



ALBERTON MATRIC PROJECT

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CODE OF CONDUCT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Code of Conduct has been created in accordance with the Schools Act 84 of 1996, as amended.

At Alberton Matric Project/Part Time Study Centre (hereafter AMP/PTSC or referred to as "the School") we are committed to enriching our students' emotional, intellectual, social, and physical lives and we acknowledge that the conduct of the students and the values that inform that conduct are critical to the social health of AMP/PTSC. AMP/PTSC is committed to providing quality teaching and learning and practises a system of positive reinforcement to encourage all students to realise their full potential within a healthy, balanced, and safe environment.

The AMP/PTSC Code of Conduct, along with various appendices which expand on certain special conditions (e.g. Drug Policy, Dangerous Objects Policy etc.) and from time to time are developed by the School, outline the ethos and rules regarding a student's behaviour at AMP/PTSC and describe the disciplinary system to be implemented by the School concerning possible transgressions by students, as well as regulatory policies. These documents pertain to all students while they are on AMP/PTSC property, or when they are away from the School and representing AMP/PTSC, or when they are attending School events.

The Code of Conduct defines the standard behaviour expected of and required from all stakeholders. When parents sign their Contract with AMP/PTSC, they sign a clause indicating that they understand that the Code of Conduct is binding on their child and them.

The AMP/PTSC Code of Conduct is informed by the following:

Vision

AMP's vision is to assist students who do not necessarily fit into mainstream schools in South Africa and run the risk of not being able to complete their school career.

Mission

We achieve our vision by making use of experienced management along with passionate educators. We are guided by well-formulated policies and constantly revised management strategies.

Values

We make use of the existing values of the South African Constitution to enhance our own values. Some of the values we implement at AMP include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Respect for yourself
- b. Respect toward others
- c. Commitment
- d. Dedication
- e. Integrity

2. EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHERS

All staff members (educational, administrative and support) are required to maintain the high standards of AMP/PTSC, as well as the ethos and culture of our School community. Teachers are bound by the Code of Conduct of the South African Council of Educators (SACE). This is entrenched in the contract that all staff have with the School.

Teachers at AMP/PTSC undertake to:

- a) be professional in appearance and approach and teach in a friendly, safe, cooperative, and fulfilling learning environment, which is supported by the School community
- b) act in accordance with the vision, mission and ethos of AMP/PTSC and to abide by the School's policies
- c) be punctual and well prepared in their approach to education in the classroom
- d) manage student performance effectively and motivate students to achieve realistic academic and personal achievements
- e) be sensitive to the needs of students and address learning barriers in a professional manner
- f) recognise, encourage, praise, and reward students for their hard work and effort; create a positive and stimulating classroom environment
- g) control discipline correctively and with dignity whenever necessary
- h) become a positive example for students to follow; and
- i) communicate with parents and keep them informed of the progress of students (where applicable).

3. EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS/PERSONS TAKING CARE OF THE STUDENTS AND GUARANTORS (hereafter referred to simply as "parents")

AMP/PTSC strives to have exemplary relations with the parents of students at our School. We acknowledge that parents have expectations of AMP/PTSC and its teachers to provide education of a high standard and we encourage parents to help the School to achieve this goal by observing the practices that follow.

- a) Ensure that their children understand the Code of Conduct and obey the terms thereof.
- b) Support and encourage their children in their involvement in School life.
- c) Ensure that their children attend school regularly, arrive at school on time, and do not leave the premises when they should be attending classes ("bunking").
- d) Understand that parents (and not AMP/PTSC) are primarily responsible for developing a moral, ethical, and disciplinary foundation within which the students should conduct themselves appropriately.
- e) Support the disciplinary structures and procedures of AMP/PTSC and so uphold a constructive educational environment.
- f) Keep the relevant staff informed of any problem areas pertaining to their children that may impact on their children's lives at school. This may include family matters, welfare, health, traumas, and the like.
- g) Encourage their children to adopt a sensible and self-disciplined approach to all matters related to school and their education.
- h) Be aware of the whereabouts of their children and set parameters regarding behaviour, as applicable.

4. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

The students of AMP/PTSC are required to:

- a) conduct themselves in a respectful manner that befits an AMP/PTSC student and shows pride in the School, the staff, and themselves
- b) be respectful, kind, helpful, and courteous to their peers and the staff
- c) exercise honesty, integrity, and self-discipline in all their actions, and in so doing, refrain from dishonesty (including all forms of cheating, plagiarism etc., theft, actions of intolerance and discrimination based on gender, race, religious belief etc.)
- d) strive to achieve their full potential and become the Best Versions of Themselves That They Can Be (this is a catch phrase we regularly use at AMP/PTSC, given that we respect that not all students at AMP/PTSC may have the same abilities and opportunities. This catch phrase echoes our Vision and Mission.)
- e) protect and enhance the reputation and ethos of AMP/PTSC and strive to be good members of the community and citizens of South Africa
- f) accept the Code of Conduct of AMP/PTSC, obey all school rules, follow all applicable school policies, and enhance the School as a place of learning
- g) attend school in appropriate dress and be neat in appearance
- h) ensure that all school equipment and property, as well as the property of others, are treated with respect
- i) be accountable for their actions, respect fellow students, refrain from endangering the lives of themselves and others, respect the right of all to an effective and fulfilled education, as well as have respect towards authority in the school environment
- j) complete all work set timeously and to the best of their abilities
- k) abstain from any behaviour that will bring the name of AMP/PTSC into disrepute
- l) be punctual and follow the timekeeping practices of their school
- m) accept appropriate disciplinary action taken against them as being both necessary and corrective
- n) establish a positive attitude towards the opportunity to learn and be diligent in their efforts to learn
- o) keep the environment clean and have pride in their School.

5. RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

All students are entitled to the rights that follow.

- a) The right to be taught in a clean, safe, organised, and supportive environment.
- b) The right to be educated in an atmosphere that is favourable to learning and free from any interferences by other students.
- c) The right to resources that enhance effective learning within the educational environment of AMP/PTSC.
- d) The right to be taught in a disciplined environment.
- e) The right to experience a system of discipline that is impartial and coherent.
- f) The right to have their opinions heard in an orderly manner within the context of the School structures.
- g) The right to be protected from conflict, cruelty, exploitation, and neglect.

- h) The right to be treated with kindness, courtesy, equal respect and dignity regardless of gender, religion or belief system, culture, sexuality, ability, heritage, or ethnicity.
- i) The right to experience an educational environment that is free from prejudice.
- j) The right to lay a grievance, verbally and/or in writing and lodge such with the Director, the Principal or any teacher.
- k) The right to learn to the best of their ability within their school environment.

6. AMP/PTSC RULES AS SET OUT IN THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

These rules set out the conduct that is duly expected of students and should be read in conjunction with the expected behaviour from students (above) and regulatory policies.

Maintaining discipline and ensuring respectful behaviour is an integral component of each teacher's role. The onus lies with the School's Management Team and/or teachers to apply the School Rules in an effective and equitable manner in the interests of the welfare of the AMP/PTSC students.

The guidelines that follow, which are not exhaustive, apply to all students of AMP/PTSC and are recorded to assist students, staff, and parents in maintaining the ethos and culture of our School community. Students are expected to be conversant with these rules and are required to abide by them. Changes to the rules may be made at the discretion of AMP/PTSC. Students and parents will be notified of any changes made.

6.1 SAFETY AND SECURITY (THESE RULES ARE FURTHER EXPANDED ON IN THE DANGEROUS OBJECTS POLICY AND THE DRUG POLICY)

AMP/PTSC acknowledges that the safety and security of all staff, students and property of the School is of utmost importance.

No weapons are allowed on to the property, save for educational purposes as approved by the Director, and then only when appropriate arrangements for storage have been made.

No staff member or student may commit any act that could threaten the safety and security of a fellow staff member or student or endanger the security of the School's property.

AMP/PTSC has a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy which may be viewed by stakeholders. This policy is audited on an annual basis by an external company specialising in Health and Safety audits.

6.2 BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION

AMP/PTSC has a strict zero tolerance policy to bullying and discrimination of any form.

Any form of degrading practice, verbal or physical bullying, discrimination (against gender, race, belief system etc.) will be dealt with in the strictest manner, according to this Code of Conduct.

6.3 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

All students are to arrive at School at least ten minutes before the official starting time of their first class, as outlined in the official and current AMP/PTSC timetable.

Any student who arrives after the start of their first class, is deemed LATE. Such lateness is recorded. The School understands that unpredictable traffic congestion or public transport systems occasionally may be a problem and asks that the School be notified in that event. However, where patterns of late-coming are noted, the student will have to account for these patterns to a designated staff member and their parents will be alerted.

Students must be present at all lessons for which they have registered. Absence from School, or any lesson or activity while at School, without permission, is unacceptable and is recorded as bunking. Patterns of bunking are reported to the parents.

In the event of absence, the School should be notified as soon as possible but before 08h00 on the day of the absence and a letter/email in which the reason for the absence is stated. This must be sent to the Attendance Controller at attendance.amp@outlook.com.

AMP/PTSC reserves the right to insist on a certificate from a qualified medical practitioner, should absence be owing to illness. Such a certificate will be required should a student miss an examination or a School Based Assessment (SBA) task/test.

Should an ill student need to be fetched by a parent or caregiver, they will be required to obtain an Early Leaving Slip signed by the Principal and/or designated staff members in order to leave school property.

Parents are requested to notify the School if a student has an infectious illness or has been involved in a serious accident. In these circumstances, the student will only be allowed to return to school on receipt of a certificate authorising this return from a registered medical practitioner. Should the student fail to produce a written note from a registered medical practitioner, they will be given 0 (zero) for the respective examination, with no extended opportunity to take the test/task.

Absence from School on the account of holiday arrangements is discouraged.

Teachers are required to keep an accurate register of attendance and keep all copies of communication from parents or guardians regarding absence from lessons.

Regular bunking or absence from school without a valid reason will be treated as follows:

- 10 days: students and parents will be issued with a Final Written Notice regarding deregistration.
- 20 days: student will be deregistered, according to the policy framed by the GDE. (Parents are liable for school fees up and until the time AMP/PTSC deregisters the student, whether or not the student has attended school. Please note these contractual obligations in the contract signed on registration.)

6.4 DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE

At AMP/PTSC we believe that students should be free to express themselves and should not be limited to a certain uniform code. However, we expect our students to present themselves dressed comfortably, but within acceptable social norms.

There is no regulation on hair styles, beards, application of make-up, jewellery accessories, piercings, and tattoos.

