

THOMAS MORE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL



STUDENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT, GENERAL INFORMATION AND HOUSE RULES 2017

Thomas More College is a Christian-based co-educational school with dedicated and professional staff, running classes from Grade 000 to Grade 12. Through a balanced programme of academic, cultural and sporting activities as well as a measure of fun, the school prides itself on developing Christian love and self-esteem in children, and a moral code as espoused in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, ensuring that they are able to make a meaningful contribution to an ever-changing society. Focus is given to developing the whole child and equipping him/her with relevant leadership and life skills.

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1. PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET

The purpose of this booklet is for the parent and the child to know what they can expect from the school and what is expected of them. The booklet will provide you with important information to assist you and your child to cope with life at Thomas More College, High School. This booklet is a working document and adjustments will be made to it each year to keep up with the changes in education and society.

2. HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

- ❖ It is very important that at the beginning of the year you and your child read through this booklet to familiarise yourself with the information.
- ❖ It may be an idea to highlight the sections that particularly apply to you for easy reference.
- ❖ Once you have completed reading this booklet you need to acknowledge this by signing the return slip. **This paper needs to be returned to the registration teacher by no later than 30 January 2017.** This document should be read in conjunction with The Disciplinary Code, Academic Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Documents which are located on the Thomas More College web site (www.thomasmore.co.za) and on the Parent Portal.
- ❖ You should keep the booklet in an easily accessible place so that it can be referred to throughout the year.

STUDENTS CODE OF CONDUCT, GENERAL INFORMATION AND HOUSE RULES

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1.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- We will respect each other's individuality.
- We will conduct ourselves in such a way as to bring credit to ourselves and to our School.
- We will treat each other and visitors to our school with courtesy, consideration and respect.
- We will care for our environment.

1.2 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The following are not acceptable at Thomas More College, High School:

- theft
- vandalism
- violence towards others and possession of dangerous weapons
- smoking, or trafficking in cigarettes
- drinking of alcohol or trafficking in such
- drug abuse; trafficking and possession of drugs
- racism and sexism
- verbal, physical and emotional abuse
- sexual harassment
- possession or distribution of pornographic or other offensive material
- bullying
- initiation
- lying
- littering
- graffiti
- intimidation
- tampering with School equipment/other pupils' equipment/ personal effects, eg cellphones.

Clarification of bullying and initiation:

Any form of initiation or bullying. This includes, but is not limited to, mental, cyber, verbal (e.g. teasing, threats, gestures or verbal attacks) and physical (e.g. beating, and deprivation of sleep or any conduct causing physical stress) harassment. Moreover, to stand by when someone else is being initiated or bullied, is to support or be associated with those acts which also constitute those offences.

Any other act that may, or may not be covered in any Thomas More College, High School Discipline document, that is an offence, or infringes upon the name of the school, good manners, respect of others and their property.

1.3 BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS

The following will not be tolerated:

- lack of respect or the purposeful embarrassment of others.
- disruption, bullying and horseplay
- foul language, verbal abuse.
- any infringement of other pupils' basic right to education.

The Subject Teacher will deal with these immediately. If the misdemeanour persists the Grade Controllers and the parents of the pupil will be called in for a further meeting.

1.4 MANNERS

- greet all people
- boys to stand up when greeting
- all pupils to stand up and greet visitors to a classroom or learning environment
- offer help to strangers
- offer to carry items
- do not talk to people with hands in pockets
- no chewing of gum at any time

1.5 PUNCTUALITY

It is stressed that pupils must arrive on time for school and must not use their parents as an excuse. In addition, punctuality for class and extra-curricular activities is essential. Parents must ensure that their children arrive at school on time for the beginning of the school day. Regular latecomers will be punished. Any latecomer must report to the High School Secretary when arriving at school in order to be marked 'present' for the day.

1.6 WORK ETHIC

The chief purpose of the school is to encourage academic endeavour. Students are required to commit themselves to sincere academic effort.

All class tasks and homework are to be completed timeously

Cheating will not be tolerated and the work a pupil submits must be his/her own and not somebody else's.

