



Welcome to our school

New Parents Booklet

WELCOME

Starting school is an exciting time for parents and children.

There are many simple things which you can do at home to prepare your child for school.

This booklet gives you some ideas about the best ways to prepare your child for the exciting experience ahead, so that school is a happy experience.

Above all, give your child as much **PRAISE** as you can.

A confident child is a happy child and a happy child will learn more quickly than a worried one.



Before coming to school you should teach your child the following:

- To put on a coat and fasten it. To hang up a coat.
- To open and close his/her school bag, pencil case and lunch box.
- To be confident to ask to and go to the toilet alone.
- To be able to wash his/her hands (with soap!)
- To be able to use tissues to wipe nose, face etc.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Social skills are very important for your child. Lots of praise and encouragement will help develop these skills.

- It is important to encourage your child to understand that 'NO' means 'NO'.
- Encourage your child to tidy away their own toys and complete one activity before choosing something else.
- Encourage your child to share.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

- St. John's N.S. navy v-necked jumper, the jumper **must** be worn **every** day. Available from The School Wear House www.schoolwearhouse.ie
- Girls: Navy skirt, pinafore or trousers (can be bought in any shop e.g. Dunnes, M&S, Tesco etc)
- Boys: navy trousers (from any shop)
- Boys and girls: navy tracksuit bottoms worn on P.E. days plain, no stripes, labels or logos (from any shop)
- Polo shirt: (t-shirt with collar) blue, red or white (from any shop)
- Navy, white or red socks/tights (from any shop)
- Flat black school shoes
- Trainers on P.E. Days

P.E. DAYS

INFANTS

1ST & 2ND CLASS

3RD & 4TH CLASS

5TH & 6TH CLASS

TUESDAY & THURSDAY

MONDAY & WEDNESDAY

TUESDAY & THURSDAY

WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY

- June is a non-uniform month each year.

SCHOOL BAG

- Pencils must be labelled.
- Pencil cases are **left in school** and should be checked at the end of each term for replacements.
- **Reading Bag/Folder and Homework Journal** (provided by the school) - these are the main methods of communication between school and home. All notes/homework sheets will be put into this folder. Please check this folder/journal every day.
- We use Class Dojo and Aladdin to communicate by message and email. The email you provided will be used for Aladdin messages. You will be sent a Class Dojo link via your provided email address.
- All books will be in school for your child.
- School books will be kept in school unless they are needed for homework.

LUNCH

We expect all parents to follow our healthy lunch policy. Please give your child a lunch which you feel will be manageable for him/her to eat eg. Sandwiches, a drink, a yoghurt, fruit.

A **small** treat is permitted on a Friday **only**.

Children are **not** permitted to bring **crisps, lollipops, fizzy drinks or any foods containing nuts** for their lunch.

RECOMMENDED	NOT PERMITTED
Sandwiches, pitta, wraps, etc.	Nuts ,crisps, corn snacks, Doritos etc.
Yoghurts/yoghurt drinks	Chocolate flavoured cereal bars
Fruit drinks, water ,milk	Lollipops
Plain popcorn	Fizzy drinks
Cheese, tuna, ham, chicken	Cold chips
Crackers, plain rice cakes	Chocolate yoghurts/ rice cakes
Fruit/yoghurt cereal bars	

SCHOOL TIMES

The school bell rings at **8.30 am** and the children are allowed to cross the yellow line at the gate. The children should line up with their class in their class drop zone and wait for their teacher.

Look for the Drop zone label in the window.

Infants: at the front of the school

3rd + 4th class : outside the last classroom at the back doors

1st + 2nd class: outside the downstairs classroom at the side of the school

5th + 6th: class: at the back doors

BREAK TIMES:

Break: 10.40 - 10.55

Lunch: 12.35 - 1.00

SCHOOL FINISHES AT:

1.10pm for Junior and Senior Infants

2.10pm for 1st to 6th class.

Please ensure that your child is collected on time every day. Please let your child's teacher know if there is a different person collecting your child.

Junior and Senior Infants should be collected from the front door.

If your child needs to be collected early any day please write a note, send a Class Dojo message or an email to your child's teacher informing him/her of the time you are going to collect your child. **Never** remove your child from school without informing a staff member.



PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOLWORK

Children are natural learners. They have an inbuilt curiosity and an eagerness to know more about everything. However, the rate of progress of children can vary greatly. We aim to give them an opportunity to move ahead at their own pace.

