

RUSTENBURG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL



CODE OF CONDUCT

and

SCHOOL RULES AND PROCEDURES

FOR LEARNERS

REVISED MARCH 2017

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS POLICY:

RGHS Rustenburg Girls' High School

MEC Minister of Education (Western Cape)

SGB School Governing Body

NOTE: The term ***parent/s*** as used in this document refers to the biological parent/s or legal guardian/s of a learner.

PREAMBLE

The South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) requires that the governing body of a public school “adopt a Code of Conduct for the learners... aimed at establishing a purposeful and disciplined school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process”.

It further states that *“nothing contained in this Act exempts a learner from the obligation to comply with the Code of Conduct of the school attended by such a learner”.*

The Code of Conduct and School Rules and Procedures for Learners of Rustenburg Girls' High School has been finalised after consultation with all relevant parties. It clarifies for learners, staff and parents the rules regarding learner behaviour and expected procedures that will be followed at the school. This Code applies to all learners while they are on the school premises or when they are away from the school, representing it or attending a school function.

While this document is prescriptive, it has been written for the safety and protection of all learners. The school rules are intended to establish an environment of mutual respect to facilitate effective and quality teaching and learning.

When a learner contravenes the Code, the school will adopt a flexible approach, within the boundaries of the Code of Conduct, and act within the best interests of the school and learner in the application of disciplinary measures. Possible sanctions are stipulated in this Code and will be applied at the discretion of the Principal, staff and/or SGB.

Notwithstanding the fact that a certain act or omission is not specifically covered by this Code of Conduct, any act or omission which, in the opinion of the Principal, staff and/or SGB, constitutes behaviour unbecoming or not benefitting a learner of Rustenburg Girls' High School shall be deemed to be a contravention of this Code.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Rustenburg Girls' High School community commits itself to the advancement of learning, personal development and responsible citizenship.

This commitment is characterised by:

- being courteous and demonstrating mutual respect for the beliefs, customs, language, individuality and property of others;
- demonstrating social awareness and personal and social responsibility;
- service to others;
- using resources carefully and wisely;
- participating fully in a wide range of school activities;
- discovering and developing personal potential;
- supporting and encouraging others positively;
- embracing a lifestyle which promotes good health and well-being;
- adopting practices which will help to secure a safe and healthy environment for all; and
- honest accountability and personal integrity.

This Code of Conduct is amplified by a set of school rules and procedures framed in terms of existing national and provincial legislation.

It is also augmented by separate, specific policies, as required by the South African Schools Act and the National and Western Cape Education Departments.

SCHOOL RULES & PROCEDURES

Girls must make themselves familiar with these rules and procedures. Parents are earnestly requested to support the school in the implementation of these rules, as well as all other measures to ensure the girls' safety.

ABSENCE

The South African Schools Act clarifies expectations regarding compulsory school attendance.

Continuous assessment takes place throughout the year, including at the beginning and the end of term, and learners are expected to attend school at all times.

RGHS is not allowed to give permission for a learner to miss school. Parents are requested not to arrange to leave early for holidays or to return late at the beginning of a new term.

If a learner is absent, she must bring a letter from a parent and give it to her form teacher on the first day she returns to school.

Absence from school for a period of three days or longer must be supported by a letter from a medical practitioner.

A medical certificate must be brought after absence from examinations or other scheduled tests or assessments.

Learners will be given zero for any school based assessment activities that they have missed, unless they have a valid reason e.g. a medical certificate.

See *Assessment Policy* for further information.

APPOINTMENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Parents are requested to avoid making appointments during the school day. Learners who miss assessments will be given zero.

If such an absence is absolutely unavoidable, parents must complete the necessary form which is available on the school website. The completed form must be taken to the Deputy Principal (Academic) at least 24 hours in advance. Please do not send an email or a letter.

**ALCOHOL,
TOBACCO,
DRUGS etc.**

The school is a place of safety where laws pertaining to public places are applicable.

