

# LILIMA MONTESSORI HIGH SCHOOL

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### **Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures**

*The Code of Conduct has a number of purposes:*

To protect the dignity of all who are part of the school community and therefore to encourage students to have respect for themselves and others.

To protect the integrity of the school community in order that the school can effectively discharge its duty of ensuring that the learning environment is an effective and happy one.

To protect the rights of all, and to this end, to ensure that students understand their responsibilities regarding their behaviour at the school. All have the right to be protected from any negative behaviour from students.

To ensure that students know what is expected of them and to encourage socially acceptable behaviour.

To help young people develop a sense of self discipline, responsibility towards others and values and attitudes in line with the mission of the school.

#### **Upholding a culture of good conduct**

All students, staff, student leaders, management and parents / guardians are responsible for ensuring that all students adhere to the rules described in the Code of Conduct, especially where a student's compliance is dependent on support from parents / guardians, staff or both. All are responsible for creating a peaceful, law abiding and happy environment, which is conducive to a culture of learning and upholding the highest expectations of behaviour of the school.

All behaviour will be judged according to the above expectations. Students accept that there are certain consequences in not taking these responsibilities seriously.

When addressing occurrences of bad behaviour no one will threaten any particular punishment and all are encouraged to refrain from threats, abuse of power or any indication of bias, dislike or interpersonal difficulties, that may compromise the authority of any disciplinary processes or the atmosphere of equity, due process, and fairness in which any disciplinary process should take place.

Students accept that a particular sanction imposed after the disciplinary process is legitimate and fair, and is a necessary consequence of the breach of a School Rule.

Discipline is aimed at reconciling the student to the expectations of good conduct and restoring any broken relationships between the student and any other member of the community.

Discipline is aimed at creating and maintaining a stable and fair learning environment, in which everyone's right to fairness and an education, is recognised.

#### **In the case of a breach of the rules as set out in the code of conduct:**

Initially two questions should be addressed regarding the breach, firstly did the incident occur and secondly was it a breach of the code of conduct. Once this has been determined, the process is outlined below.

This is a consequential process starting with a warning, then, if the incident(s) re-occurs, suspension followed by the possibility of expulsion.

All hearings regarding breach of conduct will be documented and copies made available to parties concerned.

Staff members should have their own expectations regarding behaviour in the classroom, residences or during any school activity. These expectations must be very clear and the repercussions of not abiding by an expectation should also be clear.

### **Counselling:**

If a student persistently engages in negative behaviour, parents or guardians will be notified. If the negative behaviour does not change within a reasonable period of time, the school will have the option of referring the student to a psychologist that the school will recommend. If the psychologist also wishes to see the parents or guardians, then they must also attend sessions as required by the psychologist. The aim of this is to engage the child, and his or her parents or guardians, in the work needed to help the student change their behaviour through counselling. If the student and/or parents or guardians are unwilling to engage fully in psychological counselling, then the school will have the option of recommending that the student continues their education elsewhere with immediate effect.

### **Warning:**

The breach of the rules is normally dealt with at a classroom, residential or activity basis. The student disciplinary committee will call a meeting with the student concerned. A full hearing of all the allegations and evidence before an impartial chairperson is a pre-condition to a fair outcome. This is known as the Disciplinary Committee (DC). If the breach cannot be resolved at this level the DC will refer the matter to teachers and may choose to make a recommendation with regard to a **warning**.

The teachers then meet with the student separately and decide if a **warning** is necessary.

If a warning is necessary, the teachers will meet with the board and a meeting with the parents and the student involved will be arranged. In addition the school will request the presence of the school psychologist at the meeting so that recommendations may be made to assist in behavioural change and resolution.

The misdemeanor/s will then be discussed with the parents initially and then the student will be called in to respond at the meeting and various recommendations regarding the consequences of failure to change behavior will be made. This will constitute the **warning**.

