



# Learner Code of Conduct

## Document Control

Item	Details
Document Title	Learner Code of Conduct
School	Grace Academy High School
Governing Entity	Grace Academy Foundation
Governing Entity Registration Number	2025/881786/08
School Phase	Grades 8–12
Medium of Instruction	English
Approval Authority	Governing Board
Effective Date	24 September 2024
Review Date	23 January 2026
Version	1.0

## 1. Purpose

This Learner Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour, discipline, responsibility, and accountability expected of all learners enrolled at **Grace Academy High School**. It is intended to support a safe, orderly, respectful, and academically purposeful school environment consistent with the school's **Christian values-based ethos**, its commitment to **human dignity**, and its duty to provide quality education.

This Code also establishes:

- expected standards of learner behaviour;
- procedures for addressing misconduct fairly;
- a learner grievance process;
- a learner appeal process; and
- the role of parents or guardians in supporting learner conduct and discipline.

## 2. Status and Scope

### 2.1 Legal and governance basis

This Code must be read with:

- the **Grace Academy Foundation Constitution**;
- the school's ethos and values framework;
- the school's anti-discrimination and safety policies; and
- applicable South African education law and regulatory requirements.



## 2.2 Persons bound by this Code

This Code applies to:

- all enrolled learners of Grace Academy High School;
- learner conduct on school premises;
- learner conduct during school activities, excursions, sport, outreach, and events;
- learner conduct while representing the school;
- learner conduct on transport arranged by the school; and
- digital or off-campus conduct where it has a direct effect on the safety, dignity, reputation, discipline, or educational functioning of the school.

## 3. Guiding Values

Grace Academy High School expects all learners to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the following values:

Value	Meaning in learner conduct
<b>Academic Excellence</b>	Taking learning seriously, preparing for class, completing work honestly, and striving to improve
<b>Discipline</b>	Demonstrating self-control, punctuality, orderliness, and respect for school rules
<b>Integrity</b>	Acting truthfully and responsibly in academic work, relationships, and personal conduct
<b>Respect and Human Dignity</b>	Treating every person courteously, fairly, and without humiliation, prejudice, or cruelty
<b>Service</b>	Using one's gifts and opportunities for the benefit of others and the school community
<b>Leadership</b>	Exercising influence responsibly and modelling good conduct
<b>Compassion</b>	Showing care, empathy, and sensitivity toward others
<b>Stewardship</b>	Using time, property, resources, and opportunities responsibly



## **4. General Standard of Conduct**

Every learner must:

- attend school regularly and on time;
- participate constructively in teaching, learning, and school life;
- obey lawful and reasonable instructions from staff and authorised school leaders;
- treat staff, fellow learners, visitors, and support staff with respect;
- care for school property and the property of others;
- behave honestly in all academic and personal matters;
- uphold the good name of the school; and
- avoid any conduct that disrupts learning, threatens safety, or undermines the values of the school.

## **5. Attendance and Punctuality**

### **5.1 Attendance**

Learners are required to attend:

- all timetabled classes;
- assemblies and devotions where applicable;
- tests, examinations, support sessions, and compulsory school activities; and
- other activities designated as compulsory by the school.

### **5.2 Absence**

- Absence from school must be supported by a written explanation from a parent or guardian.
- Absence due to illness may require a medical certificate where the absence is prolonged, occurs on an assessment day, or forms part of a pattern of concern.
- Unauthorised absence, truancy, class-skipping, or leaving school without permission is misconduct.

### **5.3 Punctuality**

- Learners must arrive at school before the official start of the school day.
- Learners must move promptly between lessons and be seated, prepared, and ready to begin on time.

## **8. Respect, Relationships, and School Culture**

Grace Academy High School is committed to a school culture marked by courtesy, dignity, discipline, and care.

### **8.1 Learners must:**

- speak respectfully to staff and peers;
- avoid insults, threats, intimidation, crude language, and humiliation;

# GRACE ACADEMY

## Independent High School



- show respect across differences of background, belief, language, gender, culture, and ability;
- resolve conflict responsibly and without aggression; and
- contribute positively to the school environment.