No learner may bring alcohol, tobacco/cigarettes/e-cigarettes, drugs or any other illegal substances (as defined in *The South African Schools Act*) onto the school grounds or use them on school property or during any school activity, or be on the school grounds when under the influence of any of these substances.

Contravention of this rule may lead to immediate suspension, pending expulsion. Criminal charges may also be laid in such cases. In addition, no learner identifiable as a learner of the school should use these substances off the premises.

Learners who need to take prescription medication during the school day, must keep a copy of the doctor's script with them at all times and should inform their Form Teacher accordingly.

See *Substance Abuse Policy* for further information.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are due on the set date. Marks will be deducted if deadlines are not met. This could result in a zero mark for that assessment.

See *Assessment Policy* for further information.

BAGS

Only a RGHS or WP tog bag, a RGHS or plain navy blue or black backpack and other bags approved by the school will be allowed.

Bags should be kept free of drawing, writing and other decorations. The learner's name should preferably appear on the outside.

BEHAVIOUR

Girls are expected to show respect for all staff, members of the public and one another and must behave in a manner that does not disrupt the learning activities of other students.

Movement between classes should be polite, quiet and orderly, and on the left of the corridor.

Girls must respect the property of others. This includes teachers' belongings and their classrooms. No one may use a teacher's computer without permission.

The defacing or damaging of property will not be tolerated.

All waste must be sorted and placed in the recycling bins provided.

BLAZERS

Blazers are a compulsory part of the winter uniform and must be worn at all times outside of the school grounds.

During summer blazers are optional, but jerseys may not be worn on their own outside of the school property.

**BULLYING/
OTHER THREATS**

No bullying of any kind will be tolerated, including cyber bullying.

No girl may be party to intimidation or threats against the school or any other parties.

Involvement in such activities may result in immediate suspension, pending expulsion. Criminal charges may also be laid.

**CARS/OTHER
MOTORISED
VEHICLES
DRIVEN BY
LEARNERS**

Girls with licences will be granted permission to drive their vehicles to school.

A signed letter from the parent/s, as well as a copy of their daughter's licence and details of the vehicle driven by her, must be handed in at the front office.

The learner must park her vehicle in one of the designated parking spaces (near the recycling area or on the bend at the front of the school).

The school does not take any responsibility for the safe custody of or damage to any vehicles, or for articles stored within the vehicles.

**CELLULAR
TELEPHONES/
OTHER
ELECTRONIC
DEVICES**

These may only be used before and after school and during breaks. They must be switched off at all other times, unless permission has been given by a teacher.

If this rule is broken, the device will be handed over to a member of staff. The parent may collect it the following day and must provide a form of identification. Devices received on a Friday will only be returned on the following Monday.

Learners may not have a cell phone or any other electronic device, including a smart watch, on them when writing a test or an examination.

**CHEATING /
PLAGIARISM**

Any learner found cheating or plagiarising in an assessment will receive zero for that assessment and may face further disciplinary action.

