

ST. MARK'S JUNIOR SCHOOL,

SPRINGFIELD,

TALLAGHT, DUBLIN 24.



SCHOOL BOOKLET 2016/17

Principal: Deirdre Ni Bhroin

Dear Parents / Guardians,

A very warm welcome to St. Mark's Junior School.
We hope that your child will be extremely happy here.

Our school is a happy and safe place where **every child matters** and their unique contribution is cherished.

Love, Laughter, Learning and Literacy are at the core of every school day in St. Mark's Junior school.

Respect and Quality underpin all that we do.

Without your support we cannot succeed so we look forward to working in partnership with you in the interest of your child's all round learning and personal development.

We have a wonderful staff and you can be assured of our full co-operation and commitment at all times.

Should you have any query or concern at any time please feel free to come and talk to us.

Please take a few minutes to read this booklet as it will explain fully to you the day to day workings of your child's school. This will help you share fully in your child's educational experience.

Beir bua agus beannacht,

DEIRDRE NI BHROIN
PRINCIPAL

WELCOME TO ST. MARK'S JUNIOR SCHOOL.

BACKGROUND:

St. Mark's Junior School a co-ed Catholic School catering for children from Junior Infants to Second Class usually between 4 - 9 years of age. The school was founded in 1974.

At present there are approximately 580 pupils and 50 staff.

The staff is made up of:

- Class Teachers.
- Special Language Class Teachers.
- Speech and Language Therapist.
- Special Needs Teachers.
- English as Second Language Teachers.
- Special Needs Assistants.
- School Completion Co-Ordinator
- School Secretary.
- Caretaker.
- Office worker.
- An Administrative Principal.
- Cleaners.
- Outside coaches.

The school is run by the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY: VISION, MISSION & ETHOS

OUR VISION

The Vision we have in St. Mark's JNS is that of a caring, loving Catholic School where all children, whatever their ability, race or creed are cherished for their uniqueness.

Our School seeks to give **equal opportunity** to all children to reach their full potential - academically, spiritually, physically, socially and emotionally.

We endeavour to achieve this goal in a climate of positive co-operation, supported by the entire school community of pupils, teachers, support staff, parents/guardians, Board of Management and Parish.

We believe our school should be a place of Love, Laughter and Learning.

OUR MISSION.

The staff of St. Mark's Junior School seek actively, through word and action, to create a happy climate of physical, emotional, social and intellectual security for students, staff and parents/guardians.

In this way teaching and learning can take place within the context of mutual valuing and respecting relationships.

The teachers of St. Mark's Junior School see education not just as providing students with knowledge and skills but also as providing for the **all round development** of the individual.

We seek to help every child meet their true potential.

We believe each child has a unique and special contribution to make.

We believe every child matters.

We strive to develop independence in our students together with the ability to self evaluate, self motivate and internalise discipline.

We want our students to be happy with themselves, others and their world.

We want our pupils to enjoy school.

We endeavour to achieve **quality** in all that we do.

These aspirations can only be achieved through the co-operation of students, teachers, support staff, parents / guardians, Board of Management and Parish.

We believe it takes a village to raise a child.

OUR ETHOS.

We seek to promote an ethos which is:

Welcoming, tolerant, open, listening, safe, caring, inclusive, aesthetically pleasing and fun.

We are proactive in our efforts to achieve this environment through our language and our actions.

The teachers see parents/guardians as partners in this process.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT:

The school is run by the Board of Management.

The Board is made up of 8 people;

2 Parents Nominees

2 Community Nominees

2 members of the teaching staff (one of whom is the Principal)

2 Patron's/Diocesan nominees.

The names of the current Board are available from the school office.

The Board of Management has a four year term.

PARENT'S ASSOCIATION:

As a parent/guardian you are an automatic member of our Parent's Association.

The Parent's Association is run by a Committee of **parents/guardians.**

Their names are available from the school office.

Your ideas and support will be crucial in helping to make the Parent's Association a success. From time to time during the year the Parent's Association run meetings, talks, events and fund raisers.

These contribute greatly to the social life of the school.

They are also a means of getting to know new people while at the same time making a real contribution to your child's education.

REMEMBER YOU ARE THE ASSOCIATION SO PLEASE DO GET INVOLVED.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR:

Parents/Guardians are asked to read and sign the Code of Behaviour.

Our **Code of Behaviour** has at its core

- 🌟 6 Golden Rules,
- 🌟 Smiley Faces and Tracker
- 🌟 Star charts.

