

John Scottus



National School



Induction Booklet

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ETHOS

Stillness, Attention and Enquiry are at the heart of Character Education in John Scottus.

John Scottus School (JSS) offers a vision of education which strives to help young people develop self-mastery, strength of character and compassion. It aims to educate young people so that they can come to know their true self, so they can contribute meaningfully to the world around them. It endeavours to nourish in young people that self-knowledge which gives the direction and the strength of being that will make them happy and successful in the world.

Education in JSS is about encouraging each child to discover and express their innate gifts. It is about believing that each child can come to contribute something unique and exceptional. It is about encouraging each child to discover their limitless essence.

We want every child to delight in the present, every moment of every day. Hence the motto of the School: "Laetus Impraesens – Delight in the present". Mindfulness along with philosophical enquiry and meditation are considered the 3 key aspects on this journey of self-discovery.



Central to the ethos of the school is character development through cultivating the life skills of Stillness, Attention and Enquiry.

Through developing the ability to have moments of Stillness and awareness, calmness and rest are experienced. It is these moments that give the energy which brings freshness and vitality into our lives.

Through developing the power of mindful Attention and participation in the present moment, we develop the strength to express loving attention to the person in front of us and the strength to face every situation with confidence and courage.

By the practice of Enquiry, particularly philosophical enquiry, we invite students to develop a love of learning and to enquire into a deeper understanding of themselves, the world around them and to develop ideals by which they can live their lives.

SCHOOL RULES

Our five school rules are derived from our ethos:

1. Take care of everyone including yourself
2. Give attention and participate fully
3. Follow instructions immediately
4. Speak truthfully and beautifully
5. Take care of everything

Welcome

Welcome to John Scottus National School

Starting school may seem like 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!

It is 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 their desire to know more.

Every child wants to be happy. Here in John Scottus we want your child to be happy by delighting in the present all of the time. John Scottus is a community of parents, teachers and children and we encourage close relationships between all three. We see life as a journey – of enquiry and discovery – and seek to teach each child how to live meaningfully and successfully in the world.



Our first year in school is mainly about settling in, relating to others, making friends, feeling happy and gradually getting used to the routine of the school. On the learning side the emphasis is on getting children ready for learning by:

- Developing oral language and expression
- Sharpening their senses, especially seeing, hearing and touching
- Developing physical co-ordination especially of hand and fingers
- Extending their concentration span and getting them to listen attentively
- Learning through play. The most enjoyable and effective way.
- Co-operating with the teacher and other children
- Performing tasks by themselves
- Working and sharing with others
- Teaching each child to accept the general order which is necessary for the class to work well

BEFORE STARTING SCHOOL

WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

Make Time for Play

Enjoy this precious time at home with your child and don't underestimate the value of play. Play underlines everything that we do in the reception year and beyond. It is vital for personal and social development and can promote development of speech, numerical ability and physical and creative development. For example:

- Playing with play dough and paint develops strength in children's fingers.
- Sorting buttons or other small objects helps develop organisational skills.



POSITIVITY

To encourage your child to have a positive attitude to school, make sure you always talk about school positively and enthusiastically – don't ever be tempted to use school (or the teacher) as some kind of threat.

Adopt a sensible daily routine now that will carry on when your child starts school, e.g. allow plenty of time to get ready in the morning and set bedtime at a reasonable time.

Remember if there are changing circumstances at home which may affect your child's behaviour, please keep the school informed.

Morning Routine



Number Awareness

Being able to recite from 1 to 20 (or higher) is not the same as understanding the value and place of number.

- Concentrate on 1to1 counting e.g. Can you find four spoons?
How many sausages are there on your plate?
- Talk about quantities, e.g. 5 is higher than 2.
- Try to get your child to visualise numbers and understand, for example, that 4 is 4 and not 1,2,3,4.
- Play simple board games, e.g. snakes and ladders.
- Out and about, look at house numbers, or count the number of red cars you see.



Maths is everywhere and at this age, with almost no effort, any journey, shopping trip, waiting time or mealtime can be turned into a maths game.

