



# ***Kealkill National School***

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***Information Booklet***

## **Welcome! Fáilte!**

On behalf of Kealkill National School we extend a warm welcome to you and your child as you join our school community. We hope your child will enjoy his/her learning experiences in our school over the course of their years with us. Our mission is to promote the fullest possible development of each child socially, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually so that he/she may lead a full enjoyable life as a child, be prepared to avail of further education, be able to contribute to society as an adult and enjoy leisure time. We have put this booklet together as a general guide for parents and we trust you will find it helpful. It provides useful information about getting ready for starting school and school life here in Kealkill N.S.

Some of the school's policies can be found in our School Policy booklet. Parents are asked to read these policies carefully. You are requested to read and sign an Acceptance of School Policies Form, Acceptance of school Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying Policy, to confirm your acceptance of school policies as part of our school enrolment process. Here at Kealkill National School each and every child is equal and important and receives an education that will nurture their full abilities and talents.

I am available to meet with you at any time should any questions arise.

Please do not hesitate to contact me via the contact details on the cover.

Starting school can be a daunting time for both child and parent so please feel free to contact should any issue materialise.

I look forward to meeting you and your child/ren.

**Darragh Carey, Principal**



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## **Mission Statement**

Kealkill National School, Kealkill, is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school, which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of all pupils are identified and addressed.

While Kealkill National School is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions.

Kealkill National School will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes.

Kealkill National School will facilitate the involvement of parents through regular home/school contacts and through their involvement in the Kealkill National School Parents' Association

Kealkill National School will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.

Kealkill National School will promote equality amongst the teachers and pupils.

Déanfaimid iarracht Gaeilge a labhairt.

The school motto is:  
Doras Feasa Fiafraí (The Road to Learning is Questioning).

## About Kealkill National School

Kealkill National School is a primary co-educational Catholic school serving the community of Kealkill. The school is under the patronage of the catholic Diocese of Cork and Ross. It is a vertical school providing primary education for pupils from aged 4years – 12years i.e. Junior Infants to sixth class.

The school currently has 8 teachers on staff (Sept 2023) as follows: 7 class teachers, 3 special education teachers, base for supply panel post, 3 Special Needs Assistants and a secretary.

Kealkill National School operates under the Rules for National Schools and Department of Education and Skills (DES) guidelines. The School is staffed in accordance with the schedule laid out each school year by the DES. The school is funded by annual grant aid from the DES. This funding is supplemented each school year by parent contributions for school materials and school fundraising.

The school follows the curriculum prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Section 9 & 30 of the Education Act 1998. All pupils enrolled in the school are expected to participate in all aspects of the curriculum which includes the following subjects: English, Gaeilge, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, Visual Arts, Music, Drama, SPHE and Physical Education.

The school provides Religious Education for Catholic pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. Non-Catholic pupils may be exempted from the Religious Education programme at the request of their parents and in consultation with the principal. Out of class supervision does not take place in these circumstances.

The school calendar for each year will be made available prior to September. Parents should note that planned school holidays may be subject to change by the BOM in the event of unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather etc.

### School Timetable:

**Infant Classes:** 9.00am – 1.40pm

**First to Sixth Classes:** 9.00am – 2.40pm

School doors open at 8.50 am for admission of pupils. Pupils are supervised from 8.40am. Before this time, the Board of Management is **NOT** responsible for the safety of the children on the school premises. Pupils should line up at their class line when bell rings and await collection by class teacher. Junior Infants will go home at 12 noon for the first 2 weeks and thereafter Junior and Senior Infants go home at 1.40 pm.

### Board of Management

In accordance with DES regulations Kealkill National School is managed by a Board of Management which is comprised of two nominees of the (Catholic) patron, two teacher nominees (including the principal teacher), two parents' nominees and two community nominees. The BOM meets regularly during the school year providing leadership and effective management of the school. In this regard the BOM is supported by the principal and deputy-principal.

### Parents' Association

Membership of Kealkill National School Parents' Association (PA) is open to parents of children in the school. The PA committee is made up of parents/guardians elected at the Annual General Meeting, usually held during the first term of school. The committee promotes the interests of the pupils in the school, in co-operation with the Board of

Management, the principal and teachers. The PA committee liaises regularly with the principal to plan and support school activities and fundraising. We are really fortunate to have such an active committee and I would encourage all parents to get involved.

