



## Monkstown Park Junior School Code of Behaviour

Updated 2018

### Introduction

The school's primary function is to educate. It provides for the overall formation of the pupils-moral, physical, intellectual and cultural-as illuminated by the gospel message. In order to ensure that each child has the best possible opportunity to learn effectively we place particular emphasis on maintaining a disciplined and orderly school environment. A variety of elements combine to achieve this end, the most crucial factor being the support and co-operation of parents.

In Monkstown Park our concept of discipline is a positive one. It is based on the principle of establishing and promoting good relationships and mutual respect between all members of the school community. The school's code of behaviour consists of a set of supportive measures designed to help each child grow and develop in a secure environment.

***Please note you are asked to read through this document and discuss in detail with your child. You will also be asked to sign a declaration form at the start of the school year stating that you have read our code and agree to abide by its contents.***

Our aims are:

- To encourage children to take on responsibility for their own behaviour and through constant discussion and positive example, to guide them in the process of building up their own personal sense of responsibility and judgment in order to meet the demands which their teenage years and adult life will place upon them.
- To provide a high standard of education through a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum.
- To cultivate a positive attitude and respect towards one another, teachers, sports coaches and any member of our school community and the school environment.
- To encourage responsible behaviour and good team spirit when attending sports activities outside of school.
- To ensure that teachers teach without disruption.
- To promote a Catholic ethos.
- Inform parents of their child' progress and/or any concerns affecting their child's work, behaviour, attendance or punctuality.
- During their formative years in this school the children are encouraged to maintain a high standard of behaviour and work.

We all have a role to play in the implementation of our school code of behaviour. The support and encouragement of parents is paramount in order for us to achieve our aims and objectives of this code. Where challenges and difficulties arise parents will be contacted as early as possible.

Teachers will emphasise and promote positive behaviour and it will be used in a fair and consistent manner with regard to the age and developmental stage of each individual pupil. We encourage good behaviour and the pupils are rewarded for such.

The procedures of the school in regard to discipline can be outlined under the following four headings: **(A) School Rules; (B) Classroom Management; (C) Rewards and Sanctions; (D) Parental Involvement.**

(A) SCHOOL RULES

On any school day there are about 100 people on the Junior School premises. Just like any community, the school has rules to ensure that everything runs smoothly and purposefully. Our school rules are designed to encourage self- respect and respect for one's belongings and, equally, respect for others and their property. A considerable number of rules concern the safety and well- being of the children while on the school premises. Many encourage values and attitudes which have a bearing well beyond the school gate, for example those that refer to punctuality, neatness and consideration. Parents can be enormously supportive of the school's endeavours by discussing these rules with their children and helping them understand why they should be observed.

The rules of the school can be summarised thus:

***'All pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner showing consideration, courtesy and respect at all times'***

The most important rules are listed below:

***a .IN SCHOOL PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO:***

1. Be kind, courteous and respectful to all members of the school community
2. Listen to their teachers and follow any instructions and/or advice given.
3. Work in a purposeful manner and to the best of their ability;
4. Be punctual and regular in attendance;
5. Bring to school all items, and only those, which are required for the school day.
6. Keep themselves and their belongings neat and clean and their surroundings litter and noise free.
7. Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
8. Not to behave in a way which would endanger others.
9. To refrain from using any unsuitable remarks, use of bad language and name calling.
10. Have a signed note when absent, late, leaving early, or if homework is incomplete and have their Journal signed every night.
11. Follow class rules as set down by the class teacher.
12. Follow our school and anti- bullying rules.

***b. AT YARD TIME PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO:***

1. Wear clothes suitable for the prevailing weather conditions:
2. Remain in the designated play-area during yard times and refrain from climbing on walls, banks, fences or poles;
3. Play safely, showing consideration for others avoiding purposely hurting another pupil.
4. Play ball games only when and where permitted;
5. Refrain from riding bicycles in school grounds;
6. Remember that chewing gum should be kept off school premises.
7. To always include others in games and activities either inside or outside during yard times.

\*Pupils, if ill, may only remain indoors at playtime where a note is given stating that the parent accepts responsibility for the child's conduct and safety during playtime.

**(B). CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

Smooth well-functioning classrooms do not just happen. They are the result of consistent efforts on the part of teachers to create, maintain and sometimes restore conditions that help effect learning.