However, at no time should the dress or accessories worn by a student be offensive or discriminatory.

During assessments and examinations, students may not wear any head coverings such as, but not limited to hoodies, beanies, do rags, scarves, hats etc. Where such head coverings are required by belief systems of the student, AMP/PTSC staff members reserve the right to check such head coverings (for the presence of crib notes etc.) in a discrete manner, in keeping with the codes of belief system of the student.

6.5 VALUABLES, CELL PHONES, AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

AMP/PTSC requires students, at times, to make use of electronic devices in the business of teaching. However, AMP/PTSC takes no responsibility and accepts no liability for the loss or theft of cell phones, devices, sums of money, or any valuables at the School or while used on

school activities, outings, or excursions. This includes those periods when cell phones or valuables are held in confiscation, as a result of a failure to follow the regulatory policies of the School.

AMP/PTSC will not entertain any Public Liability claim except in the event of proven gross negligence.

Valuables should not be brought to school unless absolutely necessary. If valuables or large sums of money are brought to school, they must be handed in at the Administration Office on arrival at school. Students should not leave valuables or money in their bags or their classrooms, whether unattended or not.

AMP/PTSC does provide each classroom/study area with lockers. Where applicable, lockers are locked with a secure padlock. Only staff members have the keys to these communal lockers. Where valuable items (iPads, cell phones, laptops, and the like) are stored in a locker, they remain the responsibility of the student. Security settings on the devices should be set to allow for tracking and disabling.

While AMP/PTSC acknowledges its responsibility to teach correct cell phone and device etiquette, it is incumbent on the students to understand and exercise their responsibilities in this regard.

Cell phones may not be used for communication purposes during lesson and assessment times for any reason. All cell phones and devices must be completely out of sight and set to silent during any learning or other school activity, unless being used with the knowledge of the teacher for a specific classroom-based task.

Where cell phones are used in breach of this rule, a prescribed detention period will be set as a punishment. A further breach will result in the confiscation of the cell phone for a period of a day (first offence), a week (second offence), or a month (further offences). During the period of confiscation, the student will not be allowed to bring a cell phone on to the property.

Students and parents are reminded that it is illegal to use cell phones and digital devices to record other people (staff, students) at school without their knowledge and express permission. Such recordings, if made, will be deemed to be illegal and may not be used on social media or for any other reason, and should be deleted immediately. The person/s recorded without their express permission have the right to prosecute the person/s recording them, at their discretion and according to the law.

6.6 OUT OF BOUNDS AREAS

Different areas are considered out of bounds at AMP/PTSC.

These areas are out of bounds to all AMP/PTSC students:

- a) Staff Workroom, unless with the permission of a member of staff AND unless accompanied by a staff member
- b) all offices (administration, psychologist's office and the therapy centre, and Principal's office) unless accompanied by a member of staff
- c) the area at the rear of the school's ground floor which is used for storage
- d) all electricity distribution boards
- e) the strong room and safe at ALL times
- f) the area in the parking lot where teachers' cars are parked

6.7 EXAMINATION AND TEST PROCEDURES

Dishonesty in all forms is forbidden and will not be tolerated by AMP/PTSC.

We believe that in not dealing with various forms of dishonesty in the strictest terms, we are passively excusing or even endorsing this behaviour. This ultimately erodes the legitimacy of the School in the eyes of all stakeholders and the public. Dishonesty in any form is an infringement of the rights of others at the School and it undermines core AMP Value of Integrity.

Academic dishonesty

Any dishonest action will result in

- the award of zero (0) for the examination, test or task
- further disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures.

Students and parents are reminded that receiving zeroes for formal assessments (School Based Assessment Tasks/Tests and all examinations) may impact on the student's promotion to the following grade, as the School is bound by the rules pertaining to marks for assessments, as stipulated by the Department of Basic Education.

In establishing the rules for acts of academic dishonesty, AMP/PTSC has looked to the Instructions for Candidates, as published and regularly amended by the GDE in their Standard Operating Procedures of assessments. These rules include:

- a) For the purposes of assessment, once students have entered an examination or test venue, they may not communicate with other students in any way.
- b) Students may not eat during an examination or test. Water is allowed in a see-through, label-less bottle (but not for Grade 12 examinations throughout the year).
- c) Any materials (notes, textbooks, past papers, and the like) that could aid the student in any way during the writing of the test or examination are strictly prohibited from the student's immediate vicinity and must be handed to the invigilator/teacher prior to the examination or test or stored in an acknowledged designated area in the examination or test venue.
- d) Students may not have any electronic devices, including cell phones, tablets, and smartwatches with them in an examination or test, unless so specified as a requirement for the examination. All electronic devices must be handed to the invigilator prior to the examination or test.
- e) Students are not allowed to borrow stationery or equipment during the examination or test and all stationery must be placed in a clear plastic folder or packet during examinations.
- f) Students who communicate with other students during an assessment, for any reason, are deemed to be engaged in dishonest acts and will be treated accordingly.
- g) During assessments and examinations, students may not wear any head coverings such as, but not limited to hoodies, beanies, do rags, scarves, hats etc. Where such head coverings are required by belief systems of the student, AMP/PTSC staff members reserve the right to check such head coverings (for the presence of crib notes etc.) in a discrete manner, in keeping with the codes of belief system of the student. Students may not have coverings such as blankets over their laps.
- h) Students breaking these basic rules will be subjected to disciplinary measures.
- i) Any teacher or staff member who assists or tries to assist a student in a dishonest manner which gives the student an advantage, will be dealt with by Management accordingly.

