

Does Maru-a-Pula Have A Proper School Uniform?

We have simple dress requirements: black trousers and white open-collared shirts. When our students step over the line, we ask them to change.

Botswana is a hot country. The old school blazer and tie don't make sense in a climate like ours; they aren't practical.

Does discipline come from wearing traditional uniforms? The most superficial discipline, perhaps.

We value discipline of a more enduring kind – namely, self-discipline.

We expect our students to prepare fully, to sacrifice willingly and to commit themselves unstintingly whether it be in the classroom, on the playing fields, on the stage or in the community we serve.

Many schools battle daily with students over the most petty aspects of their school uniforms; squabbling over what is and what is not permitted. This is a waste of time.

By contrast, MaP teachers try to keep a relentless focus on positive, productive reinforcement of what our students are doing right.

We accept that -- beyond dress requirements and the expectation that clothing be neat, clean and appropriate -- it is desirable that students exercise a bit of discretion over what they wear.

We cherish the differences in our students: different faiths, different languages, different learning styles and yes, modest differences in their daily dress.

As educators, we're in the business of helping our students make suitable choices. Maru-a-Pula's dress requirements – not uniforms -- give our students an opportunity to practice the art of making appropriate choices, of exercising self-discipline.

We believe that students need to focus on learning and on achieving personal excellence, not on trying to look exactly like every other student.