



Behaviour Guidance Policy

Monkstown Educate Together National School

September 2025

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*

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1 Introductory Statement and Rationale

1.1 General Statement

The purpose of the Monkstown Behaviour Guidance Policy, which recognises clearly that all behaviour is a form of communication, is to support children in an awareness of their behaviour and the development of skills to manage it appropriately. This is in the context of the different needs and requirements of children and the co-creation of a suitable learning space for all pupils.

This Policy has been formulated in conjunction with staff, parents/guardians 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 calm, conducive and positive environment. We endeavour to attain this positive school environment for all children and create an atmosphere 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 carers.

This policy offers a framework within which an approach to behaviour is agreed and shared by staff, pupils and parents/guardians, and where the individuality and rights of all children are acknowledged and where the best interest of the child remains central.

In line with the latest thinking on promoting situationally appropriate behaviour, this policy is based on building relationships with pupils which support behaviour rather than simply enforcing rules alone. It is underpinned by the idea that where they can, children will rise to behavioural expectations. In this context, behaviours of concern indicate an environmental or relational difficulty which is best resolved by looking at the needs of the child, rather than adopting a punitive approach. The focus shifts to preventative strategies, regulation first strategies and non-shame based and restorative reactive strategies and the flexibility to apply these in the best interest of each individual child.

The policy strives to give clear information, definition and pathways for promoting appropriate behaviour and for responding to behaviours of concern. The expectations of the policy encourage a standard of behaviour which promotes the wellbeing and safety of all members of the school and which creates a positive teaching and learning environment.

1.2 Positive Relations and a Foundation of Trust

Trust is a cornerstone of our approach. We recognise that building trust between staff, pupils and families is essential for positive outcomes. Trust fosters a sense of security, empowerment and emotional well-being. Positive relationships play a pivotal role in establishing trust. We strive to develop strong, supportive and respectful relationships with everyone in our school. We aim for open communication, empathy, active listening and aspire to each pupil in our school having at least one trusted adult.

In the belief that the effective schools are 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/ guardians, and that appropriate behaviours and achievement of expectations are communicated to parents as well as behaviours of concern. We seek to foster a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of cooperation among and between staff, parents/guardians and pupils.

1.3 Diversity Affirming Practice

A core principle of Educate Together is that all children are welcome and valued in our school no matter what their background, heritage, beliefs or abilities. We wholeheartedly embrace the concept of the neurodiversity paradigm, recognising that neurological differences are natural variations in the human experience. We respect and value the diverse perspectives and strengths that both culturally diverse and neurodivergent individuals bring to our school. Our school is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all participants can engage in meaningful activities and operate in a way that works for them. We adapt our practices and approaches to accommodate the unique needs and preferences of our pupils. We strive to actively normalise diversity in all its forms throughout our school, at all levels, taking and creating opportunities to reinforce messages of acceptance, inclusion and celebration.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. We recognise that the pathway of development may look different for different pupils and the expectations and consequences outlined in this policy should be applied with flexibility and awareness of each child's individual profile and needs. As a school community we aspire towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of respect, consideration, compassion, equity, honesty and responsibility.

Expectations, preventative strategies, interventions, supportive actions, reactive strategies and any consequences will be situation appropriate, age appropriate, tailored to the individual child as appropriate and clearly explained. Where the wider team and/or parents/guardians are involved, this is in a supportive rather than a punitive capacity. Parents can cooperate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules and by becoming familiar with our Behaviour Guidance Policy.

1.4 Centrality of Children's Rights, Children's Experiences and Pupil Voice

The approaches detailed herein are informed by restorative justice, trauma-informed practice and neuro-affirmative approaches to supporting all pupils. They are also firmly rooted within a rights-based approach as outlined in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Children have the right to be consulted on matters that concern them and to have their opinions taken seriously. The input of children from 3rd to 6th Class was an essential component in the formulation of this policy.

The school places greater emphasis on proactive strategies than on reactive ones to support behaviour in school. The rules in this policy are kept to a minimum and are positively stated.

These rules are shared with pupils in a variety of ways to ensure that they are comprehensible to all pupils, regardless of their age, language, or reading ability. Further support is given to develop clarity around rules and what they look like when in use where necessary.

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 pupil. 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

This drafting and formulation of this policy was informed by the following and publications¹:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations (2024)
- Inclusive Educational Framework (NCSE 2011)
- NCSE *Relate: A Regulation-First Approach to Reframing Behaviour and Supporting Pupil Engagement and Participation* (NCSE, 2024)
- *Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools Supporting Children and Young People* (2022)
- *Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools Indicators of Effective Practice*
- *Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education* (2016/ updated 2019)
- *Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes* (2024)
- *What We Wish You Knew: A rights-based analysis of school codes of behaviour in Ireland.* (As I Am, 2024)
- *Cineáltas : Action Plan on Bullying* (2022)
- *Bí Cineáltas: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviours For Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (2024)

¹ Hyperlinks to documents/ resources can be accessed by clicking on the document images below (next page).



