

LEARNER CODE OF CONDUCT & HANDBOOK (2026)

1. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Owner	Board of Governors and SMT
Drafted By	Executive Principal
Date of Approval	02 June 2026
Review Date	May 2027
Related Policies	Assessment and Academic Integrity Policy (2026); Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy (2026); Social Media & Digital Citizenship Policy (2026); Data Management & POPIA Compliance Policy (2026); Substance Abuse Policy (2026).

2. PREAMBLE & ETHOS

Discipline at Loreto Convent School is a tool for character formation, not mere rule enforcement. Our goal is to guide each learner from external control to genuine internal self-discipline — the kind that persists long after the school gate is left behind.

We believe that presence is the first act of discipleship and that community is built by people who show up, consistently and fully. Guided by the charism of Mary Ward, this Code is anchored in:

- **Sincerity:** We value integrity above all. Honesty about a mistake or an absence is treated with far greater leniency than deception. We can work with the truth; we cannot work with a lie.
- **Justice:** Consequences are fair, consistent, and proportionate to the offence. No learner is treated more harshly or more leniently than another for the same conduct.
- **Freedom:** True freedom is not the absence of rules; it is the capacity to choose what is good. Our rules exist to protect the freedom of every learner to learn, to grow, and to move through this school without fear or disruption.
- **Truth:** We are honest with learners and families about expectations, consequences, and the reasoning behind every rule. A rule that cannot be explained is not a rule worth keeping.
- **Excellence:** We are a “**High Kindness, High Discipline**” environment. We hold our learners to a high standard because we believe in their capacity to meet it. The Golden Rule applies: treat others as you wish to be treated.
- **Accompaniment:** When a learner struggles with behaviour, our first response is not punishment but accompaniment — understanding the cause, offering support, and walking alongside the learner toward better choices. Discipline without accompaniment is merely control; discipline with accompaniment is formation.

3. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

This policy is drafted in compliance with:

- *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Section 28 — Rights of the Child; Section 29 — Right to Education).*
- *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA) — including s8 (Code of Conduct) and s9 (disciplinary proceedings).*
- *Children's Act 38 of 2005 — including the prohibition on corporal punishment and the best-interests-of-the-child standard.*
- *National Policy on the Management of Learner Attendance (Government Notice 907 of 2010).*
- *SASA s9 — Disciplinary Proceedings.*

4. GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

Sections 4 to 8 of this policy provide a summary of the School Rules. Annexure A contains the complete and detailed School Rules, which are prescriptive and reviewed annually by the prefect body in consultation with the Deputy Principal. In the event of any conflict between Sections 4 to 8 and Annexure A, Annexure A prevails.

4.1. Jurisdiction

- **Gate-to-Gate:** Learners are under school discipline from the moment they enter the gates until they leave.
- **Ambassadors:** Whenever dressed in uniform or civvies, learners represent the school. The Code applies regardless of location, date or time.
- **Public Conduct:** Rudeness, defiance, or loud behaviour in public brings the school into disrepute and is a disciplinary matter.

4.2. Device Policy (Smartphones & Smartwatches)

- **Primary School:** No cell phones of any type are permitted at school.
- **High School:** Only “calls/SMS only” phones with no internet access are permitted. Smartphones are strictly prohibited.
- **Confiscation:** Smartphones found in possession will be confiscated for **three months** and returned only upon payment of a **R500 fine**.
- **Storage:** Permitted phones must be locked in lockers before school or handed in at reception.
- **Smartwatches:** No smartwatches are permitted at school.

4.3. Uniform & Appearance

- **Dresses/Skirts:** Length must not be shorter than four closed fingers from the floor when kneeling.
- **Blazers:** Compulsory for Grades 4–12. High School learners must wear blazers to and from school and during Mass/Assembly.

- **Hair:** Must be neat and tidy. Braids/locs dreads must follow the natural contour of the head and match the natural hair colour. No Mohawks, beads, or shaved patterns are permitted.
- **Nails & Makeup:** Nails must be short and clean. No nail varnish or makeup (including lip gloss) is permitted. Tattoos are not permitted.
- **Jewellery:** One plain gold/silver stud or sleeper per ear lobe. A cross or crucifix on a chain may be worn under the shirt.

4.4. Campus Logistics

- **Classrooms:** Must be kept tidy. Food, juice, coffee, and chewing gum are strictly prohibited inside the building. Only plain water may be consumed in class.
- **Examinations:** Learners must have blue pens and pencils in a transparent bag. Correction fluid ("tip-ex") is not permitted. Cheating results in an immediate zero and disciplinary action.
- **Lockers:** Available for R60 per year. Fines apply: lending spare keys (R5); cutting locks (R20).
- **Money:** Cash sent to school must be in a sealed envelope marked with the learner's name, class, amount, and purpose. EFT is the preferred payment method.

5. ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

5.1. School Hours

- **High School:** Monday–Thursday 07:35–14:00; Friday 07:35–13:45.
- **Primary School:** Monday–Friday 07:35–13:30.
- **Examination periods:** All learners finish at 11:00.
- **Punctuality:** The bell rings at 07:35. Late arrival requires a Late Slip from reception and is recorded in the demerit system.

