



TMC

Thomas More College

An Inspired Education

THOMAS MORE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

PUPILS' CODE OF CONDUCT, GENERAL INFORMATION AND HOUSE RULES

2023

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.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is for parents/guardians and the pupils to know what they can expect from the school and what is expected of them. The policy provides important information to assist parents/guardians and pupils to understand the appropriate conduct expected from pupils at Thomas More College in the High School. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

2. HOW TO USE THIS POLICY

- ❖ It is very important that at the beginning of the year parents/guardians and pupils read through this policy to familiarise themselves with the information provided.
- ❖ This Policy is found on the TMC App for easy reference.
- ❖ Once parents/guardians and pupils have completed reading this policy, the pupil will sign an acknowledgement form by end of January, 2023. 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) or the TMC App

PUPILS 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 (inclusive of vaping e-cigarettes)
- drinking of alcohol or trafficking in such
- drug abuse; trafficking and possession of drugs
- Unjust discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or socio-economic circumstances
- verbal, physical and emotional abuse
- sexual harassment
- possession or distribution of pornographic or other offensive/discriminatory material
- bullying
- initiation
- lying/dishonesty
- littering
- graffiti
- intimidation
- tampering with School equipment/other pupils' or teachers' 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. Bullying is the ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical, mental and/or social behaviours that intend to cause psychological harm.

Clarification of Unjust discrimination:

- Any form of discrimination either in language or actions (intentional or non-intentional) that discriminate unfairly on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or socio-economic circumstance;
- 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 Mentors and the parents of the pupil will be called in for a further meeting.

1.4 MANNERS

- students are to greet visiting adults appropriately
- all students 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 or earphones in your ear
- **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. Pupils are required to commit themselves to sincere academic effort. All class tasks and homework are to be completed timeously. Cheating/plagiarism 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. The procedure is to sign out with the High School Secretary.
- Failure to attend compulsory school activities will result in punishment (Grade 12 Prizegiving and Grade 8-11 Prizegiving are two such examples).
- 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 examination periods.
- The post-examination periods in June and November/December are compulsory school attendance days.

1.8 ROMANTIC AFFECTION

Public displays of affection are not permitted, e.g. cuddling, kissing and suchlike, are unacceptable and set a poor example to other pupils.

1.9 THE USE OF SMART PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

When a smart phone/iPad/Tablet/laptop or other device is brought onto the campus, they are immediately subject to the following:

- The culture at TMC is that **cellphones and earphones are not openly displayed**. Cellphones/Earphones are not to be seen in classrooms or in school corridors/fields during school hours.
- The teacher reserves the right to determine whether the smart phone is brought into and used for teaching and learning purposes in his/her particular classroom. Should the teacher not allow devices, the onus is on the pupil to lock it up in the locker provided before the lesson. Any transgression by a pupil will be dealt with according to the process set out in the Disciplinary Code. (The phone is locked in the HS secretary's safe for 5 consecutive days).
- 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.
- At no time may any photograph be taken of any TMC staff member or pupil without the written permission of the staff member or pupils. No videos may be made of any activity on the College campus without the knowledge of the Head. Uploading of images, videos and other content that include students and the TMC campus must at all times comply with the Social Media Policy.

1.10 AUDIO EQUIPMENT

MP3 players, IPOD's, loud speakers 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

The spirit of the following guidelines is not to confine the individual expression of pupils but to encourage simplicity of presentation and a lack of distraction in the learning environment. This aims to reinforce with students that one's outward appearance reflects an inward attitude, most notably to one's work ethic, each other and our wider community. It also allows for a consistent and fair approach to the enforcement of such rules so that in all instances, TMC Staff are inclusive and impartial of all pupils and situations. Thus, at all times your child must maintain:

- a high standard of neatness and tidiness;
- the dress and appearance of pupils should uphold the positive image of Thomas More College, High School.
- Civvies Days: clothing must be appropriate, comfortable, and fit well. No political, discriminatory or derogatory slogans/graphics may be worn. Skirts/shorts may be no shorter than the TMC girls' shorts. Vests/strappy tops/off the shoulder tops may be worn provided that underwear is **not** visible. No low cut tops may be worn.
- During the examination periods formal uniform is to be worn.