**CHEWING GUM /
EATING**

Chewing gum is not allowed inside the school grounds, nor should it be chewed by any girl in school uniform. Girls should not drink and eat in the corridors.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE	Girls are expected to familiarise themselves with the emergency evacuation procedures.
HAIR	<p>Girls may not alter the colour of their hair in any way. <i>Concessions to this rule may be awarded to Matric learners on an annual basis. If such a deviation is allowed, Grade 12 learners will be expected to adhere to the parameters within which this concession is granted, as conveyed to them in writing.</i></p> <p>Hair must be neat, clean and should not hang in front of the eyes. Hair touching the shoulders must be tied up.</p> <p>Hair accessories (clips, hair ties and hair bands) must be plain black, dark brown or navy.</p>
JEWELLERY	<p>Apart from earrings and a watch, no other jewellery is allowed.</p> <p>For pierced ears, only one pair of small plain metal (i.e. silver or gold) sleepers or studs is allowed, one in the lobe of each ear.</p> <p>No other visible piercing is allowed (labret, tongue, nose, etc.).</p>
LANGUAGE	Swearing and derogatory or abusive language of any sort will not be tolerated.
LATE-COMING	Learners are expected to be punctual. Learners who arrive late in the morning must report to the front office.
LOCKERS	Each girl is allocated a locker for storing her belongings. She must supply her own lock. Lockers not cleared at the end of the school's academic year will be emptied and the contents disposed of. No items should be stored on top of the lockers.
MAKE-UP	Make-up may not be worn.
NAILS	<p>False nails, coloured nail polish and henna are not allowed.</p> <p>Nails must not be so long as to interfere with sport, the playing of a musical instrument or other activities.</p>
NOTICES/ NOTICE BOARDS	<p>Nothing may be distributed or displayed on the school premises without the permission of the Principal or a Deputy Principal.</p> <p>Approved notices, signed by the Principal or a Deputy Principal, must not be placed directly on walls, including brickwork.</p>
OUT OF BOUNDS	<p>During breaks girls must stay away from the boundary fence, the area below the fields and beyond the Erinville building. The area between the tennis wall and Acton Road is strictly out of bounds at all times.</p> <p>Girls may not use the main quad without permission.</p>

PERSONAL SAFETY/ SECURITY

No learner shall hold or organise any function or social gathering at the school or elsewhere in the name of the school without the permission of the Principal.

Learners must not leave the school premises once they have arrived at school in the morning.

Learners must not sit on the roads, driveways or parking areas on the grounds and must give way to cars proceeding along the school roads.

Girls must not sit on a window sill or on the upstairs balcony wall.

The swimming pool area is out of bounds when there is no supervision (i.e. a staff member or coach must be present).

Girls must wait inside the school grounds for lifts.

Girls must not walk across Rondebosch Common.

Learners may not sell/trade goods on the school premises without permission.

No dangerous objects may be brought onto the school property unless authorised by the Principal for educational purposes. (Dangerous objects include knives, firearms or any item that could harm a person.)

POSSESSIONS

Possessions must never be left unattended.

Girls must look after their belongings and make use of their lockers.

Girls are discouraged from bringing large sums of money or other valuables to school. Where this is unavoidable, such items must be handed in to the office for safekeeping. The school will not take responsibility for the loss of valuable articles or money.

Parents must ensure that their daughter's school equipment and other valuables are covered by their short-term insurance policies.

SICKNESS

Girls who become ill at school must report to Mrs Schnetler (C to E) or Ms Blackshaw (A and B).

Where necessary, the school will notify parents to collect their daughter. Girls must not contact their parents directly.

No medication of any kind will be provided by the school.

SOCIAL MEDIA	<p>Girls are ambassadors for the school and careful consideration must be given to any information published online.</p> <p>Material published online, especially on social media (including WhatsApp), should not reflect negatively on anyone or the school.</p> <p>See <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i> for further information.</p>
SPORT	<p>Sport is compulsory in Grades 8 and 9.</p> <p>Girls are expected to honour their sporting commitments.</p> <p>See <i>Sport Policy</i> for further information.</p>
TATTOOS	<p>No visible tattoos are allowed, including non-permanent henna tattoos.</p>
THEFT	<p>Theft is a criminal offence and may lead to immediate suspension, pending expulsion. Criminal charges may also be laid in such cases.</p>
TRUANCY	<p>Learners may not absent themselves from school or lessons without a valid excuse.</p> <p>Girls may not leave the school grounds during the day without the permission of the Principal or a Deputy Principal.</p>
UNIFORM	<p>Uniforms, as prescribed in the dress regulations, are to be worn by all learners. Girls are expected to be neat and tidy at all times.</p> <p>Where the wearing of an incorrect uniform item is unavoidable, girls must obtain the permission of the Deputy Principal (Pastoral).</p> <p>School uniform is required for all school outings and functions, unless permission to the contrary has been granted by the Principal or a Deputy Principal.</p> <p>When permission has been granted to wear civvies, clothing must be appropriate.</p>
VISITORS	<p>Visitors should be greeted politely and assisted where necessary. Girls must request permission from the Principal or a Deputy Principal to receive personal visitors on the school grounds.</p>

UNIFORM REGULATIONS

Please ensure that all items of clothing and other possessions are **clearly** marked.

