the School. Nothing shall exempt a learner from complying with the School rules. Ignorance of School rules is, therefore, not an acceptable excuse.

1. Learners are always expected to behave in a courteous and considerate manner towards each other, all members of staff and visitors to the School.
2. Learners are expected to abide by the School rules regarding appearance and behaviour when representing the School both during School hours and after School hours, at School and away from School. Learners may not say or do anything that will discredit themselves or the School.
3. 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.
4. The School will contact parents/guardians when a learner's behaviour becomes a cause of concern and will endeavour, in a spirit of constructive partnership, to resolve the problem.

1.1. School and class attendance

Parents/guardians, learners, teacher and school staff are jointly responsible for ensuring that all learners attend School.

- The class teacher keeps an accurate daily register of learner attendance and must keep copies of all communication to parents when absence from the classroom is reported. If a learner does not attend school regularly, the teacher will contact the parent to enquire the reason for the learner's absence.
- All learners are to arrive at School before the official starting time of 08h00.
- Any absence from school must be communicated to the school via email or via a telephone call before 08h30 on that day.
- Learners who are more than 30 minutes late for school without a good reason will be marked as absent as registers are completed at the beginning of each School day.
- Should a learner be absent from School for a period of three (3) days or longer, this leave of absence must be supported by a letter from a medical doctor/traditional doctor/registered herbalist. Should a child have a medical condition which requires frequent doctor and/ or hospital visits, the parents are required to inform the school.
- A learner who is absent for **10 consecutive school days**, without a valid reason/and or without informing the school, may be deregistered by the school after consultation with the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). The onus is on the parents to inform the school. In such instances, parents could be held liable and face legal action by the State.
- Any absence from a formal examination, test or task must be supported by a letter from a medical doctor/traditional doctor/registered herbalist.
- 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 class teacher or Principal.
- Truancy from School is prohibited.
- All learners will attend assembly for the full duration thereof.

1.2. School attire/uniform and general appearance

Compulsory uniform items:

- Yellow Grassroots Preparatory t-shirt or gold shirt (from grade 4-7).
- A navy-blue PE shorts and a pair of takkies.
- A stone-coloured branded school peak cap .
- A list of other branded school uniform items and their cost is available from the office.

Whilst the school uniform is not mandatory at present (this may change at the discretion of management), any learner who does wear the school uniform must look presentable, clean and neat as they are representing the School.

- No additions to the uniform that are not in accordance with the regulations will be allowed.
- Fingernails must be always kept trimmed, short and clean.
- Learners who have applied, submitted supporting documents and received the necessary permission from the School management, may deviate from official School uniform for religious and cultural reasons.
- No heavy jewellery is permitted (bangles, bracelets, dangling earrings).
- No body piercings such as nose-rings, belly-button rings etc.
- Tattoos are not allowed.

Currently, learners attend school wearing casual wear which should be neat, clean, and presentable. Beachwear, tight-fitting clothes, see-through and revealing clothes are prohibited.

Hair, shoes, and accessories should always be neat. Branded clothing is not preferred.

No skirts or dresses to be worn at school.

1.3. Valuable items 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, cash or clothing).

- Learners are not allowed to bring cell phones, large sums of money or valuables to School.
- Learners may not bring computer games, iPods or similar electronic devices to School.

1.4. General

- All litter in the class or on the playground must be placed in refuse bins or wastepaper baskets.
- Wilful damaging, vandalising or neglect of School property and the property of others, either by writing or by a physical act, is prohibited. Theft of School and private property is also prohibited.
- Any act of cheating in class work, homework, informal and formal tests or internal or external examination is prohibited. Furthermore, copying of and/or borrowing another learner's work is not allowed.
- Disruptive, unruly, rude and/or offensive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- The timeous handing in of work is the responsibility of each learner.
- The learner will respect the beliefs, culture, dignity and rights of other learners, as well as their right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Language that is seen as pejorative, discriminatory or racist is prohibited.
- Any act that belittles, demeans or humiliates another learner's culture, race or religion is prohibited.
- All learners have the right to an education free of interference, intimidation and/or physical abuse.
- The learner will respect the property and safety of other learners.
- Fighting with or threatening fellow learners is forbidden.
- The learner will respect those learners in positions of authority (e.g a prefect).
- A learner who is in a position of authority (such as a prefect/class captain) 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.
- Learners must keep clear of areas that are indicated as out of bounds. These include: The School parking area (except when exiting and entering the vehicles that they come to school with/go home with), the playground after break time, the sports field except for school sports (while under the supervision of the Coach and the schoolteachers), electrical mains distribution boxes, fire extinguishers and hoses.
- No foul language is allowed at school (this includes the use of swear words, swearing at others on the school grounds).

