



HOSTEL CODE OF CONDUCT

1. PREAMBLE

The NSA Hostel is committed to providing learners with a home from home, while maintaining the discipline and control required of a hostel, which caters for a large group of learners.

The following fundamental needs of the customers (parents and learners) have been identified and are given priority:

- Safety - a safe area for learners to stay without fear of threat to themselves or their property, from outside or within
- Comfort - a need for learners to have comfortable facilities (including personal, study and recreational), a healthy (mental, physical and spiritual) environment, enjoyable, well-prepared and healthy food
- Guidance - informed guidance regarding social skills and life skills, self-motivation and self-discipline
- Development- the need for the learners to be developed in a holistic manner in terms of a social context, and for an environment in which the learner can best pursue their academic and specialist studies

In broad terms, the mission of the hostel is to deliver well-rounded, happy learners, through optimal management of staff, learners and facilities. The focus is on a positive personal image, responsible behaviour, good relationships and communication and the involvement and support of all stakeholders. The hostel aims to create an environment conducive to the development of the individual while ensuring the good of the larger group, in keeping with the code of conduct of The National School of the Arts.

Specific procedures or rules will be in place and will be adapted as required from time to time. Such rules will be applied within the broad context of this Code of Conduct.

The following values form the basis of the NSA Hostel code of conduct and provide the framework within which all behaviour should be evaluated:

- o critical thinking
- o self respect
- o respect for others
- o self discipline
- o empowerment
- o commitment to life long learning

2. BEHAVIOUR OF STAFF AND LEARNERS

At the NSA Hostel the approach to living together in a community will reflect the values listed above. The following broad guidelines for behaviour support these values:

- 2.1 learners and staff are expected to give of their best in working together to create a happy, safe, comfortable environment, conducive to furthering the educational needs of the learners and staff, within the context of the hostel.
- 2.2 learners are responsible for doing schoolwork, maintaining the neatness and condition of their rooms and the hostel facilities. Staffs are responsible for the smooth running of the hostel programme and the welfare of the learners.
- 2.3 learners and hostel staff will at all times endeavour to prevent disruption of the learning process, congenial social environment or organization of the hostel.
- 2.4 A bell system is in place to control the daily programme of the hostel, to provide stability and prevent disruption of the educational process.
- 2.5 All learners and staff are expected to adhere to the hostel programme and times.
- 2.6 A register system is in existence to control the movement of learners in and

out of the hostel. This is important for the safety of the learners and peace of mind of both parents and staff.

3. RESPECT AND CONDUCT

- 3.1 Respect for the individual is a cornerstone of the hostel policy.
- 3.2 Learners and staff are responsible for establishing and maintaining the image of the school and hostel while on the school property as well as outside of the school, wherever they can be associated with the school and hostel.
- 3.3 Courtesy towards staff, general assistants, student representatives, learners and visitors to the hostel is an important characteristic of the hostel.
- 3.4 Certain areas of the hostel (outside staff flats and learners' bedrooms) require low noise level, and times of silence (study and after lights out) must be adhered to, for the benefit of the occupants of the hostel.
- 3.5 Self-respect, in terms of personal hygiene and tidiness, morals, health and educational progress is an important part of the hostel code of conduct.
- 3.6 Respect for the privacy, possessions and well-being of all staff, general assistants and learners is an important characteristic of the hostel.

4. DRESS CODE

The emphasis is on presentability while remaining comfortable and casual during most aspects of the hostel programme. No underwear may be visible at any time. Cleanliness, neatness and a high standard of hygiene are prerequisites. Dress code for outings from the hostel will be determined by the outing and prescribed by the Hostel Committee from time to time.

5. SECURITY AND UPKEEP OF FACILITIES

- 5.1 Staff and learners undertake to protect and show respect for the facilities and property belonging to themselves, the hostel or others. The NSA Hostel disassociates itself from and rejects all forms of vandalism and other

- inappropriate behaviour.
- 5.2 Staff and learners will contribute to keeping the hostel premises and building secure, neat and clean.
- 5.3 Certain security arrangements are in place and will be adhered to for the safety of all stakeholders and their property, which includes controlled access and movement of learners out of the hostel.
- 5.4 Learners are responsible for keeping their bedrooms clean and tidy and will contribute to keeping general areas used by them clean and tidy.

6. DISCIPLINE

- 6.1 The disciplinary code of the hostel places emphasis on a constructive approach to developing an understanding and acceptance of responsibility. This implies that all parties will recognise that there are consequences attached to behaviour; condoning inappropriate behaviour is not in the interest of the hostel, individuals within it or the community at large.
- 6.2 Offences leading to disciplinary action:
- 6.2.1 The physical and psychological health and safety of all hostel members, respect for the individual, the smooth running of the hostel and the hostel programme, as well as the protection of property are regarded as fundamental to the achievement of individual and hostel goals. Any activity, which deliberately places these fundamentals at risk, will be regarded as serious offences and will be dealt with appropriately.