Reading:

- Noting visual differences is essential to reading and this skill can be practised by using matching games and jigsaws, etc.
- Reading aloud to your child will foster an interest in reading.
- Choose a wide variety of materials to read to your child. Choose topics/stories that are interesting to your child.
- Please read and practise nursery rhymes together.
- Make story time a comfortable and happy experience.
- Encourage your child to look at the pictures and talk about them. Show your child the direction to follow the print, left to right.
- Ask your child if he/she liked the story and why.



Understanding Maths:

It is important to realise that Maths is part of the language children use in understanding and talking about certain things in their daily experience:

- They associate certain numbers with particular things: two hands, four wheels, five fingers. Etc.
- Counting: one, two, three.
- Colours: red, white, blue....
- Positions: left, right, above, below
- Opposites: over/under, before/after, stop/start
- Matching or sorting objects of the same size, colour, shape.

Understanding these concepts comes quickly for some children and for others it takes longer. Be patient with your child and encourage him/her to count, name colours etc. as part of everyday life.

Developing a Command of the Spoken Language:

It is important for your child to be able to express his/her feelings, needs, curiosity and wonder through speech. A lot of time is given to language development in the first years of school.

You can help...

- Talk to your child about things of interest that you may be doing at home, in the shop, in the car etc. Your child is always learning.
- Try to make time to listen when he/she wants to tell you something about their day. Answer his/her questions and nurture his/her sense of curiosity.
- Introduce your child to using Why? When?, How? Where? What? These 'w' words are used daily in school.
- Let your child tell you their favourite story rather than you always reading it!

Getting ready for writing:

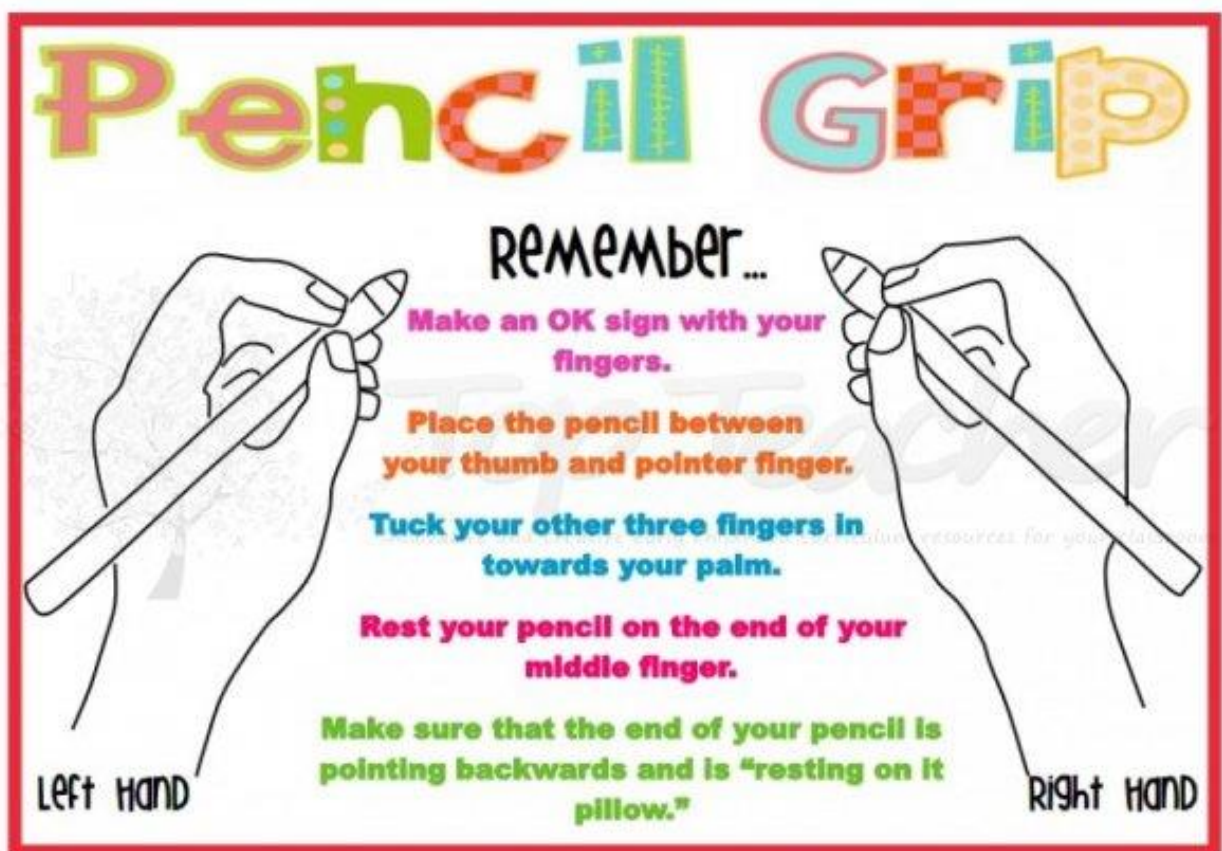
Making letters on paper is not easy for a small child. They must learn to hold a pencil properly and make regular shapes. Their hand and finger muscles are only gradually developing at infant stage.