- *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* (NEWB, 2008)
- *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice* (DES, revised 2019)
- *Looking at Our Schools: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools and Special Schools*
- *Educate Together: Ethos SSE in Educate Together Schools – Handbook* (2021)
- Restorative Practices <https://www.pdst.ie/post-primary/health-wellbeing/restorative-practice>
- Trauma-informed professional development materials

In formulating this policy, the following steps were completed:

- Our existing Code of Behaviour was audited in January 2025
- An online parent questionnaire was designed by the Positive Behaviour Committee (PBC) in March 2025 and completed by parents in April 2025. Analysis was conducted, and feedback was collated by the sub-committee (May 2025)
- An online pupil questionnaire was designed by the PBC and completed by children from third to sixth class in May using Chromebook survey stations in the classroom. Responses from the children were also collated, graphed and analysed
- An initial draft of this document was updated by a sub-committee of staff following the feedback gathered during the above-mentioned consultation with parents and children
- A consultation on the resultant draft document, and on behaviour guidance and strategies, including all staff members, was conducted in early June 2025
- The draft of the Behaviour Guidance Policy was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received
- The finalised draft of the policy was circulated to staff and submitted for Board of Management approval in September 2025, with a view to communication, upskilling and implementation for the 2025-26 academic year

3 Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- Promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- Uphold the rights of the child as outlined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Create a positive and safe learning environment that encourages and reinforces appropriate, pro-social behaviours (in whatever form it may take for the child as an individual) and regulation for learning
- Create a sense of safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment and cultural consideration within our school community
- Recognise, realise and respond to children where they are at with kindness and understanding
- Apply the principles of restorative practice
- Apply the principles of trauma-informed practice
- Encourage consistency of response to behaviours as communication whilst upholding the right of every child to access education, to be safe, to be treated fairly and so on
- Foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support situationally appropriate behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others. This is with due consideration to the different needs and setting events which might cause a child to engage in certain behaviours of concern
- Facilitate the education and development of every child
- Support respectful ways of resolving emotional regulation difficulties and conflict
- Support children in dealing with consequences of behaviour, making reparation and repairing relationships with understanding and compassion
- Foster compassion and forgiveness based on understanding that behaviours of concern are a form of communication and are often the result of skill gaps and/or unmet needs
- 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 *Bí Cineálta Policy*, 2025)
- Ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through an ethos of open and effective communication
- Support the flexible use of both preventative and reactive strategies to allow for children with diverse representations and needs
- Provide a variety of means for children to regulate, reflect and make reparation
- Encourage the involvement of both home and school, including the wider school team, 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 Behaviour Guidance Policy. 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, staff, parents/guardians/carers and the pupils themselves in the review and operation of the policy. 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:

- Show respect and consideration for others, adults and peers
- Behave in a manner which creates a safe, positive and respectful environment for all
- Behave in the classroom in a way that supports teaching and learning for all
- Behave in a kind and inclusive manner
- Do their best both in school activities, and in the completion of homework
- Show respect for the property of the school, other children and their own belongings
- Move safely and calmly around the school building
- Be honest at all times
- Wear appropriate clothing in school and on school trips







Expectations about general behaviour are discussed with children at the beginning of each school year, and often at the beginning of each term. Child-friendly presentations have been prepared for both the Junior and Senior parts of the school. What situationally appropriate behaviour looks like is modelled and detailed in behaviour matrices which have been developed as both teaching resources and visual reminders.

Each class also develops a Class Charter at the beginning of each year. This allows the children to express their views and agree expected conduct within their classrooms.

5.1.2 Behaviour Matrix for METNS (junior)

		Learning Spaces	Toilet spaces	Inside Spaces	Outdoor Spaces	Outings, activities, & ECA
						
M	Movement	I move carefully. I stay at my place.	I walk to the bathroom.	I walk quietly. I stay on the left.	I can walk or run. I can play ball.	I move to match the activity. I stay with my group.
E	Empathy	I show respect and kindness to everyone who comes to our classroom.	I wait my turn. I know the bathroom is not a play space.	I keep the space quiet so people in classes can learn.	I give others space to play. I respect the staff who are minding me.	I show respect to staff and coaches.
T	Thoughtfulness	I listen when someone is talking. I follow the instructions.	I allow people privacy.	I stand back if someone is trying to get by. I follow instructions.	I include children who are left out. I follow instructions.	I engage in fair play. I follow instruction.
N	Neatness	I mind my belongings. I keep the classroom tidy.	I leave the bathroom clean for the next person.	I make sure to hang up my coat.	I bring my own belongings back in after I play.	I help to collect equipment. I mind my belongings.
S	Safety	I walk around the classroom. I am gentle.	I make sure that I don't leave water on the floor.	I stay in the building unless there is an adult with me. I am gentle.	I watch where I am going. I stay in the play space. I am gentle.	I am gentle. I follow the rules of the game. I am careful when near roads.