### 8.2 Learners may not:

- harass, degrade, exclude, or victimise others;
- engage in discriminatory or hateful conduct;
- damage the reputation or dignity of another person; or
- encourage others to participate in misconduct.

## 9. Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment

### 9.1 Principle

Bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, harassment, victimisation, and coercion are prohibited.

### 9.2 Forms of bullying or harassment

This includes:

- physical bullying;
- verbal abuse;
- social exclusion;
- spreading rumours;
- extortion;
- threats;
- online abuse;
- humiliating images or recordings;
- sexual harassment; and
- targeting another person because of personal characteristics or perceived differences.

### 9.3 Reporting

Any learner who experiences or witnesses bullying must report it to:

- a class teacher;
- a grade head;
- the Deputy Principal;
- the school counsellor; or
- the Principal.



## 9.4 School response

The school will:

- investigate reports promptly and fairly;
- take steps to protect affected learners;
- involve parents where appropriate;
- apply corrective, restorative, or disciplinary measures; and
- monitor recurrence and wellbeing.

False accusations made maliciously may also constitute misconduct.

- Repeated lateness may lead to corrective or disciplinary action.

## 10. Digital Conduct and Responsible Use of Technology

### 10.1 General rule

Learners must use digital devices, online platforms, school systems, and social media responsibly, lawfully, and respectfully.

### 10.2 Expectations

Learners must:

- use school technology only for authorised educational or school-related purposes;
- respect privacy and confidentiality;
- refrain from recording staff or learners without permission;
- avoid accessing, storing, creating, or sharing harmful, offensive, pornographic, discriminatory, or unlawful content;
- protect passwords and login credentials;
- comply with examination and assessment rules regarding devices; and
- use social media in ways that do not harm the school community.

### 10.3 Prohibited digital misconduct

This includes:

- cyberbullying;
- impersonation;
- cheating using digital tools;
- sharing test or exam material unlawfully;
- taking unauthorised photographs or videos;
- posting defamatory, threatening, or degrading content;
- hacking or attempting unauthorised access; and
- damaging school ICT systems or data.



## **11. Academic Integrity and Assessment Honesty**

### **11.1 Principle**

All academic work must be the learner's own unless collaboration is expressly permitted.

### **11.2 Learners must not:**

- cheat in tests, examinations, assignments, or practical tasks;
- copy from another learner;
- allow another learner to copy their work;
- submit plagiarised work;
- falsify research, signatures, marks, or records;
- use unauthorised notes, devices, AI tools, or materials in assessments;
- obtain question papers improperly; or
- interfere with scripts, mark sheets, or assessment records.

### **11.3 Academic misconduct consequences**

Academic dishonesty may lead to:

- cancellation of the task or examination;
- a mark penalty or zero, where permitted;
- parental notification;
- disciplinary action; and
- further academic monitoring or support.

## **12. Care of Property and School Environment**

Learners must:

- care for classrooms, furniture, textbooks, devices, laboratories, bathrooms, sports facilities, and school grounds;
- return borrowed items on time and in good condition;
- report breakages, hazards, or unsafe conditions; and
- keep the campus neat and free of litter.

The following are prohibited:

- vandalism;
- graffiti;
- theft;
- tampering with safety equipment;
- wilful damage to property; and

# GRACE ACADEMY

Independent High School



- possession or misuse of items that may damage school assets.

## 13. Prohibited Misconduct

The following constitute serious or prohibited misconduct, depending on the nature and severity of the conduct:

### 13.1 Safety and violence-related misconduct

- fighting or assault;
- threats of violence;
- possession of dangerous objects or weapons;
- reckless conduct that endangers others;
- arson or attempted arson;
- intimidation or coercion.

### 13.2 Substance-related misconduct

- possession, use, distribution, or sale of alcohol, illegal drugs, vaping products, tobacco, or related paraphernalia;
- attending school under the influence of intoxicating or prohibited substances.

