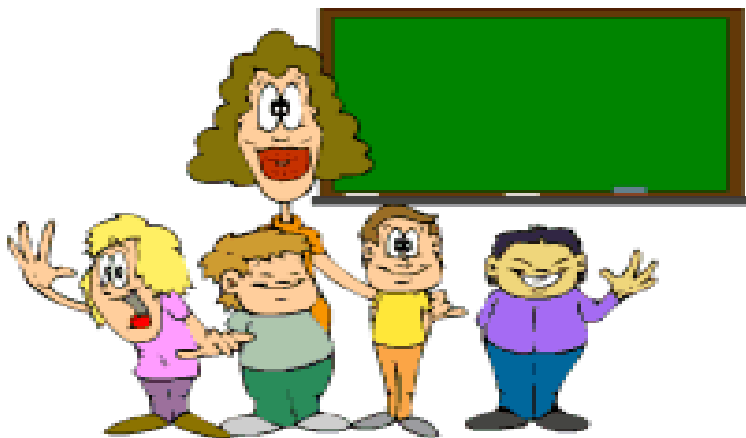




Holy Family

NS

Welcome Booklet
2018/2019



Contact Details

Holy Family NS,
Kilteel Rd,
Rathcoole,
Co. Dublin
D24 XH22

Telephone	01 4580570
Website	www.holyfamilyns.ie
Email	holyfamilyrathcoole@gmail.com

Céad míle fáilte romhaibh go léir go SN Holy Family!!

Your welcome pack includes;

- **Holy Family Welcome Booklet**
- **Junior Infant Welcome Booklet**
- **School Calendar 2018/2019**
- **Booklist**
- **Aistear Information Sheet**
- **NCCA Helping Your Child with Reading Sheet**
- **NCCA Helping Your Child with Maths Sheet**
- **'Alphabet List'**
- **NameTages.ie Order Form**

You have already received the following via email;

- **Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy**
- **Enrolment Policy**
- **RSE Parents Information Letter**

Last Updated June 2018

Staff

Principal

Mr. Colm Byrne

Deputy Principal

Mr. Noel Gavin

There are 24 mainstream teachers, 3 Team Teachers and 8 SEST (Special Education Support Team) teachers and 7 SNAs (Special Needs Assistant.)

We have a full-time secretary (Honor) and caretaker (Seán).

Board of Management

The Board of Management is the management authority of the school. Two of its members are elected directly from the parent body every four years. The BOM run and manage the school. The Principal acts as the daily Manager of the school and implements the policies of the Board of Management

Parent Association

The school has an active PA. All parents/legal guardians are entitled to attend PA meetings and stand for election to the PA Committee. Please get involved in any way you can and assist us to give our pupils the best learning environment we can offer.

The PA's primary objective is to fundraise for the school and assist and support the pupils, teachers in ways which benefit the school environment as a whole.

Principal



The Principal of Holy Family NS is an administrative Principal with a heavy workload.

The Principal cannot accede to every request for an appointment but will strive to ensure that your query or issue raised is responded to by him or another member of staff.

Who to contact with Queries?

You child's learning - Parents should consult their classroom teacher firstly for all issues related to your child.

Behaviour issues – Again your child's class teacher is best placed to respond to any queries regarding behaviour by or against your child.

If a behavioural issue requires further attention, the teacher and/or parent may refer the matter to the **Deputy Principal, Mr. Gavin (087 2710874)** who has responsibility in this area.

Special Educational Needs – You should make the school aware of any such needs upon enrolment. If you have any concerns whilst enrolled, you should make an appointment with your child’s class teacher. The matter may then be referred to our Special Education Support Team. This will then be followed up by the SEST teacher assigned to your child’s class or by the school’s appointed Special Education Needs Organiser (Ms. Melia – Assistant Principal), who has responsibility in this area. Ms. Haran – Assistant Principal, is the Deputy SENCO and has responsibility for the area of SNA support. We have 7 SNAs in the school and they are allocated to different children each year. A pupil will never have an SNA for longer than 3 consecutive years.

