



***HeronBridge***  
COLLEGE

# CHARTER

amended January 2010

## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

This Code of Conduct has been developed according to the South African Schools Act, 1996.

It promotes the Mission Statement of the College and works towards a well-balanced, broad education for pupils, a professional environment for teachers and an atmosphere for the extension of generally accepted family principles. It applies to all aspects of school life and incorporates both behavioural goals and disciplinary codes. The code defines the standard behaviour expected of and required from all stakeholders of this institution.

It is accepted that this charter is a dynamic document, requiring frequent deliberation, and possible revision, in order to satisfy always the needs of the College community. To this end, you are invited to submit any suggestions that may be reviewed by the College Head and/or Directors, from time to time.

If all parties adhere to both the spirit and the letter of the code, healthy working relationships will be created between parents, teachers and pupils, these relationships being the essential foundation for the creation of a constructive teaching, learning and growing environment. The disciplinary codes are intended to promote the maintenance of discipline and order at HeronBridge College, hereafter referred to as HBC

The Code of Conduct is to be presented to all parties concerned on first acceptance to HBC. Signing the Admission Document and Indemnity Form for pupils indicates an acceptance of the Code, as does the employment contract for teachers.

## **SECTION 2 – CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct applies to all within the ambit of the College. It promotes the good of pupils, teachers and parents. Regardless of specific age or role, all associated with the College will conduct themselves appropriately at all times to ensure optimum accomplishment.

### **2.1 Code of Conduct – Pupils**

#### **Objectives:**

By attending HBC pupils will endeavour to:

- mature through their adolescent years;
- develop their intellectual, sporting, cultural abilities;
- develop thinking and problem solving skills;
- gain knowledge about the world in which they live;
- improve social and friendship skills;
- explore career opportunities and follow related educational programmes;
- care for others less fortunate than themselves.

#### **Code:**

Pupils are to understand that they each, through their own response to the Code of Conduct and subsequent daily behaviour, either encourage or prevent the attainment of the College's objectives. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that the opportunities presented at HBC are fully utilised. The code thus identifies what behaviour is required and expected. This follows from 2.1.1 – 2.1.3 and in the associated discipline codes in Sections 3, 4, 6.

#### **2.1.1 As regards teachers:**

Pupils will respect the right of teachers to teach, to co-ordinate learning activities and to facilitate the full school programme. Pupils will show respect to teachers by:

- being punctual to class;
- following all teacher instructions;
- being attentive in class;
- applying themselves to the work set;
- not being disruptive in any way;
- not talking in class until invited to do so;
- not moving from desks without permission;

- acquiring permission to participate in lessons;
- doing tasks, as set by teachers, to the best of their abilities.

### **2.1.2 As regards other pupils:**

Pupils will respect the rights of others to learn. This will be shown by:

- not distracting other pupils from their tasks;
- giving others opportunities to make contributions in class and in tasks;
- not interrupting others while they contribute;
- respecting others' points of view;
- not ridiculing others.

### **2.1.3 As regards personal application**

- Each pupil will make the most of every opportunity to achieve well in college. This will be accomplished by:
- attending school every term day, unless incapacitated and authorised to stay away from the College by a parent or guardian;
- devoting time and effort to academic studies, as per the timetable and the demands of self-study;
- taking part willingly and enthusiastically in class activities;
- working independently and doing more than the minimum required;
- doing homework and project work as set;
- presenting assignments well and on time;
- preparing well for tests and examinations;
- working neatly;
- showing commitment to academic achievement.

## **2.2 Code of Conduct – Teachers**

### **Objectives:**

Through their acceptance of employment at HBC teachers will commit to:

- provide service to HBC;
- utilise their professional skills for the purpose of educating the pupils;
- contribute holistically to the programme of the College;
- advance their own career opportunities and those of others;
- maintain contact with parents as individuals and as a body;
- provide care in whatever circumstances and for whomever requires it within the College.

**Code:**

While every teacher can expect the respect, support and co-operation of the College, parents and pupils in his or her efforts to create a healthy learning environment inside and outside the classroom, it is important that teachers acknowledge their responsibilities. Teachers at HBC thus undertake to:

- maintain a professional bearing and manner and by so doing set a positive example to the pupils;
- be well prepared;
- be fully conversant with the demands of the syllabi taught;
- be punctual;
- mark and return assignments, tests and examinations within a reasonable period of time;
- praise, encourage and motivate pupils;
- help create a concept of team work or partnership with pupils in the education process;
- help establish and communicate realistic, clear and meaningful goals each year;
- confront pupils who transgress the accepted code, administering punishments when necessary;
- discipline with dignity and follow the principles outlined in the discipline code;
- report serious misconduct to senior executive staff;
- be sensitive to the individual needs and problems of pupils.