7. DESCRIPTION OF DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES AND DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

7.1 INFORMAL (LESSER) OFFENCES

These offences will normally not lead to immediate suspension or expulsion but may be punished by written warnings, detention, community service, and other punishments and rehabilitative measures deemed appropriate by the AMP/PTSC Senior Management Team.

Repeated infringements or transgressions may lead to suspension or expulsion from the School.

These offences include:

- a) insolence or a lack of cooperation and demonstration of respect to any staff member
- b) failure to produce work of an acceptable standard in class or for homework, not due to student ability, but rather due to their negligence and a lack of application
- c) trespassing in those parts of AMP/PTSC that are declared out of bounds
- d) failure to present a note from the parent on the day following an absence from school, including a doctor's note where applicable
- e) foul or inappropriate language directed at another person or in the company of other persons
- f) repeated late arrival for lessons
- g) littering
- h) playing ball games in classrooms or areas that are not designated for these games
- i) eating or drinking in class, unless with the permission of a member of staff
- j) behaviour anywhere in the School or its environs that obstructs others from learning
- k) absence without permission from lessons, assemblies, or other timetabled events

7.2 FORMAL (SERIOUS) OFFENCES

Formal disciplinary offences are those that are considered serious and may be viewed singularly or in combination. These offences could lead to immediate suspension or expulsion but may be punished by written warnings, detention, and other punishments and rehabilitative measures deemed appropriate by the Director and/or Principal.

These offences include:

- a) sexual harassment in any form, sexual activity at school, sexual abuse and or sexual violence
- b) any form of hate speech and/or discriminatory use of language to refer to a student or adult – this may include but is not limited to racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, ageism, discrimination against a belief system, religion, nationality, or culture
- c) theft, including unauthorised borrowing, or possession of stolen property
- d) fraud or dishonest behaviour of any sort
- e) academic dishonesty, such as cheating in exams, tests, formal assessment tasks, the unauthorised possession and/or dissemination of test papers or examination papers prior to the writing of tests or examinations (be it in hard copy or digital format), and plagiarism
- f) possession, threat of use, or the actual use of a dangerous weapon/object
- g) possession of any item that would cause harm
- h) possession of any form of pornographic or undesirable material and/or accessing or attempting to access inappropriate material through a computer, cell phone, or device

- i) possession, use, transmission, or visible evidence of the use of narcotic or unauthorised drugs
- j) smoking or vaping on the premises; or the possession of cigarettes, tobacco, devices used for consuming tobacco or nicotine (such as, but not confined to, electronic cigarettes and vaping, whether containing nicotine or not), matches, or lighters at any time on school premises
- k) the use of alcohol on the premises of AMP/PTSC and in public places such as the park and shopping centre
- l) immoral behaviour or profanity
- m) photographing, filming, recording, or being in the possession of any material that is offensive or invasive of another person's privacy
- n) posting, or intending to post, demeaning or discriminatory or illegal material relating to examination and test papers on any form of social media
- o) vandalism or the destroying or the defacing of school property (including the use of graffiti) or the property of others
- p) disrespect, physical abuse, objectionable behaviour, and verbal abuse directed at school employees or students, including victimisation, bullying or intimidation - whether physical, verbal, or on social media
- q) truancy/bunking or absence from school during school hours without the permission of the staff
- r) driving a motor vehicle in the communal parking area without a licence
- s) conduct that endangers the maintenance of a proper standard of moral conduct, discipline, or social wellbeing at AMP/PTSC
- t) bringing or threatening to bring the reputation of AMP/PTSC into disrepute
- u) repeated violations of offences considered 'informal or lesser offences' by AMP/PTSC
- v) any behaviour that would constitute a crime

8. INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

AMP/PTSC supports a consistent and fair approach to discipline and the application of corrective and appropriate disciplinary measures where necessary. Although discipline is intended to rectify inappropriate behaviour, recognition and reward is acknowledged as first resort for sustained acceptable behaviour and achieving potential.

Punishment that is fair, appropriate, immediate, and consistent will be carried out in the context of this approach.

The disciplinary stance taken by AMP/PTSC is intended to indicate fundamental values and principles by which students are expected to conduct themselves. This is a framework whereby corrective action and discipline can be executed by AMP/PTSC effectively and punishment that is fair, appropriate, immediate, and consistent will be carried out in the context of this approach.

Should the Code of Conduct and its regulatory policies not be upheld by a student, corrective action will be instituted by the Director, Principal and/or the teachers.

Corrective action may or may not include the use of formal disciplinary procedures, such formal steps being used to prevent further instances of unacceptable behaviour or to restore the teacher/student relationship. Teachers are entitled to administer actions that they believe are appropriate and fair within the context of the occurrence.

Discipline is intended not only to correct inappropriate behaviour, but also to create a safe and meaningful learning environment for all.

Students and parents accept that punishment implemented in terms of the Disciplinary Procedure is legitimate, impartial, absolute, binding, and is a consequence of the breach of Code of Conduct and its regulatory policies.

All participants involved are urged to refrain from bias, interpersonal difficulties, abuse of power, or dislike that may compromise the authority of the Disciplinary Policy, due process, fairness and equity.