### **After School Club**

The school provides an after school club for the pupils in the Infant classes from 1.40pm to 2.40pm. This club is proving to be very beneficial to parents who have a collection at both 1.40pm and 2.40pm. Each day in the club there are various activities ranging from arts & crafts to indoor and outdoor games.

### **Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Parent/Teacher Meetings are normally held in the first term to discuss your child's progress at school. Details of dates and times are confirmed early in the school year. It is important that parents attend these meetings.

### **End of Year School Reports**

Written Progress Reports are issued in Mid June of the school year. The purpose of these reports is to inform parents of their child's progress and general behaviour and school attendance for the school year.

### **Aladdin**

The school uses the Aladdin software as a means of communication between home and school. Aladdin is used by Irish primary schools to securely communicate and share information with parents/guardians. As well as messages from the school, you can view details that the school shares about your child's attendance, test results, report cards, homework, and library books. You can also enter reasons for your child's absences from the Aladdin Connect app. Aladdin Connect is accessed via a secure login. You can receive instant notifications from the school and have convenient and secure access to your child's information from your mobile device. Aladdin Connect is a fantastic way to enhance a school's communication with its parents and helps you to stay connected and informed about your child's education.

### **Homework:**

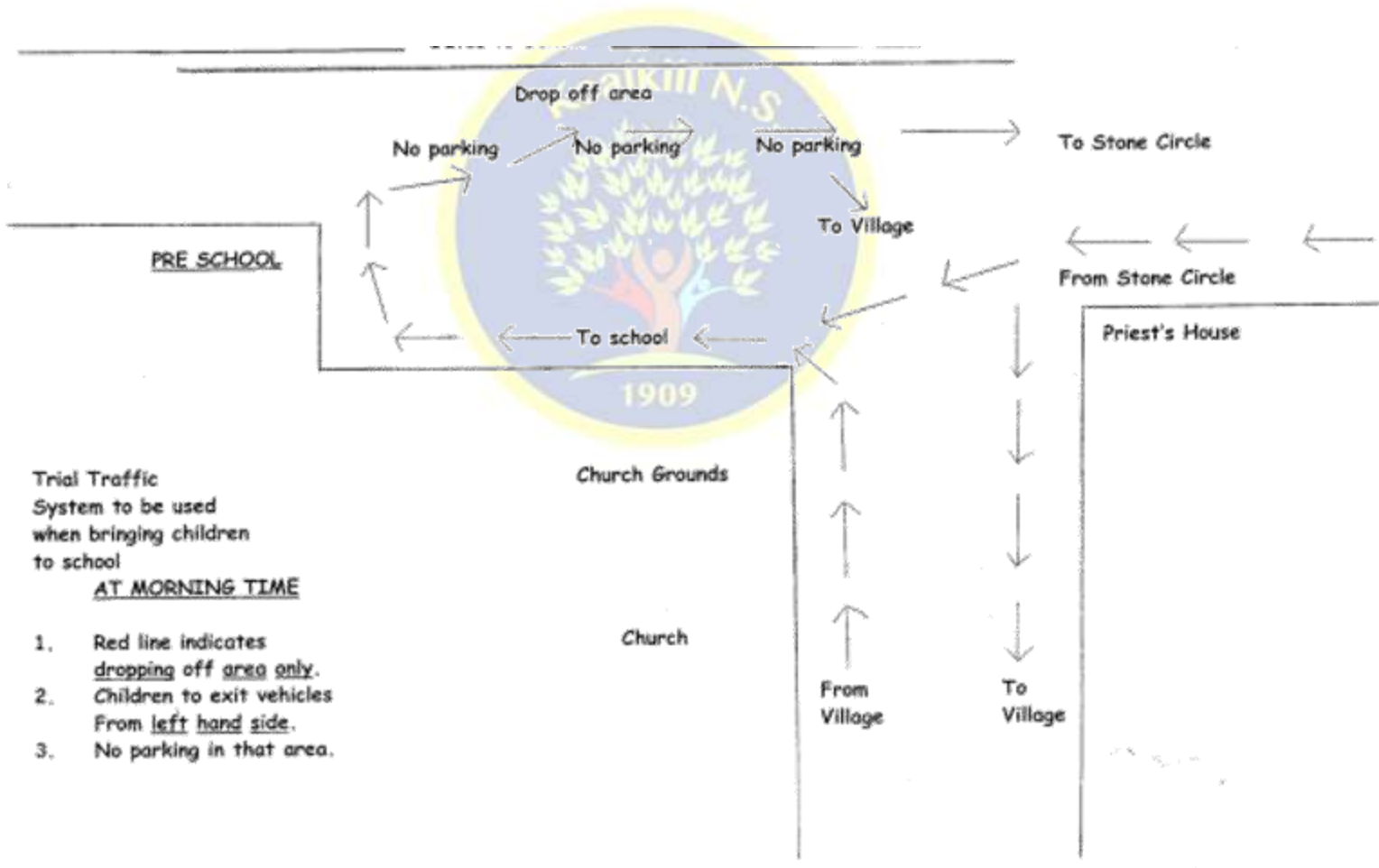
Each pupil in classes 1st – 6th has a school journal in which he/she records homework. Homework is not normally given at weekends. Junior Infants don't receive regular homework until after the Midterm break in October. Please check the Homework Policy for more information. Parents: please read your child's journal each night and check copies and books/reading to ensure that your child has completed all homework carefully.

