

**Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_



Student Handbook

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Beeton, ON L0G 1A0

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## WELCOME!

### Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! On behalf of the staff at Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School, we welcome students back for an exciting new school year. With our growing community, we extend a special welcome to the new families joining us!

Our dedicated staff is committed to educating each child to reach his or her full potential in body, mind and soul. Our school motto taken from Matthew's gospel, "Let your light shine so that others may see the good you do," expresses our hope: In learning together and using our gifts for the good of all, we inspire others to do the same. We strive to be light for the world.

We look forward to working closely with families and the community of St. James Parish as we begin a new school year filled with opportunities to grow and to celebrate.

Best regards,

The Staff of Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School

Follow us on Twitter @SMCDSB\_MRO

### School Day Schedule

Outdoor supervision begins at 8:45 a.m.

School Day Starts	9:00 a.m.
Instruction	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
A.M. Recess	11:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
Instruction	11:15 a.m. to 12:35 p.m.
Lunch	12:35 p.m. to 12:55 p.m.
Lunch Recess	12:55 p.m. to 1:35 p.m.
Instruction	1:35 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.
P.M. Recess	3:15 p.m. to 3:25 p.m.
School Day Ends	3:25 p.m.

### FAITH IN OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

#### School Mission Statement

We, the community of Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School, believe that every person is a gift from God filled with tremendous potential. We are committed to providing a peaceful learning environment grounded in our Catholic faith. We are dedicated to helping everyone achieve their personal best in heart, mind, body, and soul.

Together we use our talents to serve God and others - to be a light for the world.

### Prayer of Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School

Dear God,

Bless our school and keep it safe.

May we always be kind to everyone in our school community.

Help us to keep peace in our school by serving others and living our faith every day.

God, our Father, we thank you for the gifts that You have given us.

Please continue to guide us as we let our light shine so that others may see the good that we do in your glory.

Amen.

### Our Parish Partner

We believe in fostering a strong relationship between your home, our school and St. James Parish. Our parish works closely with our school community to provide your child with an education rooted in the Catholic faith.

### Sacramental Preparation

We work closely with our parish community to support students as they get ready to receive their sacraments.

Each year, students in Grade 2 have the opportunity to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Parents will work with St. James Parish to prepare for these sacraments. Our school supports and complements what children are learning at the parish through classroom teaching.

Students in Grade 7 have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Arrangements for this sacrament are made through the parish. The preparation and celebration of the sacrament is an important part of the students' year.



## POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

### Promoting a Positive School Climate

Maintaining a positive school climate at our school is a key priority because it helps students feel safe, welcome and secure. Using our mission and Catholic values as a guide, we have developed procedures and guidelines to ensure that our students and staff learn and work in a positive and productive environment.

### Student Behaviour

Our school has established some key statements to outline expectations around student behaviour.

Students at Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School:

- Will be active, positive and enthusiastic participants within our Catholic community as we strive towards living the Gospel message.
- Come to school on time and prepared to work with an enthusiastic and positive attitude, while striving to achieve academic goals.
- Will be familiar with and practise the school procedures as outlined in this school agenda in addition to any policies outlined by administration during the school year.
- Will respect and obey those in authority within our school community. Students will address staff and visitors to our school community in a polite and courteous manner.
- Will respect fellow students as they listen actively, speak honestly and respond positively in the classroom, on the schoolyard and as ambassadors of our school in the community.

### Dress for Success

Students will be participating in a wide range of activities – both inside and outdoors – at school, and so it is important that they wear comfortable, durable clothing that is suitable for the weather.

Our school is special because we model ourselves after Jesus Christ. How we present ourselves must reflect our commitment to promoting a safe, positive and respectful learning environment.

### Appropriate Dress Guidelines

Students, staff, parents, guardians, volunteers and visitors are to dress respectfully at school and school-sponsored activities.