Medical Alert Issue – If your child has a Medical issue/condition (allergy etc) you should inform the school immediately. This will be referred to one of our In-school Management Team members with responsibility in this area (Ms. Dempsey – Assistant Principal), who will contact you.

Mission Statement

School Schedule

Holy Family NS aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. Holy Family models and promotes

a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the catholic faith.

Ethos

Holy Family N.S. is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin where religious instruction, in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Catholic Church is part of the education given to children who belong to that Church. The pupils are prepared for the reception of the sacraments of First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, in accordance with arrangements in the diocese. The school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil, including his / her relationship with God, with other people and with the environment. The Principal and teaching staff aim at maintaining high professional standards and creating a safe and happy environment. A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community. Pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities. Close contact is maintained between school and home.

We in Holy Family N.S. believe that a positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers and the ways in which pupils and teachers treat each other. We believe that respect in our school is defined by the following examples: Good manners and courtesy; listening; politeness and showing respect for difference. Pupils are expected to be well behaved; show respect for school property; attend school on a regular basis; show respect for teachers and for each other; obey staff instructions and generally have a positive attitude to school.

In our school we treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and co-operation among staff, pupils, and parents and all are agreed that their focus is primarily on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour.

GDPR/Data Protection

Please read our schools Data Protection Policy online. You will have read the most important items on your Application for Enrolment and on the Consent Form, regarding Data Protection. **No photographs or video-ing is permitted at anytime by parents/public in school or at a school event unless otherwise directed.**

Class Allocation

Class allocations may be altered at any time by the school Principal during your child's time in Holy Family NS. Classes may be split, amalgamated or pupils moved to other classes at anytime for operational, behavioural and/or academic reasons.

School Uniform

The uniform is compulsory - The uniform can be sourced through the designated provider which is

www.schoolwearhouse.ie (Clondalkin Shop)

The uniform consists of:

Grey Slacks or Skirt or Pinafore

Sky-Blue Shirt or Polo Shirt

Navy Sweater with Crest

Junior Infants may wear tracksuit only as their uniform.

Alternatively, you may purchase school uniform tracksuit bottoms and school uniform jumper.

The uniform must be worn in its entirety every school day, without exception. In May/June, if the weather becomes very

hot, the school will issue a notice, permitting the wearing of plain navy shorts (no stripes or emblems or other colours)

In the interest of safety as little jewellery as possible should be worn. If earrings are worn they must be studs - no hanging earrings allowed.

'Make-up' and Facial piercing are not allowed.

School Policy Development and School Self Evaluation

Staff, parents/guardians and pupils are expected to support and promote all areas of school policy.

By accepting a place for your child in Holy Family NS you have also agreed to accept all current and future school policy .

The most immediate applicable policies will have been distributed to you. Policies are posted on the school website for your perusal.



School Access

Class Line

Each class has a designated Class Line.

Upon entering the school yard each pupil should walk directly to their designated class line and wait until bell rings and the class is collected by their teacher.

Parents should stand to the back of the line away from the Class line. Parents of pupils in these classes must not join the line with your child as this congests the area and can be hazardous.

Pupils are not permitted to play, run or loiter in the school yard in the morning nor at home time.

Pedestrian Entrance

There are three pedestrian entrances;

1. **Pedestrian Gate near Car Park Entrance** – This is suitable for Pedestrians entering the school as they walk on the left footpath up the village (Pedestrians are not permitted to enter the ‘Drop-Off Zone’ at any time NOR to Cross over the flow of traffic)
2. **Pedestrian Gate at Corner of Car Park** – This is to be used by pedestrians who cross the road with the ‘Lollipop Man’.

VERY IMPORTANT – If you cross the road at the Pedestrian Crossing with the ‘Lollipop Man’, you must then **turn right** (away from the school) and walk up the pathway towards the **Corner Pedestrian Entrance**. This is to ensure that pupils are not crossing over traffic entering and exiting the ‘Drop-Off Zone’.

3. **Rear Pedestrian Entrance at Forest Hills** – This pedestrian entrance is opened for morning drop-off and then at 1:40pm and 2:40pm for Last Collection.