Our aim is to “**Catch them when they’re good**”.

🌟 Golden Rules are:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| I will be gentle - | I will not hurt anyone. |
| I will be kind & helpful - | I will not hurt people’s feelings. |
| I will be honest - | I will not hide the truth. |
| I will listen - | I will not interrupt. |
| I will respect property - | I will not waste or damage things. |
| I will work hard - | I will not waste time. |

🌟 Smiley Faces:

Every child starts each week with 10 Smiley Faces. The goal is to keep all 10 of them.

Smiley Faces are lost when the Golden Rules are broken.

A weekly record is sent home to Parents/Guardians on Fridays and **must be signed and returned to teacher by Monday.**

A **4 In a Row Certificate** is awarded if a child retains all of their Smileys for 4 weeks in a row.

🌟 Star Chart:

Each child also has a **Star Chart** and stars are given to motivate, encourage and acknowledge all efforts.

CHILD PROTECTION:

We are strong on **Child Protection** and fully enforce our **Child Abuse Protection Policy**, (a copy can be obtained on request).

We have a **Pastoral Care Team** made up of the Principal, 3 teachers, an SNA and our School Completion Programme Co-Ordinator.

Children are taught the '**Stay Safe**' programme and this is reinforced at assemblies by the Principal.

The **Stay Safe Rule** that is continually reinforced is

Say NO...

Get Away...

Tell someone you trust.

Note: Parents of children walking home alone must provide the school with a signed letter to do so.

Parents are requested not to come too close to the school gates while children are on yard.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH:

In St. Mark's Junior School we seek to acknowledge all efforts.

With this in mind, every month 4 children from every class are chosen for their efforts to keep the 'Golden Rules' and for trying to improve their overall performance. They are deemed 'Student of the Month' and we would ask that you make a 'song and dance' of your child on the occasion that they achieve this award.

Each month a further 2 children from each class receive a **Special Effort Award**.

We also have a strong **Anti Bullying Policy** and an attitude of zero tolerance to any form of bullying or racism.

THE SCHOOL DAY:

Junior & Senior Infants: 8.50 a.m. - 1.30 p.m.
1st & 2nd Class: 8.50 a.m. - 2.30 p.m.

Morning Break: 11.15 a.m. - 11. 25 a.m.
Lunch Break: 12.50 p.m. - 1. 20 p.m.

PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE:

The children are expected to be punctual and to attend school everyday. Good school attendance and time keeping is crucial to your child's progress.

It should be noted that **your child may not enter the school before 8.50 a.m.**

Children remain the responsibility of their parents/guardians until that time.

We ask that you are on time picking up your child daily.

Infant Teachers have other duties to perform and a **small child's trust is shattered if s/he is left when every other child has been collected.**

LINING UP EACH MORNING:

Each morning all classes line up in yard at their classroom number where their teacher will collect them and walk them into class.

Children are asked to line up as they arrive, joining the back of the line and not pushing their way in among others.

Lining up is encouraged in the interest of safety, discipline and learning to turn take.

SAFETY UNDERPINS EVERYTHING:

The corridors are narrow and cannot accommodate the large volume of traffic that would be involved if all parents / guardians, who accompany their children to school, came inside with their children.

In the interests of **safety** and the fostering of **independence** children are encouraged to say 'Good bye' to their parents / guardians when they join the line.

They know their own classroom and are expected to take responsibility for their own coats, bags and lunches.

TRAFFIC:

Parents / guardians are urged to park in the Church car park.

Children may then cross safely with our Lollipop Lady, Lois.

Parents are asked NOT to park at the Fernwood Gate.

This is a pedestrian exit only.

Non staff Cars are not allowed in the school grounds between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

EARLY HOME GOING:

A signed written consent is necessary if a child has to leave the school during the day. We would urge you not to collect your child early, as it eats into their learning time.

CHILDREN MUST BE COLLECTED BY AN ADULT IF THEY ARE LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY.

Children will not be released into the care of another juvenile; the person collecting must be over 18 years of age.

Always ensure that your child's teacher is aware of who will be collecting your child.

Adults collecting children early are asked to call at the reception where they will be required to sign a **release form**. **No child will be released without this.** We do this solely in the interest of each child's safety.

The school office is closed for lunch 12.50 p.m. - 1.20 p.m.

For safety reasons children will not, and cannot, be released during yard time.

ACCESS TO SCHOOL:

Access to the school after 9.10 a.m. is through Reception only.