### **Suspension:**

Should the warning not be heeded or breach of rules continues the process is repeated with the initial student disciplinary council hearing with the awareness that a warning has been issued. The student

disciplinary committee will call a meeting with the student concerned, if the breach cannot be resolved at this level the DC will refer the matter to teachers and may choose to make a recommendation with regard to a **suspension**.

This matter will then be referred to the teaching staff who will again meet with the student and if the teachers feel that a suspension is recommended it will be referred to the board.

If a suspension is recommended, the teachers, board and the psychologist will convene a meeting with the parents and the student involved. The continuation of the misdemeanor/s will then be discussed with the parents initially, and then the student will be called in by the board to respond. The board will then deliberate as to whether a **suspension** is appropriate and make any further recommendations.

#### **DC Warning:**

Should the warning from the school not be heeded, or breach of rules continues, the process is repeated with the initial student disciplinary council hearing, with the awareness that a suspension has been issued. The student disciplinary committee will call a meeting with the student concerned if the breach cannot be resolved at this level the DC will refer the matter to teachers.

This matter will then be referred to the teaching staff who will again meet with the student, and if the teachers decide that the student is not making any effort to change their behavior and repeatedly breaches the code of conduct, they may feel that expulsion be recommended it will be referred to the board.

#### **Expulsion:**

At this stage the teachers, board and the psychologist will convene a meeting with the parents and the student involved. The continuation of the misdemeanor/s will then be discussed with the parents and the student will be called in by the board to respond. The board will then deliberate as to whether **expulsion** is appropriate and make any further recommendations.

Parents / guardians, students, staff and management accept that the final decision as to whether or not a breach of the rules has occurred rests with the chairperson of each hearing.

The student may appeal the decision of the Board and request an appeal hearing including the Board, the parents, the teaching staff and the psychologist where the issue may be presented before an independent arbitrator.

In the following clearly defined circumstances expulsion may be immediately instituted:

Appearing at school with a knife, firearm or any other weapon.

Rape or attempted rape.

Use of opiates, crystal methamphetamine, or cocaine.

## **SECTION 1 - Rights of learners**

### **Learners have the right:**

- 1.1 to be educated in an environment prepared according to Montessori principles.
- 1.2 to be educated following the appropriate curriculum.
- 1.3 to be respected by other members of the school community, regardless of personal, religious or cultural differences.
- 1.4 to regular reports reflecting academic progress.
- 1.5 to be treated with fairness.
- 1.6 to have security of person and property.
- 1.7 to make use of available school facilities and property.
- 1.8 to have the moral support of the school in their participation in school cultural, sporting or academic activities.
- 1.9 to work in a clean and litter-free school.
- 1.10 to ask for help, advice or counseling.
- 1.11 to have school activities begin punctually.
- 1.12 to use available books and appropriate texts in a serviceable, usable condition.
- 1.13 to attend a school free of drugs, weapons, drunkenness, bullying, victimisation or intimidation.
- 1.14 to attend a school free of sexual harassment or criminal behaviour.

## **SECTION 2 - Responsibilities of learners**

Learners have rights, with rights come responsibilities. Discipline, particularly self-discipline, is vital to the establishment and maintenance of a happy and productive learning environment. In order to achieve the desired climate in which each learner can achieve to their full potential the following pre-requisites must be met.

### **Respect for others:**

Students may not use language that is inflammatory or disrespectful, such as swear words or hate speech. Hate speech is speech that offends, threatens, or insults groups, based on race, colour, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or other traits.

### **All learners must:**

- 2.1 respect the rights of their fellow learners to learn and work in a stable academic environment, free from noise, disruption and distraction.
- 2.2 respect the rights of the teacher to teach in such an atmosphere.
- 2.3 show respect to those who are placed in authority in the school and co-operate with them at all times.
- 2.4 treat fellow learners, members of staff of all categories and all visitors to the school with courtesy and respect, not using any actions or making any comments which might cause offence in any way.
- 2.5 not, at any time, use violence or any form of intimidation towards fellow learners, members of staff or visitors to the school.
- 2.6 do no willful damage to the school buildings or to any items of school property of any description.
- 2.7 respect the property of others, whether it be that of fellow learners, members of staff or visitors to the school, and at no time, nor in any way, attempt to damage, deface or steal what is not theirs.
- 2.8 respect the moral attitudes of the school and wider community, and of society in general, with regard to dishonesty, offensive or obscene language or behaviour, unacceptable sexual behaviour, pornography of any kind, and with regard to smoking, consuming alcohol or use of drugs of any kind when at school, when representing the school or when in a position to be identified as a member of the

school.