## KEALKILL N.S. DROP OFF SYSTEM

For safety purposes there is a drop off system in place in front of the school gates in the mornings only.

- When you approach the school please drive alongside the church wall on your left, queuing if necessary.
- Then turn before you pass playschool and you can stop at the school gate to drop off your child (ren).
- Please ensure that child (ren) exit the car on the school side of the car and they can walk up to the school from there.

Pedestrians coming from church height are asked to cross the road at the corner of the church grounds at the pedestrian crossing. Pedestrians coming from Stone circle direction are asked to walk inside the white line. Please do not park cars at the school gate. If you need to visit the school in the morning, please park away from the drop off points.



## Packed Lunches

Lunch is an important meal for school going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre. The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives. We will ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start. Also, please, only give your child something you feel he or she can easily manage to eat. Children are not normally very hungry at school, so a little snack will do. Kealkill National School is recognised as a Health Promoting School.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children.

### **Bread & Alternatives**

Bread or rolls preferably wholemeal, Rice – wholegrain, Pasta – wholegrain, Potato Salad, Wholemeal Scones.

### **Savouries**

Lean meat e.g. chicken/turkey, tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines, cheese, Quiche, Pizza.

### **Fruit & Vegetables**

Apples, Banana, Peach, Plum, and Pineapple cubes, Mandarins, Orange segments, Grapes, Fruit Salad, Dried fruit, Tomato, Cucumber, Sweet corn, Coleslaw, Celery.

### **Drinks**

Water, Milk, including low fat,

### **Start with the Basics**

A healthy packed lunch should contain bread or an alternative, a savoury filling which provides protein, a suitable drink and some fruit and/or vegetables

**Please note that we operate a strict No Nut Policy**

## School Uniform

Please ensure that all items of your child's uniform are clearly labelled

### **Boys**

Jumper – Official school jumper (Grey with school crest)

Navy pants or plain navy tracksuit pants.

If desired, navy/dark shorts for summertime.

Blue shirt or polo shirt.

### **Girls**

Jumper – Official school jumper (Grey with school crest)

Navy skirt, Navy pants or plain navy tracksuit pants, shorts in Summer if desired

Blue shirt or polo shirt.

Navy tight/leggings

### **No logos please**

No jeans or denims of any kind allowed. Practical shoes suitable for multi-purpose

## Primary School Curriculum

The Primary School Curriculum outlines what children learn in each subject, the approaches and methodologies used and how a child's learning progresses through the primary school. The curriculum is learner-centered. It emphasises the importance of literacy, numeracy, and language, while at the same time responding to changing needs in science and technology, social personal and health education, and citizenship.

The Primary School Curriculum aims to:

- develop each child's potential to the full
- encourage in children a love of learning
- help them develop skills they will use all their lives

All pupils must participate in all (secular) curricular areas as prescribed by the DES. Pupils may not opt out of any of the prescribed subjects on the curriculum.

The curriculum is presented in seven areas, some of which are further subdivided into subjects. These are:

1. Language: Gaeilge and English
2. Mathematics
3. Social, environmental and scientific education (SESE): history, geography and science
4. Arts education: visual arts, music and drama
5. Physical education
6. Social, personal and health education (SPHE)
7. Religious or ethical education is the responsibility of the different school patron bodies.

**NOTE:** Pupils who are not Roman Catholic will not be obliged to participate in the religious education programme. Parents should inform the school in advance if they wish to withdraw their child from the RE lessons or events.