Get Ready to Read

KEEP IT FUN!

- Share texts as often as you can: this can be stories, comics, pictures in newspapers and recipes.
- Draw attention to words in the street, on TV, on cereal packets etc. Encourage your child to look at pictures in magazines and to talk about them.
- Your child's main interest will be in the pictures – allow time to examine them and comment on them. Ask 'What happens next?'



Get Ready to Write

- Encourage your child to trace over their name ensuring it starts with a capital letter and the rest is lower case.
- Help your child to develop their fine motor skills by modelling with plasticine, drawing on a blackboard or with crayons, joining the dots etc.
- Observe and encourage your child to hold the pencil correctly.



This is an example of the correct tripod pencil grip.

Attend Our Induction Day

Bring your child to our Induction day in May/June to meet their teachers and become familiar with the physical environment of the school. Familiarisation with the environment and the teachers will help to alleviate any anxious feelings about the first day of school. Remind your child during the summer about the teachers they met and use their names to increase familiarity.

Make a special and positive occasion out of buying their uniform and schoolbag. Pass by the school now and again and remind them of the lovely time they had there in May/June and of all of the lovely friends they met there.

Can your child...?

Before school

When your child starts school it would be helpful if he/she could do some of these things....



Dress and undress
him/herself



Put on and fasten
his/her coat



Change shoes and pumps.



Use the toilet properly
and flush it



Wash and dry his/her
hands and face



Use a handkerchief



Use a knife and fork



Tidy/clear away his/her toys

STARTING SCHOOL

1st Day of School

Having attended the induction day and met their teachers your child will find it easier to come in on the first day of school. The gate opens from 8 – 8.15 am. We advise that your child come in as close to 8am as possible as they will miss out on essential social elements of the school day if they are late.

On the first day you will be directed to your classroom. When you arrive, **be as casual as possible**.

Hopefully your child will be absorbed by their new surroundings. Having assured them that you will be back to collect them, wish them goodbye and **make your getaway without delay**.

Home Time:

Collection for the first week will be at 12 midday and thereafter at 2pm. Collection is from the front of the school. Please ensure you collect your child on time so they do not become distressed. If there is any change regarding the person collecting your child you must let the teacher / office know in advance.

Assembly and Ethos Throughout the Day

An Assembly takes place every morning. The purpose of this is to set the spiritual tone/theme for the day and week. This theme is used by teachers throughout each day and is explored more deeply during a philosophy lesson that each class has once a week. An example of a weekly theme is: Attention is the key! We also sing a song every morning in Assembly as this increases mental alertness, increases feelings of well-being and enhances the mood. A great way to start the day!



Stillness:

We use the practice of a pause throughout the day. Just as physical rest is essential, so too is mental and emotional rest. At the end of every lesson and activity children and teachers come to a complete stop for a moment. The idea is that mind and heart become as still as the body. Most children report that this is calming and refreshing, and allows them to leave the previous activity completely.

SUBJECTS

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) is responsible for the education of children in Ireland. Under the curriculum laid down by the DES all students will be taught the following subjects:

English, Gaeilge (Irish), Maths, Geography, History, Science, Drama, Music, Visual Art, Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) & Physical Education (PE).

AISTEAR

In the Infant classes children take part in Aistear which, in its nature, integrates a lot of the aforementioned subjects. Aistear is the curriculum framework for children from 0–6 years of age. Aistear – meaning ‘Journey’ – places a huge emphasis on play as ‘much of children’s early learning and development takes place through play and hands on experiences.’ While at play, children socialise with peers. This in turn allows the children to form new relationships with others which gives them independence as they become active agents in their own learning.

Aistear has 4 main themes: Well Being, Identity and Belonging, Communication and Exploring and Thinking.

