

# Learner Code of Conduct

Harding Christian Academy (HCA)  
Website and General Use

<b>Document owner</b>	Principal / School Management Team
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"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

## 1. Introduction and purpose

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from learners at HCA. It exists to protect the rights and safety of learners and staff, to keep teaching and learning effective, and to help learners grow in character.

The school uses a positive, restorative approach to discipline wherever possible: we correct, teach, reconcile and restore. Consequences still exist, but they are applied fairly and with a view to growth.

## 2. Scope

- Applies on school premises, during school transport, on excursions, at school events, and when a learner represents the school.
- Applies to off-campus behaviour (including online behaviour) where it substantially impacts the school environment, learner safety or the school's reputation.

## 3. Rights and responsibilities

HCA upholds learner dignity and lawful rights. Learners also carry responsibilities.

- **Learner rights:** to learn in a safe environment; to be treated fairly; to be protected from bullying and discrimination; to be heard in disciplinary processes.
- **Learner responsibilities:** to obey lawful instructions; to respect others; to care for property; to attend and participate; to be honest.
- **Parent/guardian responsibilities:** to support the Code of Conduct, reinforce it at home, and partner with the school when concerns arise.

## 4. Daily routines and safety rules

School hours: 08h00 to 14h00 (Monday to Friday); learners may be received from 07h30.

For safety, learners must be handed to a staff member on arrival and collected promptly. The school must be told in advance if someone else will collect a learner.

- Arrivals: no learner may be left at the gate unattended.
- Departures: learners may not leave the premises without permission.
- Healthy food: chips and sweets are not permitted during the school day.
- Toys: no toys are to be brought to school unless specifically approved.
- Illness: learners with contagious infections must stay home until cleared.

## 5. Core values (what we are aiming at)

- Respect and courtesy
- Honesty and integrity
- Diligence and responsibility
- Kindness and self-control
- Peace-making and reconciliation

## 6. General behaviour rules

These rules apply to all learners unless a specific arrangement has been approved by the Principal.

- **Attendance:** be on time and attend regularly. Absence must be explained in writing by a parent/guardian.
- **Uniform and appearance:** wear the prescribed uniform neatly; grooming must be neat and not disruptive or unsafe.
- **Respect:** no disrespectful, rude, discriminatory or humiliating language or behaviour.
- **Learning:** no disruption of lessons; complete work honestly; cheating and plagiarism are serious offences.
- **Property:** no vandalism, theft or unauthorised borrowing; intentional damage must be paid for.
- **Safety:** fighting, threats and intimidation are prohibited; follow safety rules and stay within bounds.
- **Bullying:** any bullying (physical, verbal, social, sexual or cyber) is prohibited.
- **Substances:** no tobacco/vapes, alcohol, illegal drugs or misuse of medication.
- **Weapons:** no weapons or dangerous objects.
- **Devices:** cell phones and electronic devices are not permitted during the school day unless specifically authorised; if authorised, the device is handed in to the office and collected afterwards.
- **Public conduct:** when in uniform or identifiable as an HCA learner, behaviour must honour the school and the Christian witness of the learner.

## 7. Anti-bullying commitments

Bullying harms the dignity and safety of learners and is incompatible with Christian character. The school responds promptly and consistently.

- Learners must report bullying to a staff member as soon as possible.
- The school will support the target of bullying and take steps to prevent repeat harm.
- Consequences may include restorative meetings, loss of privileges, detention, suspension, and in serious cases a formal hearing.

## 8. Positive discipline and support (how correction works)

- Correction aims to teach better choices, not simply to punish.
- Staff may use verbal correction, reflection tasks, restitution, supervised time-out, loss of privileges, detentions, and referral for counselling/support.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited. Staff will not use humiliating or degrading treatment.

## 9. Levels of misconduct and responses (summary)

Level	Examples	Typical response
Level 1 (minor)	Talking in class, late homework, minor uniform issues, minor disrespect	Teacher correction, warning, reflection task, recorded note; parent informed if repeated
Level 2 (moderate)	Repeated Level 1, deliberate disruption, dishonesty, minor bullying, damaging property	Grade Head / Principal review, parent meeting, detention, restitution, written warning
Level 3 (serious)	Theft, significant bullying, assault, serious defiance, vandalism, harassment, cheating in assessments	Formal disciplinary hearing, suspension may be considered, behaviour contract
Level 4 (critical)	Weapons, drugs, serious violence, sexual misconduct, serious threats	Immediate safety response, possible SAPS/child protection reporting, Board hearing, expulsion may be considered

## 10. Disciplinary procedure and due process

For serious misconduct, HCA follows a fair process. This includes informing the learner and parents of the allegation, giving an opportunity to respond, and considering evidence before deciding on a consequence.

- Informal management is used for minor issues (Levels 1-2).
- A disciplinary hearing may be convened for Level 3 and Level 4 matters.
- Parents/guardians receive written notice of a hearing and may attend.
- Decisions and reasons are recorded. Appeals may be submitted in writing to the Board within the time stated in the notice.

## 11. Suspension and expulsion

Suspension may be used as a corrective measure for serious misconduct or as a precautionary measure where safety is at risk, pending investigation.

Expulsion is a last resort. Because HCA is an independent school, expulsion generally functions as termination of enrolment after a fair process and Board decision.

- The school will consider the best interests of the child, the safety of others, and the seriousness of the misconduct.
- Where required by law or where a criminal offence is suspected, the school may involve SAPS and/or child protection services.

## **12. Search, seizure and confiscation (safety)**

Where there is reasonable suspicion that a learner has a prohibited item, staff may require the learner to hand it over and may conduct a limited search consistent with dignity and safety. Searches should, where possible, be conducted with a witness and recorded.

- Prohibited or dangerous items may be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian, or handed to authorities where required.
- Illegal drugs, weapons and serious threats are escalated immediately to the Principal and may be reported to SAPS.

## **13. Complaints, reporting and child protection**

Learners are encouraged to speak up early. Reports will be handled sensitively and promptly. Staff have legal duties to report certain forms of harm to the relevant authorities.

- Report bullying, harassment or abuse to any staff member or the Principal.
- In emergencies, staff will act to protect learners and contact parents/guardians.

## Annexure A: Learner and Parent/Guardian Commitment

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

Learner name	_____	
Grade	_____	
Learner signature	_____	Date: ____/____/____
Parent/guardian name	_____	
Parent/guardian signature	_____	Date: ____/____/____

## Annexure B: Notice of Disciplinary Hearing (template)

To: Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Learner: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

You are hereby notified that a disciplinary hearing will be held as follows:

Date	____/____/____
Time	_____
Venue	_____
Allegation(s)	_____
Chairperson	_____

Signed (Principal/Delegate): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_