In the interest of the children's safety and security we would ask that you **never try to enter the school by asking any child to open one of the exit doors for you. They are strictly forbidden to do so and asking them only compromises everyone's safety.**

SCHOOL UNIFORM:

Navy	Jumper or cardigan with Junior School crest.
Grey	Trousers, pinafore, skirt.
Pale Blue	Shirt and T-Shirt with collar.
Tie	School tie.
Shoes	Navy, brown, black - no platforms or high heels allowed.
Runners	For P.E. only.
Jacket	With crest, attach keyring to zip to individualise jacket.

Jumpers, cardigans and track suits **must have the JUNIOR SCHOOL** crest.

The school crest is available from the school office at a cost of €3.

To reduce competition and increase pride in their school we expect children to wear their **COMPLETE** uniform **every day**, (this includes the school tie).

Track suits and runners are worn on P.E. / Swimming / Basketball days only. You will be informed by your child's teacher on what days he/she does P.E.

In Summer, usually June, children are allowed to wear the summer **uniform - blue t-shirt with collar and navy shorts with track suit top.**

2nd hand uniforms are usually available free on request and we would appreciate any uniforms that your children does grow out of.

- **Elasticated waistbands in trousers are easier for small children to manage than buttons and belts.**

- Velcro runners are easier than lace ups.

- Please label all clothing, bags and lunch boxes, as most are identical.

JEWELLERY:

For safety reasons the **ONLY** item of jewellery allowed in St. Mark's Junior School is a **watch and stud earrings**. All other items of jewellery will be confiscated, placed in an envelope and may be redeemed from the office by a parent / guardian.

MOBILE PHONES:

Pupils are strictly forbidden to use mobile phones in the school.

Pupils who infringe this rule will have their phones confiscated.

HEALTHY EATING OPTIONS

Free school lunches are provided by an excellent company called Glanmore. We would encourage all parents to avail of these as they are nutritionally balanced and will save you money and time.

As parents you can go on line and chose your child's menu for the week. Details on this will be given to you when your child starts school.

Children whose parents choose not to avail of these lunches are encouraged to provide a healthy lunch i.e. sandwich, cheese, fruit, yogurt, milk or fruit juice. Nourishing foods are encouraged.

- **Crisps, peanuts, fizzy drinks, junk food and chewing gum ARE NOT ALLOWED.** For safety reasons glass bottles are forbidden.

- Small break at 11.15 a.m. is the 'fruit break'.

- In order that you know what your child has eaten, each child brings home the remains of their lunch in their lunch box.

- **Please ensure your child's name is on their lunch box.**

LITTER:

We encourage the children to take responsibility for their environment and to be **litter conscious**. This is a great help in keeping their school tidy. We aim to heighten in them a sense of respect and civic mindedness.

GREEN SCHOOL:

We have a recycling programme and are very proud of our **GREEN SCHOOL STATUS and 4 GREEN FLAGS**.

We ask for your support in maintaining this standard.

We remind you to **reuse, reduce and recycle**.

ST. MARK'S SCHOOL GARDENS

We have 3 different Gardens on the school grounds.....

The sensory garden to the right of the Courtyard

The school Community Garden near the road above the staff carpark

The woodland walk all along the school playing fields which houses our fairy garden.

We depend on the help of our parents to keep these in good condition and if gardening is a particular interest of yours - please let us know.

IMMUNISATIONS AND SCREENING.

The Eastern Health Board provides **sight / hearing and dental screening** for school going children.

It also provides booster **immunisations** for childhood diseases to Junior Infant Classes.

The local clinic is based in **Millbrook Lawns, Tallaght (phone: 4520666)..**

MEDICATION:

It is the policy of the school where possible, not to involve itself in the administration of medications to children. The school will be happy to facilitate Parents/Guardians needing to give medication to their child.

However where a serious medical issue exists please talk to us and read our policy on Administration of medicines which is up on our website and available from the school.

DISABILITIES.

If a child has any physical or health problems the Principal should be informed when the child is being enrolled.

Should a problem develop the Principal should be told immediately.

In this way appropriate provisions can be put in place.

The above information will be treated with respect and in confidence.

CHILDREN UNWELL IN SCHOOL:

When the Principal feels that a child is not well enough for school either as a result of becoming sick or because of an accident the Parents/ Guardians will be contacted immediately.

This highlights the importance of filling out the contact form.

