



# Monkston Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Hannah Williams  
Deputy Head: Mrs Aimee Mills  
Senior Assistant Head: Mrs Lauren Hamer

Chair of Governors: Mr Adam Gledhill  
Business Manager: Mrs Emily Winship

## Newsletter 2

19<sup>th</sup> September, 2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

It was a joy to welcome our new reception pupils and their families last week. The children have settled in wonderfully, quickly adjusting to their new routines and surroundings. From engaging in fun activities to making new friends, they're already embracing school life with enthusiasm and curiosity.



## Smart Watches

We've received some queries from parents regarding the use of smartwatches in school. Pupils are welcome to wear a watch that tracks fitness or location. However, any watch that connects to the internet, sends or receives messages, or makes phone calls will be treated like a mobile phone and must be handed to the teacher to be locked away at the start of the school day. Additionally, please note that no jewellery or watches are allowed to be worn during PE lessons for safety reasons.



## Safeguarding and Child Protection at Monkston Primary School

I want to take this opportunity to update you regarding an important aspect of our work at Monkston Primary School – safeguarding (sometimes called *child protection*). While our full policy is always available on the school website, I believe it is important to share with you a clear summary of how we keep children safe in our care.

### What safeguarding means

By law, schools have a duty to protect children from harm. Abuse is defined in four main categories:

- **Neglect:** not meeting a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or protection from danger.
- **Physical abuse:** deliberately causing injury or harm to a child.
- **Sexual abuse:** involving a child in sexual activity or exposing them to inappropriate sexual material or behaviour.
- **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional harm, such as intimidation, bullying, threats, or failing to provide love and care.

### Our responsibilities

As Headteacher, I am the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school. Mrs Mills and Mrs Hamer are also fully trained DSLs and take on the role of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) as part of the DSL team. All staff at Monkston are trained to recognise and act on safeguarding concerns – most recently in September 2025.

### How concerns are handled

If a member of staff has a concern about a child's safety, or if a child shares a worry, this is always passed straight to a DSL. We may speak with social services for advice or make a formal referral. In most cases we would inform parents of our actions, but there are times when the police or social services ask us not to do so in order to protect the child.

### Creating a safe environment

We aim to build strong, trusting relationships where children feel able to talk to staff if something is worrying them. When we do have safeguarding conversations with children, we always follow strict procedures: for example, we never promise secrecy, and we never put words into a child's mouth.

### Discipline at home – the legal position

The law on physical punishment differs across the UK.

- **England and Northern Ireland:** Parents and carers may legally use what is called *reasonable punishment*. This means that very mild physical discipline can be defended in law, but the defence does **not** apply if a child suffers injuries such as bruises, cuts, or any more serious harm. In practice, any action that leaves a mark or causes pain beyond a brief smack is likely to be considered unlawful.
- **Scotland and Wales:** The defence of *reasonable punishment* has been removed. This means that all forms of physical punishment are unlawful, and children have the same legal protection from assault as adults.

In all parts of the UK, actions such as hitting a child on the head, shaking them, using an object (for example, a belt, cane, or shoe), or using degrading punishments (such as washing a child's mouth with soap) are very likely to be treated as abuse and investigated by social services.

If a child tells us they have been physically punished in these ways, or if there are visible signs of injury, we are legally required to pass this information on to social services. Please note that schools do not decide whether abuse has taken place – our role is to report concerns so that trained professionals can investigate.

### Support for families

We understand that family life can sometimes be challenging, and we want to support you. Class teachers, along with myself, Mrs Mills and Mrs Hamer, are always happy to offer advice on positive behaviour strategies at home, or to signpost you to further help if you would like it. Please do not hesitate to reach out – we are here to work in partnership with you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important information and for your continued support in keeping every child safe.

### Upcoming Dates

Whole school	Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September 3.30pm in the hall – everybody welcome!	Friends of Monkston AGM
Whole school	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October 3.20pm-6.00pm Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 3.50pm-7.00pm	Parent consultations <i>Booking information to follow</i>
Year 2	Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2.15pm & 5.00pm	Yr2 production <i>2 tickets per child per performance will be sent home the week before the performance. If you require additional tickets, please contact the school office where a waiting list will be held.</i>
Whole school	<b><u>SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS</u></b>  <b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>INSET day</b>

Kind regards

*H. Williams*

Mrs Hannah Williams