SUMMER UNIFORM	
SHOES	Clean, plain, black school shoes (lace-up, T-bar or cross-bar) Polished and in good condition
SOCKS	White school ankle socks Turned over; not rolled
DRESS	Regulation blue dress with belt Correct length – maximum 10cm above the knee Belt to be worn through belt loops on the dress No T-shirt or other top visible under the dress Hem stitched Collar to be worn over the collar of the blazer
JERSEY	Optional; navy blue V-necked jersey or cardigan Should fit properly Cuffs not frayed; no holes May not be worn without a blazer outside of the school grounds
BLAZERS	Optional; clean, navy blue Must be worn on all formal occasions School-related badges only Only one non-school related badge is allowed (in support of a cause such as Cancer Awareness)
HAIR AND HAIR ACCESSORIES	Girls may not alter the colour of their hair in any way. <i>If a deviation to this rule is allowed for Grade 12 learners, they will be expected to adhere to the parameters within which this concession is granted.</i> Hair must be neat, clean and should not hang in front of the eyes. Hair touching the shoulders must be tied up. Plain black, dark brown or navy accessories (clips, hair ties and hair bands).
HEAD AND NECK COVERING	Where religious law prescribes covering of the head and neck, only the navy blue headscarf stocked by the Bugs' Boutique may be worn. It must be worn forward, as is traditionally intended.
NAILS	False nails, coloured nail polish and henna are not allowed. Nails must not be so long as to interfere with sport, the playing of a musical instrument or other activities.
MAKE-UP	Not allowed
JEWELLERY	Apart from earrings and a watch, no other jewellery or visible piercings are allowed. One small pair of plain metal sleepers or studs; one in the lobe of each ear.
BAGS	RGHS or a WP tog bag, RGHS or plain navy blue or black backpacks No writing or drawing, except name in small letters
No other bags, baskets, carrier bags or packets are allowed, except the plain navy or black type.	
RAIN JACKET	Clean, navy blue or black raincoat or jacket May only be worn outdoors when it is raining

WINTER UNIFORM	
SHOES	Clean, plain, black school shoes (lace-up, T-bar or cross-bar) Polished and in good condition
STOCKINGS	Plain black stockings; no ladders or holes
SKIRT	Regulation navy Correct length – maximum 10cm above the knee Must not be rolled over at the waist
SHIRT	Regulation blue shirt Must be buttoned at the neck
TIE	Regulation; pulled up properly at collar
JERSEY	Optional; navy blue V-necked jersey or cardigan Should fit properly Cuffs not frayed; no holes May not be worn without a blazer outside of the school grounds
BLAZER	Compulsory Must be worn on all formal occasions School-related badges only Only one non-school related badge is allowed (in support of a cause such as Cancer Awareness)
HAIR AND HAIR ACCESSORIES	Girls may not alter the colour of their hair in any way. <i>If a deviation to this rule is allowed for Grade 12 learners, they will be expected to adhere to the parameters within which this concession is granted.</i> Hair must be neat, clean and should not hang in front of the eyes. Hair touching the shoulders must be tied up. Plain black, dark brown or navy accessories (clips, hair ties and hair bands).
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BAGS	RGHS or a WP tog bag, RGHS or plain navy blue or black backpacks No writing or drawing, except name in small letters
No other bags, baskets, carrier bags or packets are allowed, except the plain navy or black type.	
SCARF	Optional; navy blue regulation school scarf with stripes or plain navy blue
GLOVES	Optional; plain navy blue or black
RAIN JACKET	Clean, navy blue or black raincoat or jacket May only be worn outdoors when it is raining Only the RGHS rain jacket may be worn inside the building
COAT	Optional; navy blue regulation RGHS coat

PRACTICAL SUBJECTS

Girls must protect their uniforms with suitable over-garments e.g. a large shirt, apron.