Parents of pupils who think a teacher has failed to conform to this code should approach the relevant College Head or Deputy. The College undertakes to treat such approaches sensitively and confidentially in an effort to improve the situation.

## 2.3 Code of Conduct – Parents

### Objectives:

In their association with HBC through their children, parents will undertake to:

- provide their children with the necessities for effective school careers;
- support their children in their studies and various school activities;
- uphold the discipline structures of the College;
- serve on parent committees, as able;
- attend College functions, sport and cultural activities, parent meetings, as able;
- extend their own professional expertise to the College, when required.

### Code:

HeronBridge prides itself on the good relations it enjoys with parents. While parents can expect the College to provide their children with the best possible education according to the resources available to it, parents must also accept certain responsibilities in achieving the goals set. Parents should:

- support teachers in their efforts to teach their children, i.e. monitor homework, check test results, help set goals, regularly consult their diary for teachers' comments;
- communicate with the College Head, Deputies or Grade Tutors timeously regarding areas of concern before they become major issues;
- make suggestions or provide assistance to improve the educational process and environment;
- encourage their children to participate fully in the College's programme;
- endeavour to uphold moral and legal behaviour in their children as regards alcohol, cigarettes, substance abuse and sexual activity;
- be aware at all times of the whereabouts of their children and set parameters as far as time lines, transport arrangements, dress codes and appropriate behaviour is concerned;
- communicate with the parents of their children's friends to verify information and to hereby avoid manipulation.

## **SECTION 3 – DISCIPLINE CODE**

It is every pupil's right to receive an education and while the College will strive to provide the educational opportunities our community has come to expect, it is important that pupils acknowledge their responsibilities in the process.

There are many forms of recognition within the College which reward positive, sustained performance and behaviour. These may take the form of praise, favourable diary or newsletter entries, public announcements, S.R.C. election, colours, councillorship, awards made at formal assemblies, Honours Dinner, Prize Giving or Valediction. These serve as positive rewards to motivate pupils to achieve and to exhibit the behaviour expected at HBC.

Discipline will be exerted in all cases where behaviour is inappropriate and always with positive purpose – to define the error, correct the behaviour and prevent future infringement.

The following sections will define the kinds of behaviour that will not be tolerated. The procedures and punishments that may be expected are outlined. The discipline code applies whenever a pupil may be associated with HBC, not only during school hours. Please note that it is impossible to list every punishable offence that may be committed by a pupil. For this reason the College Head, or staff member delegated by him for the purpose, may take appropriate action on any behaviour deemed an infringement of the principles of the discipline code.

<b>BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>PUNISHMENTS</b>
<p>(i) <u>that disrupts the College's organisation or damages its image</u> e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• persistent lateness to school</li> <li>• failing to fulfil extra-mural commitments</li> <li>• failing to give or return important communications between the College and parents</li> <li>• being out of bounds</li> <li>• defacing or damaging College property</li> <li>• infringing the dress code</li> <li>• selling items at school</li> <li>• littering</li> <li>• any misbehaviour during assemblies</li> <li>• inappropriate behaviour towards a visitor on the College property</li> </ul>	<p>Written impositions and detentions may be given when pupils persistently fail to co-operate in these instances and parents may be contacted via the College Head/Deputy.</p>

<b>BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>PUNISHMENTS</b>
<p>(ii)  <u>that harms a pupil's own educational opportunities</u></p> <p>i.e. generally failing to co-operate with a teacher in the classroom.  e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not doing homework</li> <li>• failing to bring work materials to school</li> <li>• failing to hand in required work</li> <li>• not paying sufficient attention to his/her studies</li> <li>• failing to write cycle tests or examinations without a medical certificate</li> </ul>	<p>It is the subject or class teacher's responsibility to punish behaviour that adversely affects a pupil's own educational opportunities.  Appropriate punishments include written impositions, extra exercises, mark penalties, rewriting tests etc.</p> <p>If a pupil repeatedly fails to co-operate, parents will be advised, and if necessary executive staff will assist with the problem.</p> <p>It must be noted that although this behaviour may only seem to affect the individual pupil, such non co-operation may also undermine the educational tone of the class, thus harming the opportunities of others.</p>
<p>(iii)  <u>that harms the learning opportunities of others</u></p> <p>i.e. through unruly or disruptive behaviour which prevents the teacher from being able to teach the class effectively.  e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• arriving late without a valid excuse</li> <li>• chewing gum, eating or drinking during the lesson</li> <li>• talking or moving around the classroom without permission</li> <li>• unnecessarily interrupting the lesson</li> </ul>	<p>These offences will normally be dealt with by teachers in the first instance but if a pupil is seriously or repeatedly disruptive then with the permission of the College Head/Deputy, a pupil may be removed from class pending an interview with parents.</p>
<p>(iv)  <u>that harms the healthy learning environment of the College</u></p> <p>i.e. the pupil's behaviour is illegal, criminal, anti-social, dangerous, offensive or lowers the educational tone of the College.  e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bullying</li> <li>• dishonesty</li> <li>• fighting</li> <li>• fraudulent actions</li> </ul>	<p>Depending on the nature of the incident, a pupil may be removed from class.</p> <p>Confidential reports may be obtained from the pupil's teachers to view the incident in a broader perspective.</p> <p>An interview with the parents may be arranged to discuss the matter.  Depending on the nature of the report, the pupil's previous</p>