Violations that are not considered serious, or those that do not require formal disciplinary action to be enforced, can be dealt with by the teacher, without the consent of the Principal. Informal disciplinary action is not generally recorded on the student's record but may still require communication with the parents. Where a regular pattern of infringement is observed, the behaviour will be recorded.

9. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

It is impossible for this Code of Conduct to list every possible type of rule infringement or misconduct by students. This code therefore only sets out the broader categories of infringement, and the norms for applying fair disciplinary measures at AMP/PTSC.

Various forms of informal and formal disciplinary measures may be initiated by the student's responsible teacher or by AMP/PTSC authorities.

AMP/PTSC will be entitled to apply corrective action and/or disciplinary measures that it believes are appropriate in the circumstances; within the guidelines provided in this code of conduct.

The judgement and discretion of staff to apply disciplinary measures will therefore not be rigidly restricted by the code of conduct but will rather be guided by the circumstances of each case and the various measures described herein. The severity of action taken by AMP/PTSC will depend on the circumstances, the seriousness of an infringement, the interests of fellow students, AMP/PTSC as an independent and private educational institution and its employees, the interests of the offending student, and any other mitigating or aggravating factors being of relevance.

For this reason, the guidelines enclosed seek to promote and assure consistency, but do not remove the necessary discretion of AMP/PTSC authorities to apply a lesser or more severe penalty should circumstances so dictate.

Disciplinary measures applied in response to student misconduct will therefore require that AMP/PTSC staff involved exercise their own judgement in deciding on the appropriate and fair action to be taken.

Disciplinary action that may be applied by AMP/PTSC, in order of severity, includes the actions that follow.

9.1 INFORMAL MEASURES

Infringements that are not considered serious, or do not require formal disciplinary action in the opinion of the student's responsible teacher, can be dealt with directly by the teacher. These are not generally recorded on the student's record but may require communication with the student's parents by the teacher involved.

These actions include:

- a) counselling by a staff member
- b) emails to parents

- c) verbal reprimands
- d) verbal warnings
- e) class demerits and detention
- f) temporary and short-term suspension from an activity during the period in which the infringement occurred – a form of time out
- g) community service and/or a work party within the school property
- h) referral to the Deputy Principal or Principal

9.2 FORMAL INVESTIGATION

When an infringement occurs that appears to require formal disciplinary action, the teacher concerned (or another complainant such as a parent) will initiate the disciplinary process by reporting the incident to a member of the Senior Management Team, or by completing a letter of complaint.

AMP/PTSC prefers such complaints to be in the form of written incident reports. AMP/PTSC will not respond to anonymous letters and complaints.

A report or complaint may be supplemented by any additional information or statements to clarify or detail adequately the facts surrounding the alleged infringement.

The student's responsible teacher, and a member of the Management Team if required, should investigate the reported infringement or the letter of complaint received, to decide upon appropriate corrective measures. This investigation generally takes the form of an informal inquiry, and wherever possible includes an opportunity for the student to state their case in response to the complaint.

9.3 FORMAL MEASURES

Formal disciplinary actions are those that are considered serious and may be applied in any combination thereof. These actions include:

- a) recorded written warning placed on the student's file
- b) contact made with parents, along with a scheduled interview/meeting, after an investigation by AMP/PTSC
- c) removal of privileges
- d) community service/work party on the school property or outside of it when in agreement with the parents (where parents do not agree, the offending student will follow the work party silently and observe their actions)
- e) internal suspension from selected activities
- f) external suspension, where the student is excluded from attending School, pending a formal disciplinary hearing
- g) disciplinary inquiry, meeting or disciplinary hearing
- h) expulsion as a last resort in the event of serious violation or repeated violations. This sanction will be implemented as a result of a disciplinary hearing, unless that hearing is declined by the parents or in the case of students over the age of 18.

Discipline must, wherever feasible, be applied progressively. Informal action for minor transgressions is generally applied at teacher level, without a formal investigation being necessary. Repeated minor offences or similar or related offences will result in progressively more severe and formal action being taken, particularly where a clear behavioural pattern or trend is indicated by the student's continued misconduct. Notwithstanding the principle of

progressive discipline, a serious first offence may justify a formal and severe penalty and mitigate against the imposition of a lesser form of action.

10. GUIDELINES FOR SANCTIONS

10.1 LEVEL 1

These involve day-to-day discipline issues and lesser offences that are dealt with by teachers. Warnings are issued by a member of the Senior Management Team.

Repetition of Level 1 offences may be viewed as Level 2 offences.

Examples – this list is NOT exhaustive: Littering; lack of punctuality; excessive noise; eating or drinking without permission; class disruption; work not done or unacceptable work; failure to bring or return books or equipment; all informal or lesser offences as listed in the Code of Conduct.

Sanction – any or all of the following: Warning – one day to correct then escalated to Level 2 offences; detention; service to the school; additional written work; two hours community service at a non-profit organisation approved of by the school counsellor.

10.2 LEVEL 2

These are handled by Grade Managers, the Deputy Principal or the Principal. A record of offences and punishments will be kept. Repeated offences are referred to the Principal.

Repetition of Level 2 offences may be viewed as Level 3 offences.