### 13.3 Dishonesty-related misconduct

- theft;
- fraud;
- forgery;
- lying in disciplinary matters;
- tampering with reports, records, signatures, or documents.

### 13.4 Moral and relational misconduct

- bullying;
- harassment;
- sexual misconduct;
- discriminatory conduct;
- hate speech;
- extortion;
- abusive or degrading behaviour.

### 13.5 School order-related misconduct

- repeated insubordination;
- gross disrespect;

# GRACE ACADEMY

## Independent High School



- refusal to comply with lawful instructions;
- truancy;
- leaving school without permission;
- disrupting examinations;
- bringing the school into disrepute.

## 14. Search, Seizure, and Safety Measures

Where there is reasonable suspicion of prohibited or dangerous items, the school may take reasonable, lawful steps to protect learners and staff, including:

- requesting a learner to open a bag or locker;
- confiscating prohibited items;
- contacting parents or guardians;
- referring the matter to appropriate authorities where required; and
- recording the incident formally.

Searches and safety interventions must be conducted with due regard to dignity, privacy, and legality.

## 15. Disciplinary Principles

Discipline at Grace Academy High School is:

- **educational** as well as corrective;
- **fair**, consistent, and proportionate;
- **respectful of dignity**;
- **responsive to context and seriousness**; and
- intended, where possible, to promote restoration, accountability, and growth.

Not every incident requires a formal disciplinary hearing. Minor misconduct may be addressed through corrective action, while serious or repeated misconduct may require formal disciplinary procedures.

## 16. Informal Corrective Measures

For minor misconduct, the school may use one or more of the following:

- verbal warning;
- written warning;
- behaviour reflection task;
- apology;
- detention or supervised corrective time;
- loss of privileges;
- classroom or break-time corrective measures;

# GRACE ACADEMY

## Independent High School



- parent contact;
- behaviour monitoring card;
- support or counselling referral.

Informal measures should be recorded where the pattern of behaviour becomes repetitive.

## 17. Formal Disciplinary Procedure

### 17.1 When formal discipline may be used

Formal disciplinary action may be initiated for:

- serious misconduct;
- repeated misconduct after prior intervention;
- behaviour affecting safety, dignity, or school order;
- academic dishonesty of a serious nature; or
- conduct that may justify suspension or expulsion.

### 17.2 Steps in the process

1. **Incident report** is submitted.
2. **Preliminary review** is conducted by the relevant staff member or school leader.
3. The learner is informed of the allegation.
4. Parents or guardians are notified where the matter is serious.
5. The learner is given a reasonable opportunity to respond.
6. A meeting or disciplinary hearing is convened where necessary.
7. A finding is made on the evidence.
8. A sanction, support measure, or restorative outcome is determined.
9. The outcome is communicated in writing where appropriate.
10. Records are kept.

### 17.3 Disciplinary hearing

Where a formal hearing is required:

- the learner must be informed of the allegation with reasonable notice;
- the learner must have an opportunity to state their case;
- the learner may be accompanied by a parent or guardian;
- the school may hear relevant witnesses or consider written statements;
- the chairperson must act fairly and impartially; and
- the outcome and sanction must be recorded.



## 18. Sanctions

Sanctions must be proportionate to the seriousness, frequency, and circumstances of the misconduct.

### 18.1 Possible sanctions

Level	Examples of sanctions
Minor	Verbal warning, written warning, apology, detention, corrective task
Repeated	Final warning, behaviour contract, withdrawal of privileges, compulsory parent conference
Serious	Formal disciplinary warning, suspension from certain activities, internal suspension, community service, counselling referral
Very serious	Recommendation for suspension or expulsion in accordance with school policy and applicable law

### 18.2 Factors to consider

In determining a sanction, the school may consider:

- seriousness of the misconduct;
- age and maturity of the learner;
- prior conduct record;
- intent;
- impact on others;
- honesty and remorse;
- risk to safety or school order; and
- possibility of restoration and behaviour change.