2.9 cause no embarrassment to, nor engage in behaviour that reflects negatively on the school in any way. This may either be in person, or through any other means or media.

2.10 do all academic assignments, including homework, to the very best of their ability.

2.11 refrain from the use of drugs, assault, carrying of dangerous weapons, criminal or illegal activities, intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, victimisation, smoking, or being in the possession of, or viewing, pornographic material.

2.12 abide by the school rules and code of conduct and any/all amendments thereto.

2.13 refrain from lighting fireworks on the school premises.

### **SECTION 3 – Rules, regulations and expectations**

Although there are a number of regulations which help in the smooth running of the school, the guiding principle is:

Treat other people in the way that you wish to be treated, with respect, and as individuals.

#### **3.1. Attitude, manners and respect for others:**

Learners should treat each other as they wish to be treated. With this in mind, learners are obliged to:

3.1.1 develop a positive attitude towards the school, their studies and involvement in activities.

3.1.2 develop self-discipline and responsibility for their own benefit.

3.1.3 show good manners, courtesy and respect to others, both their peers, seniors and adults, at all times. In the presence of adults, teachers, visitors and parents, learners must stand to greet them.

3.1.4. refrain from bullying in any form.

3.1.5. refrain from using offensive or foul language at all times.

3.1.6. maintain due decorum and respect for oneself and all those in the school community whether at school or off the school premises.

3.1.7 refrain from hazing, harassment in any form or assault: Physical violence and all forms of threatening, abusive or intimidatory behaviour are forbidden. Any form of intimidation or harassment (including sexual harassment and cyber bullying) by one student or a group of students is not permitted.

3.18 refrain from bringing offensive weapons (or toys which look like offensive weapons) onto campus. The extent of the violence, threat, abuse, intimidation or harassment and the actual harm or potential harm caused by this will be considered in the disciplinary procedures.

#### **3.2. Attendance and Punctuality**

##### **Learners are obliged to:**

3.2.1 arrive punctually for school and classes. At 07h35, the main school gate will be locked. Cars and pedestrians will only be permitted into the school after the community meeting is over. Learners who arrive late will be required to wait at the gate. More than five late arrivals per term at school will require a meeting with parents.

3.2.2 observe all regulations which specify areas that are out of bounds, or where access is restricted to certain times.

3.2.3 remain at school for the duration of the school day and in the appropriate class.

3.2.4 bring written notification from their parents if they wish to leave school early.

#### **3.3 Learners must observe the following:**

- 3.3.1 that attendance at school is compulsory.
- 3.3.2 any absences from school must be supported by a doctor's certificate or a written explanation from the parent. Such supporting documents are to be presented to the registration teacher on the first day of return.
- 3.3.3 absentee notes must be written on a separate sheet of paper and not in Homework Diaries, as they will be kept on file.
- 3.3.4 if a scholar is absent on sick leave for three or more days, a doctor's certificate will be required.
- 3.3.5 scholars who are absent for tests and examinations, or on days preceding tests and examinations, must also produce a doctor's certificate.
- 3.3.6 such notes or certificates must be presented to the Register Teacher clearly stating the date/s of absence.