As well as learning new ideas and finding out new information in the different subjects of the curriculum, children develop important skills such as communicating, estimating, problem solving, working scientifically, designing and making. The curriculum specifies the amount of time to be allocated to each curriculum area. At each class level school work is appropriately differentiated by teachers as the need arises (either simplified or extended) to accommodate all ability levels within the class.

## **Special Educational Needs**

Pupils are assessed annually from first class to establish their educational needs. Standardised assessments are also carried out in Maths and in English by class teachers.



Additional Support teaching (either in-class or small- group /individual) may be provided for pupils by our team of special education teachers. The school also has access to the services of an educational psychologist under National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), who works closely with the school in assessing and supporting pupils who are experiencing learning or behavioural or other difficulties. The school also works closely with the Child & Family Agency (TUSLA) personnel and services such as Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) etc. **It is essential that parents inform the school at enrolment if a child has learning/behavioural/social/sensory or other problems that may impact on the child's experience in school. This also allows the school to plan for the child and to seek appropriate teaching and other resources such as SNA support, assistive technology, physical adaptations etc to assist the child in school**

## **Stay Safe Programme**

The Stay Safe Programme is a personal safety skills programme for primary schools. Its overall objective is to prevent child abuse, bullying and other forms of victimisation. The aim of the Stay Safe programme is to reduce vulnerability to child abuse and bullying. The programme develops children's ability to recognise, resist and report risk situations or abusive encounters by teaching children:

To identify for themselves unsafe or upsetting situations

Simple rules to help them avoid abuse

To respect and value the rights of others

The language and skills they require to seek help

The children are taught the content of the Stay Safe lessons in the classroom by their class teacher, and can then discuss the lessons at home with their parents. The lessons teach children about what to do if they're frightened or upset. One of the central messages children learn is that if they ever have a problem, they should tell an adult they know and trust. There are five topics discussed in the Stay Safe Programme,

Feeling Safe/Unsafe, Bullying, Touches, Secrets and Telling & Strangers

Each topic is dealt with in an age appropriate manner, in a way that emphasises positive experiences while acknowledging that there are times when children may feel unsafe, threatened or frightened. Through classroom discussion, role-play and repetition, children learn simple safety strategies for dealing with problems. Children learn that they should always tell an adult who can help. The overall message is that children will learn to: Say 'No' and Get away and tell.

As part of the SPHE curriculum, the Stay Safe programme is taught every second year to all classes. If you require further information on Stay Safe please contact me or check out [www.staysafe.ie](http://www.staysafe.ie)

## **The following is some advice and tips for Parents to help your child with different areas of the curriculum**

### **Writing**

## Develop Fine Motor Skills for Writing: -

- Teach your child to use the scissors.
- Cut along lines straight/curved/zig/zag.
- Allow your child to punch holes in paper with a puncher.
- Encourage your child to tear paper and make a simple collage.
- Make letters with play dough/marla.
- Clip clothes pegs around a bowl.
- Work with construction toys e.g. lego,
- Colour simple colouring books and date the pages to chart progress
- Provide your child with opportunities to paint.

### Child's Name:

Teach your child to write his/her name. Begin with a capital followed by small letters e.g. James.  
Don't discourage left handedness

Avoid using all capital letters in your child's name.

### How to Hold a Pencil

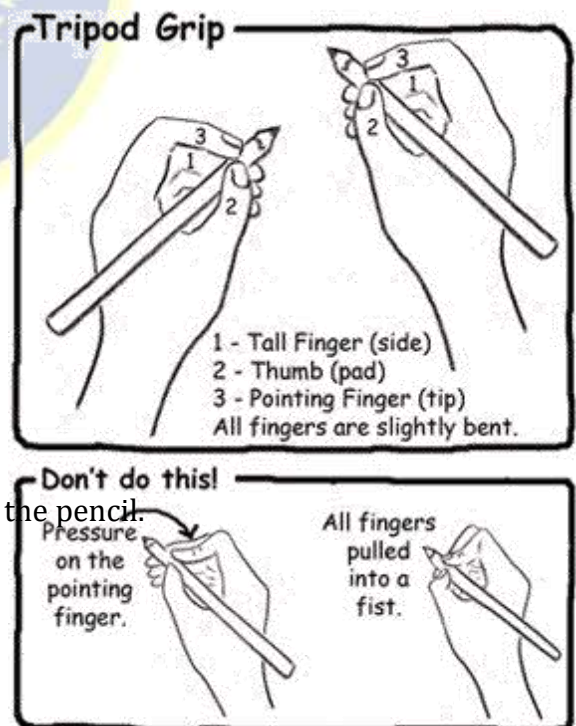
Show children how to hold a pencil in the tripod position, and check to see that they use this grip while they draw and write with you.

