



MARITZBURG COLLEGE

MARITZBURG COLLEGE PARENT CODE

1. Introduction:

Maritzburg College places high value on the partnership between home and school, and appreciates the level of co-operation that it experiences from parents. It is with that in mind that this parent code of conduct has been compiled.

The Parent Code has been drafted in accordance with the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996; the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996; the Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools (GN 1040 in Government Gazette 22754 of 12 October 2001, as amended in Government Gazette 29376 of 10 November 2006); and applicable provincial legislation.

2. Purpose of the Code:

This Parent Code aims to:

- Foster a positive relationship between parents and the school by providing parents with guidelines of expectations in their interactions with the school and their responsibilities regarding their children's education.
- Ensure a safe environment for all College learners and staff by setting out procedures that apply to parents when visiting the school as required by the "Regulations for Safety Measures in Schools".

3. General Expectations:

It is expected of parents attending any school activity that at all times they will comply with the requests and arrangements of the school and/or the organisers, model positive ways of behaving and interacting with others, and avoid –

- Disruptive or violent behaviour that interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's normal operations or activities anywhere on the school premises.
- Using loud or offensive language, or using indecent signs, on the school premises and at any school activity.
- Intimidating or threatening, in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent or learner.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Sending abusive, threatening, offensive or derogatory emails or messages in any form to anyone within the school community.
- Smoking, vaping, taking, possessing or supplying illegal drugs on the school premises.
- Bringing dangerous objects onto the school premises.
- Conducting themselves in any way that does harm to the reputation of the school or embarrasses staff members or learners.

4. Sports and Cultural Activities:

When attending sports matches or cultural activities, parents are expected to –

- Apply self-constraint and show respect, courtesy and tolerance towards each other, educators, other staff, learners, spectators, members of opposing teams/other schools and their parents, coaches and referees/judges.
- Maintain an indicated distance from the side lines of any particular sports field or court, and not go onto the play area or any other demarcated areas on the school grounds during an activity.
- Remain in a demarcated area for the audience at cultural events and not go backstage or into areas where learners are preparing for performances/events.

Parents are furthermore expected not to –

- Interrupt during sports practices or cultural rehearsals, even if it is to give advice, make arrangements, request feedback or discuss complaints or problems.
- Interfere with the coach's/educator's team/cast selection.
- Approach a learner in order to chastise or discipline him at a practice, match or performance.

5. Access to the School:

Access to the school shall be controlled in terms of Regulation 5 of the "Regulations for Safety Measures in Schools":

"Parents or visitors may be required to furnish name, address, and other relevant information; produce proof of identity; declare whether he/she has any dangerous objects or drugs in his/her possession; declare the contents of a car, bags, parcels, etc.; subject him/herself to a search."

6. Visits to the School by Parents:

Visits to the school by parents shall be controlled in terms of –

- The "Regulations for Safety Measures in Schools":
 - "8(1) Parents have the right to visit the public school where their children have been admitted but such visits may not disrupt any of the school activities.*
 - 8(2) Parents are required to make an appointment with the principal of the school for a personal appointment with him or her prior to the visit and must state the reason for the visit and the persons who may be involved during the visit."*
- The school's accepted procedures as stated below:
 - Parents wishing to meet with a member of staff must in good time make an appointment or leave a message via the switchboard. Educators are not available for calls during teaching hours. A meeting may also be requested by emailing the relevant educator.
 - Parents visiting the school buildings or staff members must follow school protocols, especially if they are arriving via the Centenary Gate on College Road, and proceed immediately to main reception.
 - Parents attending an event, sports match etc. must proceed immediately to the designated area.