Examples – this list is NOT exhaustive: Repeat of Level 1 offences; deliberate unruly behaviour; insolence or a lack of respect for teacher, students and property; discourtesy; deliberate disobedience; excessive class disruption; abuse of property; swearing; graffiti on school property; failure to complete punishments under Level 1 sanctions; failure to attend compulsory events; disregard for out of bounds areas; poor behaviour in public;

Sanction – any or all of the following: Detention; parent interview; appropriate written work; service to the school; suspension from activities, outings and/or excursions including social events such as the Matric Dance; counselling by a registered therapist; 2 to 4 hours community service at a non-profit organisation approved by the school; written Letter of Warning; Final Letter of Warning.

10.3 LEVEL 3

These are handled by the Deputy Principal or Principal, who should keep a record of offences and punishments and any correspondence with parents on the student's file, and may involve the Principal at any point in the procedure.

Examples – this list is NOT exhaustive: Frequent or repeat of Level 1 and 2 offences; failure to complete punishments under Level 2 sanctions; all Serious Offences as listed in the Code of Conduct.

Sanction – any or all of the following: Letter to parent; interview with parent; a combination of sanctions under Level 2; supervised isolation; internal suspension; 4 to 8 hours community service at a non-profit organisation approved by the school; disciplinary meeting or hearing; external suspension; expulsion; criminal charges

11. FORMAL DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

If, after investigation, the infringement is confirmed and considered to be of a nature that does not require severe action, the responsible teacher or member of the Senior Management Team may counsel the student and issue an appropriate verbal or written warning to the student concerned.

11.1 LETTER OF WARNING

A copy of the warning issued should be sent to the student's parents by the teacher or a member of the Senior Management Team involved in the process.

A disciplinary meeting with the parents or guardians may be necessary to clarify the reasons for formal action being taken, as well as to reinforce the seriousness of the infringement and to highlight the expectations that the misconduct will not be repeated.

11.2 FINAL WRITTEN WARNING

A Final Written Warning is generally only imposed by the Principal or Director if the student's misconduct is

- (a) very serious but
- (b) does not warrant suspension or a hearing and expulsion, or if
- (c) misconduct occurs which is similar to a previous infringement for which a written warning has already been issued to the student by the School.

If a Final Warning has been issued to a student for misconduct, ANY further infringement by the student should be considered as warranting suspension and a disciplinary hearing into the student's behaviour at the School.

11.3 DISCIPLINARY HEARING

When a serious infringement possibly warranting student suspension or expulsion occurs, or in the case of a further alleged infringement by a student with a valid Final Warning on their file, the School will generally be required to conduct a formal Disciplinary Hearing to determine appropriate measures to be taken against the student.

The hearing process is intended properly and transparently to investigate any new allegation(s), to provide an opportunity for the student and/or their parents to challenge the allegations being made, to determine the guilt or innocence of the student, and thereafter, and if applicable, to determine the appropriate disciplinary measure to be taken by AMP/PTSC.

The student may be represented by a member of staff (usually the staff member responsible for counselling) or a fellow student. A request for legal representation will be considered on merit by AMP/PTSC.

Notification of convening of a disciplinary hearing is to be completed by the Principal or Director and must be given to the parents of the student concerned or emailed to the address provided by the parents for school communication.

This notification must provide sufficient information to ensure that the student and their parents are properly informed of the alleged complaint, the seriousness of the allegations, and the School's intention to convene a formal hearing to investigate the infringement.

This notification should take place at least 48 hours before the scheduled date of the hearing. In cases where urgent action is required, the Principal may offer the student and parents an opportunity to accept an earlier date of hearing.

The student may be suspended pending the hearing, taking the seriousness of the alleged misconduct and their continued exposure to others into account. The suspension of the student should be indicated in the notification of the hearing to the parents. The student and their parents must be advised that they are expected to attend the hearing, and that their non-attendance may prejudice their child's case (and indicate a waiver of their rights to respond to the allegations being made), and may even result in the hearing being held in their absence with a decision being made without their involvement.

The student and their parents must be advised of the serious nature of the allegations, and the possibility of severe disciplinary (further suspension or expulsion) action being taken should the

student be found guilty of the allegations made against them. They should be advised to prepare themselves accordingly.

The conducting of the formal disciplinary hearing is an integral part of AMP/PTSC's disciplinary process if serious disciplinary measures are being contemplated against any student.

Expulsion, or extended suspension with a final warning as an alternative to expulsion (if feasible or appropriate), in the absence of a disciplinary hearing being conducted is reserved for exceptional circumstances only.

The hearing should be chaired by a competent and reasonably objective independent Chairperson, who will be responsible for leading and managing the hearing process, and making the two critical and distinct decisions: VERDICT: the guilt or innocence of the student, relative to the allegations made by AMP/PTSC; and only thereafter, if the student is found guilty of the alleged infringement, the second decision as to... PENALTY: the appropriate measure/action to be taken, after due consideration of mitigating and aggravating factors relevant to the matter.

The Chairperson is required to conduct the hearing procedure in a proper manner that conforms to the rules of natural justice. In this regard, the student and their parents:

- a) should be given adequate notice and be properly informed of the allegations being made by AMP/PTSC
- b) should be requested to attend the hearing as representatives for the student, and the hearing is to be timeously conducted
- c) should be presented with all facts and information relating to the allegations being made against the student
- d) should be given the opportunity to question evidence presented by the School, and be entitled to present their own perspective and explain and/or defend their child's actions
- e) are to be treated with dignity and respect throughout the hearing and need to be cautioned by the Chairperson if their behaviour is not dignified or respectful, in which case they may be asked to remove themselves from the hearing
- f) are to be assured of the greatest confidentiality possible
- g) must be formally advised of the outcome of the hearing (i.e. as to both verdict and penalty) by the Chairperson, and the reasons for such decisions
- h) should be offered the right to appeal against any decision made by the Chairperson.