In the event of an emergency such as serious illness / accident an ambulance will be called and the child will be brought to hospital. Again you will need to have signed the permission form for this.

TEXT-A-PARENT:

We must have an up-to-date mobile phone number in order to contact you by text.

It is your responsibility to keep this updated.

This service is also crucial in times of emergency closing and to remind you of up coming events.

If your address or phone number changes please notify the school immediately so we can update our records.

SCHOOL WEBSITE: www.stmarksjs.ie

You will find notices of events and copies of Newsletters as well as photos, information and Policies on our website. Please check in on it regularly.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE:

Please notify the school if your child is diagnosed with an infectious disease.

HEAD LICE:

Head lice are regular visitors in all schools! So check your child's hair regularly (i.e. at least once a week) for head lice. Please report it to the school so that we can alert others.

Lotions and shampoos are readily available from your local pharmacy.

ABSENCE AND SICKNESS:

As we have already stated, regular attendance is crucial to your child's progress. However, children do, from time to time, get sick.

In accordance with the **Educational Welfare Act** the school has a duty to report any child who has missed **20 days** or more in one academic year.

The Principal has no discretion in this.

Parents / Guardians are now obliged by law to provide a written explanation for all their child's absences from school.

A phone call to the school is helpful if your child is going to be out for more than a day.

If your child has a particular health problem e.g. eyesight, hearing, toilet related problem, asthma etc. please inform the school.

DO NOT SEND A SICK CHILD TO SCHOOL:

If your child is too sick to go to yard he / she is probably too sick to come to school. Exceptions are made in the case of ongoing or chronic illness and limb injuries. Otherwise **all children are expected to go to yard** as it is a vital part of learning social interaction.

UPSET AT HOME

If there is an upset or change in circumstances at home which you think may affect your child's progress / mood / behaviour in school please inform your child's teacher or the Principal.

This is really helpful for us in understanding your child's individual needs.
(This information will be treated with respect and in confidence.)

CURRICULAR SUBJECTS:

In 1999 a revised Curriculum was introduced into Irish Primary Schools.

The Primary School Curriculum consists of **6** Curriculum areas and these are further divided into **11** subjects.

Your child will be learning in the following areas and subjects:

1. **Language:** Gaeilge & English.
2. **Mathematics:** Mathematics.
3. **Social, Environmental & Scientific Education (S.P.H.E.):** History, Geography & Science.
4. **Arts Education:** Music, Visual Arts and Drama.
5. **Physical Education (P.E.):** Physical Education.
6. **Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.):** Social, Personal and Health Education.

There are guidelines on the amount of time to be allocated to each curriculum area.

The Curriculum aims to ensure that **all** children are provided with learning opportunities that recognise and celebrate their uniqueness, develop their full potential and prepare them to meet the challenge of the 21st Century. The focus is on the child as a learner.

The Curriculum aims to foster the development of key skills in communication, problem solving, critical thinking, investigation and interaction.

It is also the aim of the Curriculum to ensure that children's experience of school will lead them to value and enjoy learning as a life long process.

Oral language is a corner stone.

Literacy, Numeracy and the ability to articulate well are at the core of all subject teaching and learning.

Emotional Literacy is also seen as crucial to a child's development.

Children are taught the vocabulary to explore and process their emotions in healthy ways so that they may maximise their potential for forming and keeping healthy relationships.

In St. Mark's JNS **Restorative Practice** is used as a means of conflict resolution and towards developing empathy for others.

The current Curriculum encourages greater attention to be given to children with **Special Educational Needs. With this in mind** the curriculum is differentiated and made appropriate to the needs of all our pupils - be that the child who is struggling or the child who needs to be challenged because they are gifted.

ART AND CULTURE WEEK:

This is a 'fun' week and takes place in the last week of October.

It involves the suspension of 'formal' academic work. Children are exposed to as many arts and cultural experiences as possible during this week.

These activities usually include visiting writers, potters and story tellers.

The Second Classes attend the **Concert Hall** and **musicians**, travelling **drama groups** and even the circus are all occasional visitors during this week. The week ends with the **Annual Witches Walk**.

We seek to develop the all round potential of each child and to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum

With this in mind we take every opportunity to invite **drama groups** and **environmental speakers** into the classroom.

Competitions in **Visual Art and Creative Writing** are entered as appropriate.

Friendship Week usually takes place in mid February. We use this week to reinforce the values of friendship and inclusivity and highlight the need to be aware of bullying behaviour.

