



Monkstown Educate Together
National School

Positive Behaviour Policy

Monkstown Educate Together NS

June 2018

This policy has been developed in accordance with
Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools,
National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

and in compliance with
Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000



Contents

1	Introductory Statement and Rationale	3
1.1	Introductory Statement.....	3
2	Policy Formulation	4
3	Aims of the Policy	5
4	Whole School Approach	5
5	Standards of Behaviour.....	6
5.1	Responsibility of Pupils	6
5.1.1	General Behaviour.....	6
5.1.2	Classroom Behaviour.....	6
5.1.3	Yard, Pitch & Playground Behaviour.....	6
5.1.4	Behaviour in other School Areas	6
5.1.5	Behaviour during School Outings / Activities / Outside School Premises	7
5.1.6	Dress Code	7
5.2	Responsibility of Adults	8
5.2.1	Parents/Guardians	8
5.2.2	Parents/Guardians & Staff.....	8
5.2.3	Staff.....	9
6	Promoting Positive Behaviour.....	9
6.1	‘Kind Words, Kind Hands, Kind Feet.’	9
6.2	School Assembly.....	9
7	Inappropriate Behaviour.....	10
7.1	Level 1: Minor Misbehaviours.....	10
7.1.1	Examples of Minor Misbehaviour.....	10
7.1.2	Level 1: Disciplinary Actions.....	11
7.1.3	Level 1 Supportive Interventions	11
7.2	Level 2: Serious Misbehaviours	12
7.2.1	Examples of Serious Misbehaviour	12
7.2.2	Level 2: Disciplinary Actions.....	12
7.2.3	Level 2: Supportive Interventions	13
7.3	Level 3: Gross Misbehaviours	13
7.3.1	Examples of Gross Misbehaviour:	13
7.3.2	Level 3: Disciplinary Actions.....	14



8	Procedures for Suspension & Expulsion.....	16
8.1	Suspension.....	16
8.1.1	Authority to Suspend:.....	16
8.1.2	Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension.....	16
8.1.3	Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:.....	18
8.2	Expulsion.....	19
8.2.1	Authority to Expel:	19
8.2.2	Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:	19
9	Bullying.....	21
10	Notification of a Child's Absence from School.....	21
11	Record Keeping.....	22
12	Parental Concerns and Grievance Procedures	22
13	Extracurricular Activities	23
14	Conclusion.....	23
15	Policy Ratification	23

1 Introductory Statement and Rationale

1.1 Introductory Statement

The Monkstown Educate Together revised Positive Behaviour Policy has been formulated in conjunction with staff, parents and children. In devising the policy, we were conscious that the individuality of each child should be accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment. We endeavour to create a positive school environment where learning and development can take place, and where there is the highest possible degree of consensus about standards of behaviour among staff, pupils and parents.

This policy offers a framework within which positive and restorative techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by the teachers and other staff members. The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results. This is a whole school policy and it is vital that our children are given the information that is required and the consequences that follow when standards of behaviour are not met.

The rules in the policy are kept to a minimum and are positively stated. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of cooperation among, and between, staff, pupils and parents.



In the belief that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents, every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed, that the school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents, and that parents are not only told when their children are in trouble but when they have behaved particularly well.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not. The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As school community, we endeavour to work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility.

It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles. Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear agreed consequences. Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules and by becoming familiar with our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Mission Statement

Monkstown Educate Together strives to create a happy, safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where the uniqueness of each child is celebrated. We aim to provide a space where children are educated and where all members of the school community can grow, develop and achieve their full potential. We aspire to excellence in an atmosphere of respect, openness and joy.

This policy has been developed in line with our mission statement above which has at its core, care of the student. The school believes that respect for the individual is essential to the smooth running of a school, where effective teaching and learning can take place. The school's ethos is shaped by the philosophy of the 'Learn Together' curriculum.

2 Policy Formulation

In formulating this policy the following steps were completed;

- Our existing Code of Behaviour was audited in October 2017
- An online parent questionnaire was designed by the Positive Behaviour Committee (PBC). In September 2017 and completed by parents in October 2017. Thematic analysis was conducted and feedback was collated by the sub-committee.
- A focus group on positive behaviour, including all staff members, was conducted in October 2017. Thematic analysis was used by the PBC to summarise feedback from staff.