Just remember that it may take longer to change the habits of an older child.

#### The Tripod Grip

The pencil should be positioned so that there is equal pressure between the thumb, the side of the middle finger and the tip of the index finger. All fingers are bent slightly. This is called a "tripod grip" or "tripod pencil grasp".

Thumb should **NOT** be wrapped around the side of the pencil.



## Reading

Reading is a gift for life. It is a gateway to future learning and to the development of your child's imagination.

As parents you are the primary educators of your child. We seek to support you in this role and hope you will find this information on reading helpful. Please “dip” into the suggestions outlines as appropriate to your child.

### ***Strategies to develop Oral Language -***

- Teach your child traditional nursery rhymes to improve rhyming skills.
- Extend your child’s vocabulary by encouraging him/her to make lists of fruit/animals/places etc.
- Play “I Spy” game or “Twenty Questions”
- Ask your child to retell the story read using the illustrations in the book.
- Encourage your child to use complete sentences.

### **The Alphabet -**

- Sing the alphabet song.
- Display an Alphabet Chart in your child’s bedroom.
- Learn letter names.
- Purchase a set of magnetic letters for the fridge containing capital and lower case letters.
- Sequence the magnetic letters in alphabetical order.
- Cut out letters from the newspaper.
- Circle particular letters in magazines.
- Help your child identify the letters in his/her name.

### **Strategies to Enhance Reading -**

- Set aside a special time each day for reading e.g. bedtime.
- Don’t insist on reading when your child is tired/hungry/wants to look at his/her favourite T.V. programme
- Buy books your child has a particular interest in.
- Join the local library.

### **When reading with your child, point out -**

- The title of the book.
- The back/front/middle/top/bottom of the book.
- Capital letter/small letters/full stop/word /sentence.
- Point to the words as you read with your child.

### **Enhance your Child’s Experience with -**

- Jigsaws
- Junior Scrabble
- Picture/Word Snap
- Word Bingo
- Dot-to-dot pictures.
- Spot the difference pictures & mazes
- Threading beads helps sequences skills and will assist with spelling at a later stage.
- Card Games e.g. snap develops your child’s visual discrimination skills. It would also be important to minimise the amount of screen time that your child is subjected to.

## **Understanding Maths**

First a Word of Warning, Maths for the small child has nothing to do with “sums” or figures or tables or adding and subtracting. These will all come much later. Maths is really part of the language he or she uses in understanding and talking about certain things in your child’s daily experience e.g.

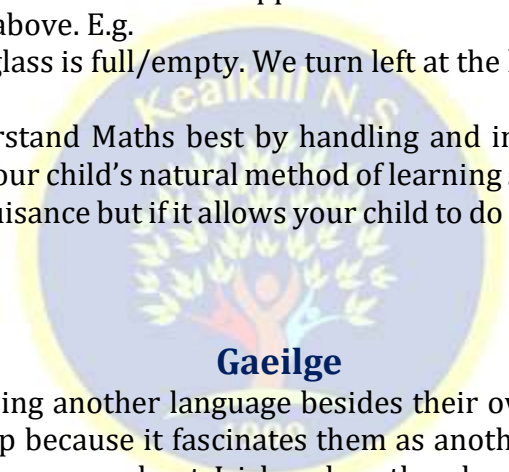
- Your child associates certain numbers with particular things – two hands, four wheels, five fingers etc.
- Counting – one, two, three, four, etc.
- Colours – black, white, red, green, etc.
- Prepositions (telling position) and their opposites: over/under, before/after, inside/outside etc.
- Matching/Sorting – 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 Maths 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 your child's natural method of learning since your child was a baby. This at times can be a nuisance but if it allows your child to do the learning, the final result is well worth it.



### **Gaeilge**

All children enjoy learning another language besides their own language. They have no difficulty in picking it up because it fascinates them as another code of communication. They are free of any hang-ups about Irish unless they become aware that the home attitude towards it is not good. So please be careful that anything you say does not give a negative attitude to your child.

We would like you to give every encouragement and help to your child in their efforts to acquire Irish. If they learn new words in school encourage them to use them at home. Use little Irish phrases or words now and again. Children are delighted to find out that their parents are into their new code as well. If they must learn Irish, let them enjoy it and master it to the best of their ability.