Drop Off Zone

The Car Park is for Staff Parking **ONLY!**

This is a DROP OFF ZONE ONLY and will only be open for dropping your child off.

The Drop Off Zone is not suitable for Parents/Guardians who need to park and get out to assist their child. Drivers should not alight from their vehicles in the Drop-Off Zone.

Therefore if you child is in Junior Infants, Senior Infants or 1st Class, you must NOT use the ‘Drop-Off Zone’.

The Drop Off Zone is opened at both collection times and there are parking spaces available for 8 cars. Cars must **NEVER** use available staff parking spaces as these

must be left for a staff member returning to the school from a meeting or appointment.

Stewards

The Caretaker, Sean, acts as Car-Park Steward in the Drop-off Zone ensuring cars are not parking up nor parents/guardians alighting from the car.

Others persons may also steward the Car-Park from time to time.

Please follow the direction of the stewards. Your full cooperation is expected in this regard.

Zero-Tolerance Policy on Aggression

Please remember that our school has a **zero-tolerance policy on aggression towards staff**. We cannot allow verbal aggression towards staff in the car park or in the school as a whole and reserve the right to refuse access to the school for any level of aggression shown towards a member of staff.

Wet Mornings

Our school does not provide pre-school nor after-school supervision.

In the event that there is **very heavy rain**, and only if Mr. Byrne and Mr. Gavin and SNAs are available, the pupils will be admitted into the school PE Halls 10 minutes earlier (8:50am).

Junior and Senior Infant Children will be admitted through their normal entry/exit door –Door 1(which is to the right of the New Main Entrance) and all other classes will be admitted through the Main PE Hall doorway.

The operation of this wet-morning scheme is contingent upon Mr. Byrne and Mr. Gavin and SNAs being available to provide effective supervision each morning. This will only occur **on very wet** mornings and only when Mr. Byrne and Mr. Gavin are available. *In the event of heavy rain immediately before bell, there will not be sufficient time to arrange hall supervision.*

Please be mindful that the operation of this scheme is dependent on good will and volunteering of the staff members involved.

School Access

Any parent/guardian visiting the school must visit the Administration Office inside the front Main Entrance Door – Door 2 (‘Drop-Off Zone’ Side).

Parents/Guardians are not permitted to enter the school under any circumstance unless invited to do so by a member of staff.

For child protection purposes, non-members of staff are not permitted to enter the corridors or pupils areas of the school.

The school secretary is the only port of call when visiting the school unless otherwise directed by a member of staff. **This is for the protection of your child!**

Sign In

All Parents/Guardians and visitors to the school are obliged by the Board of Management to 'sign-in' and wear a Visitors Pass which must be clearly displayed during their visit to the school.

Parents/Guardians wishing to collect pupils before the designated dismissal time **must report to the school Secretary who will arrange to have your child withdrawn from their room. Teachers will not release a pupil from their class unless instructed to do so by the school secretary/principal/deputy-principal.**

Pupils may not be removed from yard during yard time for early collection. Parents/Guardians must wait for yard to finish before a child will be released. Ideally, a parent/guardian should inform the teacher and secretary to have their child waiting in Reception for their arrival during yard time.

The School Office is closed from 11:30am – 12pm

A register will be kept of all pupils removed from class before the dismissal time and the reason for same. Teachers will also record the early leaving of a pupil on the school data management system. A parent/guardian who wishes to remove their child early from class will do so through the school secretary and will sign the 'Early Removal Register'.

Pupils arriving after 9:00am must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to the school office. **Never allow your child to enter the school grounds unaccompanied after this time. This way we can be sure your child is cared for by a member of staff.** A pupil arriving at 9:15am is registered as 15 minutes late.

A pupil arriving after 10am will be marked absent on the school roll. The school roll cannot be altered once attendance had been taken. Please inform your teacher, in advance, if you might be late for any reason.

School Warden

The duty times of the school warden are:

8.40 a.m. - 9.20 a.m.

2.40 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.

The School Warden is an employee of South Dublin Co Co. All issues pertaining to the School Warden and/or pedestrian crossing or traffic issues must be directed to South Dublin Co Co.