1.11.1 BOYS

GENERAL

- 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 on any excursions / Grade camps
- 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 polished regularly.
- 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 piercings. A clear bristle may be worn. No plasters are 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 or be so short that the socks are frequently visible.
- 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 or touring kit may be worn with the uniform.
- Jersey sleeves are not to be pushed up. Jerseys with holes in sleeves must be replaced / repaired.
- Only approved school badges to be worn on lapels of blazers.
- Rain jackets that are zipped up may be worn with either the winter or summer uniform. The school rain jacket may not be worn to assembly.
- **Long-sleeved jerseys may be worn to assembly.**
- No hats/visors are to be worn during the academic day.

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 polished regularly.
- 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 bottom hole in the largest part of the earlobes and similar in both ears. No other piercing is allowed. **Clear 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.
- A skirt should be at most **3 closed fingers or 5cm** above the knee.
- Grey pants/slacks are permitted.
- Only white or flesh coloured underwear may be worn.
- No sports kit or touring kit may be worn with the uniform.
- Only approved school badges to be worn on lapels of blazers
- **Jersey sleeves may not be pushed up.** Jerseys with holes in sleeves must be immediately replaced / repaired.
- Blankets may be brought to school with permission from the Headmaster and only used within the confines of the classrooms and corridors.
- Please note that no jewellery may be on a girl's uniform- eg. earrings in button-holes.
- Rain jackets that are zipped up may be worn with either the winter or summer uniform. The school rain jacket may not be worn to assembly.
- No hats/visors are to be worn during the academic day.

Personal Adornment

- No make-up may be worn.
- No false eyelashes may be worn.
- Nails must be trimmed to a reasonable length and cleaned.
- No coloured nail varnish, no French manicures or nail art is to be worn. Clear varnish will be permitted.
- At the time of the Matric Dance, consultation will happen with the headmaster to accommodate nail, hair and eyelash requests.
- No other form of adornment may be worn with the exception of a small modest religious symbol or medic alert bracelet and watches.
- Tattoos must not be visible at any time with any College uniform or on any excursions / Grade camps.

If the above standards are not adhered to, the offending pupil will be issued with a Hair/ Appearance contract. Parents will be asked to ensure that their child complies with the requirements of the school authorities.

1.11.3 HAIRSTYLES

The hair code of conduct is designed to align with our TMC culture whereby one presents oneself with a sense of pride and belonging. It aims to be all-inclusive. All hairstyles which deviate from the following guidelines are expected to be enjoyed during school holidays and must be changed back in accordance with the schools' Code of Conduct **before** pupils return to school on the first day of each term.

General principles for Boys and girls:

- Hair must be neat
- Hair must be combed through
- Off the face
- Behind the ears
- No loose hair strands
- Washed
- No unnecessary decorations

Girls

- Black, white and dark brown hair bands are the only colours to be used. Silver or black hairclips may be used.
- Beads on ethnic hair are permissible however must be clear with a maximum of 3 beads per braid.
- Ombre coloured braids, hair extensions, weaves etc. are not permissible.

- Cornrows, natural dreadlocks and braids are permitted and may only be black/dark brown and/or match the pupils' natural hair colour. "Highlight" braids may not be added to natural hair colour braids.
- Hair longer than the collar must be tied up with the appropriate accessory.
- Colouring of hair is not permitted. This includes highlights and lowlights.
- Hair buns must be neatly tied with no loose hair.

Boys

- Cornrows, natural dreadlocks and braids are permitted and are expected to be modestly and appropriately styled.
- Only gradual fades are acceptable.
- Hair, braids or dreadlocks must not be longer than the eyebrows, over the ears or long enough to tie up.
- Side burns may be no longer than the earlobe.
- Boys must be clean shaven. Boys needing to shave regularly will be informed to do so.

1.11.4 EXEMPTIONS

TMC is an institution that celebrates diversity and thus should there be a cultural, religious or other deserving reason to deviate from the above rules, then please engage the head of the high school.

1.12 ASSEMBLY AND PRAYERS

Assembly is a **formal** occasion. Pupils are expected to arrive quietly and be properly dressed. This will be seasonally dependant. All pupils will be respectful during prayer times and will be quiet during such times.