You can help..

It is very important that your child develops hand-eye co-ordination. The following activities will help:

- Jigsaws, lego, threading beads
- Playdough: making shapes, cutting, moulding
- Colouring books and crayons
- Using a scissors to cut paper

It is very important that your child holds a pencil properly, between the first finger and thumb, as it is very difficult to change later.



HOMework

When the time comes for homework it is good to develop good habits from the start. Keep to a pattern which works for you and your family. Remember you are preparing your child for what will eventually be independent habits and routines which will have a big impact on how he/she progresses in the long term.

- Establish a homework routine, earlier rather than later in the day.
 - Make sure there is a comfortable and quiet place to do homework, not in front of the television or a device.
 - Help your child when needed but allow him/her to do the work.
 - Check the homework and sign the sheet, book, or journal.
 - Talk to your child's teacher if you feel homework is taking a lot longer than you think it should.
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- Don't be negative about homework.
 - Don't give your child the answers.
 - Don't leave it exclusively to the child minder.
 - Don't do it for him/her. If your child is having difficulty with a piece of homework write a note to, or talk to the teacher.

Homework is usually given Monday - Thursday for completion at home. Junior Infants begin written homework once they are on a full day.

Wednesdays' homework will be on Class dojo and will need to be submitted through the app.

Approximate time to be spent on homework:

Junior/Senior Infants:	30 mins
1 st & 2 nd Class:	35 mins
3 rd & 4 th Class:	40 mins
5 th & 6 th Class	50 mins

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHING

It is not always immediately obvious that a child has learning difficulties. For this reason, your child's progress, application and attainment are continually monitored throughout their time in St. John's N.S. All children are individuals, and their rates of progress and development are unique to them. What may appear as a learning difficulty may only be a minor delay in their developmental progress, which is perfectly normal for them and should not cause any concern. Sometimes children appear to make fast progress followed by periods when progress seems less marked. For these reasons, it is almost always appropriate not to rush a judgement in any individual case. In a small number of cases, it may be very obvious that a child has learning difficulties. In these cases, it is normally parents who alert the school to the child's learning difficulties, as this has been obvious from a very early stage.

The period of time children spend in Junior and Senior Infants is characterised by much activity and oral work. During this time, teacher observation and teacher-designed tasks and tests will form the basis of much of the assessment that takes place. The teacher will meet the parents of children informally on a regular basis as they are being dropped to and collected from school. While you know your child best, the teacher will have a broad perspective on the stages of development of the children in his/her care. The Drumcondra Tests of Early Literacy is a tool used to help in the assessment of children in Senior Infants.

This test and teacher observations, class tests and tasks along with conversations with parents will help to build a profile of how children are coping with their new learning experiences in primary school. As early intervention is well documented as being very effective in helping with some learning difficulties, it is our practice that Senior Infants work with the Special Education Teacher to reinforce phonics skills learned in the classroom. Towards the end of Senior Infants some children may be withdrawn by the Special Ed. teacher with a small group for more intensive reinforcement of skills. This can involve practising letter formation; letter sounds and additional reading. Sometimes the Class teacher along with the Special Ed. teacher may recommend the referral of a child to an outside agency e.g. Speech & Language, Occupational Therapy or similar service. Where there is a history of learning

difficulties e.g. Dyslexia in the family, it is a good idea to inform the teacher who will be able to monitor your child more closely.

Early intervention may be continued from Senior Infants into 1st Class. All children will be monitored by their class teacher during the school year, and he/she may recommend some extra support if your child's progress has slowed down or if your child has missed some school.