5.1.3 Behaviour Matrix for METNS (senior)

		Learning Spaces	Bathrooms	Corridors	Outdoor Spaces	Outings, activities, & ECA	Online and beyond school
							
M	Movement	We move safely around the classroom.	We walk to the bathroom. Only one person is in at a time.	We walk on the left of the corridor.	We do not kick balls in the yard.	We move with awareness and care. We follow fair play.	Phones are only to be used outside school.
E	Empathy	We are kind and inclusive to all students. We help one another.	We ensure that all pupils have privacy.	We keep quiet so other classes can learn as we pass.	We understand that everyone relaxes differently. We respect that difference.	We understand that everyone relaxes differently. We respect that difference.	The rules are the same on and offline. Be fair and be respectful.
T	Thoughtfulness	We show respect for the learning of ourselves and others.	We use the bathroom efficiently so others can use it too.	We stand back and allow others to pass by.	We watch out for each other and include people in our play.	We watch out for others and ensure that we are respectful to others around us.	Consider the feelings of others – only say things that are true and kind.
N	Neatness	We have respect for our belongings and take care of our learning materials.	We treat this space with respect and keep it clean.	We ensure our belongings are stored neatly outside the class.	We bring our belongings back after each break.	We bring our belongings with us. We help to keep the space tidy.	
S	Safety	We follow staff instructions. We are respectful and fair with our words and physical actions.	We keep the floors dry.	We walk quietly and follow instructions. We are aware of others in the space.	We follow staff instructions. We are respectful and fair with our words and physical actions.	We follow staff instructions. We are respectful and fair with our words and physical actions.	Follow cyber safety guidelines and family rules. Seek adult help if something gives you a bad feeling.

5.1.4 Anti-Bully Policy

Our *Bí Cineálta* Policy is closely aligned to our Behaviour Guidance Policy and has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/guardians. Pupils are expected to adhere to the guidelines and procedures therein. Adults and pupils should refer to the *Bí Cineálta* Policy itself for further details

5.1.5 Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

The school has worked with staff, parents/guardians, and pupils to establish a policy outlining the acceptable use of technology in the school. Logical consequences for not following the guidelines outlined therein are detailed in that policy. Adults and pupils should refer to the policy itself to see details of same [here](#).

<https://metns.ie/our-school/policies/>

5.1.6 Online Behaviour and Behaviour Beyond the School Boundaries

As outlined in the *Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying framework*, behaviours that happen outside of the school are not the remit of the school, except in a situation where incidents either at home or online are impacting negatively upon the children in school, in which case the school is obliged to support the pupils involved.

The school has a duty of care to its pupils where such incidents are having a direct and deleterious impact on the ability of the school to carry out its duties of teaching and learning, or where the child's right to safety, education or having adults do what is best for them are being infringed upon.

5.1.7 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. These guidelines are included in our Dress Code Policy (2024)

<https://metns.ie/our-school/policies/>

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 cooperative, situationally appropriate behaviour in school. Parents/guardians have a key role in assisting the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school expectations, supporting a positive attitude towards learning and engagement with school tasks and activities and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort, where no alternative arrangement has been made. Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment with their child's teacher to discuss their concerns. In cases of an identified pattern of behaviours of concern, parents/guardians will be invited to participate in the intervention process. Parents/guardians should be available to visit the school when invited.

Parents/guardians uphold their child's right to an education by encouraging punctuality and regular attendance. We recognise that for some children, school attendance is very complex, especially for those who are experiencing upheaval at home, are suffering with a chronic/persistent illness, or who are neurodivergent. Where this is the case, we encourage the child's carer(s) to reach out to the school so that all stakeholders can work together to support the child's school attendance in a timely manner.

Please see section below for further information about attendance and punctuality.

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 Behaviour Guidance 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 other's needs
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, religion, ability or disability
- Foster an awareness of the anti-bullying practices within the school (see 'Bullying' section below) and the importance of avoiding bullying behaviours in our interactions with one another
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
- Ensure that our children come to school, on time, refreshed and prepared for work.
- Taken an active interest in the learning and the 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 the staff to ensure that all behaviour is viewed through a rights-based, trauma-informed, neuro-affirmative lens. This policy, therefore, is understood to allow for flexibility to ensure that each child can access *equity* of support (what they need) as opposed to *equality* (same for all). We aim to ensure that fairness is achieved for all pupils. This is particularly important for children with additional needs, whether pervasive or transient.