In accordance with the above principles, the parents should be formally advised of the decisions after the completion of the hearing with regard to the two decisions made regarding guilt or innocence, and whether disciplinary action has been imposed. This notification of the outcome, preferably distributed within five (5) school days of the hearing being completed, should include a reminder that the student/parents have the right to appeal against any corrective and disciplinary action decided upon, within a further 5 (five) school days of the outcome being made available to the parents or guardians.

Copies of all disciplinary hearing related documentation must be retained by the School for actioning, recording, and safekeeping purposes.

11.4 APPEAL REVIEW PROCESS

While it is a fundamental right in terms of the 'Rules of Natural Justice' for a student (or their parents) to be provided with an opportunity for appeal against disciplinary measures imposed by AMP/PTSC, law does not dictate or prescribe whether this appeal process should be internal (made to and decided upon by another school authority) or external (i.e. made to a third party in terms of legal process such as referral of the matter to Court for adjudication).

The School believes that an internal appeal review process is more beneficial and fairer for both the parties and provides a further expeditious and less public avenue for the parties to seek to resolve any dispute regarding disciplinary matters, primarily in the educational interests of the student.

Accordingly, the student/parents have the right to appeal against any formal disciplinary action imposed by AMP/PTSC (i.e. against any formal disciplinary action taken by the School or any decisions) as a final process in the School's disciplinary procedure.

The lodging of an appeal against formal disciplinary action, or any decision, only entitles the student to an appeal review.

The right to an appeal review therefore does not entitle the student to a 're-hearing'.

Accordingly, an appeal review does not entail a full reinvestigation or a re-hearing of all the evidence heard at the hearing, and the Reviewer is only required to review the matter, according to the grounds and motivation submitted by the student/parents. The Reviewer is expected to review the findings and any documentation submitted by the respective parties, and to consider any further or new evidence provided by either party.

Owing to the nature of the review process, the student/parents wishing to appeal must be advised to motivate fully their appeal in writing, detailing all the grounds for appeal and providing the Reviewer with any additional or new evidence they wish to submit in support of the appeal. The onus rests with the student/parents to justify an appeal, and the grounds for the appeal must be clearly and comprehensively set out in the appeal request. This will enable the Reviewer to appreciate and properly consider the grounds for the review.

Any request for appeal must be submitted to the Principal within 5 (five) school days of the decisions having been provided to the student/parents, so as not to delay review proceedings.

The School will be responsible for appointing an appropriate person, or review panel, to conduct an appeal review. It is common practice for an appropriate independent Reviewer to be appointed as the Reviewer, subject to her/him not having been consulted or involved in the matter to be reviewed.

After reviewing the appeal motivation submitted by the student/parent and investigating any aspects of the disciplinary process considered necessary, the Reviewer will make a decision based on their findings, relative to the grounds for appeal submitted by the student/parents. When a final decision has been made by the Reviewer, a written Appeal Review Finding must be provided to the student/parents by the Reviewer, wherever possible within 5 (five) school days. A copy of the Review finding must also be placed on the student's file for recording purposes.

The communication of the Reviewer's appeal decision marks the conclusion of the School's appeal process and is the final step in the School's Disciplinary Procedure. The student/parents will have to resort to external authorities should they wish to pursue an appeal to a further level.

11.5 COLLECTIVE OR GROUP MISCONDUCT

The above-described disciplinary procedure is principally designed to deal with instances of misconduct by individual students.

Alleged misconduct by a group of students, where the infringement(s) are of a similar nature or with a related intent, is considered as being 'collective misconduct'.

Generally, collective misconduct is more effectively dealt with on a collective basis. An informal investigation into the alleged group misconduct is generally conducted initially by the teacher or a member of the Senior Management Team. This investigation will normally include

a discussion with the students involved, to attempt to get to the facts of the matter and to get the students' perspective before deciding on the best way forward.

Dependent upon the outcome of this initial investigation, informal or formal disciplinary action may be considered appropriate by the responsible school official for the individual students involved.

Should the alleged infringement be considered to be of a serious nature, a single disciplinary hearing procedure may be conducted with all the students concerned, with their parents present. The same procedures as provided for in section five above (Disciplinary Hearing) are generally also followed in a collective disciplinary hearing.

Despite the use of a collective hearing procedure, individual students must still be provided with the opportunity of demonstrating that their own circumstances may be different from that of the group, or other students, and for showing why they should be treated differently.

The School reserves its right to exercise its option to conduct individual or collective hearing procedures, the disclosure of its reasons for this decision also to be at its sole discretion.

The same provisions set out regarding appeal review procedures will apply in the case of collective disciplinary matters.

