

VICTORIA PARK HIGH SCHOOL



PREPARED FOR LIFE

CODE OF CONDUCT

PREAMBLE

In terms of the **South African Schools Act, 8 (4) of 1996**, a school Governing Body must adopt a Code of Conduct aimed at promoting a positive disciplined environment for the delivery of quality teaching and learning. This Code of Conduct is linked to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 and the subordinate provincial legislation.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The School's Mission Statement encapsulates the essence of the type of school environment we desire for our learners.

Victoria Park High School is committed to providing facilities for a well-balanced education, which concentrates on the development of mind, body and soul, which will enable and encourage children to develop their full potential, so that they can play a useful, fulfilling role in the community and the larger society.

ETHOS

Victoria Park High School is driven by sound moral principles, academic excellence and passionate participation. Our Code of Conduct also recognises the need to promote an atmosphere of co-operation, teaching, learning, mutual respect and the establishment of a culture of tolerance and peace.

THE BASIC CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct applies to all learners wearing the VPHS school uniform, including sporting attire or officially representing VPHS.

LANGUAGE POLICY

The medium of instruction at **Victoria Park High School** is English. The subjects of Afrikaans and isiXhosa are offered as 2nd language subjects of choice.

EDUCATORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal and his staff have the same rights as a parent (to act in loco parentis) to control and discipline the learner according to the Code of Conduct during the time the learner is in attendance at the school, any classroom, school function or school excursion or school related activity.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEARNERS

Learner's Rights

Equality

Dignity

Protection from all forms of discrimination

A safe environment conducive to learning

A holistic education

Learner's Responsibilities

Have respect for yourself

Behave in a respectful and responsible manner towards staff and peers

Respect different cultures, languages and religions

Respect the property and safety of other learners and staff

Be proud of your school

Respect school property

Wear the uniform with pride

Make optimum use of the educational opportunities provided

Obey all school rules

Responsibilities of Parents with respect to the Code of Conduct

The ultimate responsibility for learners' behaviour rests with their parents or guardians. It is expected that parents will -

- Support the school and make sure learners observe all school rules and regulations and accept responsibility for any misbehavior on their child's part
- Honour your financial responsibilities timeously
- Take an active interest in their child's schoolwork and make it possible for the child to complete assigned homework
- Ensure that the learner arrives timeously for the start of the school day
- Be aware of the extra-mural activities of their teenagers
- Attend meetings that the SGB convenes for them

Classroom rules

These NON-NEGOTIABLE CLASSROOM RULES were developed in close consultation with the staff and the pupil body (Representative Council of Learners – RCL)

- Anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated
- Cell phones, or any similar devices, **are not to be visible** and are to be switched off at all times during the school day
- Secret texting is **NOT ALLOWED**
- No talking out of turn
- No abusive or discourteous language
- No graffiti, vandalism or littering
- No walking around without permission
- No involvement in activities not related to the subject being taught without the consent of the teacher
- Be punctual for class
- Homework tasks and missed work because of absence to be completed timeously
- Homework must be completed at home and not before school
- Transgression of any of the above rules will have consequences

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The right of a learner to a basic education places the obligation on the parent and the learner to attend school regularly during school hours.

- The register class teacher will keep an accurate register of learner attendance and will report irregular school attendance to the parent and the Grade Head. The register class teacher must keep copies of all communication with parents when absence from the classroom is reported.
- Absence from school for any period of time must be covered by an absentee note from the parent.
- Should the learner be absent from school for a period of longer than three (3) days, a doctor's certificate is required.
- Should the learner be absent for ten (10) consecutive days without a valid reason, the Principal must cancel the learner's record in the class register on grounds of continuous absence. The learner will then need to re-apply to be re-admitted to school. This process is at the Principal's discretion.
- Should the learner exceed twenty (20) unexplained days absent in total for the year, the learner will be deregistered.
- All learners are to arrive at school before the official starting time. Learners who are late will enter their **correct names** in a register at the entrance and will be recorded as being late.
- Absence from class without the permission of the relevant register or subject teacher is prohibited.
- Any absence from a formal examination must be notified by the parent and supported by a doctor's certificate.