Code of Behaviour & Discipline

&

Anti-Bullying Policy

These policies have been developed to positively encourage and promote the high standard of good behaviour associated with pupils of Holy Family NS. The policy also sets out the reprimands and sanctions the school can impose for any behaviour contrary to the Code.

The behaviour of your child at school and elsewhere is the sole responsibility of you, the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian is the primary educator. The school reinforces the good standard of behaviour that should be modelled and taught in the home by the parent/guardian.

Our Code of Behaviour is our set of rules for managing behaviour in our school. Our staff and Board of Management are best placed to decide the procedures and rules pertaining to managing behaviour in our school.

Parents/guardians should be conscious that the school is not an extension of the home environment.

School life is very different to home life. While most rules are common between home and school, there are other rules which the school must use to keep our pupils safe and happy. School life is stricter regarding behaviour to ensure optimum safety for your child and for effective and efficient school management. Parents & pupils must respect this fact and not have unreasonable expectations of the school.

Parents/guardians also have a central role to play in assisting your child learn and practise expected behaviours whilst at school. Pupils should have already been taught the basic social rules at home (Yes Please! No Thanks!) (Look someone in the eye when you speak with them)

Resilience

Pupils will encounter new experiences and social situations. Though the school strives to ensure an environment which creates positive, happy and stimulating experiences, it can be

upsetting for you, the parent/guardian, if your child becomes upset for some reason. You should comfort, reassure and talk to your child if there is such an occurrence. Remember children learn from all life situations even the ‘not so nice ones!’ It is a parent’s role, as primary educator, to teach their child ‘Resilience’ i.e. the understanding that things will not always go their way and that bad experiences occur in life and providing the children with the tools to cope with these experiences.

Your child’s classroom teacher can be informed of any concerns you may have regarding your child’s development at school. **Never approach any pupil with any issues you may have with them. Speak to the child’s parent and/or classroom teacher.**

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person’s

membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).

The school will not investigate or deal with a behavioural complaint that occurred outside of the school.

Social Media/Cyber Safety

Holy Family NS has instructed pupils and parents not to be on any form of social media as we consider it a dangerous and unsupervised environment for pupils our age.

Please visit www.webwise.ie for parental resources on cyber safety-

- Children under 13 are not permitted to be on face-book or Instagram as per these companies' rules.
- A child's excuse that "everyone else has it" should not abdicate a parent's responsibility to say NO! to things that expose a child to danger.



Mobile Phones

Due to Child Protection and Data Protection reasons, mobiles phones are not permitted in school. Should your child require a mobile phone in school, a note must be sent and the mobile powered off and handed to teacher. Any recording devices will be confiscated by the teacher and handed to the Principal/Deputy-Principal and will only be returned by them to a parent/guardian.

Rules of the School

1. Children should arrive for school no later than nine o'clock. A good rule should be: Be in line at five to nine. No playing in the yard before 9.00 a.m.
2. The complete school uniform must be worn at all times. On days when children have P.E. the school tracksuit and runners must be worn.
3. Children returning to school after an absence must provide a written explanation signed by parent/guardian.
4. No child may leave the school premises during school hours unless he/she is collected by a parent/guardian.
5. On wet days children are to remain seated during break time and may leave their places only with the permission of the teacher on duty.
6. Courtesy and respect should also be shown to everyone
7. Children must walk to and from classrooms in silence and in an orderly fashion.
8. Courtesy and good manners are expected from children at all times, both in their dealings with staff and with each other.
9. When children are away from the school e.g. school tours, swimming, playing games, etc they are to behave in a manner which will reflect well on the school.
10. Mitching, vandalism of school property, the use of bad language, name calling and cheekiness are regarded as serious breaches of school discipline.
11. The children's behaviour and attentiveness in class must be of such a standard as to allow the teacher conduct the class without undue disruption and to allow the other children learn to the best of their abilities.
13. Pupils must do all homework prescribed by the teacher. Failure to do so requires a written explanation from parent/guardian.
14. Pupils must eat a healthy lunch every day. Crisps, fizzy drinks, sweets or chewing gum are forbidden. Cans and glass bottles are also forbidden.
15. Children should be free to come to school, take part in the day's activities and go home without being bullied. Bullying is regarded as

one of the most serious breaches of school discipline and is dealt with accordingly.