Staff will endeavour to:

- Discuss the Behaviour Guidance Policy with their class in an age-appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year and use it to formulate their Class Charter and refer to it periodically thereafter
- Ensure that the voices of all children are heard in the Class Charter discussion
- Ensure the Class Charter is displayed in the classroom
- Encourage self-discipline and situationally appropriate behaviour
- Offer opportunities for movement and regulation to support engagement
- Endeavour to ensure that there is appropriate supervision at all times
- Use proactive strategies to support pupils to regulate and feel safe in school
- Use reactive strategies as a response to behaviours of concern which maintain the dignity of the child in their struggles
- Promote situationally appropriate behaviour with praise and appropriate reward systems
- Meet pupils' behaviour with curiosity and an understanding of behaviour as a form of communication, while still being clear that there are certain behaviours which are just not acceptable
- Endeavour to keep a log of behaviours of concern, where it is possible and appropriate, which are deemed to be of a moderate or significant level for the purposes of identifying patterns or triggers with a view to better supporting the child
- Discuss behaviour of concern with pupils and inform or include them in monitoring where appropriate
- Involve the school team, the Principal and the parents/guardians when dealing with moderate and significant behaviours of concern as detailed below

6 Supporting Appropriate and Safe Behaviour

6.1 'METNS' Matrix

In our school, we will always try to affirm the positive and praise children for positive language around expectations. This will be further supported with a set of consistent rules presented in a behaviour matrix (see above). We aim to keep things simple and clear, and to present this information in a variety of ways to support all learners to access the information.

As a general rule, the school will endeavour to create an environment where preferred behaviours are reinforced through praise and careful use of rewards. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that appropriate situational behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Recognition will be paid to pupils who have previously been presenting with behaviours of concern so that not only 'good' behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

Proactive strategies to support learners will be considered and planned for to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, every child is well supported to participate positively and comfortably in school life.

6.2 School Assembly

During assembly time children will be frequently praised for behaviour which supports a positive environment in the school for self and others, and be reminded of the standards of behaviour expected in the school community. The Principal may recognise exceptional behaviour. Situationally appropriate behaviours will also be reinforced and explored through reflection on our 'Value of the Month'. Inclusive language will be used.

7 Responding to Behaviours of Concern

In order to establish a common understanding of and consistent response to behaviour, the METNS Behaviour Guidance Policy classifies behaviours of concern into three levels based on the degree of disruption and the level of impact on others caused by the behaviour. The policy also includes examples of the proactive strategies put in place to support children at all levels, alongside the reactive strategies which may be engaged to respond to a behaviour of concern.

The three levels are as follows: minor lapses in expected behaviour; behaviours of moderate concern; and behaviours of significant or increased concern. All everyday instances of minor lapses in expected behaviour are dealt with by the classroom team. In cases where moderate behaviours of concern or single instances of significant behaviours of concern occur, parents will be notified at an early stage and may be invited to meet with the teacher and/or the Principal, or the wider team working with the child to discuss the child's behaviour and to collaboratively identify a pathway forward. Pathways for responses to behaviours are listed below. It is noted here that classification of a behaviour into one of these three levels is, in some cases, a matter of judgement and it is

A biopsychosocial approach recognises humans as complex beings whose functioning is determined by interrelated and interdependent biological, psychological and sociocultural factors

acknowledged that the person best placed to assess this is the staff member who witnesses the behaviour in question.

Where a child is engaging in behaviours of concern, the school will endeavour to respond with empathy and to be calm and objective. A problem-solving approach will be taken, which will include the voice of the child, and is founded upon trauma-informed and restorative practices, and the biopsychosocial approach to understanding behaviour.

Children learn through pushing boundaries and mistakes and small disruptions are part of normal development and exploration. As such, responses to behaviours will be developmentally appropriate, restorative, instructive and positive. Children will be taught explicitly about what appropriate behaviour in the school environment looks like with accommodations made for the differing needs of individual pupils which may render some expectations unattainable or inappropriate for that pupil.

7.1 Level 1: Minor lapses in expected behaviour

Level one behaviours of concern are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom or common areas.

Please note that the following lists are non-exhaustive. All strategies are implemented with the best interests of the child at heart, and a clear understanding that every child has a right to an education which is inclusive, child-centred, and safe.

7.1.1 Examples

- Minor breaches of the general, classroom or playground rules
- Disrespectful language, tone or manner towards peers or staff
- Name-calling, labelling, taunting or any general unkindness directed towards another child (or adult)
- Physical interference with others such as pushing, shoving, tripping or hitting or kicking of any kind
- Any violation of a person's body boundaries, including poking, prodding, pinching, targeting facial area or touching an area usually covered by swimwear (taking into account the age, level of understanding and intent of the action)
- Use of 'bad' language, (situationally inappropriate exclamations or words deemed so due to content used or tone of delivery. Specific words are not included here due to their inappropriate nature). METNS aims to have a zero tolerance here.
- Disobedience and ignoring a staff request deliberately (as opposed to when they are deeply engaged in an activity)
- Responding to staff members impolitely, 'answering back'
- Being disruptive during learning activities
- Talking out of turn
- Knowingly disturbing the work or play of others
- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers, including non-completion of homework without a reason or where an alternative arrangement has not been made

- Running or other minor unsafe behaviours within the school building
- Littering around the school

Please note: repeated minor incidents are classified as moderate behaviours of concern.