RELIGIOUS OR CULTURAL PRACTICES

- Learners wishing to participate in their religious or cultural ceremonies may do so once their parents have given the Principal due notice of their intentions.
- It is recommended that male learners, wishing to participate in their right of passage to manhood, do so at the end of their Grade 12 year. This will obviate any disruption in their schooling and that of their fellow learners.

Early release from School

- No learner may leave the school during school hours without a letter from a parent requesting permission to release the learner. The learner is to report to the School Secretary to obtain a "permission to go home note", **which must be signed by the Grade Head and returned to the School Secretary on leaving the premises.**
- In the event of a learner taken ill at school, a permission to go home note must be signed by the learner's Grade Head and handed in at the Secretary's office. The School Secretary will contact the parent to arrange transport home.
A learner may NOT use a cell phone to contact the parent directly without the permission of the School Secretary.
- Truancy from school is prohibited.

END OF DAY

Once the learners are dismissed, learners are discouraged from remaining at school if not involved in an academic, cultural or sporting activity. Unless there is a school function, the school is locked up at 15:45.

For security and other reasons, learners are dissuaded from loitering on the grass verges outside the school. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their children have a means of getting home if they have no need to be at school in the afternoons.

Security and Care of School Property

It is the obligation of every learner to protect and carefully use all the facilities and equipment so that others who come after them can also enjoy the privilege. Destruction or vandalism of property is a punishable offence. The parent or legal guardian of anyone who intentionally misuses, damages or defaces any school property will replace it or pay for the damaged property.

CCTV cameras are installed for the protection and safety of all staff and learners. Evidence thus recorded may be used when a dispute arises.

OUT OF BOUNDS

The following areas are out of bounds to learners:

- The areas between the west boundary walls (1st Avenue) and the VP School Shop, the Vermaak classrooms, behind the bus garages, behind the drama rooms and pre-fab classrooms
- The roof and ceiling of the Thorp and Blake Halls, Sound & Lighting Box (unless with a staff member's permission)
- The upstairs corridors and all classrooms before school and during breaks (unless instructed otherwise)
- The staffroom and staff quadrangle
- The staff parking area in Ernest Walter Avenue
- The area outside the entrance to the Thorp Hall
- The Municipal Park (known as Victoria Park) in Ernest Walter Avenue
- The area between Upper Valley Road & Gladstone Street (the walkway on the cliff face)

HITCH-HIKING

Learners in school or sports uniform **may not** hitch-hike.

SCHOOL UNIFORM AND GENERAL APPEARANCE

Learners are expected to wear the official school uniform with pride and appear neat and tidy at all times. Other items of clothing may not be worn in conjunction with the school uniform.

The wearing of the correct uniform is always compulsory when learners represent or attend the school, except when an announcement is made to the contrary.

LOST PROPERTY

If found, will be taken to the Secretary's Office from where it can be collected.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

All school and sporting uniform is to be clearly marked with the learner's name

BOYS UNIFORM

WINTER

- School blazer
- Long grey flannels. Flannels are to be regulation school issue (No bell-bottoms or stovepipes)
- White long-sleeved shirt (starched collar) – designed for a tie
- Regulation VPHS school tie. Ties are not to be defaced
- Plain grey socks. (No white socks)
- Dark brown polishable leather lace-up shoes
- Brown belts – compulsory
- A bottle-green v-neck pull-over or jersey with a band of school colours round the neck may be worn under the blazer
- Long-sleeved jerseys may not be worn without a blazer
- Optional: Green regulation scarf (when instructed), green school gloves – only available from VP School Shop

SUMMER

- As Above.
- Regulation short-sleeved open-necked white shirt with the school badge on the pocket
- Winter shirts may not be worn as summer shirts
- Optional: Blazer, slip-over sleeveless jersey
- Long-sleeved jerseys may not be worn without a blazer

GIRLS UNIFORM

WINTER

- School blazer.
- Green skirt - official school style and material.
- Length of skirt – not shorter than 10cm from the floor when kneeling
- White long sleeved shirt
- Regulation school tie
- Green knee-length socks with a band of school colours round the tops
- Brown tights obtainable at the VP School Shop
- Dark brown polishable leather school shoes (low-heeled)
- A bottle green v-neck pull-over or jersey with a band of school colours round the neck, may be worn under the blazer
- Long-sleeved jerseys may not be worn without a blazer
- Optional: Green regulation scarf (when instructed) gloves – only available from VP School Shop
- Optional: Long grey regulation ladies' pants (only to be purchased from VP Shop)

SUMMER

- Green skirt as for the winter uniform.