Intercultural Week takes place the last week before Easter and is used to celebrate our diversity. It coincides with **Seachtain Na Gaeilge and St. Patrick's Day** so we also get a chance to celebrate our Irishness.

PARENTAL INPUT IS WELCOME AT ALL TIMES AND WE ARE ALWAYS ON THE LOOK OUT FOR NEW IDEAS AND AREAS TO EXPLORE.

I.T.:

We are an 'apple' school and very proud of the range of I.T. resources and activities available to our pupils. We have made huge investment in I.T. over the last number of years.

Our resources include a computer room, digital cameras, data projectors, interactive white boards and computer in every room. Children use ipads on a timetabled basis.

ACTIVE FLAG:

St Mark's JNS prides itself on being an active school where all children are encouraged to be active everyday. We would also ask that you also encourage physical activity at home.

MONEY MATTERS:

Educational Costs for your child

There are **4 parts** to the cost of your child's books, equipment needs and activities.

(a) Book Money:

Your child will use a number of workbooks during the year. We keep this type of book to an absolute minimum. Workbooks cannot be passed on as they are written into daily. These books are generally kept in school.

(b) Book Rental:

In an effort to keep book bills to a minimum we operate a Book Rental Scheme in English, Gaeilge and R.E.

In English alone - your child will probably use more than 100 books during their time in ST. Mark's JNS. The cost of buying these individually would be prohibitive for most families.

So we would ask that these books be covered and **NOT** written on.

With care and respect they can last a few years.

Any Rental Books lost will have to be paid for and replaced.

All rental books are collected at the end of the school term/year.

(c) Materials & Equipment Cost:

This includes Arts and Crafts materials, educational equipment, photocopying, I.T. computers, copies, pencils, crayons etc.

(d) Curricular activities:

Our philosophy is based on the notion that every child has '**Multiple Intelligences**'. In order to develop these and discover their strengths, every child needs a chance to be exposed to 'other' educational experiences apart from the purely academic. We try to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum is available to our pupils.

Second Class do **swimming** lessons and receive coaching in Hurling. They also learn **tin whistle**.

First Class, Senior Infants & Junior Infants do **dance, soccer, and basketball**

PLEASE NOTE: These Activities are part of the curriculum and are not an optional extra.

Some of these activities are at an extra cost but this is kept to a minimum.

When you pay your Educational Costs Bill it will include all of the above. You do not need to buy anything other than a school bag for your child.

We ask that all Educational Costs be paid before the end of May.

You may qualify for a small **Book Grant** to cover part of this bill. This depends on what annual funds are made available to the school by the DES.

The Book Grant Application form will be attached to your child's book list and **MUST BE RETURNED BEFORE THE END OF MAY.**

MAINTENANCE CONTRIBUTION:

The cost of heating, lighting, cleaning, insurance and security for a school of this size far exceeds annually the **capitation grant** provided by the Department of Education and Skills. There is currently an annual short fall of approximately €12,000 / €15,000.

In order to help meet this shortfall the Board of Management are annually forced to appeal to the generosity of our Parents for a maintenance contribution. This is done by means of a **€5 monthly envelope draw. The prize monthly is €100.00.**

FUND RAISERS:

Annually we have fund raising drives in order that we may provide your child with the truly "all round" education we see as crucial to developing his/her potential.

These include:

- **WITCHES WALK (HALLOWEEN),**
- **BUNNY BOP (EASTER),**
- **GREEN DAY (MAY).**
- **BROWN PENNY DAY**
- **CLOTHES COLLECTION DAY**

We depend on your generosity and support to make these fund raisers a success.

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT:

An Educational Psychologist is available to carry out a limited number of **Educational Assessments** on children whom we believe are not making appropriate progress. Parents are consulted and permission is always sought before this is done.

This service, however, does not meet the needs of the school and annually private assessments are undertaken.

In such cases Parents/Guardians may be asked to help contribute to the cost.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:

Early identification of learning difficulties is crucial in their remediation. All children from Junior Infants to Second Class are regularly screened through the administration of standardised and observational tests. Parental consultation and support is a vital aspect of our learning support programme.

Should your child have Special Educational Needs s/he may qualify for daily withdrawal from mainstream class for extra help with our **Special Needs Resource** teachers.

Some children, for safety and care reasons, require extra support in school. We are fortunate to have **Special Needs Assistants** who help support the teacher in catering for the needs of these children. The role of our SNAs is reviewed annually.

SPECIAL LANGUAGE CLASSES.