The School reserves its right to initiate a separate or collective/group appeal review process, to deal with any appeals lodged by any students affected

11.6 SUSPENSION

There are three forms of suspension.

a) INTERNAL SUSPENSION

This is imposed as a sanction and does not involve the student's absence from class or other activities but does require that the student report to a designated venue before school, at breaks, and after school. It may also involve periods of detention and/or work party duties.

b) SUSPENSION PENDING A HEARING OR FORMAL INQUIRY

Suspension of the student from all school activities pending the conducting of a formal hearing (i.e. if expulsion is being considered) should ordinarily not be of a duration that would prejudice the educational rights of the student. The disciplinary hearing should therefore be conducted as soon as possible after the suspension of the student takes effect. It should also be clearly indicated to the student/parents that this suspension is not a form of punishment, and is a practical arrangement to remove the student, temporarily and in the best interests of the School, the student, and other students.

c) SUSPENSION FROM ALL SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

In exceptional cases, extended suspension from class and/or from school activities may be acceptable as a severe form of punishment, and as an alternative to expulsion of a student by AMP/PTSC.

Such a suspension is also conditional upon a final warning also being imposed in conjunction with the suspension. This can only be imposed once a disciplinary hearing has been conducted, and the student has been found guilty of serious misconduct. In addition, an extended period of suspension should not be of such duration as to jeopardise the educational interests of the student.

11.7 EXPULSION

If after the disciplinary process, it is decided that the student will not be expelled, a student support meeting will be arranged to discuss any supports, modification or adjustments that would need to take place to reduce the likelihood of the behaviour reoccurring.

External counselling or a psychologist may be recommended and this would conclude the disciplinary hearing.

The external counselling will be to the cost of the parent and not the School.

If after the disciplinary process, expulsion is the penalty, parents will be asked to remove the student either immediately and without notice, or at a specified date that is shorter than a full term, with written notice.

The School will not be required to give the parents written notice of a full term under these circumstances.

In certain instances, and at the discretion of the School, any prepaid fees may be refunded to the parents within thirty (30) calendar days.

11.8 DEREGISTRATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO EXPULSION

If after the disciplinary process, expulsion is the penalty, AMP/PTSC may offer an alternative to expulsion to the student/parents.

This alternative is considered in the case of students currently in Grade 12.

The alternative is a mutual agreement to deregister the student and handing over the student to the District Offices of the Department of Basic Education, for their officials to find an alternative venue at which the student may complete their Grade 12.

In certain instances, and at the discretion of the School, any prepaid fees may be refunded to the parents within thirty (30) calendar days.

12. CRIMINAL MISCONDUCT AT SCHOOL

Should a student admit to, be suspected of, or be found guilty of a criminal offence (such a theft of a cell phone or school property, using or dealing in drugs on the premises, for example) at school or on the School premises, the School will conduct the appropriate disciplinary procedures as a matter of urgency.

The disciplinary procedures applied by the School are not directly dependent upon any possible or later criminal proceedings that may be initiated by the State or other parties against the student.

The procedures that may be applicable in accordance with criminal law have no direct bearing upon the School/student relationship.

The School is not obliged to wait until criminal/court proceedings have run their course before initiating any disciplinary steps against an offending student.

The imposition of disciplinary measures against a student after investigation by the School, such as expulsion for serious misconduct, will not be nullified or viewed as 'double punishment' should the student also be sentenced, if found guilty by a court of law.

13. FEES AND SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, DEREGISTRATION

Parents are reminded of the commercial contract they have signed with AMP/PTSC.

Such contract indicates that fees for the current year are due on registration of the student. However, AMP/PTSC allows for a payment in equal regular instalments over an agreed upon number of months, to conclude before or on 30 September of the current school year.

As such, all fees are due up and until the date that AMP/PTSC terminates the student's registration with the School, either by expulsion or deregistration. All fees are due, as per contract, whether or not a student is suspended for a protracted time.

14. FINAL NOTE ON THE AMP/PTSC CODE OF CONDUCT

The South African Schools Act of 1996 recognises two categories of schools, namely public schools and independent schools. Public schools are run by the national government represented by the Minister for Education, provincial government represented by the MEC for Education and the parents of the learners attending the school, as well as members of the community in which the school is located through the school governing body. However, independent/private schools are privately governed.

In an independent school, the parents of students or adult students themselves generally conclude a contract with the school and these contracts govern the relationship between the parents, the students and the school, including admission and exclusion.

In terms of non-subsidised independent schools, the right to cancel parent contracts is the school's prerogative and the school should importantly not deviate from giving the same notice period to parents as the school gives the parents, when cancelling the contract.

If there are a number of public schools in the area, the parents could not raise the objection that the children will be unfairly prevented from accessing education should they be excluded from the school. Finally, the Courts have confirmed that non-subsidised independent schools do not have a duty to provide a basic education as stipulated by s29(1)(a) of the Constitution. Effectively, parents agree to the terms and conditions of the contract that they sign with the school and should take full cognisance of the provisions thereof.

Exclusions from an independent school fall into the two broad areas of:

Exclusion on grounds of contravention of the rules contained in the school's Code of Conduct.

Exclusion on the grounds that the contract between the parents and the school has been broken, usually because the parents have failed to pay fees.

Exclusion for contravening school rules: An independent school has the right to exclude learners who are in contravention of the rules as long as the school adheres to the principle of procedurally fair practice and conduct, and the rights of the child have been taken into consideration.

This existing policy was reviewed in July 2023, after serious misconduct and fraud by the previous owner made it necessary for the school to ensure that consequences for dishonest behaviour was firmly entrenched in the Code of Conduct.

Helen de Wet
Principal and Director

Beth de Wet
(Deputy Principal and for SMT)

15 July 2023

AMRP