### **Aistear**

Junior and Senior Infants are undertaking the Aistear approach to play. Aistear facilitates active learning through play and hands-on experiences and supports oral language development. This is proving to be an excellent initiative and the children thoroughly enjoy it

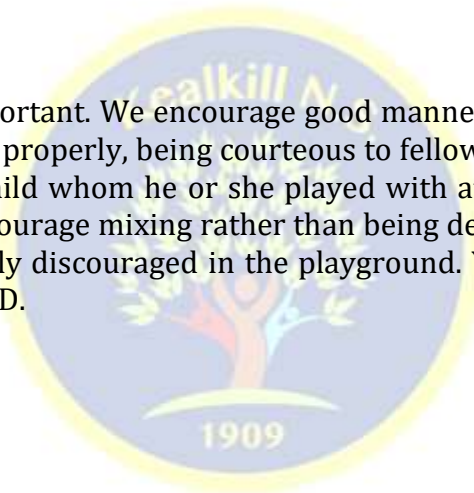
## **Other Areas of the Curriculum**

The child in juniors learns a lot through many other activities, which do not need any elaboration here. Your child's general development is enhanced through Art & Craft, P.E., Music, nature and of course through Religious Education.

In regard to the last area its moral and social aspects are covered right through the school day e.g. kindness to others, sharing with them, saying we are sorry, being aware of God through the beauty of nature etc. The children learn their prayers and bible stories gradually. Again, as in the other areas we referred to already, the child will benefit from practising at home what he or she has learned at school. Your child can then make his or her own contribution to the usual family prayers.

## **Social Skills**

Social skills are very important. We encourage good manners at all times, please/thank you, addressing teachers properly, being courteous to fellow students and teachers. It is important to ask your child whom he or she played with at school and to ensure your child isn't alone, also encourage mixing rather than being dependent on one friend only. Rough behaviour is totally discouraged in the playground. You will find a list of school policies in the enclosed CD.



## **Introduction to Primary Education & Beginning School**

Starting school will be the first big change in the life of your child. Up to this your child has felt safe and secure with you in the home and family but now she or he is facing the wider world of classroom and school. This may seem a big step for someone so small but most children manage it without any great fuss or stress - and in fact take to it like ducks to water.

However, it is also a time when parents and teachers should take special care to ensure that the transition from home to school is as smooth as possible. If the child's first experience of school is one of happy involvement, a very good foundation will have been laid for fruitful school years ahead.

It is important too, particularly during the first year that parents understand what the aims of the school are, as many may be expecting too much in the way of academic achievement.

We know from experience that parents are very anxious to help in any way possible. We have, therefore, included some ideas for the home, which should stimulate the child's interest and nurture his or her desire to know more.

With these aims in mind we have put together this little booklet as a general guide for parents. It deals briefly with the period before your child comes to school and his or her introductory stage in Junior Infants.

We trust you will find it helpful and that your child will be happy and fulfilled with us

### **Preparing Your Child for School**

Talk about school in a positive manner. Don't use "teacher" as a threat.

Read to your child on a regular basis. Make sure this is at a time that suits both parties. Talk about the cover, title etc. Ask your child to predict what they think it's going to be about. Books will be sent home in October. These will need quite a lot of talk and discussion. However make a distinction between these and books that you read purely for pleasure and enjoyment in hearing a story. Regular trips to the library are helpful.

Introduce your child to an array of books, e.g. audio, visual, fact & fiction etc.

Homework is not given until after Mid Term Break. Sign homework diary/sheet on completion of work. Use the diary/sheet as a means of communication between home and school. Homework should take no longer than 10 minutes at infant level. Word Bags are usually sent home after Christmas.

There is a buddy system in operation in the school to help make your child feel more at ease.

### **Before Your Child Starts...**

You should ensure that your child is as independent as possible - physically, emotionally and socially. If they can look after themselves in these areas they will feel secure and confident and settle in readily. It would help greatly if he or she is able to-

- Button and unbutton his coat and hang it up.
- Use the toilet without help and manage pants buttons
- Also encourage personal hygiene and cleanliness. Your child should know to flush the toilet and wash their hands, without having to be told.
- Use their hanky when necessary.
- Share toys and playthings with others and "take turns".

- Tidy up and put away his/her playthings.

### **Preparing for the 'Big Day'**

The child's first day at school is a day to remember for the rest of their life. You can help to make it a really happy one for your child.