7. Communication with the School:

- Parents are welcome to discuss any queries or problems in respect of a specific activity with the headmaster or delegated authority as per communication protocol (see Addendum A) at a meeting held for this purpose. Any matters raised will be taken up with the educator-in-charge/coach/organiser, and feedback will be provided to the parent. Discussions should occur in a mutually constructive, courteous, composed and respectful way.
- We urge parents to use these channels of communication rather than –
 - Directing complaints or concerns to the education authorities, the MEC for Education or any other outside entity. (If a parent has exhausted their efforts to be heard at the school level, they are then within their rights to escalate the issue.)
 - Resorting to the media/social media, without pursuing all internal and external channels first. (Unwarranted media/social media coverage can cause reputational damage to the school, which is not in the best interests of the learners at the school, as they are viewed in the light of the school's reputation in society and the workplace.)
- Communication concerning a learner's absence from school must be in writing and must be written and signed by the parent and contain the following information: *Name of learner, house, dates of absence, reason for absence.*

8. Social Media:

Social media sites are increasingly being used to fuel campaigns or complaints against schools or to share inappropriate information, e.g. naming children involved in incidents, sharing confidential information regarding an aspect of school life, making allegations or accusations, or sharing false news. Maritzburg College considers the use of social media platforms in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the school. The School's Social Media Policy is available on request.

9. Commitments of Parents:

Parents commit to:

- Familiarising themselves with the school's Code of Conduct for Learners (as amended in 2022) and acknowledge that, in terms of section 8(4) of the South African Schools Act, *"Nothing contained in this Act exempts a learner from the obligation to comply with the code of conduct of the school attended by such learner"*.
- Attending meetings called by the school, as far as is feasible.
- Involving themselves in the life of the school and enthusiastically supporting the school and its learners, to promote the best interests of the learners.
- Maintaining a respectful and constructive, rather than a confrontational, approach in the face of conflicts and challenges that may arise.
- Following the protocol set out by the school for dealing with complaints through appropriate communication (See Addendum A).
- Paying school fees timeously (unless fully exempt) and contacting the school should circumstances hinder the payment thereof.
- Providing a home environment that supports the school and positive learning attitudes and behaviours.
- Accepting that parents have a responsibility to assist with the discipline of their children, to monitor their educational progress, and to ensure their attendance at school, punctuality, completion of their homework and preparation for assessments.
- Following the school's protocol for reporting absence from school.
- Ensuring that their children meet their commitments regarding extra-mural activities.
- Informing the school of relevant medical information or contagious conditions.

- Informing the school immediately of any change of address or telephone numbers of both parents/caregivers (home and work).
- Arranging holidays only during the dates specified in advance by the Department of Basic Education.
- Making medical/personal appointments after school hours or, in the case of an emergency, communicating directly with the housemaster concerned, giving adequate reasons.
- Adhering to times and procedures for dropping off or collecting their children from school and observing traffic and courtesy rules when doing so.

10. Non-compliance with this code:

1. We believe that our parents will, on the whole, adhere to this Parent Code.
2. In the event of any breach of this code, action proportionate to the breach will be taken, ranging from instructing the transgressor to cease the unacceptable conduct to instituting available legal remedies immediately.
3. This Maritzburg College Parent Code was adopted by the School Governing Body of Maritzburg College at a meeting held at the school on 15 August 2022.



Signed: _____

Chairman of the School Governing Body



Signed: _____

Headmaster

Date: 7 November 2022

Addendum A:

Communication with the School:	
<i>Query regarding the academic or behavioural progress of your own child:</i>	Contact the class mentor/housemaster/subject teacher/subject head/HOD: Discipline Continuing concerns can be directed to the Deputy Headmaster in charge of Academics or the Senior Deputy Headmaster
<i>Concerns regarding the welfare of your own child:</i>	Minor issues – contact the class mentor Serious issues – contact the housemaster or the school’s psychologist or the Senior Deputy Headmaster
<i>Concerns regarding the welfare of a learner who is not your own child:</i>	Contact the school’s psychologist or the Senior Deputy Headmaster
<i>Concerns regarding the conduct of other learners::</i>	Minor issues – contact the HOD: Discipline Serious issues – contact the Senior Deputy Headmaster
<i>Concerns regarding the actions of a school staff member:</i>	Contact the Senior Deputy Headmaster
<i>Concerns about the actions of a coach, organiser of an extra-mural activity:</i>	Contact the director of that sport code or the MIC of that activity, or the Deputy Headmaster: Co-curricular
<i>Concerns about the actions of a parent, caregiver or volunteer at the school:</i>	Contact the Senior Deputy Headmaster
<i>Query regarding a school policy or practice:</i>	Contact the housemaster, or (in more serious cases) the HOD: Discipline Ongoing concerns can be directed to a member of the School Governing Body if not addressed by the above persons