- Learners who fail to produce a medical certificate on absenteeism during formal examinations/tests/assessment tasks will obtain a mark of 0 (nought) for the examination/test/assessment task.

1.5. Transport

- Learners wishing to park bicycles/scooters (etc.) on the School grounds must first obtain permission from the School to do so and make use of the area specifically demarcated for this purpose.
- All learners park their bikes (pedal or motorised), scooters etc. on the School premises **at their own risk**.
- At present, a specific area is provided for the safekeeping of bikes, etc. and must be used by learners.
- The Code of Conduct is applicable when making use of public transport to and from School.

1.6. Social Media

A learner/parent may not post:

- Any information, comments or images which may damage the name or reputation of the School, current or former staff, other learners, suppliers, parents and stakeholders.
- Any person's/student's private information (including photographs or images of the person) of whatever nature, without the authority of the person /parent/guardian.
- Any inappropriate, obscene or pornographic images; (this includes taking or sending photos of oneself).
- Any communication or image which may be defamatory or violate the rights of any party.
- Any communication which is offensive, threatening, abusive, harmful, hateful, malicious, discriminatory, demeaning, derogatory or which amounts to unlawful harassment or discrimination.
- Illicit photos, profanity or other derogatory content.
- Learners and parents must ensure that the contents of their postings are accurate, ethical and legal.

WhatsApp Groups

All members of a WhatsApp group can be held responsible for the posts of an individual member and/or the administrator of the group. If you see posts that violate the School's Code of Conduct, exit the group immediately and report the content where necessary.

- Learners/parents are reminded that they are responsible for monitoring their social media platforms and are required to remove any content that violates the Code of Conduct, whether posted by themselves or a third party.
- Learners/parents should be aware that any conduct, even in their private capacity, which impacts on the interests of the School, must be in accordance with the School's rules and policies.
- A learner may face disciplinary action should their actions on social media be found to be in violation of the Code of Conduct.
- This is applicable whether the action occurs during school hours or off the premises of the School.

Please note: Should the name of the school not be mentioned/referenced and an issue arises that pertains directly to learners and their relationship (positive or negative), it is highly recommended that- in so far as possible - parents address matters that arise on social media directly amongst themselves – with as much sensitivity as the matter requires- particularly if the incidences are isolated in nature or involve minor cases of swearing, use or distribution of crude images and/or audio or involve a conversation/disagreement between existing friends/friendship groups.

2. Code of Conduct

The administration of the Code of Conduct is the responsibility of the Management of the School.

The maintenance of discipline and ensuring orderly classroom behaviour is an integral part of every teacher's duties. Teachers and learners are entitled to a safe and secure environment in which teaching and learning must take place, free of anxiety, tension and discomfort.

The onus lies with the School's teachers and leadership to apply the disciplinary code in an effective and equitable manner, in the interests of the School and the learners, preserving and promoting educational excellence, and protecting the rights of all stakeholders. This document will be made readily available to every teacher at the School, all learners and parents. It should be noted that this document will always be evolving as and when there are legal changes/amendments to the law, a new copy will be available annually to accommodate any changes made.

2.1 Teachers

This disciplinary code is not intended as an exhaustive guideline designed to describe all and any disciplinary-related issues. Rather, it is intended to indicate fundamental values, principles and guidelines according to which corrective action and discipline are to be effectively implemented by the School.

Educators at Grassroots Preparatory shall adhere to the South African Council of Educator's Code of Professional Ethics and the School's Code of Conduct for staff and undertake, inter alia, to:

- be professional, punctual, and well prepared in their approach to education of the learners.
- motivate the learners to reach their full potential with realistic and meaningful goals.
- be kind, gentle and sensitive to the needs of the learners.
- to praise learners for their endeavours and hard work.
- to address any learning difficulties or barriers in an encouraging and positive way, so as not to discourage learning.
- create a happy classroom environment based on a learning partnership which makes education both relevant, exciting and stimulating.
- set a positive example for their pupils to follow.
- to always administer discipline correctly and with dignity when required.

The educator has responsibilities and rights as a parent to control and discipline a learner during the time that the learner is at school, during school excursions or any school-related activities (*loco parentis*). When disciplining a learner, the educator should use measures which are in line with the 'offence' and with the School's Code of Conduct. As a role model, the teacher must always ensure that his/her actions are fair, just and consistent for every learner. Offences beyond level 1 are usually referred to the principal.