7.1.2 Proactive Strategies to Support the Learner

Proactive strategies may include:

- Positive relationships between child and staff; identification of key adult
- Clear communication of behaviour expectations and behaviour that can be upsetting to others
- Collaborative communication with pupil and hearing the voice of the pupil
- Visual timetables in the class
- Predictable routines in the classroom and for other times such as assembly and lining up after breaks
- A tidy and visually calm classroom environment
- Emotional regulation strategies taught to the whole class
- Access to movement breaks within the classroom
- Access to sensory supports/ breaks
- Calm Corner in the classroom
- Environmental checklist used to assess the classroom environment (see [*Special Educational Needs: Continuum of Support*](#) for sample checklists)
- Sensory checklist
- Placement within the classroom
- Executive functioning supports
- Focused, genuine praise
- Classroom-based interventions such as stamp or sticker charts
- Strategies to support pupil, e.g. access to Post-its as an alternative to talking out of turn and other ways to collect all pupils' responses
- Access, where appropriate, to learning support groups to support pupils where difficulties with content might be a trigger
- Flexible seating/access to quiet work areas
- Access to social groups where possible/deemed appropriate
- Basic needs checklist to identify any physical needs and to support access where necessary, e.g. bathroom schedule, extra snacks, water breaks etc.
- Practice of validating the feelings of pupils when talking to them.

7.1.3 Reactive Strategies to Respond to Minor lapses of Behaviour

Reactive strategies may include:

- Gentle, clear rule reminders
- Redirection to the Class Charter or this policy
- Discussion of the behaviour with child to access their voice and perspective
- Verbal reminder or caution
- Reinforcement of alternative situationally appropriate behaviour
- Identification of the function of the behaviour to support the identification of a preferred alternative
- Making environmental changes such as place in the classroom, peer group etc.

- Offer to move to a quiet space within the classroom, SET room or a quiet place in the yard (child-led)
- Offer of an appropriate regulation tool
- Completion of unfinished work (where appropriate) at a later time (this should not impact upon the child's right to leisure time during breaks)
- Loss of privileges such as Golden Time, additional preferred or granted class activities.
- Loss of or limited access to Chromebooks where appropriate
- Supported, collaborative reflection on the situation either immediately or following a period of time to support regulation
- Explicit teaching of alternative language to communicate feelings of frustration, hurt etc.
- Where deemed appropriate, parent(s)/guardian(s) may be contacted
- The establishment of a classroom-based observation, targets or behaviour plan may be appropriate at this stage

7.2 Level 2: Behaviours of moderate concern

Level 2, behaviours of moderate concern, are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and may be potentially dangerous to the safety and well-being of pupils and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviours of concern that are included at this level.

Please note the following lists are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. Each child is an individual and responses to all moderate behaviours of concern will be viewed through that lens.

7.2.1 Examples

- Persistent minor incidents (level one) will be classified as a behaviour of moderate concern (level 2).
- Repeated unwanted behaviours such as constant interrupting, shouting, noise-making (not including stimming behaviours)
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying harassment discrimination and victimisation) which falls short of significant behaviours of concern
- 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 fall short of serious behaviours of concern
- Disrespectful/derogatory language, tone or behaviour toward a member of Staff / visitors or another pupil
- Behaviour which is dangerous/disrespectful to self or others (for example, shoving, pushing, hitting, or 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 or Smart Watch without permission
- Minor theft

- Possession of cigarettes and and/or other prohibited substances
- Behaviour sufficiently concerning where parental involvement is deemed appropriate
- Any violation of a person's body boundaries, including touching an area usually covered by swimwear (considering the age, level of understanding and intent of the action)
- Touching one's own private parts for the purpose of regulation or self-stimulation (considering the age, level of understanding and awareness of the action)

7.2.2 Proactive Strategies to Support the Learner

All the proactive strategies listed above also apply here. Additional proactive strategies may include:

- Staff conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, and Principal
- Evidence gathering for the identification of patterns or skill gaps which might be supported, e.g. language needs around turn taking etc.
- Movement, sensory or nurture breaks implemented at times which might be identified as tricky
- Meeting with pupil to explore the possible function/causes of the behaviour with a view to preventing an escalation to a behaviour of moderate concern. This meeting may include the class teacher, the Principal, the SET teacher, and/or the parent(s)/guardian(s) as appropriate
- Implementation of a proactive behaviour management plan in consultation with the pupil and other stakeholders as appropriate
- Communication of plan to all relevant staff to ensure that responses are consistent
- Referral for assessment or referral to an external body for support where necessary, e.g. CAMHS Lucena, CDNT, Primary Care Psychology, Barnardos, play therapist
- Identification of a key adult to support the development of positive relationships, if not already in place
- Offer of a role of responsibility, or opportunity to use a strength, to child, as appropriate
- Reducing the communication load on the pupil in times of high alert/crisis distress. Reducing talk and supporting the child to use their preferred method of communication
- Redirecting the child to an alternative activity
- Access to an emotional regulation or social group with a SET teacher where appropriate/possible
- Alternative systems for lining up/movement in the classroom to minimise triggering situations where possible/appropriate
- Establishing a 'buddy system' to support integration/friendships.
- Staff awareness of own body language and amount of talking used when addressing behaviours of concern.
- Logging of behaviours to support the identification of patterns, triggers and functions of behaviour to inform strategies/planning for the pupil.

