

# STARTING SCHOOL

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**You should ensure that your child is as independent as possible-physically, emotionally and socially.**

**If he/she can look after him/herself in these areas he/she will feel secure and confident and settle in readily.**

**It is very important that your child is able to-**

**Button and unbutton his/her coat and hang it up.**

**Use the toilet without help.**

**Please try to make sure that your child knows how to wash his/her hands, flush the toilet and use a hanky when necessary.**

**Share toys and “take turns” with others.**

**Tidy up at the end of each task.**

**Remain contentedly for a few hours in the home of a relation, friend or neighbour.**

**If he/she has had this experience, separation from parents will not cause him/her any great anxiety, when he/she goes to school.**

## THE BIG DAY

**The child’s first day at school is a day to remember for the rest of his/her life. You can make it a really happy one for him/her.**

**Tell him/her about school beforehand, casually, and talk about it as a happy place.**

**Don’t use school or the teacher as a threat.**

**He/she will like to have his/her new uniform and bag when he/she begins. This will help him/her to identify more readily with the school and other children.**

**Your child's books will be taken from him/her, the first day of school and the teacher will hold on to them until such time as they are needed.**

**Please have your child warned of this fact; in case he/she thinks that he/she will never see them again.**

**All books and copies must be covered and marked with the child's name.**

**Your child will only feel important if he/she has something in his/her schoolbag, so perhaps you could buy a copy or a colouring book for him/her, which could be used at home.**

## **Coming in...**

**When you arrive in the classroom, be as casual as you can.**

**Your child will meet the teacher and will be shown to his/her chair.**

**Having assured him/her that you will be back to collect him/her, say goodbye and make your getaway without delay.**

**Packed Lunches.**

**We will ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.**

**Children are not normally hungry at school, so a little snack will do.**

**The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for your children.**

**Bread & Alternatives**

**Bread or rolls, Rice and Pasta, Potato Salad, Wholemeal Scones.  
Savouries.**

**Lean Meat, Chicken/Turkey, Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines. Cheese, Quiche,  
Pizza, Fruit and Vegetables. All fruit and veg.**

**Drinks: Milk, Fruit juices, Soup, Yoghurt.**

## **Going Home.**

**Be sure to collect your child on time.**

**Children can become very upset if they feel they have been forgotten.**

**Keep out view until the children are released.**

**If at any time the collecting routine has to be changed, ensure you tell the child and the teacher.**

## **Handling the upset child.**

**A word of advice:**

**Trust the teacher.**

**She is used to coping with all kinds of starting off problems.**

**Try not to show any outward signs of your own distress.**

**When you have reassured your child, leave as fast as possible.**

**You must be firm from the start.**

**Even if a child is upset you must insist that they stay for a short time.**

## **As Time Goes On...**

**Children need plenty of rest during term time.**

**Please ensure that your child gets to bed early and has a good nights sleep.**

**When he/she has settled in, look upon school as a “home from home”.**

**Do continue to show interest in his/her daily adventures.**

**Give him/her an ear if he/she wants to tell you things but do not pester him/her with questions.**

**If your child’s progress is slow do not compare him/her adversely with other children while he/she is listening.**

**Children often “forget” to relay messages, so please check your child’s bag/folder each day for notes.**

You have received a list of books for the year and there will be an opportunity for you to purchase them soon.

We would appreciate if the Art and Craft/Photocopying were paid as soon as possible.

## **Some important areas of early learning.**

Developing his/her command of spoken Language.

It is important that the child's ability to talk is as advanced as possible.

It is through that he/she communicates his/her thoughts and feelings.

A large emphasis is placed on developing the communicative skills of the child in his/her first year of school.

### **You can help by...**

-Trying to make time to listen when he/she wants to tell you something that is important to him/her, but don't always make him/her the centre of attention.

-Introducing him/her to the structures of why, how, when, where.

These demand more advanced language structures.

-Your child will have his/her own particular favourites that he/she will never tire of hearing.

Repeat them over and over and then get your child to recall them to you.

## **Paving the way for reading.....**

Your child will experience a "print rich" environment when he/she comes to school.

Readiness for reading is built up developing phonic skills.

This is done with the help of Jolly Phonics.

Each letter has a character name and this character makes his own sound.

Children are also exposed to a sight vocabulary and to various graded picture and wordbooks.

## You can help by...

- Having attractive and colourful books at home.
- Read him/her a variety of stories.
- Convey to him/her the need to handle books carefully and the importance of putting them away safely.
- Look at pictures with him/her and talk to him/her about what they say.
- Read him/her nursery rhymes.
- He/she will learn them off his/her own bat.
- Do not try to push your child.
- *Above all do not push him/her into early reading.*

He/she may get over anxious if he/she is not ready and lose the love of reading.

- Remember the teacher is the teacher the best judge of what rate of progress is suited to each child.

## Understanding Maths.

**First a word of warning.....**

Maths for the small child has nothing to do with ‘sums, figures, tables, adding or subtracting.’

These will all come much later.

Maths is really part of the language he/she uses in understanding and talking about certain things in his/her daily experience e.g.

- he/she associates certain numbers with particular things-two hands, four wheels, five fingers, etc.
- Counting- one, two, three, etc.
- Colours-red, green, black, white, etc.

**Prepositions and their opposites;  
over/under before/after inside /outside.**

- **Matching/Sorting-** objects of the same size/ colour/ texture/ shape etc.
- **Odd one out-** difference in size/ shape and colour etc.

**Understanding of these concepts comes very quickly for some children.**

**For others, it can take a long time. Be patient.**

**You cannot force Maths understanding on a child.**

## **GAEILGE**

**All children enjoy learning another language besides their own language.**

**If they learn new words in school encourage them at home.**

**Use any little words or phrases that you know yourself at home now and again.**

### **Getting ready for writing:**

**Making letters on paper is not easy for the small child.**

**He/she must learn to hold the pencil properly and make regular shapes.**

**His/her hands and finger muscles are only developing at this stage.**

### **You can help . . . . .**

**Your child must develop the ability to get the hand and eye working together.  
This is very important.**

**Get him/her manipulating toys like (a) jigsaws, Lego, beads to thread etc.**

**(b) Pleistocene to make his/her own shapes.**

**(c) A colouring book and thick crayons.**

**(d) Sheets of paper that he/her can cut with a safe scissors.**

### **Other areas of the curriculum:**

**The children in Junior Infants learn a lot of things through many other activities  
e.g. Arts & Crafts, P.E, Music, Nature and Religious Education.**

**In regard to R.E it's moral and social aspects are covered right throughout the  
day, e.g. kindness to others, sharing with them, saying we are sorry and being  
aware of God through the beauty of nature etc.**

## **Getting ready for learning.**

**Children are natural learners.**

**They have an inbuilt curiosity and an eagerness to know more about everything. They learn quickly-but only when they are ready and their interest is aroused.**

**Social skills are very important.**

**We encourage good manners at all times, being courteous to others. It is important to ask your child whom he/she played with at school and to ensure that he/she is not alone. It is a good policy to encourage mixing with a variety of friends, rather than being dependent on the same friend always.**

**Rough play is totally discouraged in the playground.**

**At the early stages parents will see the teacher daily.**

**However if there is something in particular that you would like to discuss, you can arrange to meet her at a time when you both can have peace and quiet, e.g. between 2 and 3 p.m.**

**There are lots of ideas and suggestions here as to how you can help your child.**

**We are not advocating that you do all of them in a systematic way.**

**We would say give them all a go at different times.**

**You will find that your child engages more readily with some more than others-above all don't overdo it.**

**You can help . . . . .**

## **Packed Lunches.**

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