



# Thomas More College Primary School

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KLOOF, KWAZULU-NATAL  
The School for all Seasons

# Code of Conduct

## Mission Statement

*Thomas More College is a School that:*

- meets children where they are and strives to bring out the best in each individual whatever their ability;
- nurtures their social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual development;
- produces happy, confident, self-motivated individuals who strive to achieve their goals, whilst being sensitive to the needs of others;
- is always at the leading edge of educational thinking and development;
- endeavours always to improve on our previous best;
- remains centred in Christian values;
- strives to love and develop each child.

# Thomas More College Primary School Code of Conduct

## 1) General Behaviour

Courtesy, consideration of the feelings of others and tolerance of differences in others is expected at all times. Our Code of Conduct is focused on the golden rule of treating people as you would like to be treated yourself. We expect the highest values and standards of behaviour, inside and outside the classroom, as well as outside the school and in any written or electronic communication regarding the school.

Specifically:

- a) Adults should be greeted at all times, by surname if you know it.
- b) Visitors to the school, whether adults or children, should be treated with appropriate courtesy and respect.
- c) Courtesy should also be extended at all times to all teachers, interns and to Grounds, Admin, Kitchen and Cleaning staff.
- d) Punctuality is expected for all school-related activities.
- e) Dishonesty of any type will not be tolerated, nor will disobedience, insolence, kicking, hitting, biting, throwing of objects and all other kinds of anti-social and unacceptable behaviour.
- f) No foul or improper language will be tolerated.
- g) No magazines with pornographic or other inappropriate content may be brought to school. This includes cell phone pornography.
- h) The school's Internet Policy must be adhered to. No pornographic or inappropriate sites may be visited, and if stumbled upon inadvertently, should be reported to the teacher.
- i) Hats should be worn during break times (compulsory in the Foundation Phase and encouraged in the Senior Primary phase) and in certain specified sporting and extramural activities.
- j) Chewing gum and bubble gum are banned at all times and in all places.
- k) "Playing" a member of staff off against another is unacceptable.
- l) Respect for others and respect for adults to be shown at all times.
- m) Children are not allowed in classrooms, unless with a teacher, before school times.
- n) Children are not allowed in classrooms or on corridors during break times.

## 2) Scholastic Behaviour

- a) Children are expected to be at school throughout the term, including the first and last days, unless they are ill or have some other valid reason for non-attendance. The school must be informed by telephone, by letter or by email of a pupil's absence or inability to attend any school function. Sports Days are compulsory days of attendance.
- b) School **begins** at 7:30, and punctuality is expected by all. Children are expected to arrive prior to this time.
- c) Bunking of days or lessons will not be tolerated.
- d) Cheating in class will be treated as a serious offence. This includes plagiarism and copying from others. Any communication between pupils during a test or exam will be considered in breach of the law and seen as cheating.

- e) Pupils are responsible for keeping their desks, lockers and classrooms tidy.
- f) Homework diaries are the responsibility of the pupils, and they are to ensure that their parents sign them after they have finished all homework.
- g) Senior Primary children should have a reading book/or e-book/tablet for reading, in their bags at all times.
- h) Library Books are to be treated with care and returned regularly. In the FP no children may take home a book unless they have their school library bag. E-books are loaded onto your child's device for a period of two weeks, where after it disappears.

### 3) Bullying

- a) Bullying is regarded as an extremely serious offence and will not be tolerated at Thomas More. We strive to be a 'Hurt Free' School.
- b) "Bullying" includes verbal bullying, physical bullying, cyber-bullying and any other bullying. Behaviour such as incessant teasing and "ganging up" on fellow pupils will also be regarded as bullying.
- c) Anyone who feels that they have been a victim of bullying must report details to a member of staff immediately.
- d) Each case of bullying will be dealt with on an individual basis and will be handled at the discretion of the member of staff involved, with the proviso that all cases of serious bullying must be reported to the Head of Department, Dean of Boys or Dean of Girls, Deputy Head, Foundation Phase Headmistress or Primary School Headmistress.
- e) Any form of harassment will not be tolerated.
- f) Cyber-bullying will be treated as a serious offense.