16. Using mobile phones is forbidden. In the event that a parent requires their child to keep a mobile phone with them, it must be excused by a written note, powered off, handed to the teacher and collected at the end of the day. Any recording devices will be confiscated by the teacher and handed to the Principal/Deputy-Principal and will only be returned by them to a parent/guardian.

17. Children must show courtesy to adults (staff and parents) by standing to one side and allowing them in and out doors first. Children are also reminded that saying “Please” and “Thank You” is expected of them.

18. Rough play and ‘mock’ or ‘mess’ fighting is not allowed in the school yard. Children must stand in their line after the second bell rings until they are collected by their teacher.

19. The distribution of Christmas Cards, birthday invitations and/or birthday party packs is not allowed by children on the school premises.

20. Stud earrings only allowed. No facial piercings or makeup allowed. Pupils may be asked to remove jewellery deemed to pose a health and safety hazard.

School’s Expectations of Parent/Guardian & Pupil



Each child will arrive on time for class and attend the full school day.



Each child will arrive with all the materials required for their school day.



Each child will be in clean clothes, washed and groomed and dressed in full school uniform.



Each child will arrive fit for the school day, having slept for minimum of 10 hours the night before. **A tired child will not learn!**



Each child will be healthy coming to school.
Children who are ill should not be sent to school.



Each child will show utmost respect for school staff, school property, school policy and each other.



Each parent/guardian will show utmost respect for school staff, school property, school policy and each other.



Parent/Guardian will espouse respect of a parent's/guardian's and teacher's authority by their child. Parents/Guardians should never undermine the school, school policy nor classroom teacher. Authority and the good will of your child's teachers should always be respected regardless of whether a parent agrees with a school's decision and/or course of action.



Each Parent/Guardian will take an active interest in your child's educational development through involvement in your child's learning. This is done by following school guidelines regarding parental involvement. Parents are expected to promote the same high standard of work expected by the school.



Each Parent/Guardian will take an active interest in their child's social and educational development by providing your child with extra curricular opportunities appropriate and specific to your child. This may include educational trips, dancing/music/art lessons, involvement in community sports groups etc.



Each Parent/Guardian will take an active interest in their child's moral and spiritual development.

What You Can Expect From the School

Parents/Guardians can expect that the school will;



Act in the best interest of all the pupils of the school.



Deliver the full primary curriculum.



Aid your child's mental, social, physical and spiritual and emotional development through the delivery of the Primary Curriculum.



Strive to provide your child with equal opportunity during the delivery of the Primary Curriculum.



Make every reasonable attempt to ensure your child's safety and good well-being while under school supervision.



Monitor your child's development, report regularly to parent/guardian, and provide assistance for remedy/support as appropriate.

Make every reasonable effort to ensure that your child will develop to his/her full potential.



Make every reasonable effort to ensure that your child's time in Holy Family NS will be happy and fruitful.

Attendance

Each child is expected to attend school each day it is open. Child welfare legislation places an onus on parents/guardians to ensure full attendance.

Any absence from school must be accompanied by **written excuse, given to teacher, from the parent/guardian stating the reason for absence**. This information is recorded by the school and passed on to 'TUSLA'. If an absence has not been accompanied by a written note, this absence will be recorded and reported as 'Unexplained'.

If a parent/guardian has advance knowledge that a pupil will be absent on a particular day, please inform the class teacher beforehand.

The school is obliged to report any pupil that has exceeded 19 days absence to TUSLA. The school will inform you when your child has missed 15 (by text) and then 20 days (Letter)

You must inform us beforehand if you are leaving the school and provide us with the name and address of your new school.

Healthy School Lunch

Please note all sweets, crisps and fizzy drinks are not permitted. Please provide your child with a healthy lunch and drink each day.