**Teachers Responsibilities include:**

- Support and implement the schools code of behaviour.
- Deal appropriately with any misbehaviour and document any instances of misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Communicate with parents when it is necessary and detail any matters of mutual concern.
- Create a warm, welcoming and safe atmosphere for each pupil.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Be consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for any disruptive behaviour to an absolute minimum both inside and outside the classroom environment.
- Provide support for other teachers.

Other examples of teachers responsibilities are divided into the following categories: (a) physical environment, (b) curriculum planning and (c) teaching techniques.

### **a. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

An enriching and stimulating classroom environment helps to generate and sustain the children's interest in their classwork.

### **CURRICULUM PLANNING**

The matching of curricular material to the needs and abilities of individual pupils is the central element in the implementation of our school curriculum. This includes a regular ordered routine of activities, alternating the more demanding and concentrated work.

### **TEACHING TECHNIQUES**

Examples of the many teaching techniques which are used in this school and lead to better behaviour and consequently better learning are:

#### **1. Defining Limits**

Teaching children what behaviour is expected of them and what behaviour is beyond limits as well as the consequences of good and bad behaviour.

#### **2. Monitoring Behaviour**

In addition to closely monitoring pupil performance and achievement throughout the school year, the teacher also keeps a constant check on pupil behaviour in the classroom, while showing a certain sensitivity to mood changes, individual tensions, etc. which may lead to disruptive behaviour on the one hand (e.g. physical aggression) or withdrawn behaviour on the other hand (e.g. fearful timidity or anxiety).

#### **3. Proximity Control**

At times it is necessary to deliberately position a child who tends to distract other pupils nearer to the teacher's desk. The close proximity of the teacher usually serves as a reminder to keep the pupil's mind on the task.

### **C. REWARDS AND SANCTIONS**

In promoting the positive behaviour of pupils there is a clear emphasis on implementing a system of rewards rather than sanctions. Such rewards can be summarised as follows:

#### **1. Rewards**

##### **a. Praise and Encouragement**

Every effort is made to point out good behaviour and to praise it particularly in the case of children who regularly misbehave so that some positive reinforcement is given for good effort.

Such praise and encouragement is not just confined to verbal comments. Written comments in pupil's journal when they have behaved well and especially when they have shown an improvement in behaviour are often used.

## b. Privileges

Good behaviour is also positively reinforced and rewarded by assigning of special responsibilities in terms of classroom jobs, the opportunity to become group or class leaders, or the earning of special privileges such as a 'homework pass'.

## 2. Sanctions

Clearly in imposing any sanction on a child it must be understood that it is the behaviour that is rejected and not the child. Every effort is also made on the part of both teachers and parents to discover the reasons for misbehaviour and to help the child to overcome the problem. The main sanctions used in Monkstown Park Junior School are summarised below:

### a. In Class

In many cases a word of caution from the teacher is sufficient to deal with a behavioural problem. Other sanctions may include detention at playtime, additional work or loss of privilege, e.g. being assigned homework at weekends or detention after school.

### b. Referral

When a behavioural problem persists, despite the application of internal classroom measures by the class teacher, the matter is referred to the Principal. When behavioural problems occur at school the parents in question will be informed by way of a note or a request for a meeting to discuss the problem with the class teacher and/or Principal.

### ***Yellow Card/ Red Card system:***

#### **Yellow Card:**

If the behaviour matter is referred to the Principal, it will be decided upon whether to issue the pupil with a yellow card. This is given to the pupil as a warning in such cases of misbehaviour which may include deliberately physically hurting another child and not having respect for his or her peers etc.

#### Actions taken:

- The teacher must report to the Principal with the child and discuss the event that occurred.
- The Principal will make a note of the child who is on the yellow card which will be logged on the pupils file.
- The teacher will then report to the parent at home time of this incident along with a written note from the teacher in the child's journal, this must be signed by both parents. The teacher will have communicated both verbally and formally the situation to the child's parents and Principal.
- There will be action taken within the school as a result of receiving the yellow card. Firstly, a verbal apology with the Principal and teacher present together with any other student that was involved. The student involved will be withdrawn from certain school activities etc. for an agreed period of time depending on the incident.

### Red Card:

Children who have received the yellow card and misbehave again are automatically given a red card.

Action taken;

- At this point the Principal will immediately inform the parents of this second incident of unacceptable misbehaviour. It would be requested at this stage that a meeting would be called for the parents, student, Principal, and teacher to discuss the situation.
- It would be decided at that stage what course of action is taken at that point. A letter of apology must also be written by the student who has received a red card and given to the class teacher, Principal and any other student that was involved in the incident.