7.2.3 Reactive Strategies to Respond to Behaviour

Reactive strategies utilised at this level may include:

- Any combination of steps from level one
- Discussion and restorative reflection on behaviour with teacher/relevant staff members. Active listening and validation of the voice of the child.

- Completion of a more formal reflection activity, where appropriate and supported by an adult. This may take different forms depending on the needs of the pupil.
- Discussion of behaviour with Principal.
- Requirement to spend a designated time with Principal or other senior staff member during the school day.
- **Contract of behaviour** created with all stakeholders, including the pupil, to ensure that all voices are heard.
- **Behaviour management plan** may be developed collaboratively with the school team, family and external agencies where appropriate
- **Target Diary** to focus on particular target or desired behaviours
- Reflective session with relevant staff member during Golden Time on a Friday or another discretionary time which does not affect the child's right to leisure time and play.
- Making a repair, e.g. pupil cleaning off their own graffiti or returning a stolen item etc.
- Logical consequence which is informed by the behaviour of concern, e.g. time away from playground following repeated dangerous behaviour in that environment
- Parent(s)/ guardian(s) contacted via phone call, email, note, reflection sheet or other
- Informal or pre-arranged meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)

7.3 Level 3: Behaviours of significant or increased concern

Level 3, behaviours of significant or increased concern, are considered the most serious. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal wellbeing 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 which are considered to be of significant or increased concern. Please note the following lists are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. Each child is an individual and responses to all significant behaviours of concern will be viewed through that lens.

7.3.1 Examples

- Repeated or serious instances of level two moderate behaviours of concern which have not been modified by intervention
- Continuous serious disruption of a class by a pupil
- Any violation of a person's body boundaries, including touching an area usually covered by swimwear (considering the age, level of understanding and intent of the action)
- 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. This does not refer to instances of extreme distress on the part of a pupil where they are unable to comply

with an instruction due to extreme dysregulation or where they cannot understand what is being asked of them

- 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
- Wilful damage or attempted wilful damage of school property, property of staff, fellow pupils or school visitors
- Serious theft
- Possession/supply and/or use of alcohol, cigarettes, illegal drugs and/ or other harmful substances. Please refer to school 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
- Leaving school premises without permission. Where a child is regularly experiencing a flight response or is a flight risk due to their experience of the school environment, attempts to leave the school premises will be dealt with as an on-going safety rather than behavioural concern as appropriate

7.3.2 Proactive Strategies to Support the Learner

All the proactive strategies listed above also apply here. Additional proactive strategies may include:

- Team conference.
- Full team meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) and school team including school principal
- Advice or support may be sought from outside agencies including NEPS, CDNT, Lucena, CAMHS, and others
- Community Garda may be invited in to speak to pupils
- Contract of behaviour
- Additional review of the school environment, sensory environment and adaptations made where necessary
- Additional support from a SET teacher to address any identified gaps in skills such as social, academic or language skills
- Access to nurture breaks/down time to support regulation
- Explicit 1:1 teaching of emotional regulation strategies where possible/appropriate
- ANA access where possible/appropriate
- Increased supervision to support positive interactions with others/safety
- Access to sensory room or other withdrawal space (child-led) to support regulation and felt safety
- Focus on relationships with pupil and identification of key adult
- Increased use of visual communication techniques
- Logging of behaviours to support the identification of patterns, triggers and functions of behaviour to inform strategies/planning for the pupil

7.3.3 Reactive Strategies to Respond to Behaviour

Reactive strategies utilised at this level may include:

- Any combination of steps from levels one and two
- Review of current levels of support and strategies in use for pupil
- Consultation and/or support may be sought from NEPS, the NCSE or other external agencies
- **Contract of behaviour** created with all stakeholders, including the pupil, to ensure that all voices are heard
- **Behaviour management plan** may be developed collaboratively with the school team, family and external agencies where appropriate
- **Target Diary** to focus on particular target or desired behaviours
- **Exclusion from school trips** may be considered where a child's behaviour is considered to be a danger to themselves or others (see also Trips and Excursions policy [here](#))

7.3.4 Further Reactive Strategies to Respond to Behaviour

- **Voluntary removal from school:** for a period may be considered where it is in the best interests of the child or where it may be necessary for staff or other pupils to recover or regulate following a crisis situation. This should be agreed with parent(s)/ guardian(s) and should be for a fixed, agreed length of time. This is a child-focused emergency strategy and not intended as an ongoing response to behaviour or a punitive reaction. Where necessary, consultation with NEPS and/or the Educational Welfare Officer will be sought. A record will be kept
- **Query over school setting:** all stakeholders may come together to assess whether the school environment and the demands associated with a mainstream school setting or a special class within a mainstream school have a role in the behaviour and to decide whether an alternative school setting might be more appropriate and supportive for the child
- **Suspension from school for one to three days:** this response may occur with the first instance of a level three behaviour of concern. The Principal, following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension. See procedures in the following section for further details
- **Suspension from school for four to ten days:** this response will occur with the repeated instance of a level three behaviour of concern or a severe expression of this level of 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 this suspension will be kept by the school. Upon return to school, the pupil along with their parent(s)/ guardian(s) will understand not to repeat the specific behaviour to the best of the pupil's ability.
Please note: in exceptional circumstances, e.g. a situation in which an expulsion is being considered, the suspension period may be further extended
- **Expulsion:** Significant behaviours of concern can result in a pupil being expelled. Please see the section below for procedures

