

Junior and senior infants 2

MATHEMATICS

Your child learns to understand and solve problems with the Mathematics Curriculum. Your child is busy with early mathematical activities such as sorting, matching, comparing and ordering different objects. For example, you might see your child arranging toys in lines on the floor or organising toys in groups according to different types, colours or sizes. These activities give your child a strong foundation for learning in:

- Number (including counting, comparing and ordering)
- Algebra (including copying and adding to patterns of colour, shape, size and number using beads or blocks, or by drawing and colouring, for example, 2 blue, 1 red)
- Measurement (including working with length, weight, capacity, time and money)
- Shape and space (including working with 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes)
- Data (including sorting objects and understanding and making charts and graphs).

You can help your child to learn at home by:

- asking your child to help you with sorting and matching activities at home, for example, tidying toys into the right boxes, sorting the washing into bundles such as putting all the towels together or all the white clothes, matching socks when you're putting clothes away or helping to put the shopping away in the right presses. Talk to your child while you are doing these activities together and ask your child how he/she knows something matches or should go in a particular place
- teaching your child counting rhymes and songs and making up actions together to go with the words. Your child can also learn old counting favourites from grandparents and other family members. Children love counting rhymes such as *One, two, buckle my shoe, This old man* or *A haon, a dó, a trí, lúcha beaga buí*.

SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION (SESE)

In SESE (history, geography and science) the emphasis is on **connecting learning with the child's immediate environment**. In history, children's curiosity about the past is awakened by **exploring their personal and family history**, for example, by listening to stories about when their grandparents were young. In geography and science, the local and wider environment provides many opportunities for children's **investigations which help them to understand and care for the world** around them. In SESE, **your child uses investigative skills** such as *observing, questioning, investigating and experimenting, estimating and measuring, classifying recording and communicating* and so **works like a Scientist, Historian and Geographer** from a young age.



You can help your child to learn at home by:

- talking to your child about important events in his/her own life, such as, the day that he/she was born, when he/she came home from the hospital, his/her first steps, first tooth and so on
- helping your child to notice and discuss how changes in the seasons affect the weather, plant and animal life, for example, the clothes we wear in the Winter/Summer, buds appearing in Spring and leaves on the trees in Summer
- discussing what happens through heating and cooling and discovering things that melt and/or freeze, for example, ice-cream, butter, chocolate, water and ice.

Information for parents

Junior and senior infants 3

ARTS EDUCATION

The three subjects visual arts, music and drama give children opportunities to **develop artistic and creative skills** by participating in different kinds of activities, for example, drawing, painting, constructing, dramatic play, singing, clapping or exploring the sounds made by different musical instruments. The **focus is not so much on the work your child produces (the product) but on what your child learns by engaging in creative activity (the process)**. This curriculum area encourages your child to listen to, look at and respond to the music, artwork and dramatic expression of others in the class, as well as the work of older children and adults.



You can help your child to learn at home by:

- singing and clapping the rhythms of favourite songs with your child and encouraging him/her to share new songs with you that have been learned in school
- keeping a collection of clothes and hats that can be used for dress up play
- making a collection of empty cartons, boxes, paper, crayons, paints, playdough, pens, pencils, glue, old fabrics and so on, to allow your child to express him/herself artistically.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Children love all kinds of physical activity. Physical education in the infant classes helps your child to learn about and develop more control over his/her movements, to learn how to co-operate with others and to develop important social skills such as sharing, relying on others and teamwork. Your child also learns directions in a fun way which helps with reading and writing, and in finding his/her way around the school! Your child participates in different physical activities such as:

- Athletics (including running, jumping and throwing)
- Dance (including exploring, creating and performing dance)
- Gymnastics (including balancing, moving in different directions and moving using apparatus such as hoops and mats)
- Games (including ball handling, kicking, carrying and striking and playing simple playground games)
- Outdoor and adventure activities (including walking, following directions and following simple trails).¹

These activities help your child **to understand and appreciate physical activity**. Physical education starts your child on an active way of life.

You can help your child to learn at home by:

- encouraging your child to play with toys that will help him/her to develop physically, for example, construction toys or playdough
- encouraging your child to be active, for example, walking, running, and jumping and playing games. Encourage your child to attend or take part in local sport activities which will help him/her to feel a sense of belonging to the community.

¹In aquatics children learn about safety in the water and how to move in the water through play and using their arms and legs. To suit individual school circumstances, the curriculum advocates that children should have opportunities to develop water based movement skills at some point in their primary schooling.

Information for parents

Junior and senior infants 4

SOCIAL, PERSONAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (SPHE)

Social, Personal and Health Education, or SPHE, deals with **your child's personal development, health and wellbeing**. It helps children to **understand how to care for themselves, how to respect and relate to others, and how to deal with different feelings**. It helps your child to **learn and develop a sense of responsibility for his/her actions**. SPHE includes **Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)** – an important part of all children's development. **Each school has an RSE policy** which outlines what will be taught in RSE and when certain content will be introduced.

The SPHE Curriculum helps your child to:

- care for him/herself
- to learn basic hygiene skills, such as, washing hands before eating
- to develop growing independence, such as, putting on own coat and shoes
- to deal with the newness of school life by, for example, taking turns and sharing.



SPHE helps your child to explore and respect diversity and to appreciate differences in people by learning how to relate to and respect others. Your child also learns to develop a sense of place in the school and local community, to care for the local and wider environment and to become familiar with different types of information media.

You can help your child to learn at home by:

- talking to your child about feelings and helping your child to name and recognise feelings and realise that it is okay to have different feelings about different things
- encouraging your child to recognise and care for him/herself and his/her own things at home and at school, for example, washing hands before eating, hanging up own coat, putting away own lunchbox, tidying toys away
- developing healthy eating habits through providing a healthy lunch for school and at other mealtimes. Breakfast is a particularly important meal as it starts your child on a healthy day.

Ask your child's teacher about other ways you can help your child to learn at home in the infant classes. Ask other parents what works well for them.