LIFE ORIENTATION: PHYSICAL MOVEMENT

All girls are expected to wear the regulation navy blue cotton shorts or navy blue tracksuit pants with the regulation white sports shirt or blue sports shirt for Physical Movement (LO) classes.

The regulation black school bathing costume, team swimming costume or water polo costume and a swimming cap must be worn for swimming in Physical Movement (LO) classes.

SPORT

Learners may only wear the official Rustenburg sports uniforms to practices. This includes wearing the official Rustenburg hockey socks to hockey and indoor hockey practices and an official Rustenburg costume to swimming and water polo practices.

After sport, girls must leave the school premises properly dressed, in either full school uniform or in the regulation school sports kit.

Girls may not change into sport outfits until after school, unless special permission has been given.

Only the navy blue Rustenburg or WP tog bag is acceptable.

All the sport uniforms can be bought from the school shop (Bugs' Boutique).

Please refer the Sport Policy for information regarding uniform requirements for each sporting code.

CONTRAVENTIONS and DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

At the discretion of the Principal or a person acting on the Principal's authority, the school may respond with disciplinary measures in one or more of the ways indicated below, or in any other way deemed appropriate, when a learner is in contravention of the Code of Conduct and/or School Rules.

The nature of the offence and/or a learner's prior record shall determine the severity of the disciplinary measures. Disciplinary action will not infringe upon a learner's rights or be in contravention of any national or provincial regulation, and will be in line with departmental procedures and recommendations. Furthermore, learners facing disciplinary action will have access to counselling services offered and/or arranged by the school.

Disciplinary measures may include one or more of the following:

- A warning or reprimand
- Work or tasks of a remedial or corrective nature (at the discretion of the school)
- Replacement of damaged property or agreed compensation
- Detention
- Parental contact
- Referral to a disciplinary committee
- Special/daily report, where a learner's conduct is monitored continuously for a specified period
- Community service
- Counselling
- Removal of privileges and/or rewards and/or positions of leadership or authority
- Declaring results null and void where dishonesty in a test, examination or other assessment has been established
- Exclusion from peers, at breaks and/or other times, during the school day
- Suspension from specified school activities
- Suspension from the school
- Expulsion from the school

SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

If the Principal suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a learner has committed misconduct that is of such a serious nature that it warrants a sanction of suspension or expulsion from the school, he/she may refer the matter to the School Governing Body to hold a disciplinary hearing.

The SGB may, as a precautionary measure and in terms of the provisions of *The South African Schools Act*, suspend the learner from attending school prior to the hearing. If the learner is found guilty of the serious misconduct, the SGB may impose a sanction of suspension from school for a period of time or recommend to the Western Cape Education Department that the learner be expelled from the school.

Serious misconduct is defined in the *Regulations relating to disciplining, suspension and expulsion of learners at public schools in the Western Cape (15 December 2011)*.

Serious misconduct includes:

- A criminal conviction by a court of law;
- The criminal acts of assault, vandalism, theft, or the use, possession, distribution or sale of any of the following: illegal drugs, chemical substances, alcohol, tobacco, weapons or objects which could cause harm or injury. The Principal may in terms of the provisions of *The South African Schools Act*, conduct random searches, seizures and drug testing in this regard;
- The repeated breaking of school rules, regulations and/or procedures listed in this Code of Conduct; and
- Conduct that is immoral, improper or unbecoming.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Where any person becomes aware of any act or omission by a learner of Rustenburg Girls' High School which constitutes a contravention of this Code of Conduct, he or she shall:

- if a learner, refer the matter to a prefect or an educator;
- if a prefect, apply reasonable, relevant sanctions at her discretion, provided the matter is not of a serious or repeated nature, in which case she will refer the matter to the Principal or a Deputy Principal;
- if an educator, apply reasonable, relevant sanctions at his/her discretion, provided the matter is not of a serious or repeated nature, in which case he/she will refer the matter to the Principal or a Deputy Principal; and
- if the Principal or a Deputy Principal, decide on appropriate action (in consultation with the SGB if necessary).