- An online pupil questionnaire was designed by the PBC and completed by children in 3rd-6th class in January 2018 using iPad survey stations in the classroom. Responses from the children were collated and graphed.
- Two whole staff professional development workshops were completed with CARA Training Consultancy in 'Managing Aggression and Violence in Schools' in December 2017. The ISM team attended a follow up strategy meeting with CARA in February 2018.
- An initial draft of this document was compiled by a sub-committee of staff and parent representatives in February/March 2018 in consultation with staff, parents and the children of METNS Community.
- The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received
- The finalised draft of the policy was presented to staff for feedback at a staff meeting in April 2018.
- The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for Board of Management approval.

3 Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- Promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- Create a positive and safe learning environment that encourages and reinforce good behaviour
- Apply the principles of restorative practice
- Encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- Foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- Facilitate the education and development of every child
- Foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- Enable teachers to teach and children to learn without disruption
- Prevent and eliminate bullying (see METNS Anti-Bullying Policy, 2014)
- Ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through ethos of open and effective communication
- Encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of the policy.

4 Whole School Approach

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the principal, teachers, and parents in the review and operation of the code. Co-operation and communication between home and school is very important as together we try to provide clear guidelines and pointers as to what is expected of those who attend our school.



5 Standards of Behaviour

5.1 Responsibility of Pupils

5.1.1 General Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Behave appropriately and to show consideration for other children and adults
- Behave in a kind and inclusive manner
- Show respect for the property of the school, other children and their own belongings
- Attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Do his/her best both in school and for homework
- Be honest at all times
- Wear appropriate clothing in school and on school trips.

5.1.2 Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- **Respect** the staff, other pupils and visitors to the classroom
- **Follow** the direction of his/her teacher and all staff
- **Listen** to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- **Work** to the best of his/her ability and allow others to do the same
- **Value** school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.

5.1.3 Yard, Pitch & Playground Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- **Respect** adult supervisors and fellow pupils
- **Follow** the directions of adult supervisor(s)
- **Follow** agreed school rules for outdoor areas
- **Play** safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- **Avoid** inappropriate language, fighting or name calling
- **Remain** on school grounds at all times

5.1.4 Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- **Walk** quietly and in single file in the school corridors and on stairs
- **Speak** at an appropriate volume
- **Respect** adults and other children on the stairs, in the corridors and at doorways
- **Knock** when entering another room
- **Greet** students, staff and visitors in a friendly manner
- **Enter** and exit the building in a safe and orderly way.



5.1.5 Behaviour during School Outings / Activities / Outside School Premises

The M.E.T.N.S. Positive Behaviour Policy also applies to all school related activities and trips e.g. swimming, sports trips, class outings etc. The suitability of all children attending school trips will be determined by the Principal. Refer also to METNS Policy for school trips 2018.

Each pupil is expected to:

- **Follow** his/her teacher's and/or staff directions at all times
- **Respect** adult supervisors, fellow pupils and members of the public
- **Remain** with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- **Behave** appropriately and politely in all public areas
- **Observe** the rules of general good behaviour.

5.1.6 Dress Code

The school does not require children to wear a uniform. All t-shirts, sweaters and other forms of clothing bearing the school logo are optional. The only exception is that children playing on sports teams representing the school will be required to wear a common sports strip.

There are however, some basic rules about dress which need to be observed. All children should come suitably dressed for attending a primary school.

In particular:

- It is essential that the clothes the children are wearing are safe for playing, for example:
 - Shoes - flat and fastened properly; ill-fitting, non-supportive footwear is not suitable
 - Very wide and/or very long trousers or skirts are not suitable and clothing should not have dangling chains, straps or ties for safety reasons;
- Very short, bikini type and off the shoulder tops, extremely short skirts or shorts are not suitable dress for school;
- No underwear should be showing;
- Children should dress appropriately (eg. tracksuit/leggings) and wear runners/trainers for PE and movement activities;
- Hats, caps and hoods are not appropriate indoor wear;
- Jewellery must not create a safety hazard (eg. stud earrings rather than others);
- The use of make-up is not permitted;
- We recommend coats, hats, scarves etc. during spells of cold weather and sun cream/hat for your children during the summer term.



5.2 Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school and at home have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

5.2.1 Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort, should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns. In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents/guardians will be invited to participate in the intervention process. Parents/guardians must make themselves available to visit the school when invited.

5.2.2 Parents/Guardians & Staff

Parents/guardians and staff will work together to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment
- Discuss the Positive Behaviour Policy with their child/class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year, with reminders at the start of each term
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding others needs
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, religion, ability and disability
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
- Encourage *'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'*
- Ensure that our children come to school, on time, refreshed and prepared for work
- Taken an active interest in the learning and concerns of children
- Work towards effective communication between adults and children within the school community



5.2.3 Staff

The Policy as it applies to staff, extracurricular coaches and volunteers ensures that the rights of the children are upheld. It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to ensure that the school's Positive Behaviour Policy is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils, and in the spirit of restorative practice and inclusion. Each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school and teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class.