- Length of skirt – not shorter than 10cm from the floor when kneeling
- Regulation short-sleeved open necked white shirt with the school badge on the pocket
- Winter shirts may not be worn as summer shirts
- Long-sleeved jerseys may not be worn without a blazer
- Plain white ankle length socks, which must be folded over not rolled over
- Optional: Blazer and pullover

Boys Hair

- It must be neat and tidy
- When in doubt, be conservative. Keep it short (See picture on the wall outside the Deputy Principal's office)
- Sides not touching ears
- Back and sides - well off the collar and neatly graded from the bottom upwards
- Front – no longer than the midpoint of the forehead
- Top – neat and reasonably short
- Sideburns – no longer than the midpoint of the ear
- No colouring of hair is allowed
- Gel applied conservatively is permitted
- Current fashionable hairstyles that do not conform to all of the above, will not be acceptable ie. shaved sides and back with a great deal of hair on top of the head (**European style**)

Girls Hair

- No hair style, extensions or hair colour to draw unnecessary attention
- Long hair, including braided hair, needs to be plaited or tied back so as to be neat and tidy
- No hair allowed in face or hanging over the eyes
- Short hair to be tidy
- Hair accessories – only bottle green or black hair bands, not wider than 3 cm, or plain hair grips may be worn
- No bows, banana clips or pantyhose are to be used as hair accessories
- Gel applied conservatively is permitted
- **HAIR ACCESSORIES** Must be bottle-green or black
- **HAIR** Styles for **boys and girls** will be such that the learner does not attract undue attention and is in accordance with the regulations as set by the Discipline Officer. Hair must be neat at all times.

COMMITMENT TO VPHS SPORTING EVENTS

Representation of the school in any sporting activity takes precedence over any club or private activity

SPORTS UNIFORM FOR PRACTICES AND MATCHES

The uniform requirements for each sport are laid down by the sport concerned.

TRACKSUITS

Regulation VPHS tracksuit is the only permissible track suit.

Tracksuits are not to be worn during academic school hours unless pupils are instructed to do so for life orientation.

Only a **plain white** or **bottle-green** T-shirt may be worn under the tracksuit top.

OTHER MATTERS OF APPEARANCE

BADGES

The only permitted lapel badges are those concerned with the sporting disciplines and the clubs & societies offered at VPHS.

JEWELLERY & BODY PIERCING

The wearing of jewellery, e.g. studs, bristles, earrings, chains, rings or bracelets, tongue rings, lip studs and eyebrow studs made of any material, is not allowed. A plaster to conceal studs or bristles is not allowed.

KIT-BAGS

The VPHS kit-bag is permitted for carrying sports kit only – NOT BOOKS. Only the regulation kit-bag may be used for school sports.

MEDIC-ALERT BRACELETS

These should be worn by those who need to. No other bracelets are allowed.

MAKE-UP

Make-up is not allowed. This includes eye make-up. Learners who arrive at school wearing make-up will be asked to remove it immediately.

NAILS

Nails must be kept short, clean and neat. No body make-up or nail varnish may be worn on the hands. Learners found to be wearing nail polish will be sent to the Grade Heads. For a fee of R5.00 the learner will be given nail polish remover and cotton wool.

SHAVING

Boys are to be clean-shaven.

Boys who arrive at school unshaven, will shave at school. The cost of a razor and cream will be R5.00. Should the problem persist, the parent will be contacted and the matter discussed.

SUITCASES

A standard VPHS satchel (a black Red Mountain Bag) is **compulsory**. This bag is obtainable from the VP School Shop. Only the pupil's name may be written on the outside. Graffiti on school bags is not permitted. Coloured school bags are not permitted.

TATTOOS

Tattoos, in any form, are NOT to be visible when school uniform or sports uniform is worn.

GENERAL

Only a plain white vest, which may not be visible above the collar, may be worn under the shirt. No T shirts may be worn under a summer shirt.