Grassroots Preparatory strives to have good relations with the School's community, which importantly involves parents of learners. While parents must allow the school and its teachers to provide the best education possible with the resources available to the school, parents must also accept responsibility to help the school achieve this goal. In so doing, parents who enrol their children at Grassroots Preparatory shall accept the school rules and the conditions of enrolment. The responsibilities of parents include, but is not restricted to:

2.2. Parents:

- Actively support and trust the efforts of the school and its teachers in the education of their children.
- Cultivate a cooperative relationship with their child's teacher.
- Fully avail themselves to help with school activities.
- Support the disciplinary structures and procedures of the school, and the reasonable efforts by the School to apply discipline effectively and fairly.
- Encourage their children to participate fully in both the school and its extra-mural activities.

- Supply textbooks and stationery for their child on the first day of the school year, as stipulated by the School.
- Ensure that their child is at school before the start of the school day (08h00) every day. Ideally learners should be at school by 07h45 so that they get a chance to settle in for the school day.
- To inform the school when their child is ill and will not be able to attend school for any day/days.
- Participate in the learning process and assist their children with revision (when applicable).
- Not expect the school to meet their child's every need.
- Provide their child with any extra support that may be required upon the request of the class teacher.
- Ensure that the pupil is in attendance of all compulsory attendance functions and activities, and that timekeeping requirements are observed at these functions.
- To make an appointment with the teacher if any concerns need to be raised. If they feel their concerns were not addressed, to then make an appointment to meet with the principal.

2.3. Learners

In terms of the South African Constitution, every child has the right to an education. Grassroots Preparatory strives to provide the educational opportunities that its learners deserve. Learners must also recognise that they have responsibilities to the school, their parents, their teachers, their fellow pupils and themselves.

Learners must thus accept and comply with the School's rules as well as its conditions of enrolment. We require our learners to:

- Follow the instructions from those who work at the school (teachers and other school staff).
- Follow the general rules of the school and the class rules.
- Always display responsible behaviour, which includes not endangering the safety, welfare and rights of fellow classmates.
- Refrain from physically or emotionally abusing a fellow learner.
- Refrain from cyber bullying.
- Respect and care for the property of the school (textbooks, furniture, equipment etc.) and the property of others.
- Maintain sound relations with others at school, be courteous and respect the dignity and self-worth of all at school.
- Be punctual and observe the timekeeping practices of the school.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning in the classroom.
- Be respectful of the class teacher and the assistant teachers and respect the timetable as laid out.
- Be diligent, hardworking and excited about their work, and about learning both in and out of the classroom.
- To always behave honestly and conduct themselves with integrity.
- Accept legitimate disciplinary action taken against them as being necessary.
- Respect the authority of teachers.
- Avoid anti-social behaviour such as bullying, theft, vandalism, assault, alcohol and drug abuse.

The School has several rules that define the kinds of behaviour expected of its pupils. Learners are to keep their parents advised of these rules and are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the rules provided above.

3. Disciplinary procedure

Every teacher is responsible for discipline and has the full authority and responsibility to correct the behaviour of learners whenever such correction is deemed necessary. Any corrective measure or disciplinary action will correspond with and be appropriate to the offence. All learners will abide by the discipline system that has been developed to assist and guide learner behaviour in the School.

It is impossible for the disciplinary procedure outlined in this document to list every possible rule infringement by pupils. The disciplinary code therefore only sets out the broader categories of infringement and the norms for applying fair discipline at the School.

- Various forms of informal and formal disciplinary measures may be initiated by the teacher and/or the School. The School management and teachers are entitled to apply disciplinary action that they believe is appropriate in the circumstances, within the guidelines provided in this procedure. The judgement and discretion of school officials to apply disciplinary measures will therefore not be rigidly restricted by this disciplinary procedure, but this will act as a guide.
- The severity of action taken by the school will depend on the circumstances, the seriousness of an infringement and any mitigating or aggravating factors. The current guidelines outlined here will intend to promote and assure consistency, but do not remove the necessary discretion of the teacher or the School to apply a lesser or worse penalty should circumstances so dictate.
- Disciplinary measures applied in response to pupil misconduct will therefore require that the teacher or School officials involved exercise their own 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:

Informal action

- Counselling by the teacher/s or head.
- Time out of the classroom/playground to help the learner think about his/her actions.

Formal action

- An investigation will be conducted resulting in a meeting with the parents where they will be informed of a warning that will be recorded in writing. They will be informed of the specific issue after an investigation has been conducted.
- Suspension for a period from class or from attending school, pending the convening of a formal disciplinary hearing, and/or as a form of corrective action after the conducting of a disciplinary hearing.
- Expulsion only after the conducting of a disciplinary hearing, and as a last resort.

