

Preparing for ‘The Big Day’

A child’s first day at school is a day to remember for the rest of his/her life. These are some tips so you can help to make it a really happy one.

- Tell your child about school beforehand, casually, and talk about it as a happy place where there will be a big welcome and where they will meet new friends.
- Please do not use the school or the teacher as a threat – it can make some children very apprehensive.
- Your child will like to have the new uniform or tracksuit and a new bag when school begins. These help him/her identify more readily with the school and other children.
- Your child’s books, copies and workbooks will be taken up on the first day of school and the teacher will hold on to them until such time as they are needed – this minimises books getting lost. Please have your child warned of this fact, in case they think they will never see the books again!
- All books/copies must be marked with your child’s name and readers must be covered.
- Your child will feel important if he/she has something in their school bag, so perhaps you could buy an extra copy or colouring book which could be used at home.

COMING IN ...

- When you arrive in the classroom, please be as casual as you can
- You and your child will meet the class teacher and the other children
- Hopefully, your child will be absorbed in the new surroundings, so having given assurance that you will be back to collect him/her, wave goodbye and make your getaway without delay to the school hall for a ‘cuppa’

GOING HOME ...

- Junior Infants will finish school at 12pm for the first 2 weeks. School will finish at 2pm after this time.
- Be sure to collect your child on time. Children can become very upset if they feel they are forgotten

- If at any time the collecting routine has to be changed please ensure you tell your child and the class teacher in writing. We understand that emergencies can also arise so a phone call to the school office will ease anxiety

HANDLING THE UPSET CHILD ...

- In spite of the best effort of both teacher and parents a small number of children will still become upset. If your child happens to be one of them don't panic. Patience and perseverance can work wonders

A WORD OF ADVICE ...

- Trust the teacher. He/She is experienced and resourceful and is used to coping with all kinds of starting-off problems.
- Try not to show any outward signs of your own distress. Sometimes the parents are more upset than the child and are the main cause of his/her anxiety.
- When you have reassured your child, leave as fast as possible. The teacher can distract and humour him/her more easily when you are not around.
- Check back discreetly in a short while with the office. You will invariably find that calm has been restored.
- You must be firm from the start. Even if a child is upset you must insist that they stay. He/she must never feel that he/she is winning the psychological battle of wills.
- On day one take as many photos and videos as you like. It is a great day for children, parents and the school.