If a blazer is brought to school in summer then it must be worn when out of the classroom and not carried around.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

- The school will not be held responsible for theft of or damage to personal belongings on school premises (e.g. cell phones, bags, books and clothing).
- Learners are responsible for all their belongings. Lockers are available for the safe-keeping of learner's valuables and books. A nominal fee is charged for the use of these lockers.
- A designated protected area, which is covered by CCTV, has been provided to store sports bags during school hours. Unattended school bags must be left in full view of the CCTV cameras which are placed in numerous areas around the school.

CELL PHONES

- Members of staff will not be held responsible for any cell phone lost or stolen whilst the learner is at school or engaged in school related activities.
- If cell phones are brought to school, they must be switched off from the time the learner enters the premises until the bell rings at the end of the school day.
- In extreme circumstances (emergency calls only) learners may use their cell phones outside the Principal's office before school starts or at break-times.
- Should a learner be seen with his/her cell phone, it will be confiscated and held in safe custody for 1 week. If it is confiscated for a second time during the same term, it will be held for 2 weeks. Should the phone be confiscated for a third time, it will be held for a month thereafter.
- Learners may not take photos/videos of anyone without that person's permission.

TELEPHONE CALLS FROM THE SECRETARY'S OFFICE

Calls to parents/grandparents to cancel or arrange sport or cultural activities will be made by the secretary for free.

For any other reason, the learner may use the land line at the secretary's office for a fee of R5.

CASH PAYMENTS

If a parent requests a learner to pay school fees on his/her behalf, or any other payment, such monies should be paid at the Bursar's Office **before** the start of the School day.

Learners are discouraged from bringing large sums of money to school.

For security reasons, parents are encouraged to pay school fees via Debit Order, EFT or Direct Deposit. Card payment facilities are also available at the Bursar's Office.

ITEMS OF VALUE

Arrangements should be made with the teacher in charge for safekeeping of valuables. etc. during sports practices.

Learners may not bring personal computer games, iPods, iPads, laptops, palmtops or similar electronic devices to school unless by prior arrangement with the teacher or Grade Head. The school takes no responsibility for any lost items.

BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

All pupils are expected to behave in a civil manner towards each other, all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff and visitors to the school. The understanding is that all learners are to respect the rights of others to being safe, secure and unthreatened whilst at school, so as to ensure that the educational process is allowed to proceed.

Intimate behaviour between learners is not acceptable.

Inappropriate physical behaviour is **unacceptable** and will be dealt with accordingly.

MISDEMEANOURS

Which will be addressed by means of corrective measures as laid down by the Principal and the Discipline Officer (listed alphabetically and in no order of importance)

- Alcohol – possession at school or at a school outing/smelling of liquor/under the influence at school or functions
- Anti-social behaviour
- Any action which brings the school's name into disrepute
- Bullying
- Cheating or attempting to cheat/lying
- Communicating with fellow learners in a test venue
- Copying of projects or any other work
- Defacing school property
- Derogatory terminology
- Disrespectful or insolent behavior
- Disruptive and or un-cooperative behavior, violating the rights of teachers to carry out their assigned task of teaching the class
- Drugs –the use, possession or sale thereof
- Eating/chewing in class (including chewing gum)
- Entering out of bounds area
- Excessively noisy/unruly behaviour
- Failure to attend detention without a prior excuse
- Failure to timeously submit homework/tasks/library/text books
- Fighting/common assault/sticking a sharp object into a fellow learner
- Forbidden material in a test venue
- Forgery, e.g. parent/guardian's signature
- Gangsterism – promoting formation or forming of gangs
- Hate speech
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Indecent assault

- Insubordination
- Interfering with or damaging another person's possessions
- Intimidation
- Late arrival for school/ class
- Littering
- Loitering in cloakrooms/passages/classrooms
- Misconduct in assembly/classroom/playground
- Misuse of cell phones – including during exams
- Plagiarism
- Possession of offensive material, including pornographic material
- Possession of weapons or dangerous items (knives etc.)
- Preventing other learners from attending classes
- Racist remarks/insults
- Repeated dress code infringements
- Smoking or in possession of cigarettes
- Stealing
- Swearing or using obscene gestures
- Tampering with safety equipment
- Truancy (bunking)
- Uncooperative/discourteous behavior
- Unlicensed, reckless or negligent driving whilst in school uniform,
- Vandalism
- Verbal or non- verbal abuse
- Violating the rights of fellow learners and staff at VPHS

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The Principal and his staff have full authority to ensure that every learner abides by the code of conduct.