### **3.4. Respect for property:**

Learners are obliged to:

- 3.4.1 ensure that all personal belongings are clearly marked.
- 3.4.2 take care of their own belongings, and show respect for the property of others.
- 3.4.3 refrain from bringing valuables to school.
- 3.4.4 report any accidental breakage or damage to property to their teacher or head teacher immediately.
- 3.4.5 refrain from defacing or willfully changing school property in any way. The school may request that damaged property be replaced, or charge the learner for the repair of the damaged property.
- 3.4.6 be aware that it is an offence to litter.
- 3.4.7 be aware that theft (and that unauthorised 'borrowing' will be considered as theft by the school) is strictly forbidden.

### **3.5. Transport**

Learners are obliged to:

- 3.5.1 practice discipline on all forms of transport to and from school.
- 3.5.2 Only learners with a valid driving license, and with the written approval of their parents and the written permission of the school, may drive to and from school in a motor vehicle or motor cycle.

### **3.6. Extra-Mural Programme**

Learners are obliged to:

- 3.6.1 participate in the cultural and sporting life of their school.
- 3.6.2 uphold sportsmanship and teamwork as values the school strives for.
- 3.6.3 attend all practices once they have made a commitment to a sport or cultural activity.

### **3.7. Classroom code of conduct**

Learners are obliged to:

- 3.7.1. listen to their teacher/guide.
- 3.7.2. allow everyone the right to learn without interference from themselves or others.
- 3.7.3. be punctual and prepared for lessons (books/files/stationery).
- 3.7.4. show politeness and consideration and to exercise self-discipline.
- 3.7.5. take care of furniture, books and equipment.
- 3.7.6. respect the property of others.
- 3.7.7 refrain from cheating or copying the work of others.
- 3.7.8 not eat food, sweets or cold drinks in classrooms or other educational rooms.

### **3.8. General Conduct**

3.8.1 No inappropriate physical contact of any kind is permitted between boys and girls. Displays of affection and sexual activity beyond the holding of hands, hugging and simple kissing are not permitted. Students found to have engaged (or were about to engage) in intimate sexual activity, such as sexual intercourse, the giving or receiving of oral sex, or being together in a state of undress (even partially), will be considered to be in breach of the rule. The list of intimate sexual activity cannot be viewed as exhaustive.

3.8.2 Smoking is forbidden as are matches and lighters. No guns, knives or weapons of any sort may be brought onto the school premises.

3.8.3 No illegal substances or alcohol, or recreational drugs are permitted on the school premises and any use or possession of such will be considered a breach of conduct.

### **3.9. Computer Usage**

Use of the internet will be strictly controlled and students are expected to use the computers responsibly.

### **3.10 Cellphones**

Cellphones not allowed at school during school hours and only permitted onto the school premises under the following conditions:

3.10.1 that they are handed in at the office at the beginning of the day and collected on the way home.

3.10.2 that they are brought onto the school premises entirely at the risk of the learners and their parents. Failure to observe this will result in their confiscation.

### **4.1 Dress code:**

Students are required to dress appropriately and modestly.

Hair should be neat and tidy and long hair should be tied back.

### **5.1. Expectations:**

Everyone at Lilima Montessori is expected to do their best at all times.

Staff, learners and parents will all work together to help every person in the school reach their unique capabilities. Any behaviour or action, which helps learners to grow and mature will be encouraged.

Everyone in the school is encouraged to work on the five core characteristics of positive behaviour:

5.1.1. Citizenship: having a sense of pride, actively participating in the community, a sharing of time, talent and resources, compassionate.

5.1.2. Responsibility: Accountable, accepting of consequences for one's own actions and decisions.

5.1.3. Respect: Honoring appropriate authority, treating others as you would like to be treated, being courteous.

5.1.4. Self-discipline: Confidence in self, knowing that one is of value and can have a positive impact, developing and taking care of oneself.

5.1.5. Honesty: Telling the truth to others.

I .....hereby declare that I have read and fully understand the terms of this binding agreement.

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Date.....

Signed by Student (full name and signature)

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Date.....

Signed by Parent or Guardian (full name and signature)

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Date.....

Signed by Lilima Montessori Board (full name and signature)

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Date.....

Witness (full name and signature)

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Date.....

Witness (full name and signature)