

# Preparing For Junior Infants – Scoil Carmel JNS

Starting 'big school' is a huge transition in your child's life and it takes time to adjust. Some will settle immediately, and for others it takes time. Here in Scoil Carmel, we try to make it as smooth a transition as possible. Our aim is to make the children feel safe and secure in their new environment.

## Preparing for September:

- We ask that you make the break before September and leave your child with a relative, neighbour or friend ahead of starting school
- Make sure your child has experienced you leaving but coming back!
- Please break any attachment to a blanket or a soother ... in advance of September!
- Please let us know if your child has any food allergies/medical conditions, etc, or if your child has not attended playschool
- Please remember to only start your child if you feel they are ready
- Try not to compare him / her to siblings, neighbours or cousins – every child is different
- There is no harm in holding off a year if you feel they would be more socially and emotionally ready then



## We expect your child to be able to:

- Put on, take off and hang up their coat independently
- Later, we will need them to be able to manage hats, scarves and mittens (no gloves) themselves
- Tuck him/ herself in after visiting the bathroom
- Work on zips, buttons, and tights – no belts please as these are tricky!
- Put on and take off their jumper and over the summer we specifically ask that you work on turning jumper and coat sleeves inside out
- Encourage your child to be as independent as possible in terms of dressing – this will be a huge help to us
- Toilet: children **must be** toilet trained and able to wipe themselves properly
- Our classrooms have adult sized toilets, and so the children must be able to balance, reach for toilet roll, flush the toilet, and know how to wash their hands, etc.
- 'Toilet time' will be done regularly during the day
- Please put a change of clothes in your child's schoolbag in the event that they wet themselves
- For their own comfort, children will be sent home in the event of soiling
- Manage his/ her lunchbox: we expect the children to be able to feed themselves and to manage independently at lunchtime
- Make sure lunchboxes are easy to open for tiny hands – play lunch time at home over the summer to practice!
- Manage his/ her own drink: As a Green School, the children must have a reusable beaker – no cartons or straw drinks
- Again, over the Summer, practice opening and closing – like sleeves, this takes practice!



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## The first day of school:

- Our first day will be August 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 – school begins at 9.15am until 12 noon
- On this day, please say lots of positive, reassuring things to your child, while staying composed yourself – allow us to do what we need to get them inside!
- We are well used to this will have lots of lovely things ready to distract them – trust us, children always settle!
- In terms of the morning itself, we recommend getting up nice and early so that there is no major rush
- Take lots of time to get dressed, have a nice breakfast and to take lots of photographs
- Make it a nice, happy and relaxed morning for your child...and yourselves!



## Top tips and ideas to help your child prepare:

- Talk and Discussion: encourage your child to ask lots of questions and TALK! TALK! TALK!
- Sing and say lots of nursery rhymes and counting songs
- Share lots of stories (bed-time stories, picture books, audio books)
- Give your child plenty of opportunities to colour in and draw (please don't teach your child to write – we will do that!)
- Social skills: encourage listening, taking turns, sharing, playing with others, and experiencing losing a game (as traumatic as this can be!)
- Encourage your child to dress him/ herself and to be as independent as possible: managing his/ her coat, jumper, sleeves, buttons, zips, lunchbox and beaker
- Develop basic movement skills: running, skipping, walking, jumping
- Be positive and encouraging about school!

## Uniform & Supplies:

- Make sure to label EVERYTHING your child owns with a label s/he recognizes (coat, jumper, lunchbox, beaker, hat etc) Check labels regularly as they can wear off
- It is your choice whether to buy a formal uniform or just school tracksuit
- Our school tracksuit is available from 'The Sisters' – Village Green in Tallaght
- Children wear our navy Scoil Carmel tracksuit with a white or blue polo shirt
- Our formal uniform is made up of a red jumper, white shirt, grey skirt, grey pinafore, grey trousers, grey tie (available from any department store)
- We ask that long hair be tied up every day please
- We ask that you buy trousers with an elasticated waist (no belts) and allow your child to practice opening and closing buttons and zips
- When buying shoes and runners we insist on Velcro fasteners – no laces!
- When purchasing a coat, please choose a zip not buttons and make sure children can zip their coat independently
- Choose a suitable school bag: big enough to hold an A4 Folder (no wheels please)
- In September we will be in touch regarding the total cost of your child's supplies for the year (schoolbooks, copies, photocopying, arts and crafts materials etc). You will pay this through Aladdin and teachers purchase all supplies
- No pencil cases/ toys at school
- Teacher will provide everything the children need
- \*By all means, buy a pencil case if you want...but keep it at home for homework!