What it looks like: Daily play sessions and monthly themes e.g. The Restaurant, Pirates, etc

5 Play Stations



Role Play



Junk Art



Jigsaws & Games

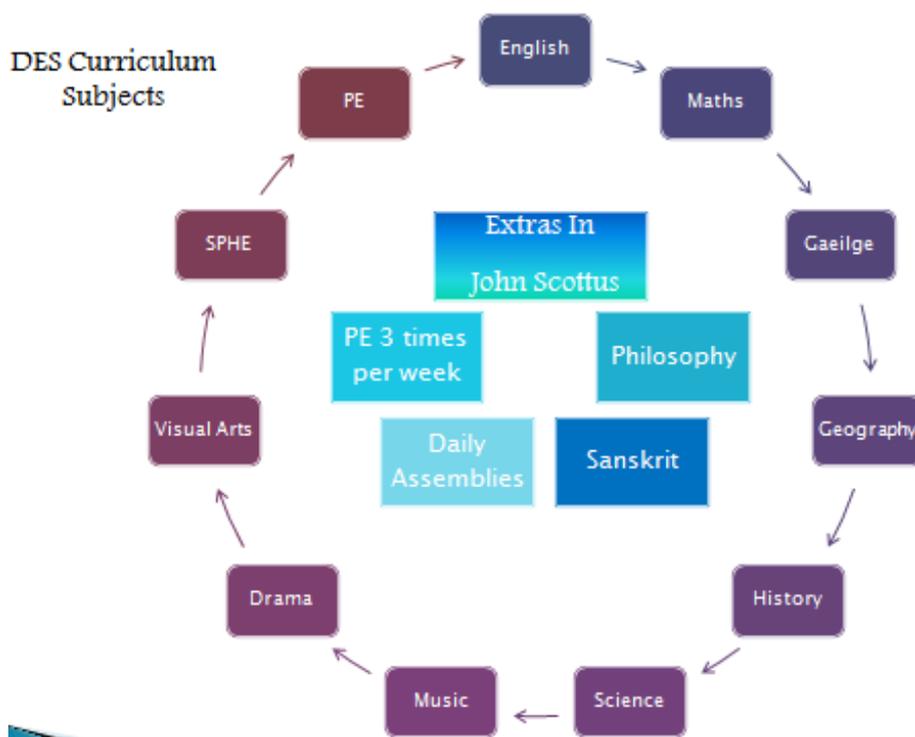


Exploratory Play



Small World Play

Children are arranged into play groups and get the opportunity to play at a different station each day. Each theme is introduced in a whole class setting. The teacher introduces each theme with a stimulus (e.g. a story, guest speaker, video, song or poem), teaches vocabulary and models playing at each station. Before engaging in play children are encouraged to discuss and plan their play session in their groups. At the end of the session children are given time to give feedback on their session. E.g. saying something they enjoyed or showing something that they made.



Additional Subjects in John Scottus

In addition to the DES curriculum we explore a few other subjects here in John Scottus.

We have 3 PE lessons a week – one term a year we have a swimming lesson once a week.

Philosophy: We transmit our ethos primarily by our behaviour. Weekly philosophy classes help this. In the youngest classes it's about stories with good messages, followed by discussion. As the children grow the questions become more fundamental. Who are we? Where did we come from? What is the purpose of life? What is our relationship to the creation?

Sanskrit: Sanskrit is an amazing classical language with a huge literature. As Sanskrit is extremely precise, in terms of pronunciation and grammar, full attention is necessary. Giving attention is the most important skill you can learn. Studying Sanskrit empowers children to pay attention. The study of Sanskrit refines the mind just as the study of mathematics trains the mind to think in a mathematical way.

HOMEWORK

Homework in Junior Infants does not start until after the October Mid Term. Children will be given a small amount of homework twice a week. Time that should be allowed for homework varies from 5 – 10 minutes for Junior Infants, up to 75 minutes for 6th Class.

Parents are expected to sign the homework journal; This is checked on a daily basis.

Parents are asked to help the pupil establish a rhythm in doing their homework: the child should have a quiet place, uncluttered, and clean, and without the noise of radio or television distracting them. They should encourage full attention to the job in hand and then, once done, to forget about it.

LATE or ABSENT

It is important that if your child is late or absent that you call the office before 10am. Reasons for a pupil's absence must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper, or by e-mail. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence.