Appropriate dress is described as the following:

- The torso is to be modestly attired. Clothing should cover the upper back, chest, and stomach.
- Sleeveless tops must cover the shoulder area and undergarments cannot be exposed. Shoulders must be covered by at least three adult fingers-width of fabric.
- Shorts, dresses and skirts must be at least to mid-thigh.
- Students are expected to wear indoor shoes while they are in the school.

Inappropriate dress refers to a standard of attire that does not meet the school community standards and is described as the following:

- Clothing with drug, alcohol-related, tobacco, sexual, sexist, racist, or violent slogans or images and/or inappropriate language.
- Hats, hoods and sunglasses are not worn inside.
- Halter-tops, tube tops, see-through mesh shirts, short shorts/skirts, inappropriate tank tops and bare midriffs.

It is expected that students will wear appropriate clothing that is not offensive or distracting to others. If a student's clothing is felt to be inappropriate, a number of consequences will be considered. Students may be required to change their clothing. Students may be sent home to change or parents may be required to bring a change of clothing.

### Footwear

For safety reasons and to maintain cleanliness in the classrooms, students need to wear clean shoes inside their class. Outdoor footwear is not to be worn in teaching areas. Students must have non-marking running shoes for gym classes.



## SAFE SCHOOLS

### Safe Arrival and Attendance

It is important that your child arrives at school safely and on time. It teaches your child the value of being punctual and it prevents disruptions in the classroom with the entry of late students. Our Safe Arrival Program, which includes communicating with our office when your child is late or absent, helps ensure student safety.

## Compulsory School Attendance

Ontario law states that children between the ages of 6 and 17 must attend school. We appreciate that sometimes there are circumstances beyond your control, such as illness, that might prevent attendance at school. However, these situations should be rare and the school principal will address prolonged absences.

If your child is away for more than 15 days consecutively due to illness, a medical note will be needed to maintain your child on the school register. There are many supports in place to encourage regular school attendance, including school counsellors, social workers, community agencies and an attendance counsellor. Please contact the school if you have questions or concerns.

## Reporting Your Child Late or Absent

Please follow this simple, but critical process when reporting your child as late or absent:

**Step 1** – Phone our school at 905-729-3473 at any time, to inform us when your child will be absent or late. There is a voice mail 24 hours per day.

**Step 2** – Leave your child's full name, teacher's name and the reason for the absence on the school voice mail.

**Step 3** – Late students must check-in at the office to receive a late slip for admittance to class.

**Important Note:** If your child regularly walks to school, it is assumed that he/she will attend class when buses are cancelled due to inclement weather. If you decide to keep your child home during an inclement weather day, you must use the process listed above to report your child's absence.

## Safe Welcome Program

All of our elementary schools have front door intercom and video technology installed as part of the Ministry of Education's Safe Welcome Program.

The intention of the program is for all elementary schools in Ontario to have doors locked throughout the school day. This means that students who are late for school or return to school after an appointment will need to be buzzed in through the main entrance. This enhanced security measure provides us with one more way to monitor who is visiting our schools and helps us ensure that all visitors sign in at the office.

## Leaving Early

Students who are leaving school early must bring a note to their teacher stating the need for the early dismissal. Please avoid any last minute early dismissals. We do not want to interrupt the learning in the classroom. At the time of dismissal, your child will proceed to the office to be signed out by a parent/guardian.



## Morning Drop-off

Students are to use the designated crosswalk entering school property.

School begins at 9:00 a.m. and supervision in the schoolyard begins at 8:45 a.m. Please do not drop your child off prior to 8:45 a.m.

Students will remain outside until the 9:00 a.m. bell, unless there is inclement weather.

## Afternoon Pick-up

Our school day ends at 3:25 p.m.

## Bicycles/Scooters/Skateboards

Bicycles/scooters must be locked in the designated bicycle racks. Wearing a bicycle helmet is mandatory and students must walk their bikes/scooters when on school property. Please note that the school cannot accept responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles/scooters.