## 19. Suspension and Expulsion

### 19.1 Suspension

A learner may be suspended from classes or specific school activities, pending a disciplinary process or as a sanction for serious misconduct, where permitted by school policy and law.

### 19.2 Expulsion

Expulsion is reserved for the most serious cases and may be considered where the learner's continued presence seriously undermines safety, discipline, or the functioning of the school. Expulsion must follow a fair process and the parent or guardian must be informed in writing.

## 20. Learner Grievance Procedure

A learner who feels aggrieved by unfair treatment, inappropriate conduct, bullying, discrimination, victimisation, or an unreasonable decision may use the grievance procedure below.



### **20.1 Informal step**

The learner should first raise the concern, where appropriate, with:

- the relevant teacher;
- class teacher; or
- grade head.

### **20.2 Formal grievance**

If unresolved or inappropriate for informal handling, the learner may submit a grievance to:

- the Deputy Principal; or
- the Principal.

The grievance should state:

- the nature of the concern;
- the date and circumstances;
- the persons involved; and
- the remedy sought.

### **20.3 Handling of grievances**

The school will:

- acknowledge the grievance;
- consider the matter promptly and fairly;
- hear relevant persons where necessary;
- protect confidentiality as far as reasonably possible; and
- communicate the outcome and any action taken.

### **20.4 Protection**

No learner may be victimised for raising a genuine grievance in good faith.

## **21. Learner Appeal Procedure**

A learner or parent/guardian may appeal against a formal disciplinary finding or sanction.

### **21.1 Grounds for appeal**

An appeal may be based on:

- procedural unfairness;
- new relevant information;
- disproportionate sanction; or
- material error in the finding.



## **21.2 Timeframe**

An appeal must be submitted in writing to the Principal or designated appeal authority within **5 school days** of receiving the outcome, unless good cause is shown for a later submission.

## **21.3 Appeal outcome**

The appeal authority may:

- confirm the original finding or sanction;
- amend the sanction;
- set aside the finding;
- remit the matter for reconsideration; or
- impose another lawful and fair outcome.

The appeal decision should be communicated in writing.

## **22. Parental Involvement and Responsibility**

Parents and guardians are partners in learner formation, discipline, and academic development.

### **22.1 Parents or guardians are expected to:**

- support the values and rules of the school;
- ensure regular attendance and punctuality;
- monitor uniform, homework, behaviour, and digital use;
- respond to school communication promptly;
- attend disciplinary, support, or review meetings when requested; and
- work cooperatively with the school in the best interests of the learner.

### **22.2 School-parent partnership**

Where learner conduct becomes a concern, the school may require:

- parent conferences;
- behaviour contracts;
- support referrals;
- monitored home-school communication; or
- joint intervention planning.

## **23. Record-Keeping and Confidentiality**

The school will keep appropriate records of:

- disciplinary incidents;
- warnings and sanctions;
- hearing outcomes;
- grievances and appeals; and



- intervention measures.

Such records will be treated confidentially, subject to lawful disclosure, safeguarding duties, and the school's data management processes.

## 24. Communication and Acknowledgment

This Code must be:

- communicated to learners and parents at admission and at the start of each school year;
- explained in age-appropriate ways;
- supported by class, assembly, and orientation processes; and
- acknowledged by signed acceptance in the parent/learner contract or annual code acknowledgment form.

## 25. Review of the Code

This Learner Code of Conduct shall be reviewed:

- at least every **three years**;
- when legal or regulatory requirements change; or
- when school experience indicates the need for amendment.

Amendments must be approved through the school's policy governance process.

## 26. Approval

Approved by: [GOVERNING BOARD / PRINCIPAL]

## 27. Acknowledgment by Parent/Guardian and Learner

We acknowledge that we have read and understood the Learner Code of Conduct of Grace Academy High School and agree to support and comply with it.

Signatory	Name	Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian	Full Name	[SIGNATURE]	[DATE]
Learner	Full Name	[SIGNATURE]	[DATE]
School Representative	Full Name	[SIGNATURE]	[DATE]