Due to the increasing number of pupils with serious nut allergies, nuts or nut products are not permitted.

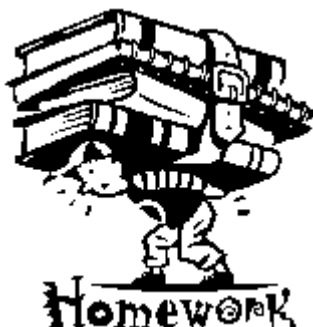
Pupils are asked not to swap lunches or offer their lunch to another pupil.

Teachers do not ‘police’ lunch time. Children are encouraged and advised to eat their full lunch but teachers do not monitor whether your child has eaten a full lunch.

Homework

Junior & Senior Infants	10 minutes
Rang 1&2	20 to 30 minutes
Rang 3 &4	c.45 minutes
Rang 5 & 6	c.1 hour

Generally there is no homework at weekends but it may be given at the teacher’s discretion should he/she considers there is a specific reason for so doing. There is no homework given during the month of June.



Homework supervision and completion is the duty of the parent/guardian. Parent/Guardian should sign the homework

journal every evening **after** the journal entry has been checked against the homework completed.

Parents/Guardians should check bags for homework exercises and notes.

Aladdin Parents Portal

You may access and edit your child's up-to-date contact details and access their attendance record and report cards as well as Library information. An access code will be sent to you via email and you can access these details through the portal by clicking on the link. Please use the portal to change any contact details so we have the most up to date information.

Correspondence Home

The school will periodically forward notes home via your child. Please check your child's homework bag and/or school bag for same.

The school also operates an email and texting system to communicate information home. Most correspondences will be via email. E-payment requests are also made via email for various items during the year.

There is a monthly newsletter providing details of up and coming events, school calendar etc.

The homework journal is also used to communicate between home and school and should be checked regularly.

All messages are communicated in good faith that all families will receive them. The school will not accept any

responsibility for failure of parent/guardian to receive correspondence due to circumstances beyond the school's control.

The school website www.holyfamilyns.ie also contains very useful information.

HSE

The Health Service Executive visits the school at regular intervals during the school year to administer hearing and sight tests to specific classes. The HSE also uses the school to administer inoculations and boosters for same. Pupil details are made available to the HSE in line with the school's 'Data Protection Policy'.

Experience has shown us that the pupils exhibit minimal to no upset when NOT accompanied by a parent/guardian.

The pupils are well looked after by their teacher and school staff during Immunisations. We find the less fuss made the better!

Parents/Guardians are not permitted to accompany their child on the day of inoculations. If for any reason you require to be present, please arrange a private appointment with your GP or public Health nurse.

Administration of Medicines

Staff are not permitted to administer medicines to your child. Should you require a member of staff to do so, you should first make contact with our In-school Management Team member, Ms. Dempsey (Assistant Principal), who will advise you of the procedures. If the Board sanctions the application

you will be requested to complete an Indemnity Form. Please see our school's Administration of Medicines Policy.

Acceptable Use on the Internet Policy

The school will teach and advise the children about appropriate behavior while on the internet. Parents/Guardians are expected to talk to their child about same. Your child will be asked to sign the Acceptable Use of the Internet form when they are at a stage where independent internet use is required.

We have a strong fire-wall on our system operated by the Department of Education & Skills!

Consent Form

Parents/Guardians are expected to sign a School Consent Form upon application to enroll. This negates the need to administer consent forms for basic activities. It also covers trips during school time. However, parents/guardians in the Junior classes will always be informed if the pupils are leaving the school premises.

SPHE/ RSE & Stay Safe Programme

The pupils engage in the Relationships & Sexuality Education programme every year. The correct anatomical terms are taught and used from Junior Infants. The children use the terms penis and vagina instead of 'pee-pee' or privates. Please refer to the RSE Parent Information letter and Terminology leaflet in your Welcome Packs or request same from school. The 5th & 6th Classes engage in the HSE 'Busy Bodies' programme. The 'Sex Ed' workshops are delivered by our teachers. More information will be sent to you at the time.

