

**ST. BRIGID'S NATIONAL
SCHOOL
KILLYGARRY**



**INFANT PARENT
INFORMATION BOOK**

POINTS TO NOTE

For the first two weeks or so in September you are welcome to bring your child to the main entrance door yourself. From Monday 12th of September, we would like the Junior Infant children to line up in the front yard along with the other classes. The teacher will collect the class at 9:00am and bring the children into their classroom. Please say “goodbye” to your child at the gate or in the line in the yard.

In the event of your child being absent for illness or any other reason, the class teacher should be informed by note on return to school. These notes are retained on file for inspection by the Education Welfare Board if required.

When it is necessary for your child to leave school early, a note must be sent to the class teacher. Please do not collect him/her early unless it is absolutely necessary. Parents/guardians must call to the school office personally and sign the blue book before collecting their child. This is in the interest of the safety and security of your child. Please do not go directly to the classroom to collect your child the school secretary will do this for you.

We ask you to inform the school of any changes in person who will be collecting your child on any particular day.

We generally issue a School Newsletter about once a term. Occasionally, as the need arises, shorter notices regarding school matters may be issued in writing or by Text. Please encourage your child to deliver such notes immediately or check their school bag or book yourself each evening. Other information about your child’s class can be found on the class blog (see school website www.killygarryns.ie).



BEFORE YOUR CHILD STARTS

You should ensure that your child is **as independent as possible**; physically, emotionally and socially. If pupils can look after these areas they will feel secure and confident and settle in readily.

It would help greatly if your child is able to-

- **Button and unbutton, zip and unzip a coat/jacket** and hang it up properly.
- **Use the toilet without help** and manage pants buttons.
- Also **encourage personal hygiene** and cleanliness. Your child should know how to flush the toilet and wash hands, without having to be reminded.
- Use a tissue when necessary
- **Share** toys and games with others and ‘take turns’.
- **Tidy up** and put away playthings and activities when told to do so.
- Remain contentedly for a few hours in the home of a relation, friend or neighbour. If children had this experience, then separation from parents when they start school will not cause any great anxiety.
- Wear ‘**Velcro**’ shoes as most Junior Infants cannot manage laces
- Hold a pencil with the correct tripod grip (see p3)

HEALTH, HYGIENE & SAFETY

In the interest of safety, jewellery should not be worn in school, especially bracelets, chains, looped earrings, nose, lip or eyebrow rings. Coloured nail polish and the wearing of transfers are not permitted.

Hair should be tied back from the face and eyes or plaited.

If you discover headlice in your child’s hair, please treat it immediately and inform the school office. We will then send out a note to parents of children in the class so that the problem can be successfully eliminated. The child’s name will not be identified in this letter.

Getting headlice is not a reflection on the standard of cleanliness in your home. Headlice are picked up through close head-to-head contact. They do not survive on clothing or furniture but are attracted to clean hair. If untreated, headlice can multiply very rapidly and infect others.

If you do receive a note about headlice, you will need to:

- check and treat your child's hair that evening
- check the hair every couple of days to ensure that re-infection has not occurred.

As a preventative measure you could put a very small drop of Tea Tree Oil into the child's shampoo bottle. Headlice do not like the smell of this Tea Tree Oil.

PARKING

There is a **one way system** in place for all vehicles, entering at Alacken and exiting by Killygarry Motors, and parents are asked to adhere to this in the interest of safety. Please approach the school at a very slow speed to avoid any accidents.

The safety of our children is of the utmost importance to all of us. With this in mind we would like to remind you to use the "drive-through" system when dropping your child off in the morning.

Parents are asked to get their child safely out of the car and drive off immediately, as parking in the drive-through area prevents other parents from pulling in. If for any reason you need to come into the school, use the parking bays at the school wall. No child is to be dropped off across the road and allowed to cross by themselves.

Similarly, at home time, we do not permit any child to cross the road by themselves or to walk down through the traffic. Please use the drive-through system for pick-up. If you decide to park across the road, please get out of your car and collect your child at the gate.

Again, if you need to come into the school, you may use the parking bays at the front wall.

At infant home time parents are permitted to park in the drive-through area while collecting their child from the gate (or door on wet days). However, please do not park on the road. If there is no room in the drive-through area, remain in your car and wait for a space to open up. We understand that this may mean your child has to wait a few minutes but it's important not to block the road at this busy time.

Thank you for your cooperation in these important matters.