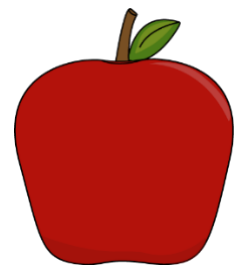
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## Attendance & Punctuality:

- Ordinarily school begins at 9.00am and ends at 1.40pm
- On day one, August 31<sup>st</sup>, however school begins at 9.15am and ends at 12 noon
- Children finish at 12 noon until September 13<sup>th</sup> 2023
- Full school day commences on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (9.00 – 1.40pm)
- By now, the children have been shown where to line up each morning
- For the first few mornings in September, we will have staff on site to help!
- Punctuality is essential both in the morning, and at collection time
- In relation to collection time, we ask you to inform us if somebody other than you is collecting your child
- All absences must be explained – you can either ring Reception, send in a note or communicate with class teacher via Aladdin or ClassDojo
- The school is obliged to report absences exceeding 20 days per year to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB)

## Lunch:

- For the safety and well-being of all our pupils, Junior Infants is a NUT FREE ZONE
- There are absolutely no nuts or nut products allowed in lunchboxes and we expect your full co-operation in this regard
- Be vigilant, and aware of hidden nuts (no nutella spread, peanut butter, popcorn etc)
- Please check labels carefully
- On a full school day, the children have two lunch breaks
- The first break is a designated 'fruit/ vegetable break' and then later we have 'big break'/ 'lón mór'
- We give the children PLENTY of time to eat and allow even more time for this at the beginning of the year as the children get used to it!
- As a Green School, we aim to reduce waste and ask the children to take home their food wrappers
- With this in mind, lunchboxes must be washed and cleaned out each night
- When preparing your child's lunch give him/ her a manageable amount of food to eat – not too much
- Please make sure that it is as easy to manage as possible, e.g. fruit peeled and chopped
- In line with Scoil Carmel's Healthy Eating Policy, we ask that lunchboxes are filled with healthy contents only
- The children are allowed one fun-sized treat on Fridays. Our NO NUTS policy still applies here
- Please don't send in Frubes as these can be hard to manage
- We ask that you send in water/ fruit juice or milk in the children's reusable beakers – no fizzy drinks
- Suggestions for fruit/ veg break: please have them peeled and ready to eat
- Fruit: chopped apple, peeled mandarin, chopped pear, grapes (cut in half), raisins, pineapple, berries (strawberries/ blueberries), peeled kiwi, banana
- Vegetables: Cucumber, cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, sweetcorn, celery, peppers
- Suggestions for big break / 'lón mór' - sandwiches, crackers, cheese, pasta, drycereal, pancakes, croissants
- In advance of the full school day, we will ask you to talk to your son/daughter about their lunchbox, identifying what they are going to eat at each break



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## Communication

### Aladdin

- By now you should have received some information from us regarding how to log on and register with Aladdin Connect, the official communication channel between school and home
- This is the platform used by both our principal and class teachers to communicate directly with parents
- As there will be lots to communicate before school reopens, it is essential that you are able to access the information
- Please let us know if you are experiencing any difficulty in terms of registering
- It is very important that you keep us informed of anything which is happening in your child's life which might be affecting him/ her (e.g. loss of a grandparent, parents separating, etc.)
- Similarly, we will be sure to inform you of anything happening in school which might be affecting your child at home too
- If you need to talk to us, we are always available to meet after 1.50pm
- We are unavailable to meet or chat at 9am as our main focus is always on the children
- If your child is ill or has headlice, please let us know

### ClassDojo

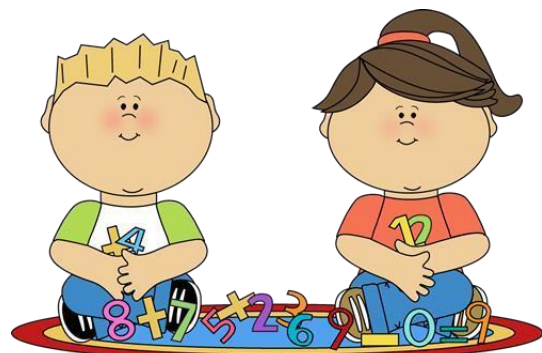
- is the social app used by the school to communicate to you the general work and activities taking place in the classrooms and around the school
- If you are not already a parent of a current pupil, you will be able to access it in September

### Birthdays

- Birthdays are a huge celebration for Junior Infants but in the interest of fairness, party invitations cannot be distributed in school
- If distributing invitations, you must do so outside of and after school

### Parents Association

- Our fantastic Parent's Association have their own Facebook page if you would like to check it out simply search 'Scoil Carmel Firhouse Parent's Association'
- Get in touch if you would like to get involved



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