



**RIDGE PARK
COLLEGE**

**CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR PARENTS**

PREAMBLE

At Ridge Park College we aim to provide an open, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all. We are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body who, we believe, are valuable contributors and participants in the life of the school.

We believe that educating our children is a process that involves a three-way partnership between the parents, the children and the school. It is this partnership that will equip our learners with the necessary skills for adulthood and will teach them the values which underpin our motto, ***“HONESTY AND HONOUR”***

AIM & SCOPE OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

The aim of this Policy document is to provide a reminder to all parents, guardians and visitors to our school about their expected conduct when interacting with other members of the school community, including learners, school staff, other parents and visitors to our school, as well as their conduct during school events and activities.

The Policy applies to all adults including parents, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, child-minders or any other guardian of the learners, while involved in activities or communication related to Ridge Park College. For convenience the term ***“Parent”***, will be used throughout this document.

- The ultimate responsibility for a learner’s behavior rests with his or her parents/guardians. Parents/guardians must support the Code of Conduct for learners to ensure that their child/ward observes it. They need to inform the school authorities about any problem(s) concerning their child/ward and accept responsibility for any misconduct pertaining to their child/ward.
- Parents/guardians must be involved in the correction of their child’s/ward’s inappropriate behavior.
- Parents/guardians are also expected to take an active interest in their child’s/ward’s school life including academic performance, homework, attitude and behavior and must attend any meeting that the Governing Body/Principal may convene.
- Disagreement with the Code of Conduct does not exempt the parents/guardians or learners from having to comply with it.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of any changes in contact numbers. It is imperative that the school has the correct contact details in case of an emergency. The school will not be liable if a learner takes ill and a parent cannot be contacted.
- It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that their daughters are picked up timeously at the end of the school day and after functions. The school will not be held responsible for learners’ safety after school hours. The hours are 06:45AM – 15:30PM.
- If your daughter is involved in codes of sports or other school activities time will be put down on indemnity forms.
- In the event of an emergency such as a learner taking ill, it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that they make arrangements to:

1. Have their daughter picked up immediately.
2. Contact an ambulance service if needed.
N.B (Ambulance services do not take learners without a parent/guardian accompanying their child/ward in the ambulance).
3. Admit their daughter to hospital if required.

N. B (The school will not be held liable if the parent is negligent and fails in their duty to take proper care of their daughters).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Respect the caring ethos of our school.
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that **all** members of the school community should be treated with respect and, therefore, set a good example in their own speech and behavior.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Correct own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behavior or unsafe behavior.
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Avoid using staff as threats to admonish children's behavior.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. COMMUNICATION

- Parents will use courteous and acceptable written and spoken language in all communications with the staff and other parents and members of the school community. No profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language may be used.
- Parents must follow protocol when they need to communicate with any member of staff. Parents are required to call the school and set up an appointment to meet with the relevant educator, Head of Department and Grade Controller in order to address any school related issues.
- The time available for parents to meet staff is limited and must be scheduled at a time that does not disrupt the classroom time. Parent meetings are scheduled for each term where general matters about your child can be discussed at length.
- Parents are prohibited from addressing or communicating with any learner from the school, without the learner's parent present.

- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards your own child, may be seen as assault on that child and may have legal consequences.
- All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of our children as well as the staff members themselves. Parents should therefore ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety.
- The priority of the school staff is the welfare and education of all the children in our care. School staff are therefore not required to respond to e-mails and telephone calls instantaneously. General business practices allow for an acceptable response time of two (2) working days. Responses are not permitted outside of working hours unless it is an emergency. All communication will be via Official means – school telephone, fax and e-mail.
- Parents are welcome to communicate with members of the School Governing Body. Feedback is welcomed by the SGB. However, parents must remember that the SGB members are volunteers and are engaged in their own work and activities during business hours. It is suggested that parents send their concerns in writing to the school, addressed to the The Chairman of the SGB, which will then be forwarded to the chairperson.
- Parents must allow the SGB an opportunity to discuss their correspondence at a properly constituted meeting of the school SGB and therefore refrain from demanding an urgent response.
- The school is prohibited from handing out educator's telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of parents to other parents. Parents are encouraged to avoid the exchange of their personal information in relation to the school.