### 4) Property

- a) Pupils are expected to respect property, whether it is their own, other pupils', a teacher's or the school's.
- b) Pupils are expected to take appropriate steps to ensure that their possessions are properly looked after, and not left on sports fields etc.
- c) All property must be clearly marked.
- d) Theft is regarded as a serious offence, and punishment will accordingly be severe.
- e) No computer games, BB guns or other expensive or dangerous toys may be brought to school and will be confiscated for a period of time if they are.
- f) No borrowing of other pupils' possessions without permission is allowed. This is regarded as theft, and will be dealt with as such.
- g) Vandalism of property (including defacing and writing on surfaces) will be severely dealt with.
- h) Cellphones/tablets/notebooks may only be brought in the Senior Primary on the understanding that this is at your own risk, for vital communication or with the permission from a teacher. (*Refer to Point 9 for more detail*). Cell phones are **NOT ALLOWED** in the Foundation Phase as the Secretary will phone for children if/when needed.
- i) Pupils should treat the grounds with respect. Littering is an offence.

### 5) Sport and Extramural Activities

- a) A comprehensive sports programme is offered at Thomas More and sport is regarded as part of the education offered. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the sports programme, doing at least one sport a term (preferably a team sport).

- b) The correct sports uniform is to be worn at all times when sports activities are taking place. This includes a swimming cap. No coloured socks or t-shirts are permitted, and the correct match kit must be worn at all matches.
- c) On the sports field, there should be keen, friendly rivalry. On no account, even if there is provocation, will cheating or any unsportsmanlike behaviour be tolerated. Sportsmanship is exhibited through fair play, escorting guests to and from tea, and greeting visitors. Sports teams should act as gracious hosts for home fixtures and as polite guests when playing away.
- d) It is important to note that the umpire/referee's decision is deemed final and no child or parent is to dispute this.
- e) School activities must take precedence over private or club activities, and if chosen to represent the school in a team, pupils are expected to do so with pride and enthusiasm.
- f) Players need to be considerate of other players in the team and no shouting or negative commenting is allowed.
- g) A register for practice sessions is kept with a policy of "no practice, no match" being in place. If a child is unable to attend a session, they must excuse themselves.
- h) Children are expected to see a sport through to the end of the term, as commitment is viewed as an important life skill.

#### 6) Uniform

- a) Pupils are expected to wear the school uniform to and from school, at all official functions, on outings and in public places. No item of school uniform may be worn with casual clothes. If school uniform is worn at shopping malls and in town, special care must be taken, both in correct dress and good behaviour, to give credit to the school.
- b) All school shirts are to have the school badge on the pocket.
- c) The uniform is expected to be clean and complete, i.e. no buttons missing.
- d) Official black school shoes must be worn at all times. They are to be clean and well fitted.
- e) Unconventional dress is unacceptable and the school uniform list should be strictly adhered to. All items of clothing must be clearly marked with the child's name.
- f) Girls' skirts should be no shorter than 3 fingers above the knee for Senior Primary girls, and for Foundation Phase girls the skirt should at least rest on the knee. Skirts are not permitted to be rolled at the waist to shorten them.
- g) Suitable and appropriate underwear must be worn by both boys and girls.
- h) Boys' grey socks are to be worn pulled up at all times. Garters are encouraged.
- i) Children may wear "civvies" on their birthday. If a birthday falls on a weekend or a holiday, the teacher will advise the child of a suitable day/date (*usually the school day closest to the birthday*).
- j) An old T-shirt should be brought to school to wear in Art classes to protect uniform.
- k) Only religious symbols may be worn on fine silver or gold neck chains, but these must be kept out of sight. A Medic-Alert bracelet may be worn if necessary.
- l) Only girls are permitted to wear plain studs or small thin sleepers (one per earlobe). The studs/sleepers must be gold or silver.
- m) Pupils are permitted to wear conventional, simple watches. No other items of jewellery may be worn.
- n) No nail polish, make-up or lip-gloss may be worn.
- o) Hair: Gelling, dying, highlighting or tinting is not permitted.
  - Girls: must clip their hair away from their eyes or wear an aliceband. Shoulder length and longer hair must be tied back. Girls' hair accessories may only be plain black or white.