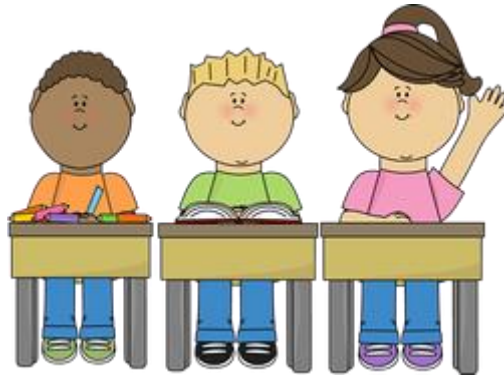
A small minority of children may have more serious learning difficulties, and these will have been assessed and discussed with parents. It may be suggested to parents that a full educational psychological assessment is appropriate at this time. If the parents agree a full assessment may be offered by an Educational Psychologist from the National Educational Psychological Service, a state service, free of charge, where possible. Should this service be unavailable, for any reason, parents may like to pay for a private assessment. The main purposes of an educational psychological assessment are:

- To diagnose the nature and extent of any learning difficulty or otherwise that a child may have.
- To assess the child's level of attainment relative to other children of his/her age.
- To conduct an intelligence test which will be compared to a standard result for children of his/her age.
- To make recommendations regarding the teaching and learning strategies to be adopted with this particular child.

As a result of an Educational Psychological Assessment, or, any professional assessment your child may be entitled to receive additional help from the Special Ed. Teacher.

In May/ June of each school year standardised tests in Literacy and Numeracy are conducted in 1st to 6th Classes. Sometimes these tests are followed by further diagnostic tests conducted by the Special Ed. Teacher. The results of these tests are used to determine which children need extra support.

The Special Ed. Teacher works with small groups of children who are scoring at the lower end of the achievement spectrum. Some of these children may already have been receiving early intervention from Senior Infants. A child remains in the Special Education Programme of support while he/she is benefitting from the programme, and he/she is continually monitored.



HEALTH

You should inform the school if your child has a health problem. Cases of infectious illness e.g. chicken pox, impetigo, head lice, should be reported to the Class Teacher immediately. Children who are ill should not attend school. Please ensure that the school has at least one phone number for contacting you when necessary and for emergencies.

MONEY

When money needs to be paid to the school a link will be sent by Sandra, the school secretary, through the school's system, called Aladdin. You can pay online. You will get a receipt via email.

If you prefer to send in cash please put the correct amount into a sealed envelope with your child's name, the amount paid and what the money is for on the outside of the envelope.

e.g. Sarah Smith

Photographs €10

Voluntary Contributions:

Each year parents are asked by the Board of Management to pay a Voluntary Contribution to help with the payments for lighting, heating and cleaning of the

school as the grants paid by the Department of Education and Skills do not adequately cover the cost of running the school.

If you are unable to make this contribution, please contact the Principal. Parents will not be put under pressure to pay this, but all contributions help.

PARKING

Parents should not park in the school gateway. There are various car parks around the village. Please check the car park signs for terms.

SCHOOL EVENTS

- Halloween: Fancy Dress for a charity or classroom resources
- Parent and Teacher Meetings: November
- Nativity play and Carol Service: December
- RED Day: dress in red for Valentine's Day for charity or PTA funds
- GREEN Day: dress in green, white, orange for St. Patrick's Day for charity or PTA funds
- Drama Night, usually in May or June
- Musical Evening: June
- Bake Sale: June
- School Tours: May or June
- Sports Day: June
- Library visits: 1st - 6th class, every 3 weeks

SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

Address: St. John's N.S., Tower Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22 D22YN52

Phone: 01-4570680

Email: secretary@stjohnsnsclondalkin.com

Website: www.stjohnsclondalkin.ie

SCHOOL STAFF

Mrs. Sharkey	Principal	Junior & Senior Infants
Mrs. Stanley	Deputy Principal	3 rd & 4 th Class
Ms. Goulden		1 st & 2 nd Class
Mr. Beckett		5 th & 6 th Class
Mrs. Veighey		Special Education Teacher
Ms. Moriarty		Shared Sp. Ed. Teacher
Mrs. Gráinne Aitken		S.N.A.
Mrs. Emma Barnewell		S.N.A.
Ms. Sandra Duke		School Secretary

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Ms. Eileen Timlin	Chairperson
Mr. Brian Hetherington	Treasurer, Parent's Nominee
Ms. Lorna Carroll	Secretary, Community Nominee
Mrs. Michelle Sharkey	Principal
Mr. David Beckett	Teachers' Nominee
Mr. K. Mahon	Patron's Nominee
Ms. Siobhán O'Neill	Parent's Nominee
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