- Tell your child about school beforehand, casually, and talk about it as a happy place where there will be a big welcome for them and he or she will meet new friends. Don't make starting school to be too big an event as children can become very overwhelmed and quite upset.
- Don't use school or the teacher as a threat. "If you behave like that for teacher she'll give out to you" though said light-heartedly can make some children very apprehensive.
- If you feel it would help, you could take him or her for a stroll to the junior classrooms and play area on an afternoon during June when the other children have gone home. Your child can browse around and become familiar with their new environment. On arrival you could drop in to meet the Principal with your child and perhaps your child could meet their teacher, as well.
- At home your child will like to have their new uniform and their new bag when they begin. These will help your child identify more readily with the school and other children.
- Your child will feel important if he or she has something in their school bag, so perhaps you could buy a copy or colouring book for your child, which he or she could use.

### **The Big Day Coming in...**

When you arrive at the classroom, be as casual as you can. Your child will meet the teacher and the other children and will be shown to their chair. They will play with the other boys and girls to allow them to get settled in. Hopefully he or she will be absorbed in their new surroundings. So having assured your child you will be back to collect them later wish them goodbye and make your getaway without delay.

### **Going Home**

- Keep out of view until the children are released.
- Be sure to collect him or her on time. Infants are collected from the classroom. Children can become very upset if they feel they are forgotten. If you are running late contact the school at (027 66298)
- If at any time the collecting routine has to be changed ensure you tell the child and the teacher.

### **Handling the Upset Child**

In spite of the best efforts 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. She is experienced and resourceful and is used to coping with all kinds of starting-off problems.

### **As Time Goes on...**

School begins at 9.20a.m. We have a policy where Junior Infants go home for the first two weeks at 12.00 p.m. After that they go home at 2pm. Please make sure your child is collected at 2pm.

Children need plenty of rest after the effort and excitement of a day at school. You should ensure that your child gets to bed early and has a good night's sleep. When your child has settled in and hopefully, looks upon school as a "home from home" do continue to show interest in his/her daily adventures. Give your child an ear if he or she wants to tell you things-but don't pester him or her with questions.

Get him/her into the habit of being in good time for school from the beginning.

Mid-morning break: 11:00-11:10.

Mind that you take some of your child's "stories" with a pinch of salt.

- If your child's progress is slow do not compare your child's adversely with other children while he or she is listening. Loss of self-esteem can be very damaging to your child.
- Be careful too about criticising your child's teacher in his or her presence. Remember that she is your child's mother figure while your child is at school and for your child's own well being it is important that he or she has a good positive image of her.
- At times there may be other adults in the classroom. We have a number of Special Needs Assistants working in our school. We are also a base school for trainee teachers.
- Your child is not going to be a model of perfection all the times - thankfully. You should try to have patience with your child's shortcomings and praise for his or her achievements.
- Children often "forget" or relay messages incorrectly, so please, check your child's bag each night for notes. It is best if notes for the teacher are handed to the teacher or other staff member.



## Communicating with the School

Parents who wish to meet your child's teacher or the Principal should send a written note to the school office for the attention of the teacher or Principal requesting an appointment. The letter should give a brief indication of the reason for the meeting. The school secretary will liaise with teacher/staff member and arrange a meeting at a mutually suitable time. Meetings with teachers are normally arranged to take place outside of class time to minimise disruption to school work.

Please inform the Secretary (not the class teacher) in writing of any change of address; parent's phone numbers; contact person's phone number etc. and active mobile number to be used for Aladdin Text Service for urgent school message service.

If it is wet or very cold, children do not go out to playground at break times. A letter requesting permission to remain indoors at playtime must be sent to class teacher. Notes & Letters are sent home to parents as necessary with information about important school or class events. Please check school bags regularly for such notes.

### Pupil Absence from School

The Education Welfare Act states that it is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school every day. It also requires schools to monitor pupils attendance and to notify the Education Welfare Board (TUSLA) of pupils who are absent for an accumulation of 20 days at any stage during the school year. All pupils are expected to be in school each day unless there is good reason for absence i.e. illness. **If your child is absent from school, please write a note to explain the dates of absence, reasons for absence and include parent's/guardian's signature.**

Documentation may be sought by the Education Welfare Board which oversees school attendance for all children and this agency is now under the remit of the Child & Family Agency.