The persons in positions of authority referred to above shall afford a learner the right to make a representation and apply reasonable, relevant sanctions at his/her discretion, provided the matter is not of a serious or repeated nature, in which case he/she will refer the matter to the Principal or a Deputy Principal.

A learner has the right to appeal to a higher level of authority if she feels that she has been unfairly treated.

The school reserves the right, where any disciplinary measure has been applied to a learner, to place this on record.

DUE PROCESS and APPEAL

Any learner accused of violating any rule that may lead to suspension and/or expulsion shall be brought to the Principal or a Deputy Principal, who will hear the evidence and then decide on the action to be taken.

Before a learner may be suspended or before a recommendation for expulsion is made to the Head of Department (Education: Western Cape), the school must inform the learner and her parents in writing and arrange for a fair hearing by the members of the SGB's Disciplinary Committee.

To this end, the learner shall

- Be informed of and understand the charge/s, of which written notice is given at least five days before the hearing. Such notice shall also indicate the time and place of the hearing;
- Be required to plead to the charge/s;
- Receive an explanation of the evidence if the charges are denied;
- Have the opportunity to be heard; to relate her side of the story and to present the relevant facts;
- Have the right to request the presence of witnesses;
- Not be prohibited from being represented by any person of her choice, including her parent/s and/or legal counsel;
- Be heard by impartial persons;
- Be informed, in writing, of the decision of the Disciplinary Committee and the SGB and the sanction/s imposed;
- Have the right to appeal to the MEC against her expulsion; and
- Have the right to support and counselling offered and/or arranged by the school during the disciplinary process.

The SGB must inform the Provincial Head of Department or his/her representative, in writing, of the intention to suspend a learner pending a decision on her expulsion.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THIS CODE

Religious practices, conduct or obligations that relate to the core values and beliefs of a recognised religion and that are deemed to be incompatible with any rule contained in this Code of Conduct will be considered by the School Governing Body.

A learner and her parent must make written application to the SGB for permission to be exempted from the Code of Conduct, or any part thereof if such rules are in conflict with or infringe on any religious right of the learner. Until such time as an application has been considered and a decision reached, a learner must adhere to the normal rules, regulations and codes of the school.

Such a written request must include the following:

- The specific rule/s that is/are offensive or in conflict with the learner's religious rights as contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa;
- The manner in which the learner wishes to deviate from the Code;
- The substantiated basis for this request, supported by documentary evidence, must include a reasonable interpretation of the religious rights that the learner feels are offensive and a suggestion on how the rules may be supplemented by the SGB to accommodate such religious rights;
- The learner must provide proof that she belongs to that specific religion and that the religious practices, rules and obligations that are incompatible with the school's Code of Conduct are her true beliefs and commitments. The religious conduct or practice must be lawful; and
- Whether the cultural or religious practice is mandatory or voluntary.

Once this request and information has been submitted, the learner and parent will be called to an interview with a sub-committee of the SGB.

When the SGB allows for deviations from the standard rules, such deviations must be based on core religious beliefs inherent to the religion and it must be compulsory for the learner to comply with such beliefs.

The SGB will provide the parent/learner with written notification of its decision and any conditions relating to the exemption. The SGB will specify the approved deviation from the rules and will identify the conditions under which such deviation will be applicable to the learner.

Cultural rights will be considered in the event that they do not relate to a religion, if such cultural rights manifest in conduct of a permanent nature that is compulsory for the cultural group. This refers to cases where the removal of the cultural jewellery or mark will cause considerable distress to the learner.

Any request for a deviation from the Code of Conduct based on cultural rights must be in writing and will be based on a process similar to that described above. The learner will need to convince the SGB that her cultural rights can be exercised only through a permanent intervention.

Requests for short term, temporary deviations from the school rules may be submitted in writing to the Principal or a Deputy Principal. A learner must adhere to the normal rules, regulations and codes of the school until such permission has been granted.