Level 1 offence:

- Disobeys teacher instructions.
- Disregard for the teacher.
- Constant talking in class and/or back chatting.
- Walking around in class and disturbance to other learners.
- Taking/grabbing things from other learners without asking.
- Scribbling in other learners' books.
- Constant temper tantrums.
- Leaving the classroom without permission.
- Name calling/mocking/teasing others.
- Push or shove another learner due to an altercation/quarrel.
- Dishonesty and/or telling lies.
- Producing untidy and/or sloppy work.

Discipline must, wherever feasible and effective, be applied progressively. Informal action for level 1 offences is generally applied at teacher level, without a formal investigation. Repeated minor offences will, however, result in more formal action; particularly where a clear pattern or behaviour trend is indicated by the learner's continued misconduct.

Should the mild offence recur after the above intervention, a written warning will be issued, the staff member will, in consultation with the principal, arrange an interview with the learner and the parents. A final written warning will be issued. A signed copy of acknowledgement will be kept on record by the teacher and the principal and communicated to the parent/guardian.

Level 2 offence:

- Blatant disrespect towards authority figure (teacher, principal, a member of staff).
- Racist conduct that defames a learner/teacher.
- Disruptive behaviour in class frustrating teaching and learning.
- Aggressive behaviour towards another learner causing minor physical or emotional stress.
- Stabbing a fellow learner with a sharp object, e.g., pin, pen, nib, etc.
- Spitting at a fellow learner/ spitting onto the ground.
- Derogatory comments aimed at deliberately hurting the feelings of others.
- Regular late arrival at school (after 08h30).
- Unbecoming behaviour which causes embarrassment to others.
- Deliberately excluding another learner from games/ functions or groups with the intent of making them feel socially disconnected.
- Participation in pranks or games not allowed at School.
- Behaviour (on or off school property) and/or commentary (whether direct or implied) that damages the good name of the School.
- Any communication prior to, during or after an assessment or exam that could be construed as cheating.

The teacher will discuss the offence with the learner. A report will be sent to the parent via ClassDojo or email with regards to the offence. If the offence is repeated a second time, the teacher will send the learner to the Principal, who will discuss the behaviour with the learner. Once the offence has occurred for the third time, the teacher will immediately phone the parent to inform them about the offence. The parent will be asked to fetch the learner at school and keep them at home for the rest of the day.

Please note, despite the above disciplinary procedure for a level 2 offence, the Principal has the right decide that the learner who has conducted the offence be taken home by his/her parent and kept home for the rest of the day, or suspended for additional day/s, especially if the offence involves physical abuse/fighting with another learner, resulting in harm to the recipient. This may occur even if the offence has occurred for the first time.

Level 3 offence:

- Bullying or intimidation.
- Continuous victimization causing physical injury or emotional stress to others.
- Physical fighting.
- Verbal abuse of a staff member.
- Assault on a staff member.
- Satanic practices that damage property or cause harm to people or any other living creatures.
- Smoking (including e-cigarettes).
- Documented or implied use of drugs or any other prohibited substances. (The School is within its rights to conduct a search and/or drug test if there is reasonable doubt of drug use or possession).
- Bringing a dangerous weapon onto the School premises.
- Bringing a dangerous weapon onto the School premises with the intent to harm others.
- Damage to school property such as scratches or graffiti on desks, tables, doors, walls, windows, etc.
- Wilful damage to the personal belongings of another learner or member of staff.
- Theft.
- Continuous disruptive behaviour in class.
- Offensive /racial remarks causing emotional stress to the victim, their parents, or staff member/s.

The parent will be asked to fetch the learner at school and keep them at home for the rest of the day/a few days. An investigation will be conducted by the teacher and Principal. This will include a discussion with the offender/s and the victim/s.

A meeting with the parents of the offender/s and victim/s will take place.

Depending on the severity of the case, a disciplinary hearing will be instituted to decide on more drastic action, namely suspension or expulsion. If proven 'guilty' of the offence, parents will be held liable for the repair or replacement of the damaged items.

Annexure A

Learner Commitment Oath

I,, a learner at Grassroots Preparatory, understand the rules and their implications and hereby commit to:

- abide by the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary System.
- behave in a courteous and considerate manner and respect other learners, all members of staff and visitors to the School.
- treat everyone with respect regardless of differences in culture, religion, ability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation or social class.
- take responsibility for my learning by attending regularly and punctually and completing all my assessment tasks on time.
- co-operate with my teachers and other School staff.
- assist in making the School a safe place for all.
- seek help if I need it.
- let the School know if I feel that my rights have been infringed, or if I experience any other difficulty.

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Learner

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Parent/Guardian

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Date