2. PROTOCOL WHEN VISITING THE SCHOOL

- All visitors are required to visit the school during school hours and to sign a visitor's register located with the Security personnel. Parents need to respect the security personnel and follow protocol as is presented below. No visitor will be permitted to enter the school without signing the register. No vehicles are allowed into the school. Please park in the designated visitor's area outside the school's main gate.
- Parents will be screened before proceeding to the Front Office. Masks need to be worn at all times.
- Parents are expected to report to the Front Office Staff for further direction related to their visit. **NO PARENT IS ALLOWED TO WANDER OFF WITHIN THE SCHOOL CAMPUS WITHOUT FIRST REPORTING TO THE FRONT OFFICE PERSONNEL.**
- Parents to please note that the Front Office personnel will not accept items such as projects, clothes, money and lunch to be handed to your daughter. Please understand that this is not part of their portfolio and they cannot be held liable for any mishaps in this regard.
- Parents must refrain from obstructing the entrance to the school or other traffic in the

Avenue or on South Road.

- Parents will be given a VISITOR'S CARD, which they need to carry, while on the school premises.
- Parents will comply with all the safety and emergency procedures in place at the school. In the event of an emergency, while on the school campus, the parent will follow the instructions given by the school staff.
- When attending any school function or event, the parent is expected to dress appropriately, to be on time and to conduct themselves in a dignified manner.
- During a school function/event/public meeting, parents will listen respectfully, in the same way as is required by the school learner population and the school staff. The parent must refrain from creating any unnecessary noise or disturbance. Heckling will not be tolerated. The school has the right to ask a parent to leave, if their behaviour is deemed unacceptable.
- Parents are not allowed to approach any learner or educator on the school campus without being accompanied by a staff member.
- Parents are not allowed to enter a classroom under any circumstance.
- Any unauthorised person found on the school property will be asked to leave. The police may be called in, if the situation warrants it.
- Early leave dismissal will **only** be permitted in extreme circumstances. Parents are encouraged to set Doctor appointments after school. Any request for early dismissal must be accompanied by a letter as well as a copy of the ID of the person collecting the learner.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT BY PARENTS – VIOLATION OF THESE RULES CAN HAVE LEGAL IMPLCATIONS

- Disruptive behavior, which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, office area or any other area of the school grounds, including sports matches.
- Threatening to do bodily harm to a member of staff, the SGB, a fellow parent, or learner, regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Using loud offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper.
- Abusive or threatening e-mails/text/voicemail/phone calls or any other form of written communication, including social media.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/staff, at the school on Facebook or other social sites. **(See Appendix 1)**
- Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages, controlled substances or being under the influence of any of the above on school

property or at a school function.

- Parents are not allowed to carry any weapons onto the school property.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child, in or outside the school premises, in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Smoking on the school premises.
- Refusing to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
- Willfully inciting others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.

APPENDIX 1

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORK SITE

Social media websites and cell phone chat groups are increasingly being used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils.

Ridge Park College considers the use of social media websites and chat groups, negatively, as unacceptable and not in the best interest of the children or the whole school community. Any concerns you may have, must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the school staff or the School Governing Body, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent/guardian of a child/children being educated at Ridge Park College is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/guardian or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases, the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entries. We will regard this as a serious incident of school bullying, and deal with it accordingly.

Should **any** of the above behaviour occur on school premises the school may feel it is necessary to contact the appropriate authorities and if necessary, even ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds.

CONSEQUENCES OF A BREACH OF PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Any parent, member of the school staff or learner may notify the Principal of a possible breach of Code of Conduct. The Principal together with the School Governing Body will investigate the complaint and if satisfied that a breach has occurred:

- a. Provide a first and final written warning that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred and that a further breach will not be tolerated;
- b. In the case of serious matters the school has the right to pursue civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the Code of Conduct.

We trust that parents and guardians will assist our school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continued support of the school.

We would expect that parents would make all persons responsible for collecting children aware of this policy.

Mr A. Ebrahim
ACTING PRINCIPAL

Mr S. S. Zondi
SGB CHAIRPERSON

EXTRACT FROM LEARNER CODE OF CONDUCT

1.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS (page 5-6)

- Failure of the parent/guardian to undertake his/her responsibilities as listed as in terms of the Children's Act of 2005 considered as neglect of your parental responsibilities of care and as such the school is obliged to report this matter to the authorities.
- Disagreement with the Code of Conduct does not exempt the parents/guardians or learners from having to comply with it.
- All parents/guardians are required to sign a Code of Conduct regarding their rights and responsibilities.
- **Parents to please note that the Front Office personnel will not accept items such as projects, clothes, money and lunch to be handed to your daughter. Please understand that this not part of their portfolio and they cannot be held liable for any mishaps in this regard.**
- The ultimate responsibility for a learner's behaviour rests with his or her parents/guardians. Parents/guardians must support the Code of Conduct for learners to ensure that their child/ward observes it.
- They need to inform the school authorities about any problem(s) concerning their child/ward and accept responsibility for any misconduct pertaining to their child / ward.
- Parents/guardians must be involved in the correction of their child's/ward's inappropriate behaviour.
- Parents/guardians are also expected to take an active interest in their child's/ward's school life including academic performance, homework, attitude and behaviour and must attend any meeting that the Governing Body/Principal may convene.

