



Parish Sacramental Programme Code of Behaviour

With reference to the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy, this Code of Behaviour seeks to define acceptable standards of conduct so that all children may prepare for the reception of the sacraments in an optimum learning environment. In pursuit of this goal, we consider the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility to be essential. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles. Each and every child attending the classes is entitled to receive the best sacramental preparation and nobody has the right to interfere or disrupt that process. Consequently, it is necessary that guidelines be laid down to ensure that all the children have the opportunity to benefit to the full from the instruction they are receiving.

Since it is impossible to foresee every possible situation it is not intended to give an exhaustive list of offences and sanctions. This could lend itself to the mistaken understanding that something which is not on the list, is permitted. The code is intended as a guide, which indicates the spirit of discipline expected in the classes, and each separate incident will be judged according to that spirit.

Parents/Guardians* can co-operate with the Catechists/Teachers* by encouraging their children to understand the need for class rules, which are structured in the interest of their welfare and safety. Both Children and Teachers have the right to participate in the Sacramental Preparation Programme in a disruptive-free environment.

Aims of the Code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in children and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable Catechists to teach without disruption.

The main area where good discipline is required are:

- Behaviour in class.

- Attendance and punctuality.
- Respect for others.
- Behaviour in church.

Behaviour in Class

- Our parish expects that children will have respect for themselves, their teachers and fellow classmates.
- Directions of the teacher must be followed at all times.
- Homework may be given each week. It is an essential part of sacramental preparation. Repeated failure to complete the assigned homework may result in reception of the sacrament being deferred to a later date.
- Children are expected to bring their books/folders to class each week. These books/folders are an essential part of both class work and sacramental preparation. Consistent failure to bring books/folders to class may result in reception of the sacrament being deferred to a later date.
- Neither eating nor chewing gum is permitted during class.
- Aerosol cans, knives, sharp objects, matches, lighters and other dangerous substances or objects that are considered a danger are also forbidden.
- The classroom should be kept neat and tidy.
- The parish centre property and the property of others must be treated with respect.
- Throwing objects in the classroom is forbidden.
- Children will not have access to the use of email or the internet while participating in the sacramental preparation programme.
- The use of mobile phones or all other electronic devices during class is forbidden. Failure to comply with this will result in the device being confiscated and returned only to the parents.
- Tipp-ex is forbidden.

Attendance and Punctuality

- It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to be punctual in dropping off or collecting children. Children who arrive late to class disrupt the teaching and learning process. Consistent latecomers may be required to defer sacramental reception to a later date.
- Parents/guardians are required to collect children from the classroom promptly once the class is completed.

Respect for Others

Children must:

- Have respect for teachers and fellow pupils at all times.
- Respect each other's property.
- Respect other children and their learning.
- Be kind to others and show willingness to help each other.
- Show courtesy and good manners at all times.
- Take responsibility for their own work.
- Follow instructions from teachers immediately.

Every instance of disrespect will be treated as a very serious matter and may result in parent/guardian being asked to remove the child from sacramental class.

Serious and/or consistent disrespect or misbehaviour may result in parent/guardian being asked to remove the child from the sacramental class.

Breaches of discipline and disruptive behaviour, including bullying will be dealt with in a manner that is fair and transparent involving the Sacramental Preparation Team and the parents/guardians involved. All such instances will be recorded in the Sacramental Preparation Programme Incident Book which is retained in the Parish Office.

Respect in Church

- Chewing gum, food or drinks are not permitted in the church.
- Children should be respectful always of the fact that it is a place of prayer for the wider community who come to the church to pray and that the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle.
- Parents/guardians should instil in their children an understanding of the various postures (standing, sitting, kneeling) used during Mass.
- Parents/guardians should assist their children's understanding of holy water, blessing themselves on entering the church, genuflection etc..
- The use of mobile phones and all other electronic devices while in the church is strictly forbidden at all times.
- Serious and/or consistent disrespect or misbehaviour may result in parent/guardian being asked to remove the child from the church.

Please note:

All participants in the Parish Sacramental Preparation Programme must adhere to the code of behaviour for these classes, otherwise they may be asked to discontinue their participation.

Parents/guardians who are dissatisfied with any aspect of the classes should inform the Parish Sacramental Preparation Programme co-ordinators.

Any concerns regarding the welfare and safety of children participating in the Parish Sacramental Preparation Programme should be brought immediately to the attention of the Parish Safeguarding Representative, the Designated Liaison Person or the statutory authorities. Contact details are displayed on the notice boards in the Parish Office and the church porch.

Pursuant to the data protection legislation in force in this jurisdiction; all documentation associated with the Sacramental Preparation Programme in Ashbourne-Donaghmore Parish will be stored securely and confidentially. It is retained for lawful purposes, and is not used or disclosed in any manner incompatible with those purposes. Access will be restricted to the Parish Priest, and/or the Parish Representatives, including Parish Safeguarding Representatives. This applies to: parental consent forms, incident records, necessary medical details, personal contact details, Safeguarding Declaration and Volunteers Forms, Garda Vetting Forms, etc.

**For the purpose of this entire policy document, the word 'Parents' includes also 'legal Guardians'. The word 'Catechist' is used interchangeably with the word 'Teacher'.*