**Skateboards and in-line skates are NOT permitted at school.**

## Riding the Bus

We are committed to providing safe and reliable bus transportation for those students whose distance from home to school one way is greater than 1.6 km. Riding the bus should be an enjoyable and positive experience for our students.

In order to ensure the safety of children riding the bus we ask the following:

- Students must take their bus home in the evening unless they have a note from a parent or guardian indicating that they can remain at school or walk home.
- A note from a parent/guardian must be provided to the office if a student plans to get off the bus at a different stop. This note will be approved by the office and then provided to the bus driver.

- Occasionally, we receive requests from parents to allow their child to ride the bus in order to visit a friend's house. Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate these requests.

### Ensuring Safety on the Bus

It is helpful to periodically remind your child about the rules and regulations of riding a school bus. Although it is very rare, school bus privileges can be suspended temporarily or permanently if a child doesn't respect the rules and regulations that are in place for the safety of everyone. Here are some basic guidelines to follow:



- Your child must always enter the bus in an orderly manner and immediately find a seat. Once on the bus, he or she must always follow the instructions of the school bus driver.
- All students must remain in their seats while the bus is in motion. With children sitting quietly, the bus driver is free from distractions and able to focus on road safety.
- Parents are financially responsible for any willful damage to the bus caused by their children.
- Keeping in mind the safety of all riders, we ask that your child not bring any objects onto the bus that may hinder safe operation.
- Eating or drinking on the bus is not permitted.
- Head and arms must stay inside the bus at all times and aisles should be kept clear.
- Mobile devices are not to be used on the bus.

### Bus Cancellations Due to Inclement Weather

On inclement weather days we urge you to visit [simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) or listen to a local radio station to find out if buses are cancelled. When buses are cancelled in the morning, they are automatically cancelled in the afternoon. Please keep in mind that our school is open for student learning even when buses are cancelled.

### Know Your Weather Zone

Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School is in the **SOUTH weather zone**. There are four weather zones and it is possible that buses will run in our zone, but be cancelled in another zone and so it is important for you to know your zone.

### Custody

We are always concerned about the safety of your child. Please ensure that the office staff and the classroom teacher are aware of legal agreements

between separated or divorced parents and copies of current legal documents are on file in the office.

### Emergency Situations

At Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School, procedures are in place and outlined in our Emergency Preparedness Plans so that we are fully prepared for an emergency situation. Staff and students routinely practise these procedures. If it is necessary to evacuate the school, our students will be relocated to Tecumseth Beeton Elementary School. In the case of an emergency, transporting students to this location is the responsibility of the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board. In any emergency situation, our school would work closely with the school board and emergency personnel to provide updates via websites and the media.

In very rare circumstances, for example a power outage or loss of heat in the winter, we may be required to close the school early. In emergency situations or early school closures, your child may be picked up by you or an authorized designate. If a parent authorizes a designate to pick-up a student, the teacher would appreciate a signed and dated note.

### Major Incidents

We know that being proactive and preparing for the potential of a major incident is a key way to keep our students and staff safe. As part of our safe schools initiative, Monsignor J.E. Ronan Catholic School has worked with the local police service to develop a response plan should a violent incident occur.

This involves immediate contact with the police and a lockdown of the premises. Although it is highly unlikely that something like this would occur, our staff regularly reviews and practices procedures with the students. Your child may mention to you that they were involved in a "Lock Down" drill because that is what our response plan is referred to within the school.

## GETTING INVOLVED

### Communicating With You

Establishing a positive and open relationship between parents, teachers and students is a critical part of achieving excellence in education.

The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board uses the SchoolMessenger Communicate Tool to send messages and updates to our staff and families. These messages can be sent via

email, text message or phone. Our school will use this tool to send regular updates to families throughout the year and it will also be used by the Board or the school to communicate information during crisis or emergency situations. It is important that the school office has your most current email address and phone number on file so that you receive the messages in a timely manner.