Staff will:

- Discuss the Positive Behaviour Policy with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year, use it to formulate their Class Charter and refer to it periodically thereafter
- Ensure the class charter is displayed in the classroom
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour
- Ensure there is supervision at all times
- Use rewards/sanctions in a fair and consistent manner
- Promote positive behaviour with praise, awards, certificates, privileges etc.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and the consequences of its repetition (Refer to METNS recording pack for examples)
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal and the parent/guardian.

6 Promoting Positive Behaviour

6.1 'Kind Words, Kind Hands, Kind Feet.'

In our school, we will always try to affirm the positive and praise children for using kind words, kind hands and kind feet. As a general rule the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Recognition will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

6.2 School Assembly

During assembly time children will be frequently praised for positive behaviour and be reminded of the standards of behaviour expected in the school community. The Principal may recognise exceptional behaviour. Positive behaviour will also be reinforced and explored through reflection on our 'Value of the Month'.



7 Inappropriate Behaviour

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the METNS Positive Behaviour Policy classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption and the level of impact on others caused by the misconduct. The policy also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of minor misbehaviour are dealt with by the class teacher/ member of staff. In cases of serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be notified at an early stage and may be invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour. The classification of misbehaviour as minor, serious or gross, is, in some cases, a matter of judgement and it is acknowledged that the person best placed to assess this is the member of staff who witnesses the behaviour in question.

7.1 Level 1: Minor Misbehaviours

Level 1, minor misbehaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, restorative, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

7.1.1 Examples of Minor Misbehaviour

- Minor breaches of General, Class and Playground Rules
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner towards peers and/or staff
- Disobedience and ignoring staff requests or 'answering back' impolitely
- Being disruptive in class
- Talking out of turn
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers including non-completion of homework without good reason (to include a note from a parent/guardian)
- Arriving late for school
- Running or other minor inappropriate conduct in the school building
- Littering around the school



7.1.2 Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1, minor misbehaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1.

Some examples of Level 1 responses are: (Please note the list is not exhaustive or prescriptive)

- When incidents of misbehaviour occur staff will try to engage the student with actions such as calmly saying “The rule in our school is...” (Quote relevant rule) or directing their attention the class charter
- Discussion and restorative reflection on behaviour
- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others – Student takes time out in a separate area in the classroom or another designated classroom for a set length of time (using a visual aid if necessary). If this occurs on the yard the pupil will be sent to a designated area on the yard for a set length of time.
- Completing unfinished school work
- Loss of privileges for example: Golden Time in class/computer time
- Complete a reflection sheet which can be kept in school or sent home to be signed as required
- Where deemed appropriate parent(s)/guardian(s) may be contacted/informed via homework journal, reflection slip, letter, email, phone-call or meeting
- Behaviour contract may be appropriate for some children at this stage

*Note: Repeated Minor Breaches are classified as serious behaviour. See 7.2.

7.1.3 Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as extra computer time/Dojo points /stickers/stamps/preferred activity/certs with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members) etc.
- Discussion and restorative reflection on behaviour with the child
- Communication with parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding behaviour via homework journal, reflection slip, letter, email, phone-call or meeting



7.2 Level 2: Serious Misbehaviours

Level 2, serious misbehaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and may be potentially dangerous to the safety and well-being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2: (Please note the list is not exhaustive or prescriptive)

7.2.1 Examples of Serious Misbehaviour

- Persistent minor misbehaviour will be classified as Serious Misbehaviour, ie. repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Repeated unwanted negative behaviour eg. constant interrupting, shouting, noise-making
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation) which falls short of Gross Misbehaviour
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin
- Threats or physical hurt to another person which falls short of Gross Misbehaviour
- Disrespectful/derogatory language, tone or behaviour toward a member of staff/visitors or another pupil
- Behaviour which is dangerous/disrespectful to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting, spitting)
- Use of unacceptable language, profanity, name calling, telling lies, inappropriate behaviour or gestures
- Serious breaches of General, Class and Playground Rules
- Intentional minor damage to school or personal property
- Use of mobile phone without permission
- Minor theft
- Possession of cigarettes and/or other prohibited substances

7.2.2 Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of students for Level 2, serious misbehaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels.