1.7 ATTENDANCE

- It is compulsory to attend school and truancy will be severely dealt with, as set out by the Thomas More College, High School Disciplinary Code.
- No pupil may leave the school premises during school hours without the permission of the Headmaster or the Deputy Headmaster.
- Failure to attend compulsory school activities will result in punishment

- Absence for illness must be explained by a telephone call, email or in a letter to the High School secretary, before or on a pupil's return to school.
- A doctor's certificate must be produced for any absence of three days or longer.
- A doctor's certificate must be produced for absence of any length of time during formal exam periods.
- The post-exam periods in June and November/December are compulsory school attendance days.

1.8 ROMANTIC AFFECTION

Public displays of romantic affection, e.g. cuddling, kissing and suchlike, are unacceptable and set a poor example to other pupils.

1.9 CELLULAR TELEPHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

All cellular telephones and electronic devices are to be switched off during lessons. No pupil may receive calls, MMS or SMS during lesson time. Cell phones may only be used **to contact others** before and after school, as well as during break times. **Cell phones and electronic devices may be used in class for educational purposes at a teacher's discretion.** Any transgression by a pupil will be dealt with according to the process set out in the Disciplinary Code. Any other forms of social media are **banned** from being used on the Thomas More College, High School internet service (as well as connection via cellular link).

In bringing a cellular telephone or electronic device to school, you are acknowledging that you are responsible for it. The school will not be held liable if the phone or device goes missing or is stolen. **Pupils may not use any type of headpiece/earphones to listen to music at any time 24/7.**

By bringing a cell phone / tablet on to the TMC Campus you must adhere to the TMC Social Media Policy as set out in the IT Acceptable use agreement.

Cell phones, electronic tablets and devices must not be visible or used between and during lessons. Teachers may give permission to use a cell phone during a lesson for educational purposes at their discretion. Thomas More College philosophy on cell phones / electronic devices is that they are out of sight until permission is granted by a teacher.

1.10 AUDIO EQUIPMENT

MP3 players, IPOD's and any such items are forbidden at school, unless specifically needed for a practical or oral lesson. Any such item found at school without a valid reason shall be removed and put in safekeeping. Parents will be requested to collect the items, at a time that is convenient to them and to the school.

1.11 DRESS AND APPEARANCE

- A high standard of neatness and tidiness must be maintained at all times.
- The dress and appearance of pupils should uphold the positive image of Thomas More College, High School.
- Civvies Days; dress appropriately.
- Grade Camps; normal school uniform rules apply.

Normal dress regulations apply during examination periods. ALL PUPILS are expected to be correctly dressed and ALL BOYS clean-shaven. Parents will be notified when their son has to start shaving for the first time.

- **Modest Christian Religious Symbols** may be worn, providing that they are worn on a **thin silver/gold chain** that is **long enough** to be hidden from **direct view**.

1.11.1 BOYS

GENERAL

- Summer and winter uniforms may not be mixed.
- Blazers must be worn on formal occasions and to assembly in winter.
- Tattoos must not be visible at any time with any College uniform or any excursions.
- Shirts must be properly tucked in and must not be folded over.
- Black plain lace-up shoes must be worn. No buckles permitted.
No pointy shoes / dress shoes are permitted – normal Bata Toughies type of school shoes only. These must be regularly polished.
- No form of jewellery, wrist adornments or neck adornments may be worn (excluding a religious symbol, medic alert bracelet, or watch). **No wrist bands supporting a charity may be worn unless permission is granted by the Headmaster for a period of time.**
- No piercing, including bristles are allowed. No plasters allowed to cover piercings.
- Pants should be worn on the waist and should be suitably tailored. Hipsters, baggy pants and stovepipes are not permitted.
- Pants should be of appropriate length and should not drag on the ground.
- If a belt is worn, it must be black. The buckle must be modest and conservative.
- Only charcoal ankle length socks are permitted.
- No sports kit may be worn with the uniform.
- No cuffs of shirts to be rolled partly back
- Jersey sleeves are not to be pushed up. **Jerseys may not be draped over the shoulders.** Jerseys with holes in sleeves must be replaced / repaired.
- Only approved school badges to be worn on lapels of blazers.
- The school rain jacket may be worn, but not to assembly as this is a formal occasion.
- **Short-sleeved or long-sleeved jerseys may be worn to assembly.**

- **Summer uniform will be worn from the start of the school year in January until 30th April. Winter uniform will be worn from 1st May to 31st August. Either summer or winter uniform may be worn from 1st September to the end of the fourth term.**
- **Summer and winter uniforms may be worn only in the seasons specified by the school, or at the discretion of the Headmaster, for example, Speech Nights.**

SUMMER UNIFORMS

- Black lace-up shoes.
- Charcoal socks.
- Charcoal pants available from TMC Stockshop.
- Short sleeved Thomas More College, High School shirt (no tie) with badge on pocket.
- Thomas More College, High School charcoal jersey or Matric jersey.