The following list of interventions and corrective measures used by the school are aimed at correcting behaviour before suspension and, in extreme circumstances, expulsion:

- A verbal warning / reprimand to express disapproval
- Use of the de-merit card system
- Written warning
- Final written warning
- Removal from classes to the exclusion zone / outside the Principal's office
- Written punishment
- Community service to improve the physical environment within and around the school property
- Homework detention
- Supervised detention
- Saturday detention
- Detention – exam block days
- De-merit detention
- Referral for counseling
- Attendance of a relevant life skills programme
- Compensation for damages to cover the cost of repair or replacement of the lost or damaged item
- Temporary suspension of school related privileges

- Exclusion from school activities and functions e.g. academic dinner, matric dance, sporting events, valedictory, prize-giving
- School testimonial may be withheld (At the discretion of the Principal)
- Withdrawal of recognition, e.g. award withdrawn, councilor badge rescinded
- Temporary suspension from class or school – pending disciplinary hearing
- Disciplinary hearing

SERIOUS MISCONDUCT THAT MAY LEAD TO SUSPENSION

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

- seriously threatens, disrupts or frustrates teaching or learning in a 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 racist remarks)
- distributes, or is in the possession of, any test or examination material that may enable 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
- engages in any act of public indecency
- sexually harasses another person
- possession or distributes of pornographic material
- is under the influence or in the possession of alcohol/drugs

SERIOUS MISCONDUCT THAT MAY LEAD TO EXPULSION

A learner will be guilty of serious misconduct if he or she-

- is found guilty of misconduct as described in the above after having been found guilty of the same or similar misconduct on **one previous occasion**
- 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 himself or herself or another person to gain an unfair advantage therein
- engages in fraud
- engages in theft, or otherwise acts dishonestly to the prejudice of another person
- is in possession, of, consumes or deals in any illegal substance or other harmful substance
- is in possession of any dangerous weapon
- assaults or threatens to assault another person

- holds any person hostage
- murders any person
- rapes any person, or engages in any sexual activity which amounts to an offence in law
- maliciously damages property

HEARINGS

The Principal and his staff will make every effort to correct the situation before resorting to a full hearing, which will include members of the RCL and Governing Body.

In the event of serious or continuous misdemeanours, the learner will be required to attend a full hearing.

For lesser misdemeanours and at the Principal and Discipline Officer's discretion, the parent/s or guardian will be called to attend a meeting to discuss the continued misbehaviour of the learner.

GENERAL

Any matters not specifically dealt with in this Code of Conduct will be dealt with as they arise by the Principal and his authorities and on the understanding that whatever action is decided upon will be dependent upon the accepted ethos of the school and the laws of the land.

OUR CREDO

- ❖ Happy learners flourish in a disciplined environment where the boundaries are clearly defined.
- ❖ At Victoria Park High, we believe in the power of individuality.
- ❖ We break the mould and question the status quo.
- ❖ We believe that everybody can be somebody.
- ❖ We believe in exploring and amplifying the various talents that make each of our pupils unique.
- ❖ We believe that where you are going is more important than where you have come from.
- ❖ We believe in the pursuit of excellence and the enjoyment of the journey along the way.
- ❖ We believe in giving our pupils opportunity to find themselves by providing them with a variety of activities and facilities.
- ❖ We believe in fostering a pioneering spirit to tackle life's challenges head-on.
- ❖ We believe that everything you have is everything you need.
- ❖ We believe in bravery and self-belief.
- ❖ We believe in the power of encouragement and in building confident and empowered young hearts and minds.
- ❖ We believe in dreaming big and working hard.
- ❖ We believe that talent can get you far but persistence can get you further.
- ❖ At Victoria Park High, education is an education in life. It is a five year window of equipping the next generation with the maturity, dedication and open-mindedness required to readily embrace their uniqueness and leave their mark on the world.
- ❖ At Victoria Park High, we believe that preparation for life turns opportunities into success.