Notices: A list of notices will be sent out to assembly and via electronic communication from the High School Secretary's office to all staff and pupils.

1.13 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 student may phone their parents to come and pick them up without going through the correct channels.

1.14 CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Pupils must participate in school organised activities each Term: Outreach and Cultural and/or Sporting activities (see Participation Policy for list of activities).

- 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.
- TMC sports/cultural attire must be worn at all practices and matches/performances.
- Behaviour should **AT ALL TIMES**, conform to the principles contained in the Thomas More College, High School Students' Code of Conduct.

1.15 SPECTATORS POLICY

- Your son/daughter is playing sport for their own enjoyment, not yours. Allow him/her to enjoy the game.
- You and your child are representing the school. Please be mindful of the image that your words and actions might reflect.
- We respectfully ask that spectators give the referees and all players the respect that they deserve. They are all trying their best.
- Do not publicly question the referees' judgment or their honesty.
- **Please note that coaches, parents or spectators who are found to be behaving in an inappropriate manner i.e. verbally abusing the referee, coaches or other spectators, will be asked to remove themselves from alongside the field of play before the match continues.**
- Children learn by example. Be a good example and applaud good play by both teams.
- Show respect for your child's opponents. Without them there would be no game.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules.
- Praise your child and his/her team on their efforts, not their result.

Please remember that this is after all, just a game. If the game is played in the correct spirit, everyone will enjoy themselves

1.16 PARTICIPATION POLICY

MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS IN THE COLLEGE

Given the innate importance of every child's growth journey, the College has set out a minimum expectation:

All Grade 8 and 9 students are required to participate fully in the ECP. Involvement in Sport (Physical Wellness) over all 4 terms is an expectation but the activity may vary

from term to term. Involvement in the cultural programme is subject to audition and availability of meaningful interaction opportunities

All Grade 10 and 11 students are required to participate fully in the ECP, over 3 of the 4 terms. Involvement in Sport (Physical Wellness) is an expectation but the activity may vary from term to term. Involvement in the cultural programme is subject to audition and availability of meaningful interaction opportunities.

Gr 12's must do at least one sport in the year or a meaningful cultural activity as determined by Mrs. Logan.

*please note that permanent members of the Tech Crew are not expected to participate in another activity given the inordinate number of hours required throughout the year from these students.

Failure to comply with the Participation Policy will jeopardize Matric Privileges.

1.17 HOUSES

The three houses are Dalberg (red), Hurley (black), and Savory (blue).
The house competition is based on:

- The Inter-house Swimming Gala; and
- Inter-house Athletics

1.18 COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL PARTNERSHIPS (CSP)

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

1.19 MATRIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (MLC)

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 portfolio. The MLC Executive consisting of a Headboy, Headgirl, Deputy Headboy and Deputy Headgirl, will lead the Whole Matric Body. Each student within the Grade 11 (July – Dec) Grade 12 (Jan – July) 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.

1.20 SENIORITY

Seniority is a system that applies to the senior students in the High School. All Matric students who do not achieve their Seniority based on their participation in Grade 10 and Grade 11 will not receive the following privileges:

1. Matric jersey
2. Hall seating during Assembly
3. Matric tie to be worn
4. Allowed to sit inside the new Moreish Coffee Shop
5. Civvies may be worn to extra lessons during exam times

The privileges can be awarded once the student has fulfilled their participation commitments. If a Grade 12 student does not fulfil their participation commitments, their privileges may be withdrawn.

1.21 DETENTION

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

- 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. Dates are calendarized and supervised by a senior management member.
- Uniform infringements and late coming will result in break detentions, whereby the pupil is required to stand outside the staffroom during both breaks.

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

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 Deputy Head: Academics.

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

1.22 TUCKSHOP

Good behaviour at the tuck shop is essential. Students 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 are to be respectful to the serving staff and each other.

1.23 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.

1.24 PROPERTY AND MATERIALS

- It is the responsibility of all pupils 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.

1.25 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 policy regarding any issue not covered in this policy or contact your child's Phase Mentor.

Review Date:	Reviewed By:	Approved By:
November 2021	HS Leadership Team	Mr. Stephen Ireland & The Executive Committee
December 2022	HS Leadership Team	Mr. Stephen Ireland & The Executive Committee