WINTER UNIFORM

- Black lace-up shoes
- Charcoal socks
- Charcoal pants available from TMC Stockshop
- Long sleeved white lounge shirt (**top buttons to be done up at all times**) or short sleeved High School shirt with badge.
- Thomas More College, High School tie
- Thomas More College, High School charcoal jersey or Matric jersey.
- Blazer
- **OPTIONAL: Thomas More College scarf** (to be worn on cold days only)

HAIRSTYLES

Hair should be neat, tidy, clean and combed at all times. The principle behind the following guidelines is that the hairstyles should be appropriate for the formal attire of the school uniform as judged by the management of the school and it should not draw attention to oneself:

- Hair colour must be natural without contrasting highlights. No peroxide, dyes or colour rinses are permitted.
- When fringes are combed forward, the fringe must be above the eyebrows.
- Hairstyles should be neat and tapered and hair should not be so long that it falls over the collar or ears.

- Boys hair must be combed and must not draw attention to themselves. In the event of boys hair drawing attention to themselves the HOD/ Grade Controller with the representatives from the MLC will deliberate on the matter.

The following hairstyles are not acceptable:

- Undercuts
- Steps with contrast between thick and short/no tails/mullets
- Tucking long hair behind the ears.
- Middle partings with hair that grows into wings or ringlets.
- Heads shaved shorter than a 'number 2'.
- Uncombed hair.
- Gel may only be used to style hair. Wet looks and spiked hair **are not** permitted
- Boys must be clean-shaven daily and sideburns may only be grown **half** way down the ears.
- No comb overs

If the above standards are not adhered to, the offending pupil will be sent home. Parents will be asked to ensure that their child complies with the requirements of the school authorities.

1.11.2 GIRLS

GENERAL

- Blazers must be worn on formal occasions and to assembly in winter.
- Black plain Bata Toughie type shoes must be worn. These must be regularly polished.
- Only **one** set of **plain gold or silver** earrings may be worn and these must be plain studs (**3-4mm in diameter**) or sleepers (**1mm thin**) in the lower part of the ear. No other piercing is allowed, **this includes nose rings. No bristles are allowed.** No plasters allowed to cover piercings. No other form of jewellery, wrist adornments or neck adornments may be worn (excluding a modest religious symbol, medic alert bracelet, or watch). **No hair elastics/ponies may be worn around the wrist.**
- Skirts must have a waistband and may not be worn on the hips.
- A skirt should cover at least **4/5** of the thigh. The hemline must be at most **3 closed fingers or 5cm** above the knee.
- Only white or flesh coloured underwear may be worn.
- No sports kit may be worn with the uniform.
- No cuffs of shirts to be rolled partly back
- Only approved school badges to be worn on lapels of blazers
- **Jersey sleeves may not be pushed up. Jerseys may not be draped over the shoulders.** Jerseys with holes in sleeves must be immediately replaced / repaired.

- The school rain jacket may be worn, but not to assembly as this is a formal occasion.
- **Summer or winter uniform may be worn at any time during the school year. Summer and winter uniforms may not be mixed.**
- **Summer and winter uniforms may be specified by the school, or at the discretion of the Headmaster, for example, Speech Night.**
- Matric girls may only wear the Matric tie from 1st May to the end of the fourth term.
- Tattoos must not be visible at any time with any College uniform or any outdoor excursions.
- Blankets may be brought to school with permission from Grade Controller.

Please note that no jewellery may be on a girl's uniform- eg. earrings in button- holes.

SUMMER UNIFORMS

- Black shoes.
- Grey Thomas More College, High School skirt.
- Short sleeved Thomas More College, High School shirt (no tie).
- Thomas More College, High School charcoal jersey or Matric Jersey.
- White ankle length socks, which are to be worn at a length of 4 (of the pupil's) closed fingers above the ankle.