Some examples of Level 2 responses are: (Please note the list is not exhaustive or prescriptive)

- Any combination of steps from level 1.
- Discussion and restorative reflection on behaviour
- Complete a reflection sheet which is sent home to be signed by parent/guardian and returned to school
- Discussion of behaviour with Principal
- Detention
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted/informed via reflection slip, phone-call or email
- Informal or arranged meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Agreed sanction/consequence determined by the class teacher and Principal.



7.2.3 Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Staff conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff and Principal
- Parent (guardian)/principal/pupil meeting
- Agreed short term plan, target diary or behaviour contract
- Implementation of behaviour management plan in consultation with the pupil, teacher, Principal and parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Referral of a child displaying continuous behavioural problems for relevant assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent)

7.3 Level 3: Gross Misbehaviours

Level 3, gross misbehaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well-being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental/guardian involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3, gross misbehaviours. (Note, this list is not exhaustive or prescriptive)

7.3.1 Examples of Gross Misbehaviour:

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2, serious behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Continuous serious disruption of a class by a student
- Gross discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Gross disrespect to any staff member, any other pupil or visitor to the school
- Gross insubordination: resistance to, or defiance of, authority or a disobedience, refusal or failure to obey reasonable instructions causing risk.
- Deliberate recording of school activities which is likely to embarrass or undermine any member of the school community
- Verbal abuse, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards others
- Violent fighting, physical assault or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Behaviour deemed inappropriate or liable to endanger in any manner a member of the school community or which has been identified by members of staff as dangerous
- Very serious breaches of general, class and playground rules
- Leaving school premises without permission



- Wilful damage or attempted wilful damage of school property, property of teachers, fellow pupils or school visitors
- Serious theft
- Possession/Supply and/or use of alcohol, cigarettes, illegal drugs and / or other harmful substances - Refer to schools substance use policy
- Intentional possession or use of dangerous equipment, weapons or harmful implements/ substances that would inflict harm on any member of the school community
- Setting fires

7.3.2 Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

As Level 3, gross misbehaviour is considered very serious, the school will take note of any additional factors which may be relevant to determining a suitable response. Factors to be considered include the student's behavioural record to date, the student's understanding of his/her action, the degree of intent involved and the health and safety of the school community. Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document.

Some examples of Level 3 responses are: (Please note the list is not exhaustive or prescriptive)

- **Contract of behaviour:**
The school may employ a contract of behaviour, involving pupil, parents/guardians and school, outlining agreed procedures and what may happen in the event of a behavioural issue arising
- **Behaviour Management Plan:**
A detailed plan for managing behaviour may be developed in consultation with the full school team and any relevant external agencies
- **Exclusion from school trips:**
Where deemed appropriate, and in consultation with the Principal, the child may be asked not to attend school trips
- **Shortened Day**
Where deemed appropriate and in consultation with parents, the child may be placed on a shortened school day



- **Voluntary Removal**

Where necessary, due to extenuating circumstances, parents/guardians will agree to voluntarily withdraw the student from school for a fixed period of time agreed by both parents/guardians and school. This will happen following consultation with NEPS where a suspension would not be deemed appropriate or of any benefit. A record will be kept.

- **Suspension from school for one to three days:**

This response may occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour. The Principal, following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension. See procedures below.

- **Suspension from school for four to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management. See procedures below.

A detailed account of the circumstances of the suspension will be kept by the school. Upon return to school, the student along with the parents / guardian will undertake not to repeat the specific misbehaviour to the best of the student's ability.

***Note:** In exceptional circumstances (eg. a situation where expulsion is being considered), the suspension period may be further extended.

- **Expulsion:**

Gross misbehaviour can result in a pupil being expelled. See procedures below.



8 Procedures for Suspension & Expulsion

As part of Monkstown Educate Together National School's Positive Behaviour Policy, The Board of Management of Monkstown Educate Together has ensured that the school's policy on, and procedures for, the use of suspension and expulsion are in line with guidelines for Developing A Code of Behaviour (2008) as outlined by The National Educational Welfare Board.

8.1 Suspension

Definition of Suspension:

'requiring the student to absent himself/ herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'
(Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008)

8.1.1 Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of Monkstown Educate Together N.S. has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but will not exceed 10 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

8.1.2 Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and well-being of pupils or staff of the school or that the action of the pupil warrants a suspension. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period as detailed above.



An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Monkstown Educate Together, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

- Any behaviour outlined in this or other policies which the Principal feels is likely to endanger or has endangered the health and safety of the student/s responsible or the school population.
- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period as detailed above.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected, where possible. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school before the end of the school day prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course. Such a notification will detail:

- i. The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- ii. The reasons for the suspension
- iii. Any study programme to be followed
- iv. The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, the Board may invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- i. The circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- ii. Interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of Monkstown Educate Together acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

No person with a vested interest in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure if feasible.



