**Junior Infants Parent Guardian Information Meeting**

**September 2017**

***Welcome***

First of all, you are all very welcome and a big thank you for coming today. Also, thank you for helping to get the children settled in so well.

Before I begin, can I pass around an information sheet on which you can fill out your and your child’s’ details. If during the year these details change especially your phone number please let me know.

***Punctuality***

* School begins at 8.50 and ends at 1.30, except for tomorrow when the children will go home at 11.30.
* It is expected that the children are in the line at 8:50. If the children are brought to school late they are required to go with their parents / guardians to Caroline’s office to sign in on the late sheet.
* Continue to allow your child to walk in by themselves. They are doing fantastic at this. If your child ever gets upset reassure them that I will look after them and that they will see you soon. It really is best to not hang around. Generally if a child is upset in the morning, they settle down within 10 – 15 minutes.
* I will please ask that if the parents / guardians could refrain from looking in the window in the morning and at hometime as it is quite distracting for me and the children.
* Please let your child hang up their own coat / school bag / take out their own lunchbox, etc. in the morning. This is important as it gives the children a sense of independence.
* Continue the home time routine as we are. I will bring the children outside at 1.30. Please stand against the railings. I will come to each child and please come forward to take your child. Your child must say goodbye to me at home time so that I know they have gone home safely. If your child runs to you, please ask them to return to the line until I tell them to go.
* On a rainy day, for now the parents / guardians can line up on the corridor and wait till I call your child.
* Please be as punctual both morning and evening.
* Please let me know if someone different is collecting your child.
* Attendance in school is extremely important and the children are expected to be in school every day. However if they are sick and have to take a day off you must record in writing the date and reason your child is off. I am required to keep these notes

***Label***

* Please label everything!!! Coats / jumpers / cardigans / lunch box / PE jumpers

***Lunch***

* St. Paul’s has a healthy eating policy. No chocolate, fizzy drinks, crisps, biscuits, winders, pop corn, etc. They are not allowed in school, even as a “treat”.
* Occasionally I give out a jelly for something special and at the end of term we will have a class party at Halloween, Christmas etc and the children can bring in treats on these days.
* From next week we will have our full days until 1.30. Children will then have two breaks. A small snack for little break and something bigger for big lunch. Please show your child in the morning what is for little and what is for big break as sometimes the children feel that they have to eat everything at little break.
* Normally children have a piece of fruit for little break and sandwiches/crackers for big lunch.
* Please no glass bottles.
* Any uneaten food is to be brought home – no food allowed in the bins, only rubbish.
* Practise with your child how to open yoghurts, frubes and their drinks bottle.
* Whole apples take a long time for the children to eat, cut them up. If your child is unable to peel oranges, peel them in the morning for the children.
* I have already sent a note home that Room 1 is a Nut Free, Kiwi Free and Fish Free Classroom as well as the whole school. No nuts of any form are permitted. No peanut butter / nutella / nuts / etc. Also no kiwi or fish. Please also remind your child that their lunch is for them and not to share. Please check ingredients for traces of nuts / kiwi / fish. If there are any other allergies to food or otherwise please inform me in writing.

***Yard***

* Junior Infants have their own section of the yard, marked off with white lines which they are already familiar with.
* Please talk about the rules of the yard at home:
  + Kind hands, kind feet.
  + Walk, not run.
  + Stay within the white lines.
  + Stay off the grass.
  + No climbing the railings – including in the morning and at home time.
* Children are encouraged to report any problems to the teacher on yard who will then tell me if I am not on yard duty. Any serious problems I will let you know of.
* If your child reports an incident to you which he/she didn’t tell me and you think it is very important, please tell me and I will sort the issue out.
* If your child bumps their head on yard, I will ring home as a precaution or send a note home or mention it to you at hometime.
* We would greatly appreciate some help with yard duty. If any Mammies / Daddies / Aunts / Uncles / Grandparents are free from 10.30 to 10.45 or 12.30 to 1.00 on any day of the week please let me know and I can draw up a rota. Your help is greatly appreciated as we have 60 Junior Infants on the yard.

***Health***

* At some stage during the year it is inevitable that there will be a case of head lice. In such cases, please let me know as soon as possible. A letter will be sent home to everyone asking you to treat your child. The only way to stop the spread of head lice is to treat your child.

***Toilets***

* Children may go to the toilet whenever they need but they do need to ask me with their hand up. At the moment the children see it as a novelty to go to the toilet if they see another go so I encourage the children to wait a little while if possible.
* Only one boy or one girl is allowed to go at a time.
* Remind children to flush toilet afterwards and to wash hands carefully. Paper towels are in the classroom for the children to dry their hands.
* If accidents occur, it is never a problem. I have spare pants / trousers / socks / skirts / in the classroom. Please wash and return as soon as possible.
* If your child is prone to wetting themselves send in a spare pair of clothes and I will keep them if needed.

***P.E.***

* P.E. day is on a Tuesday.
* Please wear tracksuit and runners.
* Tracksuits are only for P.E. day. Please wear uniforms otherwise.