EARLY LEARNING



Developing the Command of Spoken Language

It is important that the child's ability to talk is as advanced as possible. It is through speech that children communicate their thoughts and feelings, their needs and desires, curiosity and wonder. If they cannot express these in words they will tend to remain silent and will often withdraw from the learning activity of the class. This can be the first sign of failure in the school system and must be remedied, if at all possible. This is why a lot of attention is given to language development in the first years of school.

You Can Help

- Talk to your child naturally and casually about things of interest that you or he/she may be doing at home, in the shop, in the car etc. Remember that all the time children are absorbing the language they hear about them. It takes them a while to make it their own and to use it for their own needs.
- Try to make time to listen when they want to tell you something that is important to him/her. But don't always make him/her the centre of attention.
- Answer genuine questions with patience and in an adequate way. Always nurture her/his sense of curiosity and wonder.
- Introduce her/him gently to the ideas of Why? How? When? Where/ If? etc. These demand more advanced language structures.
- He/she will have his/her own particular favourite stories that he/she never tires of hearing. Repeat them over and over again and gradually get him/her to tell them to you.

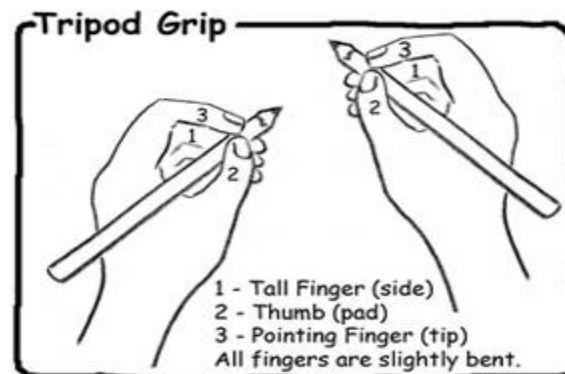
GETTING READY FOR WRITING

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 hand and finger muscles are only gradually developing at this stage.

You Can Help ...

- He/she must develop the ability to get the hand and eye working together. This is very important. Get them manipulating toys like:
 - (a) Jigsaws, Lego, beads to thread etc.
 - (b) Plasticene (Marla) to make their own shapes
 - (c) A colouring book and thick crayons
 - (d) Sheets of paper that they can cut up with a safe scissors.

- When he/she begins to use a pencil make sure that he/she holds it correctly at the start. It will be difficult to change him/her later.
- He/she may be making capital letters at home even before he/she comes to school. But when he/she starts making lower case letters at school you should try to get him/her to discontinue the capitals.
- Don't discourage left-handedness. If that is his/her definite natural inclination, don't attempt to change it



UNDERSTANDING MATHEMATICS

First a Word of Warning

Maths for the small child is not all about “sums” or figures or tables, adding or subtracting. Mathematics is really part of the language children use 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, four etc.
- Colours - black, white, red, green etc.
- Prepositions (telling position) and their opposites: over/under, before/after, inside/outside etc.
- Matching/Sorting - objects of the same size/colour/texture/shape etc.
- Odd One Out - difference in size/colour etc.

Understanding of these concepts comes very quickly for some children. For others it takes a long time. Be patient. You cannot force mathematics understanding on a child.

But You Can Help ...

- In the course of your ordinary daily routine in the home, in the shop, in the neighbourhood you should use suitable opportunities to casually introduce the maths vocabulary referred to above, e.g. How many cakes? The glass is full/empty. We turn left at the lights.
- The child gets to understand Maths best by handling and investigating and using real objects. This has been his/her natural method of learning since he/she was a baby. This at times can be a nuisance but if it allows them to do the learning themselves. The final result is well worth it.

FIRST STEPS IN READING

Ability to read is the foundation for all future progress in our school system. However, learning to read is a gradual process and a lot of preparatory work must be done before a child is introduced to her/his first reader.

We very deliberately do not rush or push children into reading. We get them ready for it over an extended period. Reading is something to be enjoyed. It should never start as a chore for the small child. Fill your child's life with a print rich environment.



You Can Help ...

- Have attractive colourful books in the home.
- Read your children a variety of stories from time to time. He/she will get to associate these wonderful tales with books and reading.
- You must convey to him/her gradually that books are precious things. They must be minded and handled carefully and put away safely.
- Look at the pictures with him/her and talk to him/her about what they say.
- Read nursery rhymes. Children will learn them off their own bat. Don't try to push them.
- Above all, don't push them with early reading. You may turn them against it for evermore.
- Remember that the teacher is the best judge of what rate of progress is best suited to each child.
- Attend our Paired/Shared Reading Information meeting in the first term of the school year.

**St. Brigid's National School
Killygarry**

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