8.1.3 Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the School will initiate a formal investigation of the matter. Such behaviour may well be ongoing and as a result of certified/diagnosed additional needs. The use of suspension will only be considered if all alternatives have been exhausted and if no extra provision is granted in the care of the student. The Health and Safety and wellbeing of the entire school community will be paramount in any such issue.

The following procedures will be observed;

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be;

- i. Informed of details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. Invited to a meeting and provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of Monkstown Educate Together acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

No person with a vested interest in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process if feasible.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive written notification of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- i. The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- ii. The reasons for the suspension
- iii. Any study programme to be followed
- iv. The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- v. The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal. The school will take due cognisance of the number of days the student/s has also not been in school for other reasons.



8.2 Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'
(Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008)

8.2.1 Authority to Expel:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

8.2.2 Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii. Ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- iii. Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)



c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing.

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing;

- i. As to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. Of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. That they may, if they so choose, be accompanied by another adult at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- i. The meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. The principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. Each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. The parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board;

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organised by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.



9 Bullying

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

Bullying can be a serious problem which some children encounter and one which is of great concern to parents and teachers. It is a problem which requires cooperation between schools and parents in seeking solutions. Bullying can be physical, verbal or emotional and may be carried out by groups or by an individual. Repeated name calling, teasing and taunting, rude gestures, intimidation and extortion are some of its forms.

Every child is expected to do his/her best to ensure that such behaviour does not happen, and has a responsibility to report any incidents of bullying behaviour to parents or a member of staff. Parents should also encourage their children to report such behaviour. Bullying behaviour can only be dealt with if it is reported. Monkstown Educate Together is proud to be a 'Telling School'. The steps for dealing with bullying behaviour in METNS are outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

10 Notification of a Child's Absence from School

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- In line with good practice, parents are encouraged to inform the school on the day a student is absent (or before if feasible).
- The school should at least be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school in writing by *letter / using the school journal*
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.
- The school is obliged to maintain all records of attendance in line with the Rules for National School and the National Educational Welfare Board.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register.



11 Record Keeping

Record systems will be used to track pupil's behaviour where appropriate. Such systems may include;

- Behaviour incident reports, reflection sheets and charts such as scatterplot charts for each teacher to record incidents of misbehaviour or bullying in the classroom and resulting contact with parent(s)/guardian(s). (*See recording pack)
- The school will use a yard book for the supervising teacher to record incidents of misbehaviour or bullying on the yard.
- The school will keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour and gross misbehaviour, and sanctions used. Parents are entitled to view the records of their children in accordance with section 9(g) of the Education Act, 1998. Requests to view such records should be notified to the Principal.
- The principal will maintain a record of any voluntary withdrawals, suspensions and expulsions, outlining the details of each, including dates and reasons.
- The Board of Management will maintain proper minutes of meeting in relation to longer suspensions and expulsions in line with Department of Education practice and policy.
- All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

12 Parental Concerns and Grievance Procedures

It is recognised that the implementation of this Policy requires a high level of cooperation between staff and parents, all of whom have a common aim in fostering a positive school environment where there is the highest possible degree of consensus about standards of behaviour.

Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of this Policy and/or its implementation should contact the school for further clarification following the steps outlined in the METNS Communication Policy. The school believes that communication with parents is vital in this regard and would prefer to address any concerns a parent may have at the earliest possible stage.



13 Extracurricular Activities

The Purpose of Extracurricular Activities in METNS is to enhance the vital life of the school for all children through a range of activities including sports, games, arts and culture. The M.E.T.N.S. Positive Behaviour Policy applies to all extracurricular activities, both on the school premises and off-site. The suitability of all children engaging in the ECA Programme and attending related school trips (matches, concerts etc) will be determined by the ECA coordinators in consultation with the Principal.

Each pupil is expected to:

- **Follow** his/her facilitators/coaches directions at all times
- **Remain** with the facilitator/coach and group of pupils at all times
- **Behave** politely towards those they meet on off-site trips (matches etc)
- **Observe** the rules of general good behaviour.

14 Conclusion

The Safety and wellbeing of all children attending our school is of the utmost importance to us. With this in mind, a Positive Behaviour Policy has been put in place and ratified by the Board of Management. We require parents to read the policy carefully with their child/children, discuss, and accept the contents. This should be repeated at the beginning of every school year or more frequently as appropriate. Please keep the policy document safely at home for future reference.

15 Policy Ratification

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Monkstown Educate Together in June 2018