- It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of any changes in contact numbers. It is imperative that the school has the correct contact details in case of an emergency. The school will not be liable if a learner takes ill and a parent cannot be contacted.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their daughters are picked up timeously at the end of the school day and after functions. The school will not be held responsible for learners' safety after school hours.

3. Late Coming and Leave-Taking (page 13)

In the interest of the culture of teaching and learning, learners must attend school punctually and regularly. Parents are advised not to request permission for leave during school hours. Parents are responsible to check with the school for late detention if your daughter reports late (after 7:40am)

Should a learner report to school late, she must sign the register at the gate and thereafter proceed to the Front Office where her diary will be signed and a late-coming slip will be issued to her in the event of her not being in possession of her diary.

Learners will be required to serve late-coming detention (14h45-15h15) on the day that they arrive late to school. Should a learner not attend late – coming detention she would have to serve Discipline Detention on Friday from 13h30 to 15h30.

Learners need to get to class on time between lessons and after breaks. A Lock-down procedure is used at Ridge Park College. If a learner is late three times, then she will serve discipline detention on a Friday. Detention will take prevalence over extra and co – curricular activities.

Absenteeism: (page 13)

- 3.1 Should a learner fall ill parents must telephone the school before 8.30 a.m.
- 3.2. On her return, a letter of explanation signed by the parent/guardian should accompany a learner who has been absent.
- 3.3 A valid medical certificate must be presented for absences of 3 days or more.
- 3.4 If a learner has been absent for examinations/assessments a valid medical certificate must be presented on the day of her arrival at school in order for the learner to be permitted to write the supplementary examination/assessment.
- 3.5 Learners must not complete or sign absentee letters; it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian
- 3.6 It will be the learner's responsibility, as well as that of her parents to keep up to date with her school work, as well as to make arrangements to submit her assignments/assessments, and to write tests and exams

Leave Taking: (page 14)

- 3.7 No leave will be granted to a learner unless prior written consent is obtained from the parent.
- 3.8 A learner must produce a signed letter from her parent should early departure be required. The letter should be submitted to the Principal during morning registration, before 8:00am. The letter must include parent's ID number and contact number as well as a copy of the ID of the person collecting the learner.
- 3.9 Exeats will only be issued in an emergency. (Medical appointments or any other appointments should be made after school hours.)
- 3.10 Sick Room - is for emergencies only and use is left to the discretion of the educator. Learners who are unwell and not picked up by parents timeously will be asked to return to their subject classroom.
- 3.11 Should a learner take leave before the end of the first lesson, she will be marked absent for the day.

- 3.12 It will be the responsibility of the learner as well as that of her parents to keep up to date with her school work, as well as to make arrangements to submit
- 3.13 No leave can be taken during school functions.

11. Cell Phone, Smart Watch and Electronics Policy (Page 19)

- 12.1 Cell phones, smart watches or any other electronic equipment/accessories are not allowed at school. No exceptions are allowed on this matter.
- 12.2 All requests for emergency calls by the learners should be directed to the Front Office.
- 12.3 The possession of a cell phone, smart watch or any other electronic equipment/accessories during any form of assessment process, i.e examinations, class tests e.t.c is regarded as an irregularity by the Department of Education. In such a case not only will the candidate's cell phone, smart watch or electronic equipment/accessories be confiscated, but she will receive a zero mark for the examination/test being written and the appropriate disciplinary action will be instituted against her.
In the case of Grade 12 learners, this violation will be reported to the Department of Education.
- 12.4 If a learner is found guilty of contravening any of the cell phone, smart watch or any other electronic equipment accessories policy offences, the following disciplinary measures will be adopted:

First Offence: Confiscation of cell phone with the sim card, smart watch or any other electronic equipment/accessories for 6 months from the date of confiscation.

Second Offence: Confiscation of cell phone with the sim card, smart watch or any other electronic equipment/accessories for one year from the date of confiscation.
After the allocated period, confiscated item will be handed to a parent if he/she provides his/her ID document.
- 12.5 No negotiations by learners or parents with regards to confiscated cell phones will be entertained.
- 12.6 The school does not accept responsibility for any cell phone/s, smart watch/es or any other electronic equipment/accessories that is/are lost or stolen or damaged on the school premises. **Staff will not involve themselves in any investigation in the event of a cell phone or smart watch being lost or stolen.**