LUNCH

Lunch at John Scottus is an important part of the day where children and teachers sit down together and enjoy a scrumptious hot, vegetarian meal. We emphasis the importance of serving your neighbour and ensuring everyone is looked after.



Sample Weekly Lunch Menu

	HOT FOOD	COLD FOOD	
Mon	Pesto Pasta	Selection of fruit	Salad
Tues	Cous Cous, Pees and Raisins	Fresh baked bread	Hummus
Wed	Homemade Pizza	Butter	Eggs, Raisins
Thur	Chips & Baked Beans – Baby Potatoes & Carrots	Honey	Coleslaw
Fri	Pasta & Tomato Sauce	Milk	Sunflower Seeds
		Water	Sweetcorn

UNIFORM

GIRLS	BOYS
JS Navy Cardigan	JS Grey Jumper
JS Striped Blouse	Sky Blue Shirt
JS Royal Blue Pinafore	Grey Trousers
Navy Socks or Tights	Grey Socks
JS Summer Dress *	JS Tie
PE UNIFORM	PE UNIFORM
JS Navy Tracksuit Top	JS Navy Tracksuit Top
JS Navy Tracksuit Bottoms	JS Navy Tracksuit Bottoms
JS Royal Blue Polo Shirt	JS Royal Blue Polo Shirt
JS Navy Shorts	JS Navy Shorts
Navy Socks	Navy Socks
SHOES: Flat Black or Navy (no boots of any kind)	
RUNNERS: Plain White/Navy/Black (Velcro fastening for JI & SI)	
OTHER: JS Navy hat and scarf. JS school bag and swimming bag.	
SWIMMING: Swimming costume (one piece for girls / no Bermuda shorts for boys) Cap, Goggles, towel, comb, flip flops or crocks MUST be worn at the pool.	

Summer dress for girls, worn from Sept – Halloween Mid Term and from the Tuesday following the May Bank holiday to end of school year.

GIRLS



SUMMER DRESS



BOYS



COAT



PE



FACILITIES

Facilities in the Community



Herbert Park Football
& Gaelic Pitches



The Secret Garden



Pembroke Wanderers



Sportsco Swimming Pool, South Lotts Road



As we are a city centre school we make use of many facilities within our community.

We have the use of ‘The Secret Garden’ just behind our school for play time and PE classes and this is where we have our school garden. We use Herbert Park for picnics, PE and sports events. We use Pembroke Wanderers Hockey club for hockey training in 5th & 6th class.

We use the swimming pool in Sportsco Leisure Club all year round

SCHOOL GARDEN



In ‘The Secret Garden’ we have our school garden.

Each class has a bed to look after every year. We plant, we grow, we dig and we prepare and we care for all that grows.

While outdoors and in nature each child becomes aware of their environmental responsibility and the importance of taking care of themselves and the world around them.

SCHOOL RULES

Our five school rules are derived from our ethos:

1. Take care of everyone including yourself
2. Give attention and participate fully
3. Follow instructions immediately
4. Speak truthfully and beautifully
5. Take care of everything

Resilience, Universality and Self Discovery are at the core of a John Scottus Education.

RESILIENCE

UNIVERSALITY

SELF DISCOVERY

USEFUL CONTACTS

SCHOOL:

John Scottus School Principal: Cónall Clancy: principalp@johnscottus.ie, 01 6609309

John Scottus School Secretary: primary@johnscottus.ie, 016609309

John Scottus After School Facilities: Trish Bunyan: afterschool@johnscottus.ie, 0879089573

John Scottus School Website: www.johnscottus.ie/primary/

John Scottus School Policies: <http://www.johnscottus.ie/primary/parents-2/policy-documents/>

UNIFORM:

Uniform Warehouse: www.uniformwarehouse.ie, 01 2830173

(Unit 3, Cranford Centre, Montrose, Dublin 4)

A Second-hand Uniform Shop opens at various times during the year in the school. Keep an eye on e-mails from the office.

WEBSITES:

Department of Education and Skills: www.education.ie

NCCA: www.ncca.ie see Aistear link

Read Write Inc. Tutorials: <http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/resources/>