<b>BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>PUNISHMENTS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• possession of and/or distribution of offensive or pornographic material</li> <li>• <b>use of cell phones or cameras by pupils to take and/or distribute inappropriate photographs of themselves or photographs of other pupils</b></li> <li>• possession of or smoking cigarettes or tobacco or being in the company of those infringing this clause</li> <li>• racism</li> <li>• rudeness or insolence</li> <li>• satanism</li> <li>• sexism</li> <li>• swearing</li> <li>• tampering with or damaging other people's property</li> <li>• unseemly or inappropriate physical contact</li> <li>• vandalism</li> <li>• verbal or physical threats</li> <li>• <b>cyberbullying, including inappropriate or unacceptable comments on social network websites and/or cell phones</b></li> <li>• <b>possession of or distribution of offensive material by any electronic means, including cell phones</b></li> <li>• <b>inappropriate use of social network sites, via computers or cell phones, including posting comments about anyone associated with HBC, or the families of HBC</b></li> </ul>	<p>disciplinary record at the College and the seriousness of the offence, the College Head/Deputy/Disciplinary Panel may issue a verbal or written warning to the pupil in the presence of the pupil's parents.</p> <p>Any serious incident and/or repeated incidents of this type of misconduct may result in parents being asked to remove their child from HBC <b>or expulsion.</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• possession of, dealing in or using alcohol or drugs</li> </ul>	<p>These offences will result in formal disciplinary hearings, possible suspension and expulsion procedures.</p> <p>Refer to the specific drug and alcohol policy in Section 4.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>plagiarism</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Plagiarism in any form, in any academic work or exercise, will be deemed most serious. The definition of plagiarism will include any copying and pasting from</b></p>

<b>BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>PUNISHMENTS</b>
	<p><b>electronic media without suitable indication of quoting or referencing. Such offences will result in formal disciplinary hearings, and censures from loss of marks, to the non-submission of work to the IEB or other agencies, to suspension and expulsion.</b></p>

In all disciplinary procedures, HBC will endeavour to be fair, consistent, impartial and will treat the pupils with dignity. Moreover, in cases of serious misconduct (when a disciplinary hearing is necessary) parents will be invited to be present with their children.

# **SECTION 4 – DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

### **Definition**

- 1 Substance abuse is defined for the purpose of this policy as:
  - 1.1 being under the influence of or the unauthorised, excessive or wrongful use of drugs (whether legal or illegal) or alcohol by any member of the College community whenever that person can be associated with the College;
  - 1.2 a positive identification of drug use by test of an agency recognised by the College for the purpose.

### **Policy**

- 2 The College Head and Directors will bear joint responsibility to ensure the property of HeronBridge College remains a drug free zone.
- 3 Suitable education, guidance and monitoring programmes will be conducted at the College.
- 4 Appropriate actions will be taken in cases of infringements of this policy.
- 5 The best interests of the College as a whole will be considered paramount.

### **Application**

- 6 This policy will be applied consistently in all cases.
- 7 A distinction in culpability will be made between instances of those seeking assistance voluntarily and those discovered.
- 8 Anyone associated with the College will be given every assistance should it be requested, regardless of any disciplinary actions taken.
- 9 All assistance given will respect the dignity of those concerned and will be according to generally accepted codes of confidentiality and dignity.

### **Resources**

- 10 The executive staff will be responsible for providing suitable guidance and educational programmes regarding substance abuse on an ongoing basis.
- 11 The Directors will be responsible for providing the College Head with resources required: e.g. skilled monitoring services. Whenever possible, the College Head's requests for assistance in these matters will be acceded to and whatever reasonable support is deemed necessary at any time will be given.

- 12 Parent responsibility will be recognised and emphasised throughout.
- 13 Outside agencies will be contacted for assistance in both educational and monitoring matters.