You will also find information posted on our website [smcdsb.on.ca/mro](http://smcdsb.on.ca/mro).

Please also follow us on Twitter [@SMCDSB\\_MRO](https://twitter.com/SMCDSB_MRO).

We always welcome opportunities for parents to have meetings with teachers and other school staff as necessary throughout the school year. This student agenda is also an excellent way to communicate with your child's classroom teacher. You can share questions or concerns via this agenda on a daily or weekly basis.

### **Online Payment Using School Day**

Our school is excited to offer online payment through a program called School-Day.

The system will enable parents to:

- Approve permission forms and pay online instantly
- Register your child for extracurricular activities
- Order and pay for hot lunches
- Reduce the amount of paper sent home in backpacks

If you haven't done so already, please obtain your family's secure key code from the school and visit [www.school-day.com](http://www.school-day.com) to register. Once you have registered you can pay for items and approve permission forms by clicking on the "School Day" quick link on our school website or logging in directly on the school day website [www.school-day.com](http://www.school-day.com).

### **Contact Information**

Please inform the school office if your address or any other pertinent information such as home or work telephone numbers change throughout the year. We need to make certain that our records are accurate.

### **Making the Most of the School Day**

In order to promote the best learning environment possible, we ask that parents keep school day interruptions to a minimum. Planning in advance and maintaining regular communication through this agenda will help maintain a harmonious and smooth day at school.

- **Dropping off items** – parents are not permitted to go to their child's classroom to drop off items, check-in, etc. If you need to see your child for some reason or would like to drop something off during the school day, you must check-in at the office.
- **Speaking with the teacher** – if you have questions, we encourage you to speak to your child's teacher. In addition, if you are making a change to your child's regular routine, please make these arrangements well in advance and communicate changes with your child's teacher in writing.
- **Last minute messages** – our office is quite busy during the day and so we urge you not to rely on us to get last minute messages to your child, unless it is an emergency.
- **Using the telephone** – students will not be permitted to use the office telephone unless they have permission from their teacher. If a phone call is necessary, it will be made by the teacher or another adult (this includes calls regarding illness or injury).

### **Catholic School Community Council**

Our Catholic School Community Council is composed of parents, a teaching staff representative, a non-teaching staff representative, a parish representative, a representative from the community and the principal. Members are elected each fall and serve as an advisory body to the principal on many significant school issues throughout the year. We welcome everyone to attend the meetings!



### **HEALTHY SCHOOLS**

We know that parents want us to promote a healthy environment at school. This includes promoting healthy food options, opportunities for physical activity as well as minimizing exposure to illness – all of these contribute to better learning.

### **Scent-Safe Schools**

Please be advised that a Scent-Safe Schools program is now in place for all schools and board office locations. This means that we are asking for

the cooperation of students, staff and visitors in not using scented products in our working and learning environments.

We know that allergies and sensitivities to scents can have severe health implications and so we must do everything possible to make sure that all students, staff and visitors with scent allergies and sensitivities are safe and fully included.

A scent is a smell or odour from products and it can be natural such as flowers or synthetic such as perfume. Examples of products that may have scents include shampoos, deodorant, hairspray, soap, detergents, perfumes, lotions, candles and cleaning products.

Not using scented products is a simple thing to do and it will help ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all of our students and staff.

### **Accident or Illness**

If your child becomes sick or gets injured while at school, we will contact you as soon as possible. If you are not available, or unable to be contacted, we will call the emergency contacts that you have listed in your child's record. It is essential that parents and guardians notify the school of changes to phone numbers or contacts.

### **Communicable Diseases**

The *Health Promotion and Protection Act* requires that children with certain communicable diseases must remain at home. Unfortunately we do not have the space or staff supervision for children who are not well enough to go outside at recess.