Our stay Safe Rules are;
If you Get a 'No' Feeling –

- 1. Say No!**
- 2. Get Away**
- 3. Tell Someone you trust**
- 4. Keep telling until someone hears you!**

Extra-Curricular Activities



We strive to engage in as many extra-curricular activities as possible to cater for as many pupils as possible. However, a balance must be achieved between engagement in these activities and the inevitable disruption to classes.

Five ways to make school familiar for Junior Infant Child

1. Point out the school whenever you pass it.
2. Tell stories about what you enjoyed at school and the fun things you did.
3. Build a school with your child from cardboard boxes or play-bricks, then act out some classroom scenarios with your child.
4. Read some positive books about starting school. Good titles include 'Topsy and Tim Start School' by Jean and Gareth Adamson or 'Starting School' by Alan and Janet Ahlberg.
5. Walk or drive to school together so your child gets to know the route. Note how long it takes so you leave in plenty of time on the first day.

Plan ahead

Shop for uniform and other equipment early – you’re more likely to find things in the right sizes and you’ll avoid the crowding of the last week before term starts. Make the shopping trip into a special event for you and your child. Most items required are provided by the school through the payments of the school Booklist fees.

The countdown

If your child’s in holiday routine – staying up late and rising late – then one week before term begins, change their schedule. Gradually bring their bedtime back to a time suitable for school nights (10 hours sleep minimum) and introduce more regular eating habits with meals at set times.

You may need to get into the term-time habit too. Write a list of all the things you’ll need to organize; snacks and lunches, PE tracksuit, labelled plastic bag with change of clothes, school bag with books and utensils. Stick the list to the fridge and tick each item off as you sort it out.

Involve your child in getting ready for their first day. The evening before term starts you and your child can work together to lay out their uniform, bag and snacks.

Last of all set your alarm early for the first day – even the most organised parents and children need extra time to get ready for the big event.

Your emotions

Your feelings will guide your child’s emotions. If you approach your child’s first day with confidence that they’ll be fine, using positive words about school and loving attention, their anxieties will be reduced.

Saying goodbye at school may be very emotional for you. But try to send your child off with a smile and a wave along with the reassurance that you’ll be there to collect them later. Remember even distressed children settle very quickly once you’re gone, so

make your leave loving but brief. Teacher will call you if there is any problem!

The end of the day

Do make sure you're a little early to collect your child at the end of the first few days – even a few minutes late can seem an eternity to a waiting child. Your child will probably be tired and hungry so a healthy snack and some quiet time, with or without you, will be just what they need after school.

Listen to your child! Make this a priority. They'll probably talk about their day in their own time so avoid pressing your child, but do give them opportunities to talk to you.

A CHILD'S TEN REQUEST-MENTS

1. My hands are small; please don't expect perfection whenever I draw a picture or throw a ball.
My legs are short; please slow down so that I can keep up with you.
2. My eyes have not seen the world as yours have; please let me explore safely. Don't restrict me unnecessarily.
3. Housework will always be there. I'm only little for a short time; please take time to explain things to me about this wonderful world, and do so willingly.
4. My feelings are tender; please be sensitive to my needs; don't nag me all day long. Treat me as you would like to be treated.
5. I am a special gift from God; please treasure me as God intended you to do, holding me accountable for my actions, giving me guidelines to live by, and

disciplining me in a loving manner.

6. I need your encouragement to grow. Please go easy on criticism; remember, you can criticize the things I do without criticizing me.
7. Please give me the freedom to make decisions concerning myself. Permit me to fail, so that I can learn from my mistakes.
8. Please don't do things over for me. Somehow that makes me feel that my efforts don't quite measure up to your expectations.
9. Please pray with me daily, take me to Sunday mass regularly; setting a good example from an early age.
10. Please don't be afraid to leave for a weekend together. Kids need breaks from parents, just as parents need breaks from kids.

' A muddy child is a happy child!!'



School Pledge

‘I will treat others the way I would like to be treated.
No-one should ever feel left-out, unwanted or defeated,
I'll always be thoughtful, I'll always be true,
I'll stand up for myself and also for you!’