



## INFORMATION SHEET ON CUSTODY AND SEPARATION

- ☉ It is in your child's interests to make the school aware of any situation at home that might impact the emotional life of your child
- ☉ The staff of St. Mark's Junior School encourage parents experiencing separation to come and speak **confidentially** to the teachers and/or Principal.
- ☉ It is our aim to handle such matters with sensitivity and compassion, and ultimately, our primary concern is for the well being and overall development of the child.
- ☉ When a child spends time in two homes, it is requested that the school be provided with both sets of emergency/contact numbers.
- ☉ Regarding the collection of child/ren from school, it is requested that the school be informed of any changes in collection arrangements by note.
- ☉ It is not the school policy to offer the option of separate parent/teacher meetings.
- ☉ It is assumed that when we wish to communicate with parents regarding their child, the parent who is contacted, (i.e. the parent with whom the child principally resides) will inform the other parent of meetings, arrangements etc.
- ☉ Special requests for separate communication will be accommodated, where possible.
- ☉ Regarding notes, school communication via schoolbags, school reports etc., it is assumed that the parent with whom the child principally resides will keep the other parent informed.
- ☉ In the case of married parents, the school cannot be asked to withhold a child from either parent in the absence of a custody arrangement.
- ☉ **In the case of unmarried parents, the natural father - if not named as such on the birth cert - has no custody or guardianship rights unless a Court grants those rights to him.** In such a situation, when a dispute arises, the onus is on the father to produce evidence of a Court Order .
- ☉ The staff of St. Mark's Junior School will endeavour at all times to deal sensitively and sympathetically with children experiencing separation.
- ☉ The Rainbows programme is available in the school for children experiencing loss. The staff can recommend books, videos, publications etc. on dealing with the issue of separation, on request.