## **Procedures**

- 14 All instances of substance abuse will be investigated and actions taken consistent with this policy.
- 15 The College Head and staff will be responsible for all necessary investigations. Reference will be made to the Directors and/or SAPS when necessary.
- 16 HeronBridge College reserves the right to:
  - 16.1 exert control at all times, as deemed fit by the College Head and Directors;
  - 16.2 arrange urine and/or other drug tests by an outside agency selected by the College for any persons identified by the College Head/Deputy as possibly being involved (these tests will be at the expense of the College if negative, for the parents' account if positive in the case of pupils);
  - 16.3 use agencies and/or staff teams to monitor persons, belongings, grounds at any time, to identify any possession or usage of drugs or alcohol;
  - 16.4 establish and insist upon adherence to contracts of behaviour to regulate future conduct.
- 17 In cases of possession, usage, abuse or distribution, discipline will be meted out, as seen fit by the College Head or Directors at the time. Discipline may take the form of:
  - detentions;
  - withdrawals from College activities;
  - community service;
  - written or verbal warnings;
  - final warnings;
  - regular monitoring;
  - contracts regulating behaviour;
  - suspensions;
  - expulsion;
  - referral to the SAPS
  - or any other action deemed suitable at the time.
- 18 Serious and second infractions will be considered expellable offences.
- 19 In every case, parents must be informed of their children's involvement and of what actions have been and will be taken.
- 20 Expulsions and suspensions will be according to the South African Schools Act, 1996, or other relevant legislation.

## **Principles**

- 21 In every instance, regardless of whether or not the pupil/s concerned are removed from HeronBridge, counselling will be offered and the College's facilities or advice made available.
- 22 To ensure that HeronBridge College's property is maintained as a drug free zone, the strictest measures must be taken in cases where inappropriate substances are:
  - transported to school or to any activity associated with the College;
  - passed on to others at school or at any activity associated with the College.
- 23 The degree of involvement of any pupil must be assessed thoroughly and actions taken must be commensurate with the severity of the case, the past disciplinary record of the individual concerned, any coercion or intimidation which may have taken place, as well as the reaction of the individual to being involved.
- 24 Pupils may be guilty by association: those in company of others at the time they are guilty of infringements to this policy can be deemed similarly culpable and may be subjected to the same or other disciplinary action.
- 25 The principal has the right to search any pupil, in accordance with the prescriptions of the Government Gazette, Notice 776 of 1998.

## **Police action**

- 26 In cases of possession or of the distribution of illegal substances at school, or in activities associated with the College, referral will be made to the SAPS for further investigation.
- 27 The College will render to the police whatever assistance is required.
- 28 Referral to the police will in no way delay or prevent the implementation of the College's drug policy.

## **Testing**

- 29 Parent/Guardian acceptance of the Admission Policy of the College provides prior permission to the College Head to arrange tests at his discretion, but only if there is due cause or sufficient evidence to warrant this.
- 30 Liaison will take place with parents prior to testing, unless it can be shown that contact was not possible.

## **SECTION 5 – EXTRA MURAL CODE**

### **Introduction**

Each activity has its own specific code, to which all participants are expected to adhere. Nevertheless, the following hold as general principles.

### **Objectives:**

Extramural activities are presented to

- contribute to a balanced college programme;
- foster healthy lifestyles;
- develop interest in sporting and cultural activities;
- develop skills;
- teach respect for the rules of sport;
- teach respect for coaches and officials;
- teach good attitudes towards winning and losing
- enhance school spirit;
- develop camaraderie and team spirit.

### **Code**

Participants are expected to

- behave appropriately on and off the sportsfield;
- play in the spirit of the game always;
- respect opponents;
- show due courtesy;
- attend scheduled practices and matches;
- adhere to the dress code.

## **SECTION 6 – DRESS CODE**

No variation to the uniform as specified in the admission document will be permitted. Any item that is not listed may be confiscated if worn by a pupil.

Any sloppy or untidy appearance will not be tolerated.

Serious or repeated infringements of the dress/uniform code will result in removal from the class until the pupil's appearance is satisfactory.

## **THE SECURITY OF BOUNDARIES**

CHILDREN FEEL MORE SECURE, and therefore tend to flourish, when they know where the boundaries are. Let me illustrate that principle.

Imagine you're driving a car over the Royal Gorge Bridge in Colorado, which is suspended hundreds of feet above the canyon floor. As a first-time traveller, you're pretty tense as you drive across. It is a scary experience. I know one little fellow who was so awed by the view over the side of the bridge that he said, "Wow Daddy! If you fell off of here, it'd kill you constantly!"

Now suppose there were no guardrails on the side of the bridge. Where would you steer the car? Right down the middle of the road. Even though you don't plan to hit those protective railings along the side, you just feel more secure knowing that they're there.

It's the same way with children. There is security in defined limits. They need to know precisely what the rules are and who's available to enforce them. When these clear boundaries exist at home, the child lives in utter safety. He never gets in trouble unless he deliberately asks for it. And as long as he stays within those reasonable, well-marked guardrails, there's mirth and freedom and acceptance.

Your children need the security of defined limits, too. They may not admit that they want you to be the boss, but they breathe easier when you are.

(Dr James Dobson)