***Social Integration and Behaviour***

* Children should be able to put on own coat. Please practise at home, taking it on and off, make it more difficult for children with arms inside out, etc. Also practise zipping coat. The same for jumpers also.
* In the classroom the children must put up their hand when they want to speak. They must put up their hand, wait for me to call on them and then speak. Please remind the children of this at home as some are finding it difficult to be patient and wait their turn.
* I will only give an instruction once. Children need to listen carefully to the instruction and follow it. It is bad habit to repeat instructions over and over as the children will become inattentative and careless.
* Encourage children to look and listen when someone is talking. If you could practise at home calling their name once and before you give them the instruction ensure they are looking.
* Each morning we go through the rules of the classroom. Children are reminded of the positives for keeping the rules … stickers / prizes / etc. We also discuss what will happen if they don’t keep to the rule …
  + First … spoken to
  + Second … reminded of rule plus warning
  + Third …. Time out for 5 minutes. (Parents / Guardians will also be spoken to)

We also have group stars to motivate the children and I will use different techniques throughout the year to encourage good behaviour.

* No bad language is tolerated.
* Children are encouraged to be kind, polite, caring, helpful and co-operative at all times.
* I will report to you if there is ever a problem with behaviour but also when behaviour is particularly good.

***Work***

* Colouring: It is important for Junior Infants to be able to colour. Encourage your child to colour as often as possible at home using different colours and also emphasise the important of staying inside the lines. Colouring is important for pencil grip and co-ordination.
* Practise jig saws also as they too are excellent for co-ordination.
* Crocodile fingers (demonstrate)

***Books***

* Thank you for returning all books so quickly. It is greatly appreciated.

***Jolly Phonics***

* We use the scheme “Jolly Phonics”. Children are taught 42 sounds rather than the 26 letters of the alphabet. A new letter is taught Monday to Thursday and on a Friday we will practise some free writing of the sounds taught that week.
* The sounds are taught through story, song and games on the Interactive Whiteboard.
* Practising these sounds every day at home will really benefit the children and help reinforce.
* Each night, children will take home a “sounds copy”. In it is the new sound and song that accompanies it. **Trace** the letter with the finger, **sing** the song, do the **action** and think of **words** that begin with that sound. It is very important for the children to these 4 things.
* There are also videos on youtube that will demonstrate the letter formation, song and action – just please do not go ahead.
* Emphasis for the moment is on letter sound rather than letter name.
* Each night, encourage the children to find words that begin with the letter of the day.
* The letters are learned in groups of 6. When 6 letters are taught we will begin to blend them together to make words. For example the first six letters are s, a, t, i, p, n. From this we will begin to make words, sat / pin / pit / tip / tap / tin / etc.
* I will send home games to encourage the children to blend the sounds learned to make words.(show blends eg. s-a-t)
* If there is ever a letter that you are unsure of the formation of, please ask as it is important that the children make it correctly.

***Reading***

* Please read with your child as often as possible. It is good practise to read with them everyday. Soon I will send home readers, please practise every night.
* Please don’t expect your child to know every word when they bring a book home. As time progresses, children will become more confident at sounding out words.
* We use a scheme called “The Big Box Adventures”. This scheme has proved very successful and is popular with the children. We are currently reading Big Books in the classroom and playing games based on the characters. Early October, I will begin sending little books, two per week on a Monday and Wednesday. Children must keep readers in their bags and must return books to receive the next one. I will listen to and assign reading for the children.
* Additional supplementary reading will also be sent home.
* When we start to send readers home we will send a note home about reading with children.
* We will go to the library one day a week. Please ensure the child’s book is in his/her schoolbag every day. This is a fun book that the child pick themselves and is for enjoyment in the evenings or at bedtime.

***Maths***

* In Junior Infants, numbers 0 – 5 are taught in terms of formation / making the set however we will count up to and recognise up to 20.
* We also cover colours / shapes / money / weight / length.
* Emphasis is placed on the language of Maths so each day I will spend 10-15 minutes on oral Maths.
* Practise lots of counting at home, count cups on the table, teddies in their bedroom, etc.
* I will regularly send home notes with the language of maths we are covering in school which you can use at home.

***Gaeilge***

* We are using a new scheme called “Bua na Cainte”. We have used the programme in the school for the last few years and the children really enjoyed it as well as it improving their Gaeilge level. We cover topics of myself, school, weather, shopping, etc. It is an interactive programme on the Interactive Whiteboard where the children listen to stories / songs / play games / etc.
* Gaeilge is also taught incidentally throughout the day.

***General Information***

* From now on I will put notices in the classroom window. Please check daily.
* If your child brings a toy to school it must not be valuable or a ball. Your child must be reasonable for it at all times.
* Baptismal certificate need to be brought to Caroline if you haven’t already.
* Talk to your child about school. Rather than asking them what they learned ask them what activities they played / what did Danny and Zeb do / What colour table have you set up in the classroom / etc.
* Give your child plenty of praise and encouragement as I will be doing no matter how big or small the achievement may seem.
* Regarding birthdays, if your child is having a party I am unable to give them out in class – please do so before or after school.
* If you ever have any problem, big or small, please let me know and I will try sort it out.
* On Friday, the children can wear blue in preparation for the All Ireland – a Dublin jersey / blue t-shirt / etc. Please do not go buy a jersey!!!!
* I sent out letter for insurance. Please return if you wish to avail of it – it is excellent cover.
* Please return vaccination forms as soon as possible.
* If there is ever anything you do want to discuss with me, please wait until 1.30 as the mornings can be hectic and I need to be in the classroom with the children.
* The Parent’s Association is very active in the school and would welcome new volunteers. If you are interested please give me your mobile number and I will pass it on to the Association.
* There will be a link to all said today on the school website in coming days.

Questions

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to getting to know you all. And again if there is ever anything you would like to talk about please do not hesitate to talk to me.

Thank you

Aisling Treanor

Charlene Caldwell

Tracey O’Connell