In all other cases where incidents of serious misbehaviour occur the Principal will issue an immediate red card and follow the protocol outlined above. All of which is recorded and logged on the pupils individual file.

#### c. Suspension

Only in very serious circumstances is suspension considered (e.g. repeated instances of physical assault or verbal abuse of other children, vandalism or verbal abuse of teachers).

#### d. Expulsion

For a very serious offence or when all sanctions have been exhausted.

### **D. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:**

The role of the parent in implementing the school code of behaviour cannot be over-emphasized. The foundations for good discipline are laid long before a child comes into our care and are subsequently altered by home or social influences completely outside the control of the school. Our role is limited by the fact that a relatively small proportion of the child's time is spent in school.

Indiscipline, misconduct or the continuous disruption of disorderly pupils interferes not only with the education of the child who misbehaves, but can also adversely affect the education of other pupils in the class. While we try to meet each situation with sympathy and kindness, serious breaches of discipline or continuous misconduct and/or disrespect for either pupils and teachers will be dealt with firmly. We expect co-operation and support from parents on such occasions should we have to ask for it as communication between parents and school will lead to a quick resolution of the problem.

The School needs *full support* from parents to stamp out any type of unacceptable and/or bullying type behaviour. We all must work together to achieve a better outcome and do what's in the best interests of the student and other students concerned.

Parents Responsibilities:

- We would hope that parents would notify their child's teacher of any circumstances at home which might adversely affect their child's performance or behaviour in school. Such information would be treated in strictest confidence by the school.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Be positive towards the school and school activities, thus promoting a positive and confident attitude in their child.
- Behave with courtesy towards all members of the school community, both in and out of school.
- Parents should aim to keep in constant touch with the progress of their child in school. Parents are asked, in particular, to be consistent in signing their child's Journal.
- Support all school policies regarding our school discipline and Anti bullying policy within our school.
- Support our school policy on E- safety and Social Media Policy: we would ask that parents refrain from having any negative conversations about any member of our school community or the school on social media accounts or Whatsapp forums. Any messages and comments if disclosed are treated in the same way as written communication formally addressed to the school.
- Attend parent/teacher meetings and information sharing events to discuss your child's progress and learning.
- Support homework tasks and ensure it's returned within the time set.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.

## **BULLYING**

### **Bullying**

Bullying (either verbal or physical) is completely unacceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated in Monkstown Park Junior School.

Bullying can occur anywhere-in the classroom, the schoolyard, the corridor, the toilet etc. and everyone is expected to ensure that this does not happen. If bullying is discovered, there is a responsibility to tell the teacher-this is not telling tales.

### **Verbal Bullying:**

Playful teasing is part of everyone's experience as a child and is harmless. Children, too, must learn to take fair and reasoned criticism from their peers. However, verbal bullying is another matter altogether and is not tolerated in the school.

Verbal bullying can be clearly distinguished from playful teasing and constructive criticism. Firstly, there is malicious intent behind the remarks- they are cruel and wounding. Secondly, the victim will be clearly upset or confused by the attack. Thirdly, the verbal abuse generally continues over a period of time and regardless of its obvious effects on the victim.

Cyber Bullying: see separately our policy on E-Safety:

Cyber bullying has been described as an extension of traditional bullying with technology providing the perpetrator with another way to abuse their target. When bullying behaviour is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, mobile phones, social networking sites, apps, and other online technologies it becomes increasingly difficult to deal with and goes beyond the traditional boundaries of the school environment.

**Procedure for reporting a concern:**

If you feel you have reasonable cause for concern in most cases it can be sorted out by arranging to speak with your child's class teachers he/she should be your first point of contact. We would really encourage all parents to discuss any issues they have with their child's class teacher first and not to communicate it with any other 3<sup>rd</sup> party during and whilst its being dealt with.

If all avenues have been exhausted and you are still not satisfied with the way your initial concern was handled, you can arrange a formal meeting with the Principal, requesting an appointment via email and in writing through the school office outlining your concern.

Any meetings with the Principal must be arranged formally and recorded via email through the school office.

Where all else fails the matter can be referred, in writing only, to the Board of Management.

***We cannot stress enough the importance of communication between parents and teachers. The education of the children in our care is the joint responsibility of home and school. One cannot succeed without the help of the other.***