- Boys: hair must be kept short and neat. It should be off the collar and off the ears and may not hang over their eyes. No fashion statement haircuts are permitted.
- p) Tracksuit tops are to be zipped up **at all times**, including when forming part of the sports attire at matches.
- q) Tracksuit pants are to be worn in conjunction with tracksuit tops and **not** jerseys.
- r) Shoes and socks are to be worn when leaving the campus in school uniform, and takkies and socks with P.E. kit.
- r) School sandals are not worn with tracksuits and are limited to the first and fourth terms (up to end of Grade 3), unless notice is given to the contrary.
- s) No tour clothing is permitted as normal school uniform or for sport practices.
- t) The sleeves of jerseys, jackets, tracksuit tops may not be rolled/pushed up.

## 7) Bounds

The following areas are out of bounds and pupils may only enter these areas in the company of a responsible adult:

- The Swimming Pool enclosures
- Staff offices
- Classroom storerooms
- Sports storerooms
- The Hall
- Chapel (SP children may go there to pray only with pre-arranged special permission or when attending mass)
- School vehicles
- Classrooms other than their own
- The car parks
- Ken Mackenzie Centre
- Pavilion
- Conservancy
- Tennis courts
- Computer room
- Library
- Farmhouse
- JP Music room
- AEU
- The road alongside the PP playground
- Pre-Primary playground
- Any building site on campus
- The Villa
- Leffler, Savory and Pickering field embankments.
- JP Playground
- AstroTurf
- FP children are not allowed at the Tuck Shop unless accompanied by an adult

Children may not leave the school property during the school day.

Children may not leave the school grounds during the school day without an adult, and written permission must be received by the school if a child is to leave with a person who has not been designated as the usual caretaker or lift provider.

8) Drugs, alcohol and tobacco and dangerous objects

- a) Thomas More pupils are prohibited from bringing alcohol, cigarettes and any illegal or harmful substances e.g. knives, onto the school property. A pupil may neither smoke nor consume alcohol nor arrive at school under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. These rules will also be strictly applied should pupils be away from school on school-related activities (e.g. tours, sporting events, excursions).
- b) Pupils may not bring any dangerous objects to school which could inflict harm.
- c) No medication is to be brought to school or kept at school by a pupil. Should a child be required to take medication it should be handed to the School Sister, and notification should have been received by the parent/s in this regard.

9) Cell phones

While it is widely accepted that cell phones/tablets have become an integral part of our everyday lives, it is extremely important to remember the following:

- a) Cell phones/tablets/electronic devices are NOT ALLOWED in the Foundation Phase as the Secretary will phone for children if/when needed.
- b) Phones/tablets brought to school are the property and responsibility of the Senior Primary carrier. The school is in no way responsible and cannot be expected to look for lost or stolen phones/tablets.

Communication between the Primary School and parents is of such a high standard that cell phones are not necessary.

- c) The use of cellphones/tablets/electronic devices in the school is done so with permission from a teacher in a designated area only (the quad outside the Primary School Library), or for reading e-books/tablets/electronic devices for doing relevant class work, under teacher supervision.
- d) Social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram etc., which are now freely available on phones/tablets, are strictly forbidden on school premises. These sites often lead to 'cyber-bullying' – an activity which will be dealt with in the strongest possible way.
- e) Phones/tablets are not permitted on children during tests and exams, and children found with phones/tablets during this time will be considered to be cheating. They may not use the calculator facility of the phone/tablet for Maths tests and exams, but this is permissible where such devices, with teacher permission and supervision, are used in class.
- f) There are occasions where a teacher may require the children to use a phone/tablet/device as part of an academic programme, but he/she will notify you of these occasions well in advance. Cell phone, tablet/device etiquette and correct usage may form part of the IT programme.