5.2. Absence Procedures

- **Notification:** Parents must inform the school of a learner's absence on the day of the absence, via phone call or email.
- **Documentation:** A written note or medical certificate is required upon return. A doctor's certificate is mandatory for absences exceeding 2 days or when a formal assessment is missed.
- **20-Day Rule:** Unexcused absence exceeding **20 days** in a year may result in the learner being barred from writing final November examinations, in terms of the National Policy on the Management of Learner Attendance (Government Notice 907 of 2010).

6. AFTERCARE & TRANSPORT

- a) **Hours:** Aftercare operates until **17:30** promptly.
- b) **Late Collection Fine:** A penalty of **R80 per hour** (or part thereof) is charged for collection after 17:30.
- c) **Non-Aftercare Learners:** Learners not in Aftercare who remain on campus after

- d) 16h00 will also incur the late collection fine unless on days when extra-curricular activities end later(e.g netball matches, choir performances/practices).
- e) **Gates:** High School learners use the Nana Sita Street gate. After 14:30, and for all Primary School learners, the Visagie Street gate is used.

7. THE MERIT & DEMERIT POINT SYSTEM

Discipline is tracked through a point-based database to ensure consistency, fairness, and transparency across all year groups. The system recognises positive conduct as well as recording misconduct.

7.1. Thresholds

- **Grades 4–7:** A detention notice is issued once a learner reaches –50 points.
- **Grades 8–12:** Detention letters are issued once a learner reaches –40 points.
- **Detention schedule:** Friday afternoons, 14:00–16:00 (High School).

8. SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

The following offences trigger an immediate Disciplinary Inquiry and may lead to suspension or expulsion. They are regarded as Level 3 offences:

- **Substance Abuse:** Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs, alcohol, or vaping devices on or off school premises while in uniform **or civvies**.
- **Violence:** Fighting, assault, or severe bullying causing physical or psychological harm.
- **Weapons:** Possession of any dangerous object, firearm, or replica weapon on school premises.
- **Gross Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating in formal examinations or assessments, including the unauthorised use of AI-generated content.
- **Sexual Misconduct:** Any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature toward a fellow learner or staff member, including the creation or distribution of intimate images.
- **Criminal Conduct:** Any conduct on school premises that constitutes a criminal offence under South African law.

9. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

9.1. Search and Seizure

The Executive Principal may conduct a search of a learner's bag, locker, or personal effects upon reasonable suspicion of possession of a prohibited item. The following safeguards apply:

- The search must be conducted in private, with an adult witness present.
- The learner must be informed of the reason for the search before it is conducted.
- Strip searches are prohibited.
- Parents must be notified of any search conducted and its outcome.

9.2. Formal Disciplinary Hearing

- Parents receive a minimum of **5 school days' notice** of the hearing in writing, including the charges and the evidence to be considered.
- An **independent chairperson** presides over the inquiry. The learner has the right to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- The learner has the right to hear and respond to the evidence against them before any finding is made.
- A written record of the hearing, the finding, and the sanction is retained in the learner's file.

9.3. Suspension

- Where the safety of the school community requires it, the Executive Principal may impose an immediate **precautionary suspension** pending a formal hearing.
- A suspended learner must continue to receive school work and remain registered as a learner. Suspension does not prejudice the outcome of the hearing.
- Suspension may not exceed **5 school days** in terms of section 9 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.
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9.4. Expulsion

- Expulsion is a measure of last resort and is only recommended by the Executive Principal to the Board of Governors following a formal hearing at which all evidence has been considered and the learner has had a full opportunity to respond.
- The Board of Governors is the expulsion authority at school level.
- Expulsion decisions must comply with SASA s9 and the SASA s9 — Disciplinary Proceedings.

9.5. Appeals

- A learner (through their parent or guardian) may appeal an expulsion decision to the Board of Governors within **5 working days** of receiving the written decision.
- Should the Board's decision be upheld on appeal, the family retains the right to escalate the matter to the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education (Gauteng) in terms of section 9(7) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.

9.6. Restorative Process

Consistent with the school's ethos of Accompaniment, the school may — at the discretion of the Executive Principal and School Counsellor — offer a restorative process alongside formal disciplinary consequences. A restorative process is not a substitute for consequence; it accompanies it.

10. DATA PRIVACY (POPIA)

Disciplinary records, demerit point data, and all personal information collected in connection with learner conduct are personal information under the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA, Act 4 of 2013). These records are governed by the Data Management & POPIA Compliance Policy (2026). Disciplinary records are accessible only to the Executive Principal and the relevant Deputy Principal.

- **Demerit records:** Retained for the duration of the learner's enrolment.
- **Disciplinary hearing records:** Retained for 3 years after the learner's departure from the school.
- **Expulsion records:** Retained for 5 years.

11. APPROVAL

Signed on behalf of the Board of Governors:



Date: **02 June 2026**

Fatima Rawjee

Chairperson: Board of Governors

Signed by the Executive Principal:



Date: **02 June 2026**

Suzette Truter

Executive Principal