WINTER UNIFORM

- Black shoes
- Blackmail stockings or black tights or short white socks when wearing a skirt or charcoal socks when wearing girls long pants.
- Grey Thomas More College, High School skirt
- Charcoal grey girls long pants available from the stock shop only
- Short sleeved Thomas More College, High School shirts
- Thomas More College, High School tie for Matrics only with a short/long sleeved white lounge shirt. (Top button must be done up at all times).
- Thomas More College, High School charcoal jersey or Matric jersey
- Blazer
- **OPTIONAL: Thomas More College scarf** (to be worn on cold days only)

HAIRSTYLES

Hair should be neat, tidy, and clean at all times. The principle behind the following guidelines is that the hairstyles should be appropriate for the formal attire of the school uniform as judged by the management of the school.

- Hair colour must be natural. **NO** dyes, no colour, no rinses, no high lights and no coloured braids are permitted this includes before and after the Matric dance.
- Fringes should not fall over the eyes.
- Long hair touching the shoulder / collar must be tied back.
- Loose strands must be clipped back. **If a side pony is worn pupils must ensure that their hair is clipped back properly.**
- Only red, white or black **head/Alice** bands may be used.
- **Only red, white, brown or black ponies or elastic bands may be used to tie up hair.**

MAKE-UP

- No make-up may be worn. This includes eyeliner, base, mascara and coloured lip gloss
- No false eyelashes may be worn. Matric girls may wear false eyelashes for the Matric dance in consultation with the Headmaster on an annual basis.
- Nails must be trimmed to a reasonable length and cleaned. No coloured nail varnish, no French manicures or nail art is to be worn, including before and after the Matric dance.

If the above standards are not adhered to, the offending pupil may be sent home. Parents will be asked to ensure that their child complies with the requirements of the school authorities.

1.12 REGISTRATION

All pupils must report for registration every morning. This takes place once daily: 7.30 - 7.40 a.m. Lateness for registration for no valid reason will result in a break **detention**. These periods are used to check -

- a. Registration
- b. The dress and appearance of pupils as they arrive at school
- c. Any daily/weekly record cards
- d. Any circulars, out or in, and
- e. Any other routine matters.

1.13 ASSEMBLY AND PRAYERS

Assembly is a **formal** occasion. Pupils are expected to arrive quietly and be properly dressed. During the summer months no blazer need be worn to assembly but during winter and when the formal uniform is worn, a blazer must be worn.

Notices: A list of notices will be sent out to assembly from the High School Secretary's office. Please ensure that all notices are sent to the High School Secretary by the beginning of period 3.

1.14 SICK ROOM

If for any reason you are not well, please get a note from your teacher, and take it to the High School Secretary who will record your absence from class and send you down to sick bay.

Any pupil who is sick will be sent home by the school nurse. The pupil must report back to the High School Secretary. **NO** pupil may take themselves directly to the School Nurse, without notifying and getting permission from either senior management or the High School Secretary.

No pupil may phone their parents to come and pick them up, without going through the correct channels.

1.15 CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Each pupil must take part in a school organised and based activity each term: cultural and/or sporting AND Outreach.

- Absence from co-curricular activities must be explained by a letter before the event or a direct approach to the relevant coach or staff member. Do not send messages through friends.
- Correct sports clothing must be worn at practices and matches.
- Behaviour should **AT ALL TIMES**, conform to the principles contained in the Thomas More College, High School Students' Code of Conduct.

The sport and extra-curricular activities programme will be detailed by the H.O.D. in charge. Each pupil will be expected to attain a minimum of **40** participation points during the year. Participating in sport and/or supporting fixtures as well as getting involved in the service and cultural activities on offer may attain these.

The amount of points allocated will vary according to the amount of commitment and dedication required. A breakdown of all points will be given to pupils at the beginning of each year.

- **Every pupil is expected to gain a minimum of 10 points for being involved in the Grade Outreach Project**, and a minimum of 30 points for participation in extra-mural programme. Participation Points will be finalized at the end of each term.

- Those who fail to reach the required number of points will be expected to make up the points by being involved in a Participation Points Detention, at the end of each term.

