



Thomas More College Primary School

KLOOF, KWAZULU-NATAL

Code of Conduct 2022

TMC Ethos

Thomas More College is an independent, Christian-based co-educational school with dedicated and professional staff, offering classes from Grade 0000 to Grade 12. Through a balanced programme of academic, cultural, sporting and community 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 and inspiring the whole child and equipping each one with relevant leadership and life skills.

Mission Statement

Provide an Inspired Education.

TMC Core Values

- Purpose:** Def: The reason for which something is done, created or exists. Everyone student is created with a purpose - An Inspired Education provides a range of opportunities for students to find, explore and grow into their purpose
- Belonging:** Def: To be in a suitable place. An affinity for a place, a situation or a group. If a student knows that they belong and, therefore, trust their learning space, they feel safe to pour their energy into their work and learning opportunities – An Inspired Education draws students into a space where develop an affinity for learning.
- Effort:** Def: A vigorous or determined attempt. Ongoing effort, when directed with intent and determination, improves results.
- Can-do-attitude:** Def: Showing a willingness to take action and achieve results. By embracing challenge, students cultivate a growth mind set and strive to reach their goals.

1) General Behaviour

Courtesy, consideration of the feelings of others and respect for 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, Security, 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 / personal device pornography and inappropriate content.
- 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 before school, unless with a teacher.
- 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, letter or email of a pupil's absence or inability to attend any school function. Sports Days, our Long Walk and Country Fair days are compulsory days of attendance.
- b) School **begins** at 7:30, and punctuality is expected by all. Children are expected to arrive at school by 07:20.
- c) Bunking lessons or school 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 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 or guardians sign them after they have finished all homework.
- g) Senior Primary children should have something to read in their bags at all times.

h) Library books are to be treated with care and returned on time. 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, physical, relational, cyber-bullying and any other bullying. Behaviour such as incessant teasing and "ganging up" on fellow pupils will also be regarded as bullying. Cyber-bullying will be treated as a serious offense.
- 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 Grade Head, Dean of Boys or Dean of Girls, Senior Primary Deputy Head, Foundation Phase Headmistress or Primary School Headmaster.
- e) Any form of harassment will not be tolerated.

4) Property

- a) Pupils are expected to respect property, whether it is their own, other pupils', a teacher's or the schools.
- 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 with the written permission from a teacher and the Senior Primary Headmaster. *(Refer to Point 9 for more detail) otherwise cell phones are banned from Grade 4 to 7. 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.
- 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. The compulsory sport shirt is the grey TMC t-shirt.

- 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) End of year awards are not given to a pupil who pursues their own sport but does not play for the school team.
- g) Players need to be considerate of other players in the team and no shouting or negative commenting is allowed.
- h) 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.
- i) Children are expected to see a sport through to the end of the term, as commitment is viewed as an important life skill.
- j) Failure to uphold the school name or poor behaviour when on TMC Tours will result in the necessary action being taken and pupils will be sent home or punished accordingly.

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 jewelry 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 alice-band. 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 shirt 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.
- s) 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.
- t) No tour clothing is permitted as normal school uniform or for sport practices. Tour clothing may be worn on a civvies day.
- u) The sleeves of jerseys, jackets, tracksuit tops may not be rolled/pushed up. Jerseys are not to be worn that are full of holes at the end of the sleeves – you will be asked to remove the jersey if they are tatty and untidy.

7) Bounds

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Swimming Pool enclosures • Staff offices • Classroom storerooms • Sports storerooms • The Habberton 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Library • Farmhouse • JP Music room • iKhwezi Sports Centre • Music School
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Children may not leave the school grounds during the school day without an adult. A parent / guardian is required to email their child's registration teacher, and a signed gate pass must be issued prior to departure from the receptionist in the Great House. 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, onto the school property. A pupil may neither smoke nor consume alcohol nor arrive at school under the influence of drugs (including cannabis) 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 e.g knives.
- 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 a parent/s or guardian in this regard.

9) Cell phones and computer devices

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, smart watches which are computers are NOT ALLOWED in the Foundation Phase, the Secretary will phone on behalf of children if/when needed. Cell phones and digital computerized smartwatches are also not permitted in the Senior Primary.
- b) Tablets / devices brought to school for lessons and homework 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 or advisable.

Gaming during lessons, at break / lunch time or during the extracurricular programme is not permitted.

Tablet/device etiquette and correct usage may form part of the IT programme.

- c) Social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram etc., which are now freely available on phones/tablets, are strictly forbidden on school premises and the legal age for use of these is generally thirteen. These sites often lead to 'cyber-bullying' – an activity which will be dealt with in the strongest possible way. Should a parent permit a child to use such an unauthorised program/Apps then it is the parents' responsibility to check the phone regularly and to educate their own child as to their appropriate use.
- d) 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 tests and exams, but this is permissible where such devices, with teacher permission and supervision, are requested to be brought for use in class.

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. Suitable such measures are also followed in the Senior Primary where appropriate and relevant.

If/when necessary, a *¹Daily 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 the Dean of Boys and the Dean of Girls 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
- SP Headmaster / Deans / SP Deputy / FP Headmistress and Parent interview
- Detention
- Daily report*¹ (see above)
- Internal suspension from school
- Temporary suspension from school
- Expulsion

10) Aftercare

- a) Children who are not fetched by 14:30 in the SP (Wednesday at 14:00 and Fridays by 13:15 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.
- 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 and SP closes at 15:00 on the last day of the school term and on the day starting half term.
- k) 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

Grade	Start	Tea Break	Lunch Break	Home
Crèche, 000 and 00	07:30			12:00
0	07:30			12:30
Pupils are expected in their class rooms by 07:20				
1,2 and 3	07:20	10:10 – 10:30		13:00
After half term in Term 1 Grade 3 Tues, Wed & Thurs	07:20	10:10 – 10:30		14:00
4 – 7 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday	07:20	10:00 – 10:20	12:20 – 12:45	13:50
4 – 7 Wednesday	07:20	10:00 – 10:20	12:20 – 12:45	13:20
4 – 7 Friday	07:20	09:30 – 09:50	11:50- 12:10	12:50

Contact Details

Main Reception:	031 764 8640
FP Secretary / FP Headmistress's Secretary:	031 764 8668
SP Secretary & SP Headmaster's PA:	031 764 8660