The school has two Special Language Classes. Each class is staffed by a full time teacher. A Speech and Language Therapist from the Eastern Health Board is employed full time. The Language Class was set up for children **within the normal range of intelligence**, who present with an expressive and / or receptive language disorder. Referrals for this class are made to the Principal before March 1st annually.

Children stay no longer than two years in this Educational setting and then return to their school of origin.

ENGLISH AS ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

We are delighted to have among our students a number of children from other cultures and backgrounds. We currently have a number of support Teachers who help these children learn English as a second language.

HELPFUL HANDOUTS / POLICIES.

Apart from this booklet we have helpful handouts on things like Paired Reading suggested reading lists, homework etc. These are available on request from the office. You will find many of these items on our website where they may be downloaded

We have a number of Policies dealing with pastoral, administrative and curricular areas and again just ask and we can make a copy for you.

EMERGENCY CLOSING / TEXT-A-PARENT:

The safety of the children is of primary importance at all times.

Should an emergency closing be appropriate (e.g. in the event of no heat, snow etc.) the decision to close the school will be taken by the Board of Management at the earliest possible time so as to maximise notice to Parents/Guardians.

WE ASK THAT YOU ENSURE THE SCHOOL ALWAYS HAS AN UP-TO-DATE AND IMMEDIATE CONTACT NUMBER FOR YOU. THIS IS CRUCIAL FOR THE SUCCESS OF OUR TEXT A PARENT SYSTEM.

Children walking to school alone should always be kept aware of the person whom they should contact in the event of an emergency closing when their Parents/Guardians may be gone to work.

If an emergency closing arises early in the morning, before school starts, Parents/Guardians will be informed of this at the gates and by text.

We would ask therefore that you **never drop your child without first satisfying yourself that the school is open.**

THE FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL:

- Start with a good breakfast.
- Come to the class on time on the day.
- Give a hug, say good-bye, give an assurance that you will collect him/her at the proper time.
- **Then leave!**

Almost all children are busy and happy within minutes of their parents leaving.

For the first few weeks your child will have a short day so give a small healthy snack.

New Infants are usually very tired when they start school first, so please help them by making sure they go to bed early.

Towards the end of September the children will be in school for the full infant day: **8.50 a.m. - 1.30 p.m.**

At home time the teachers will bring the children out to the appropriate door and call each child's name so that the parents can come forward.

Please ensure you are on time.

Your child's ability to separate from you will be enhanced if they know you will be there on time.

Please wait for your child's name to be called out.

THE FIRST YEAR:

Starting school is a milestone in the life of your child.

You can help to make this transition easier for your child by providing safe opportunities for him / her to spend time away from you and with other children in order to learn how to share and take turns.

Your child will have an opportunity to visit the classroom / school in June and will thus be familiar with the school setting.

All children are different:

In school we encourage each child to do his / her best through individual, group and whole class activities. **All children learn at their own pace.** Just as children walk and talk at different ages, they also read and write when they are ready.

Formal reading is not undertaken until year 2 i.e. Senior Infants.

Our school motto is “Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh siad” - “Praise the young and they will flourish”.

No where is this more crucial than in their first faltering steps to independence.

HELP YOUR CHILD TO BE INDEPENDENT by teaching him / her.....

1. To say his / her full name and know their address.
2. To use the toilet, wash and dry hands without help.
3. To put on and take off his/her coat and do and undo buttons and zips.
4. To open and close schoolbags, lunch boxes and drink containers.
5. To use a tissue/handkerchief when needed.
6. To recognise his/her own belongings.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD TO GROW:

- Give your child time, spend time together.
- Talk to your child and encourage him/her to talk to you.
- Listen attentively to your child.
- Read and enjoy stories together. Talk about the story.

- Repeat Nursery Rhymes.
- Identify colours and shapes.
- Provide paper, crayons and paints for colouring and scribbling.
- Provide jigsaws, lego, play dough etc.
- Help him/her to cut out using safe scissors and old catalogues.
- Allow sand and water play.
- Have fun together.
- Praise his/her efforts at every opportunity.
- Don't criticise.

If children feel you have confidence in them they will feel they can achieve.

In short, do as little 'to' or 'for' your child and as much 'with' your child as possible.

Education is a life long journey

. We want your child's first steps to be as positive as possible.

We hope your child's years spent in St. Mark's Junior School will be extremely happy and will help him/her to grow in all that is positive and good.

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE.

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient.

If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice.

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,

he learns to find love in the world.