The following list defines some of the more common childhood diseases and how long your child should stay home if he/she becomes ill with one of these illnesses:

- **Chickenpox** - for 5 days after the rash begins or until all blisters have crusted.
- **Impetigo** - until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.
- **Pink-eye** - until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.
- **Scabies** - until treatment has been given.
- **Scarlet Fever** - until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.
- **Strep Throat** - until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.

- **Fifth Disease** - even though this is not a communicable disease, it should be reported to the office as there is a risk posed to pregnant women.

Visit the [simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://simcoemuskokahealth.org) for more information.

### **Head Lice**

Any situation related to head lice will be dealt with in a discreet manner, which protects the dignity of the children and privacy of families. Our school will educate students about preventative measures and we will also send current information from the Health Unit home to parents.

We are asking parents and guardians to help us prevent incidents or the spread of head lice by doing the following:

- Examine your child's head for possible infestations at regular intervals.
- Notify the school of any infestations.
- Ensure that proper and full de-infestation takes place within a reasonable length of time.

The major signs and symptoms of head lice are: intense itching, frequent and persistent head scratching with scratch marks, or an apparent rash on the neck and scalp. Further information regarding head lice is available through the school office or by visiting the Health Unit's website at [simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://simcoemuskokahealth.org).

### **Immunizations**

In Ontario, under the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*, you must provide proof that your child's vaccinations are current. When you register your child for school for the first time, you will be asked for a record of your child's immunization. Students who don't have up-to-date immunization or a valid exemption on file at the Health Unit, may be suspended from school. You can find out more about immunization programs on the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's website at [simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://simcoemuskokahealth.org).

### **Administering Medication**

There are some students who require regular or special medication. We all want to be sure that your child receives any medication he or she needs. Our board has a medication administration policy, which states that no medication can be administered by staff without written permission from parents. Students may not carry medication with them at any time, with the exception of an EpiPen and/or inhaler. Informed consent must be

provided from parents should a child be required to carry it with them. If a child requires medication, assigned staff will administer it. For medication to be administered, a consent and instruction form must be filled out. These forms and our board's policy are available at our office or on the board's website at [smcgsb.on.ca](http://smcgsb.on.ca).

## HEALTHY EATING

### Lunch

Students will eat their lunch at their desk and will remain on school property, unless special permission has been granted.

Students who walk to school may go home for lunch if they have written permission from a parent. For the safety of your child, we ask that a consistent routine be established with regards to staying at school or walking home during lunch. If your child is going to a friend's house for lunch, written permission is required from the parents of both children.



### Snacks

Students will be provided with time in the classroom to have snacks and drinks. All food and beverage must be eaten in the classroom. We discourage students from using glass bottles and containers for their drinks and snacks.

### Allergies

Many children have allergies, but for some students an allergy can be life threatening. For example, even minimal exposure to peanuts can prove fatal within minutes. Some other common allergens include tree nuts, shellfish, eggs, milk and latex – all of these can cause severe reactions.

If your child has a severe allergy, it is absolutely critical that you let us know. With your help, we will do our best to reduce risk and make sure all our students are safe, healthy, and able to concentrate on learning.

Our staff is instructed on how to deal with anaphylactic shock. However, our best course of action is to prevent exposure to potentially life-threatening allergies. As a school community, we must work together to ensure the safety of our students.

Here is what we are doing to reduce the risk of allergic exposure:

- All food and beverage must be consumed inside the classroom – under no

circumstances are students allowed to have snacks in the schoolyard.

- We strive to be a peanut and tree nut free zone. Please ensure that all food sent to school with your child meets the nut-free standard. "Pea Butter or Wow Butter" is not permitted. On request, we would be happy to provide you with a list of nut-free snacks and lunch ideas.
- We will inform you if there are other allergies in your child's classroom. We ask that you please understand and appreciate the health and safety of every student by not sending food and beverage items that may be a cause for concern.
- There are many students with a variety of food allergies and so we err on the side of caution to make sure all of our students are safe. We cannot distribute food brought from home (i.e., cakes and cookies).