The following activities would be included in a list of serious offences:

- leaving the hostel at any time without permission
- drug and alcohol abuse
- violence, vandalism and theft
- bullying, intimidation, victimisation and other aggressive behaviour
- bringing weapons or other dangerous instruments to the hostel
- visiting the rooms of the opposite sex or being in the quarters of the opposite sex
- the possession or distribution of any inappropriate material
- continued disruption of hostel programme
- repeated violation of the hostel code of conduct
- insolent and subversive behaviour

Extended Suspension and Expulsion from the Hostel will be the punishment for these offence

6.2.2 Action will be taken for the following activities, which impact on the individual and group or the image of the hostel:

- disruption of the hostel programme
- non-compliance with hostel routine
- misbehaviour impacting on the hostel image
- inappropriate dress and lack of cleanliness
- untidiness within the hostel facilities and littering
- ignoring or violating security arrangements
- behaviour that demonstrates lack of respect for others and for self
- disobeying direct instructions from the Hostel staff

Punishment for these offences will be done through the violation system.

6.2.3 To support the academic programme of the school and ensure that learners are effectively prepared for teaching and learning the study time and programme of the hostel is regarded as very important. Any activity, which does not include studying during these times, will be regarded as an offence.

This will include the following:

- absence during study without a good reason
- socializing during study
- being more than one person in a room
- making telephone calls (including cell phones)
- being involved in any other activity other than school work

Punishment for these offences will be done through the violation system.

6.2.4 Attendance of school during the week is compulsory. This is to support the academic development of learners. The following transgressions are deemed serious, as they will impact on the academic progress of learners:

- staying in the hostel room during school time
- arriving late at school after breakfast or lunch

Punishment for these offences will be done through the violation system.

6.3 The drug policy of the school is not applicable to the hostel as it is felt that in a community such as the hostel, it would be detrimental to members of the group if an individual who is addicted, experimenting with drugs or in possession of drugs resides in the hostel. It is therefore policy that such persons will be **expelled** from the hostel and would then be dealt with by the school in terms of its drug policy.

Exceptions to the above paragraph are:

- In cases where learners are not caught with drugs in their possession or using drugs on the Hostel and school premises,
- These learners tested positive for drugs and this is the first offence of this nature
- He/she will be placed on **suspension** for a period of 28 days providing that the parents agree to a programme of rehabilitation and follow it through to conclusion.
- These learners will only be allowed back into the hostel once they tested negative for drugs
- The parents of these learners must provide the hostel with monthly test results to prove that they are clean and staying clean.
- If this is not kept up the learner will be **expelled** as stipulated above.

6.4 In line with worldwide and local health authorities, the hostel believes that smoking is injurious to the health of smokers and to the health of non-smokers who are exposed to smoke. As such the hostel and hostel grounds are designated as non-smoking areas for learners. The hostel buildings, with the exception of staff flats, are designated as non-smoking areas, for both members of the hostel and their guests. It is considered inappropriate for staff to smoke in their flats if learners are present.

Disciplinary steps will be taken when learners are caught smoking.

6.5 **Disciplinary procedure:**

Transgressions are dealt with by Staff or student representatives, or may be referred to the Senior Housemaster, then to the Headmaster the Hostel Committee and the Governing Body. Depending on the severity of the transgression the parents are notified both telephonically and by letter. Learners would always be given an opportunity to give an explanation of their behaviour.

Punishment may include:

A **Reprimand:**

This will be done by student representatives, Staff and Senior Housemaster. During this discussion the punishment for future transgressions will be discussed.

B Punishment:

- A Violation System is in practice in the Hostel. Staff members will meet out a violation for minor offences and student representatives will report them to the Staff. The violations are point based and can result in either suspension or Expulsion. 10 points will result in a sit down with Head of Hostel and 5 hours of Community service. 20 points will result in a second sit down with Head of Hostel and 10 hours of Community service. 30 points will result in suspension. The duration of the suspension will be determined by the severity of the violations the learner received. 40 points will result in a final written warning as well as 15 hours of Community service. 50 points will result in the expulsion of a learner.

On return to the hostel a contract will be signed between the hostel, the learner and the parents.

C Contract:

After repeated offences as borne out by the violation system or when 20 points is reached and in other (6.2.1 and 6.2.2) serious cases learners will be placed on contract. This will be done in writing and the learner and his/her parents must also sign the contract. The Senior Housemaster will determine the time frame of how long the contract will be applicable. If learners fail to adhere to the terms of the contract suspension or expulsion will follow.

D Suspension:

This step follows after a learner who has entered into a contract with the hostel continues to behave in an unsatisfactory manner. Suspension may also follow immediately in cases considered as serious enough to warrant such actions (see 6.2.1). The Principal or Senior Housemaster will decide the period of suspension.

E Expulsion:

A learner will be expelled in the event of serious misbehaviour, particularly after having been given the opportunity, under contract and finally suspension, to change a certain behaviour pattern. The decision will be taken by the Governing Body and will be irreversible.

NB: It is important that parents and learners understand that punishment, suspension and even expulsion from the hostel need not affect their position at the school.