8 When our school setting is not working for the child

There are times when young people may be struggling significantly, and when this happens it is much more difficult for a child to regulate and for us to support their behaviour. Due to setting events beyond the control of the school such as trauma or significant ongoing dysregulation due to additional needs, pupils may repeatedly be engaging in behaviours which are dangerous or which have a significant impact upon the ability of they themselves and their peers to access learning in the school environment. While every possible option will be explored by staff to support the pupil and their parent(s)/guardian(s), a time may come when we need to look at the propriety of the placement.

The following are some situations under which the school may recommend a change of placement for a child:

- A highly individualised curriculum is needed, which we do not have capacity to offer
- Smaller class groups and consistent attachment figures are needed for a young person to feel safe
- A greater level of flexibility is needed within the curriculum/structure of the timetable
- School attendance continues to be minimal after the school has exhausted all possible accommodations, in consultation with relevant bodies including a NEPS psychologist and the Education Welfare Officer in Tusla
- Higher levels of autonomy are needed than we can provide
- More practical or therapeutic interventions are required to re-engage an individual.
- When a young person threatens the safety of other pupils
- When all other supports put in place to ensure that the child can engage positively with the school staff and their peers have not been successful

Before a recommendation of this type is made, the school has a duty to ensure that they have:

- Worked with the pupil to identify possible solutions to the challenge(s) they are facing
- Worked with the pupil and/or their trusted person to gather the pupil's own feelings to ensure that their voice is part of the process
- Worked with the pupil's parent(s)/ guardian(s) to identify possible solutions and/or accommodations to address the challenges
- Completed an assessment of the environment and classroom practices to ascertain whether a reasonable and practical change in either or both of these areas would support the pupil to return to meaningful education within the existing setting

Where a decision is made that a pupil should explore an alternative educational setting, it is important for the pupil and their family to know that it is not their fault and that, sometimes, the limitations of a mainstream school or special class setting can mean that they cannot get the support they need. This does not affect our positive regard for the pupil or their parent(s)/guardian(s).

9 Procedures for Suspension & Expulsion

Occasionally, despite every effort being made to support a child in our school, behaviours of concern of a dangerous or significantly disruptive nature continue to occur. In these instances, the school is obliged to consider, not just the rights and needs of pupil themselves, but the rights of their peers and classmates. Dangerous, hurtful, or disruptive behaviours can result in a whole class group being denied their right to an education and their right to be safe. When this situation arises, the school may be forced to take steps towards suspension or expulsion.

As part of Monkstown Educate Together National School's Behaviour Guidance 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.

9.1 Suspension

Definition of Suspension:

'... requiring the pupil 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)

9.1.1 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 five 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 ten school days. The Board retains its authority to suspend a pupil in all other cases/circumstances.

9.1.2 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 pupil/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 pupil 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 behaviours of concern.

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.

9.1.3 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 facts confirms behaviour of significant and/or increasing concern that could warrant suspension, the school will initiate a formal investigation of the matter. Such behaviour may well be ongoing and a direct result of identified or emergent 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 pupil. 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 consequence 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 pupil/s has also not been in school for other reasons.

9.2 Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

‘A pupil 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.’

9.2.1 Authority to Expel:

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

9.2.2 Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms behaviour of significant and/or increasing concern that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

Step 1: 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 five 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.

Step 2: 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 pupil; 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)

Step 3: 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 pupil 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

Step 4: 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 pupil before the passage of twenty 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 pupil, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the pupil during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff

10 Bullying

In accordance with the *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviours for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

(Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying, DES 2022)

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. It includes online bullying and homophobic/transphobic / racist / sexist/ or ability-focused bullying behaviours. Discrete learning about bullying behaviour and how to handle them forms part of the SPHE curriculum for all classes at an age-appropriate level.

Every child is expected to do his/her best to ensure that such behaviour does not happen, and each pupil has a responsibility to report any incidents of bullying behaviour to parents or a member of staff. Parents/carers should also encourage and support their children in reporting such behaviour. Bullying behaviour can only be dealt with if it is reported. The steps for dealing with bullying behaviour in METNS are outlined in the school's *Bí Cineálta* Policy which can be accessed <https://metns.ie/our-school/policies/>

11 Guidelines for Attendance and Punctuality

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school and for upholding their child's right to access education. Monkstown Educate Together National School recognises that the child's ability to attend school and to be punctual is often outside of their control and we, therefore, rely upon parents/guardians and carers to uphold this right.

