



## DATA PROTECTION POLICY

### Record Keeping and Data Protection

#### Rationale

It is necessary to devise a policy on record keeping for several reasons:

- Teaching is informed by pupil learning needs and the recording of where a pupil is in relation to his/her learning is a cornerstone of good teaching.
- Education Act Section 9(g) provides that parents (or students of 18 years or upwards) are entitled to have access in the prescribed manner to records kept by the school relating to the progress of the student in his/her education
- Attendance at school has a bearing on a pupil's attainment levels
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, requires principals
  1. To communicate to a school, to which a student is transferring, any problems relating to school attendance which the pupil concerned had and any other appropriate matters relating to the pupil's educational progress
  2. To keep a record of the pupil's attendance and the reasons for failure to attend
  3. To inform the Educational Welfare Officer in writing, where a pupil is suspended for a period in excess of 6 days, annual school attendance per child and where in the opinion of the principal the student is not attending regularly
- The school's existing procedures need to be clarified to ensure that the school complies with the spirit as well as the letter of the law e.g. accountability and transparency

#### Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

Mount Anville Montessori Junior School seeks to enable each child to develop her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

#### Aim:

The school aims by introducing this policy

- To record the educational progress that a pupil is making thereby enabling parents and teachers to support the child's learning.
- To report to parents in a meaningful way on the educational progress of their children
- To establish clear, practical procedures that will enable parents/guardians (or past pupils who have reached the age of 18) to access records relating to educational progress.
- To ensure that this access is available within the capacity of the school to administer it.

- To establish a clear understanding, shared by management, staff and parents, as to the type of records that are maintained and how such records should be made available.
- To ensure that the school complies with legislative requirements while awaiting the issue of guidelines as to the 'prescribed manner' referred to in Section 9 (g) of the Education Act
- To ensure that, is so far as possible, the school complies with legislative requirements/principles of good practice while awaiting the issue of guidelines.

## **Content of Policy**

A clear statement of what is understood by 'records kept relating to the progress of that student in his or her education' will include...

- Summer Report: an annual written report on each child's attainment levels/progress in each subject
- Teacher-designed Tests:
- Screening Test results
- Diagnostic Test results
- Samples of Pupil's Work in a folder or portfolio
- Class list of names and phone numbers are kept inside the roll book for access by the class teacher
- Letters regarding referrals for Support Teacher or other supplementary teaching and communications relating to this e.g. a record of parents' decision not to allow the child to attend at learning support.
- Enrolment/ Emergency Forms will be stored in a safe and secure cabinet in Administration Office.
- Code of Behaviour, signed by parents is stored in the individual pupils' files
- Record of meetings and child's breaches of code of behaviour will be stored in principal's office
- Serious injuries/accidents are recorded in the Accident Book by the supervising staff member. This is stored in the Welcome Office and the following school year, the Accident Book will be archived.
- Administration of medicines information and indemnity form for administration of medicine will be stored in the Principal's Office. A hand out of medical procedures for individual pupils will be kept in the Blue Medical Box in the pupil's individual classroom.

It is essential that records are stored in a safe and secure manner consistently for all pupils and that parents are made aware of the procedures.

## **Guidelines for the administration of records including records related to employees:**

- On the school emergency form, the pupil's parent will identify their consent regarding the transfer of information to other schools and permission to carry out diagnostic assessments.
- There is a standardised format for the school's report to parents at each level. The Support Teachers have their own school format for report cards. Classes from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class have a progress report that is communicated with parents at Christmas time.

- The test scores with such reports are based on standardised assessments, class tests, projects, copies and teacher observation. A hardcopy of the report cards will be sent to all families, a copy is kept on the pupil file and each class teacher will have a copy of their present classes' report cards electronically.
- The summer report cards are posted to parents
- The report cards are issued approximately 10 days before the end of term and parents/guardians have an opportunity to respond to the reports e.g. parent/ teacher meetings, phone call.
- Reports will be communicated to parents who live separately if requested by the parent.
- The class teacher will have the responsibility for ensuring that records are updated each year in the pupils' individual file once the report cards have been sanctioned for dissemination.
- Records will be kept in a safe and secure place. Access to the information in the records should be strictly controlled by the administrator. No individual file should leave the Administration Office.
- The school will keep a note of what, when and to whom a record has been transferred
- There is no time period specified in the Education Act, 1998 stating for how long records should be retained but as a prudent school, MAMJ would keep records of its pupils into adulthood as a child may bring a legal action relating to events in their childhood even when they are adults according to the time limits set out in the Statute of Limitations Acts, 1957-2000.
- Where reports are generated by external agencies (e.g. NEPS), permission will be sought from parents before allowing access to the reports by third parties e.g. another school.
- Access be regulated for people who are no longer enrolled MAMJ through the Administration Office.

### **Success Criteria**

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy

- Systematic compilation of attendance records by staff
- Systematic reporting to parents on educational progress in place
- Storage of records is manageable

### **Roles and Responsibility**

- The Bursar's Office will ensure that files and information are kept safe and securely
- The Administrative Officer will ensure files are transferred to the archive room and that the computer system archive is up-dated as appropriate.
- Each teacher has a locked cabinet for the safe and secure storage of all sensitive information.

**The Board of Management ratified this policy: September 2015**

**Signature of the Chairperson:            Donal Brennan**