### Selling Food and Beverage

Making healthy food choices while in school supports learning. The Government of Ontario has a school food and beverage policy, which has impacted the kinds of food and beverages we can sell at our school. The policy encourages selling lunches, snacks and drinks that follow the principles of healthy eating in *Canada's Food Guide*.

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

### Recess

Getting some fresh air and participating in physical activity at recess is important. Unless the weather is unsuitable, students are expected to be outside during recess. We cannot leave children unsupervised inside the classroom and so they must go out to the yard where supervision is provided.

### Dressing for the Weather

We ask that students dress in clothing that is suitable for the weather – this is especially important during the winter months. Durable and warm clothing will help ensure that your child's outdoor experiences are enjoyable. It is also advisable to label clothing with your child's name.

### Yard Safety

While outside at recess, we expect students to play safely and respect the rules of the schoolyard at all times.



### **Bringing Personal Property to School**

We request students not bring valued personal property to school including mobile devices, trading cards, etc. These items can easily be lost or damaged. Please note that the school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

Students should not bring money to school. If your child is required to bring money for school events or activities please ensure it remains in your child's school bag until the teacher collects it first thing in the morning.

### **Use of Mobile Devices**

With special permission, a student may be allowed to use mobile devices for instructional purposes. It is understood that all devices will be operated according to the agreement between the teacher and the student. Cell phones must be turned off and secured in the knapsack at all times. Theft, loss or damage of a device is the sole responsibility of the owner. **These rules also apply to the school bus.** Should a student use a device at school, on the bus or at a school-related event without permission, the device will be held in the office and returned at the end of the day. This is meant to ensure the privacy and comfort of all and helps maintain our primary focus on learning.

### **Lost and Found**

We encourage our students to check the lost and found for any misplaced items. If you know your child is missing something, you are welcome to check the lost and found yourself (please check-in at the office first). Unclaimed items will eventually be donated to a charity.

### **Volunteers**

We are always looking for volunteers. In order to volunteer, a parent must have a valid Criminal Background Check with a Vulnerable Sector Screening. You can get the forms and information about this from the school office administrator.

### **Co-curricular Activities**

There are various clubs and sport teams offered at our school. Many take place during lunch hour, as well as before or after school. These co-curricular activities provide opportunities for students to learn new skills and form friendships. They help to teach teamwork, co-operation and demonstrate school spirit.

In order to participate in co-curricular activities, students must make a sincere effort in their academic endeavours. Students must conduct

themselves in an appropriate manner both in and out of the school. It is important for students to represent our school community by showing good sportsmanlike qualities and by dressing appropriately for the event.

## **SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING**

### **Homework**

Homework is an integral part of a student's learning experience. In order to get the most out of school, students will be required, at times, to finish or continue their studies outside of the classroom. Research clearly shows that students who successfully complete homework achieve greater academic success in school.



If parents have concerns with the amount or content of homework assigned by the classroom teacher, please take the time to contact your child's teacher. It is recommended that all students read each night, and if possible, be read to by a parent or older sibling.

### **Learning Commons**

Our school is fortunate to have a beautiful and recently updated 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Commons and a teacher on hand to help students develop, refine and master research, computer and reading skills.

Students will have the opportunity to sign out books or resources. These items must be returned the next time they visit the Learning Commons. Students will not be able to sign out new material until their previous items have been returned. If a book is lost or damaged, it is expected that the student or parent will replace it.

Once your child has signed our Responsible Use of Technology Agreement, they will be able to access our devices and network.

### **Wishing You a Successful Year**

We hope you found the information in this agenda informative and useful. If at any time throughout the school year, you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or our office staff. We know that each child will grow tremendously – both in learning and in faith.



We look forward to working with you to provide your child with a fulfilling year.