10) Disciplinary procedure

The aim of the disciplinary procedure is to illustrate to offenders that their behaviour has been inappropriate and that the school, their parents, and indeed society at large, have higher expectations of them. At Thomas More we aim to instill self-discipline in our children. This does not mean, however, that general rules and regulations are not adhered to and that there is no discipline system.

Reward for good behaviour is regarded as a more valuable and constructive way to encourage children than punishment, and children should be praised and rewarded in a variety of ways and on an ongoing basis.

In the Foundation Phase certain behaviour modification techniques may be employed to encourage children to practise appropriate behaviour. These may include star charts, filling a marble jar, and a variety of other motivational charts.

If/when necessary, a \*<sup>1</sup> Daily Report system is in place to help children to have a more positive focus on school life in general. This is a positive reinforcement strategy rather than a punishment. It is monitored by Class teachers, Grade Head and Dean of Boys in the Senior Primary and in the Foundation Phase, by Class Teachers and the Foundation Phase Headmistress. If and when necessary, however, offenders will need to be punished in an appropriate way. Punishment should, where possible, fit the “crime”.

Punishment may include one of, or a combination of these examples, although there may be other punishment meted out.

- Time out (withdrawal from activity)
- Litter collection
- Children may miss a break or portion thereof
- Teacher and Parent interview
- PS Headmistress / Deans / SP Deputy / FP Headmistress and Parent interview
- Detention
- Daily report\*<sup>1</sup> (see above)
- Temporary suspension from school
- Expulsion

#### 10) Aftercare

- a) Children who are not fetched by 14:30 in the SP (Wednesday at 14:00) and 13:20 in the JP are to proceed to Aftercare. Crèche, Grade 000 and Grade 00 children not fetched by 12:15 and Grade 0 children not fetched by 12:45 will be taken to Aftercare.
- b) Children who are not fetched after sport are to proceed to Aftercare.
- c) All FP children are required to bring extra play clothes to change into.
- d) All children are expected to bring their own lunch. A small snack and drink is provided mid-afternoon as part of the care provided.
- e) All children attending Aftercare are expected to respect Aftercare staff and the rules which are in place.
- f) All children attending the homework session during Aftercare are to make proper use of this facility, and must have the correct stationery in order to complete homework efficiently.
- g) Aftercare closes at 17:00. There is a fine levied for children fetched after 17:00.
- h) Under no circumstances are children allowed to wait outside the school gates.
- i) Under no circumstances will staff members provide lifts home for children.
- j) Aftercare in the FP closes at 15:00 on the last day of the school term and on the day starting half term.
- k) Aftercare in the SP closes at 15:00 on the last day of the school term and on the day starting half term.

- l) Aftercare in the SP runs until 12:30 on break-up day, the last school day of the year, while the FP run aftercare till 15:00 as usual.

### Primary School Hours

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	<b>Home</b>
Crèche, 000 and 00	07: 30			12:00
0	07:30			12:30
<b>Pupils are expected in their class rooms by 07:20</b>				
1 and 2, every day	07:30	10:10 – 10:30		13:00
3 - Monday, Wednesday & Friday	07:30	10.10 – 10:30		13:00
3 – Tuesday & Thursday	07:30	10.10 – 10:30	12:20 – 12:45	14:00
4 - 7	07:25	10:00 – 10:20	12:20 – 12:45	14:00 (Wed. 13:30)

### Contact Details

Main Reception:	031 764 8640
FP Secretary / FP Headmistress's Secretary:	031 764 8668
SP Secretary:	031 764 8660
Executive Secretary / PS Headmistress's PA:	031 764 8646
F.P. Fax:	031 764 3004
S.P. Fax:	031 764 4964
Admin Fax:	031 764 4964

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