# A Special Welcome & Information sheet for Junior Infants

At St.Joseph’s N.S. we are always delighted to welcome new pupils and we take particular pleasure in welcoming new students to our Junior Infants class. Over the years we have established strong links with families through the children who have attended this school. Those bonds have, in many cases, extended well beyond the limit of the children’s attendance at the school. We would like to make the child’s early experience of school a positive and enjoyable one.

 The following suggestions should prove of benefit in helping to prepare your child for Primary School. Many, or indeed all, of them may have occurred to most parents and we would welcome for inclusion here, any further suggestions which parents may wish to offer that would be useful for first time pupils in Primary School.

* Visit the school on the day allocated for first-time entrants to familiarise your child and yourselves with the school.
* If another new pupil lives close by, introduce your child to him/her. It always helps to know others in the class prior to coming to school.
* Encourage your child to be independent early on e.g. Dress themselves; put his/her lunch in school bag etc.
* Provide shoes with Velcro fastenings if your child has difficulty in tying shoelaces. Zip fastenings or Velcro provide for easier opening and closing of school bags also.
* Healthy lunches are important. A Healthy Eating Policy is currently implemented in the school and **children are not allowed to bring chewing gum, sweets, chocolates or fizzy drinks to school.** [Healthy Eating Policy available on request]
* Label all separate items e.g. Books, Shoes/slippers; Lunch Box; Coat; Markers etc.
* In order to foster language development and literacy skills, the following cannot be overstressed: talking to children, reading stories to them and with them, providing interesting pictures and picture books/stories which will develop a love of books and reading in children.

**The following should be encouraged in order for your child to make a positive start and be more independent at school:**

* Open and close zip fasteners
* Wash and Dry Hands
* Use the toilet unassisted
* Put on and take off shoes, jumper etc.
* Open and close school bags
* Use drinks bottles properly
* Use tissue or handkerchief
* Tidy up belongings ~ Put things in their proper place
* Listen to instructions e.g. Take out lunch; Put away pencils etc.
* Use full sentences when speaking to others.
* Hold pencil/crayon using the correct grip.
* Colour pictures using crayon – be able to identify colours
* Among children’s toys, ensure there are jigsaws, building blocks, construction toys etc., which help to develop hand/eye co-ordination, thinking and sequencing skills.
* Encouragement! Although it may often require extreme patience, children respond best to a positive attitude from parent/teachers