



POLICY (Hi)

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PUPILS

Introduction

Our objective at Somerset House is to assist children in learning to make the right decisions with regard to personal actions and behaviours. We do so, recognising that people make mistakes and must learn from them in order to grow. Ideally, the ability of each child to self-regulate their behaviour must be the objective of our discipline system.

At Somerset House we take discipline seriously and are advocates of an environment which is based on mutual respect and responsibility rather than fear. We believe strongly that if a positive and constructive environment is created in our school, there will be fewer discipline issues to deal with. Equally, if we deal with discipline issues respectfully and responsibly, our children will learn to respect rules and be responsible in abiding by them. We therefore emphasise our responsibilities more than our rights. We emphasise consideration for others in all our actions.

At Somerset House we expect:

- Good manners and courtesy from all who make up the school community
- Responsible behaviour
- Respect for others regardless of differences, culture, religion, language, opinions or beliefs
- Respect for school property and the property of others
- Pride in our school, our grounds, our appearance
- Children to handle problems in a responsible manner by seeking solutions to problems. This may involve consulting staff members or parents

Discipline problems are mostly handled on a one-on-one basis at Somerset House. All children must learn to accept the responsibility for their actions when they fail to follow rules and fail to respect the rights and dignity of others and/or school property. In order to help all pupils to become well-adjusted people, Somerset Houses uses a discipline system that includes conflict resolution, counselling, appropriate punishment or consequence and in serious cases, suspension warning, suspension, and expulsion. These consequences are used to ensure that the right of all to learn in a safe environment is protected. If a pupil behaves in a manner which is contrary to the ethos of the school or impinges on the rights of others, the school will respond to the misbehaviour. Consequences will follow a logical progression of procedures/steps. Examples of consequences are listed below:

- Counselling/problem solving/conflict resolution with the pupil(s);
- Loss of break, sitting in the office doing work or community service;
- Use of a break to problem solve in writing;
- Parent/guardian contact and follow-up at home;
- Conference with teacher, parent/guardian, and pupil;
- Conference with Principal or his/her representative, parent/guardian, pupil, and teacher; loss of activity (study trip, assembly, class party, outing, camp, etc);
- Suspension;
- Expulsion.

Note: This document and the procedures set out therein may, from time to time, be amended, amplified or added to by the school, in order to cover exigencies which may not have been contemplated at the time of publication thereof. In such event, a revised document will be provided to parents and pupils.

The school reserves the right to take action in the case of any breach of these cardinal rules or any breach of discipline.

1. CARDINAL RULES

- Respect is to be shown to everyone at all times. All property is to be treated with respect.
- Courtesy and good manners during lessons and while representing the school are expected at all times.



- Our school is judged in the eyes of the community and the general public by the behaviour of our pupils outside the school after school hours, whether in uniform or not. Any action, which brings the school's name into disrepute, will not be tolerated.
- Safety of ourselves and of others is to be maintained at all times.

2. **MINOR TRANSGRESSIONS**

In general, a teacher at the school has the same rights as a parent -to control and discipline the child according to the Code of Conduct during the time that the child is in attendance at the school, in any classroom, and during school functions or school excursions or school related activity.

3. **SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY TRANSGRESSIONS.**

While it is not the school's intention to suspend or expel pupils, it sometimes becomes necessary to remove pupils who infringe upon the rights of others or who refuse to follow the rules of the school.

Examples of reasons for suspensions and/or expulsions are when a pupil:

- 3.1. Caused or attempted, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or wilfully used force or violence upon another person, except in self-defence.
- 3.2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object; possession of an imitation firearm.
- 3.3. Unlawfully possessed, used, or been under the influence of any alcohol, illegal, banned or controlled substance as defined in any Act promulgated by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa or by any provincial or local authority.
- 3.4. Unlawfully offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any alcohol, illegal/banned/controlled substance, as defined in any Act promulgated by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa or by any provincial or local authority.
- 3.5. Possessed or used tobacco, or any product containing tobacco on any of the School's premises or during an official school function or outing wheresoever.
- 3.6. Committed, or attempted to commit hate speech, robbery or extortion.
- 3.7. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school or private property.
- 3.8. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property; receiving or being in possession of any stolen school or private property.
- 3.9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in repeated profanity or vulgarity.
- 3.10. Contravened a part of the school Information Technology User Agreement.
- 3.11. Disrupted school activities or defied the valid authority of school personnel.
- 3.12. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery; sexual misconduct on the school premises or during an official school function or outing wheresoever.
- 3.13. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil, including one who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding.
- 3.14. Is involved in repetitive and continued harassment of another pupil, ie. bullying, either of a verbal or physical or psychological nature, as defined in the bullying policy.
- 3.15. Repeatedly committing inappropriate acts or "minor" transgressions for which the pupil has received warnings during the current calendar year.
- 3.16. No pupil shall be suspended or expelled for any of the acts set out above unless that act is related to school activities or attendance:
 - While on school grounds;
 - While going or coming to school;
 - During any break period, whether on or off campus;
 - During, or while going to or coming from a school related activity such as school outings, sports activities or tours, camps, etc.;
 - Bring the good name or reputation of the school into disrepute.