1.16 HOUSES

The three houses are Dalberg (red), Hurley (black), and Savory (blue).

The house competition, which runs throughout the year, is based on: -

- Swimming,
- Athletics,
- The One-Act Plays
- All other inter-house matches.
 - Water Polo
 - Hockey
 - Netball
 - Debating
 - Touch Rugby
 - Soccer
 - Tennis

1.17 OUTREACH

Thomas More College, High School prides itself on the fact that we offer a structured Outreach Programme. All children are expected to get involved in the respective Outreach Programme for their Grade. The teacher in charge of the Outreach Program in each grade will handle details of the Outreach Programme, under the supervision of the Senior H.O.D. - Outreach.

1.18 MATRIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Thomas More College, High School does not have a Prefect system. We believe in the ethos of self-discipline, where children are expected to carry themselves in a manner befitting the standard of the school. However, in August/ September each year, the school democratically elects students in Grade 11 who form the executive on the Matric Leadership Council (MLC). The council is made up of different portfolios with a chairperson who is in charge of each portfolios. The MLC Executive consisting of a Headboy, Headgirl, Deputy Headboy and Deputy Headgirl, will lead the Whole Matric Body. Each pupil within the Grade 11 (Aug – Dec) Grade 12 (Jan – Aug) group will be involved within the MLC portfolio committees.

It is an honour to serve on the MLC. The MLC strives to operate under a servant leadership model.

1.19 SENIORITY

Seniority is a system that applies to the senior pupils in the High School. All Matric pupils who do not achieve their Seniority points in Grade 11 will not receive the following privileges:

1. Matric jersey
2. Hall seating during Assembly
3. Use of the Matric Tuck-shop line
4. Matric tie to be worn

The privileges can be awarded once the pupil has gained all his/her points during his/her Grade 12 year. If a Grade 12 pupil does not fulfil their Participation Points commitment by obtaining the pre-requisite stipulated minimum number of points, per term, their privileges may be withdrawn.

1.20 DETENTION

Pupils may be given detention for a variety of reasons. These are clearly explained in the discipline code and the code of conduct.

- Break detention takes place Tuesdays and Thursdays at second break.
- Detention takes place three times a week, on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons.
- Friday Detention takes place every Friday for 2 hours and is taken by a Grade Controller.
- Saturday Detention is for two hours on a Saturday morning.

No pupil may be excused from a Saturday detention. Students who fail to attend detention may be given Saturday Detention, (especially if they are repeat offenders). Pupils who miss Saturday Detention will be suspended from School.

Detention starts on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons directly after school and is for 1 hour.

Pupils should report to the Duty Teacher's classroom.

Pupils will be given punishment by the teacher who put that student in detention.

The detention time may be used for cycle tests or other assessments missed due to illness or other legitimate excuses as determined by the head of academics.

Pupils may sit in silence in the detention venue to do homework.

1.21 TUCKSHOP

Good behaviour at the tuck shop is essential. Pupils are expected to line up in an orderly fashion and do not attempt to jump the queue or to get others to buy for them. They are

expected to leave the tuck shop before the siren goes so that they are not late for class. The tuck shop is strictly out- of -bounds during lessons.

Pupils working in the tuck-shop do so as a service to the school community and will receive participation points. Parents will have to agree to their children working in the tuck-shop.

1.22 LITTERING AND GRAFFITI

These activities are directly frowned upon and should not take place. The school and its environs must be respected at all times especially since the whole school is regarded as a conservancy.

1.23 PROPERTY AND MATERIALS

- It is the responsibility of all students to take care of school property, as well as their own goods. The defacing of buildings, plants and desks is considered a serious misdemeanour.
- Any breakage of, or damage to, school property must be reported immediately to a staff member.
- Any purposeful damage will be paid for by the pupil concerned

1.24 DISCIPLINE

- Thomas More College, High School aims to develop a culture of *self-responsibility, self-reliance* and *self-discipline*, believing that all students are accountable for their action or lack of action.
- Punishment will depend upon the nature of the offence and where possible, will include reparation of the wrongdoing.
- The disciplinary process is discussed at length under the heading of the Thomas More College, High School Disciplinary Code.

Kindly refer to the Thomas More College, High School information booklet regarding any issue not covered in this booklet or contact your child's Grade Controller.