## Medical Conditions and your Child

It is important that the school is aware of any medical conditions that may affect your child during the school day. In the case of a child becoming ill at school, parent or guardians will be contacted. You will be notified if your child has any fall involving a bang on the head.

### Infection in School:

Infections in schoolchildren are common. Infection may spread rapidly when groups of children are in classrooms so it is very important that the school should be informed when there is an outbreak of certain contagious infections. Your G.P will be able to advise you on this.

### If your child is sick:

If your child is unwell, please do not send him/her to school as children are unable to cope with the demands of school when they are unwell. Should a child become sick during school hours, the child is made as comfortable as possible and the child's parent/guardian is notified straight away by telephone and asked to collect the child

### **Emergencies during school hours:**

In the event of a child becoming ill at school or suffering a serious fall or injury, parents/guardians will be contacted by phone. It is very important that we have a contact number of a responsible adult who will be able to collect the child if the parent/guardian is not available. Parents are asked to make sure that the emergency phone number on their child's Enrolment Form is up to date.

### **Administration of Medicines:**

The Board of Management requires that parents inform the school and their child's teacher in writing of any medical condition their child may have. While the Board has a duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils when they are engaged in authorised school activities, this does not imply a duty upon teachers to personally undertake the administration of medicines. Under normal circumstances, no oral medicine or tablets will be administered by the staff. This includes medicines which have been prescribed by your own doctor for your child. If your child is ill enough to require medicine while in school, please keep him/her at home until the treatment is completed. Where children carry inhalers, they should be competent to self administer.

### **Long term illness requiring administration of medicine during school hours, e.g. diabetes, severe allergies, etc.**

Parents must write to the Board of Management requesting permission for the administration of medicine during the school day and outlining the procedure involved. Where children are suffering from life threatening conditions, parents should outline clearly, in writing, what can and cannot be done in a particular emergency situation, with particular reference to what may be a risk to the child. If specific staff members agree to administer the requested medication, the parents/guardians are required to indemnify the Board of Management and authorised members of staff in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of prescribed medicines in the school. Requests for administration of medication should be received at the beginning of each school year.

**It is essential that all parents sign the administration of medication form.**

### **Custody/Separation**

We encourage parents experiencing separation or family issues to come and speak confidentially to your child's teacher/s and/or Principal. The school will deal with such matters with sensitivity and compassion. Our primary concern always is for the well being and overall development of the child.

When a child spends time in two homes, it is requested that the school be provided with both sets of emergency/contact numbers. Regarding the collection of child/ren from school - it is requested that the school be informed of any changes in collection arrangements in writing. Generally the school will correspond/contact with the parent with whom the child normally resides and the school seeks that this parent will inform the other parent of meetings, arrangements etc. Special requests for separate communication may be accommodated by prior agreement only. School staff will endeavour at all times to deal sensitively and caringly with children experiencing separation and other family difficulties.

### **Data Protection**

Kealkill National School is a data controller responsible for personal data - i.e. information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person. We collect and processes personal information about pupils and parents / guardians for a variety of purposes and we rely on a number of legal grounds to do so. We require this information to perform our duties and responsibilities and to comply with our legal and statutory obligations. In addition, we require this personal information to pursue the legitimate interests of the school and our dealings with relevant third parties. We collect personal information about pupils, their parents / guardians through the enrolment process and/or through expressions of interest in relation to enrolment. Additional information is collected from third parties, including former schools and through school activities and general interaction(s) during the course of the pupil's time at Kealkill National School. There is a consent form in the enrolment pack which you must sign. For further information please see the schools Data Protection Policy on the CD or on [www.kealkillns.ie](http://www.kealkillns.ie).

## Parting Thoughts

### Who is the Boss?

Bit by bit the child will get used to the general discipline of the classroom. Your child will get to understand very quickly that in certain important matters an instruction from the teacher must be obeyed promptly and without question.

### Teacher and Parent

At the early stages some parents meet the teacher almost daily and this is a very desirable thing. However, if there is something in particular that you would like to discuss you can arrange to meet her at a time when you both can have a little peace and quiet.

### Easy Does It

There are lots of ideas and suggestions in this little book as to how you can help your child. We are not advocating that you do ALL of these with your child in a systematic way. But if you find from time to time that your child enjoys a fun approach to certain aspects of learning then we would say – give it a go – but remember don't overdo it.

### Our Hope

We are offering this Guide to Parents as a little practical help in dealing with the education of their children at the very early stages. We will be very happy if you dip into it from time to time and find something in it of value to you and your child.