It is also acknowledged that certain groups of children, particularly those who suffer with anxiety or who may experience additional challenges relating to school attendance due to neurodivergence may require additional support with their attendance. It is vital to maintain the habit of attending, even if it is for a reduced time each day. If a pupil is experiencing reluctant attendance, we encourage parent(s)/ guardian(s) to engage proactively with the school for support and further guidance.

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

- In line with good practice, parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to inform the school on the day a pupil is absent (or before if feasible). This is easily done through Aladdin
- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school in writing by letter, absence notes in the child's journal, or via an email or Aladdin Connect message
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- In the event of significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) occurring, the school should be notified and a doctor's cert provided
- 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.

12 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 behaviours or concern or bullying in the classroom and resulting contact with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- A list of significant incidents, actions taken to support the child, and a log of contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) will be kept as part of the child's log of actions on Aladdin. This information is password protected and is only accessible by certain staff working with the child in keeping with GDPR guidelines
- The school will use a yard book for the supervising teacher to record behaviours of concern or bullying on the yard/pitch
- 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

13 Parental Concerns and Grievance Procedures

It is recognised that the implementation of this Policy requires a high level of cooperation between staff and parent(s)/guardian(s), 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/carer 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 home is vital in this regard and would prefer to address any concerns at the earliest possible stage.

14 Extracurricular Activities (ECA)

The purpose of Extracurricular Activities in Monkstown Educate Together National School is to enhance the vital life of the school for all children through a range of activities including sports, games, arts and culture. The METNS Behaviour Guidance Policy applies to all extracurricular activities, both on the school premises and off-site. In addition, the ECA program has an additional but overlapping set of behavioural expectations which are communicated to parents upon sign up. Issues are dealt with by the ECA coordination team under the remit of the MCA.

The ability of children to engage with the ECA Programme and to attend related school trips (matches, concerts etc) will be determined by the ECA coordinators in consultation with the school team and the Principal. Every effort will be made to ensure that all available supports are offered to promote the inclusion of all pupils, but where a concern relating to the safety of a child or their peers is identified, and where accommodations or additional supports will not adequately answer these concerns, a child may not be included in the activity or trip.

Each pupil is expected to:

- **Follow** their facilitators/coaches directions at all times
- **Remain** with the facilitators/coaches and group of pupils at all times
- **Behave** politely towards those they meet on off-site trips (matches etc)
- **Observe** the rules of behaviour appropriate to the setting.

15 Trips and Excursions

When a METNS pupil is off site as part of a school group on a tour or trip, they are expected to follow the guidelines for appropriate behaviour as outlined in this policy. This includes but is not limited to expecting the children to:

- **Behave respectfully and cooperatively** with all members of the school team and any parents who attend the trip
- **Follow** their facilitator's/teacher's directions at all times
- **Remain** with the facilitator/teacher and group of pupils at all times
- **Behave** politely towards those they meet on off-site trips (other tour groups, members of the public)
- **Observe** the rules of behaviour appropriate to the setting.
- **Pay particular attention to** any health and safety requirements.

The needs of the children in any class group will inform the choice of venue and activity. Where additional needs, health issues or other factors might make a trip or tour more challenging for a child every accommodation will be made to support them and help them to regulate, behave appropriately and to access activities in an unfamiliar environment. This may include asking a parent/ guardian to be available close by or to attend the trip.

In the event of a serious breach of expected behaviour, where the welfare and safety of a child or their peers, or the integrity of the trip is jeopardised by such behaviour, parent(s)/ guardian(s) may be contacted to collect a child.

Where there is a major concern over a child's participation in a trip or tour on the part of the parent or the school, or where patterns of behaviour are considered to be a potential danger to the child themselves or to others, it may not be appropriate for a child to attend a trip or tour. In this instance, the guidelines of the Tours and Excursions policy will be followed.

See the METNS Tours and Excursions Policy [here](#) for further information.

16 Conclusion

The rights of every child are outlined explicitly in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. Among them it makes explicit the right of every child to access a good quality education and to be encouraged to attend school, regardless of whether or not they have a disability. This right is uniquely important to this policy. Furthermore, children have a right to and education which develops their unique talents and abilities, and which supports them to learn to live peacefully and to protect the world in which they live. This education should be available to all children in a safe and inclusive environment, where the right to have adults act in the best interests of the child is upheld. It should also be a space in which the child's right to have their say is facilitated and respected.

Children have a right to play and a right to rest. They have a right to have friends and to form groups together as long as it does no harm to anyone else. They have a right to access information which supports their wellbeing and to do all of this whilst being protected from harm. It is the intention of this Policy to support an environment and to outline practices which uphold these rights.

With this in mind, this Behaviour Guidance Policy has been put in place and ratified by the Board of Management. We require parents/guardians 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.

To facilitate this, the school undertakes to provide a hard copy of this policy to families at the beginning of their school journey in junior infants, and again mid-way through their primary education, at the beginning of third class. A reminder to parents/guardians to review this policy will be given annually.



17 Policy Ratification

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Monkstown Educate Together in **September 2025**.

Signed _____ (Principal)

Date: _____

Signed _____ (Chairperson)

Date: _____