

HSCL Guidelines on Supporting the Transition from Preschool to Primary School during Covid-19

One of the key roles of HSCL Coordinators is to support families in the transition from preschool to primary school. This is particularly challenging this year due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the physical closure of preschools and schools. Adapted from the 'Guidelines for HSCL Coordinators Supporting Families in the Transition from Preschool to Primary School', please see below a list of suggestions that may be useful. This is not an exhaustive, nor prescriptive, list.

Whole-School Planning

- ✓ Where possible, and with Principal approval, hold an online Care Team to review all incoming Junior Infants families. This will help structure, prioritise and plan your work as a HSCL Coordinator.
- ✓ As part of the Care Team, review any documents received from local preschools (e.g. Mo Scéal etc.)
- ✓ Where possible, call or arrange virtual meetings with local preschool(s) to support the transfer of any documents, information etc. to the school. Ensure parental consent has been given.

Linking with Parents

- ✓ Make phone contact with the parents of your incoming Junior Infants, prioritising those who are new to the school, may have additional needs etc.
- ✓ Send the children a short video, introducing them to their teacher
- ✓ Send any new parents a short video, introducing them to the HSCL coordinator and the role
- ✓ Hold a virtual induction meeting/ coffee morning online
- ✓ Prepare a virtual tour around the school for incoming parents and children
- ✓ Where practicable, send induction packs to incoming Junior Infant families (e.g. by post/ courier, by email). Further details below.
- ✓ Ask a selection of the present Junior Infant parents on what advice to give new parents to the schools. Put together a leaflet/ letter to incoming parents based on what they say
- ✓ With BOM/ Principal permission, post regular updates on your school's website, Facebook and/or Twitter pages on transition
- ✓ Circulate the National Parents Council 'Transition from preschool to primary school Online Session' link to families: <http://www.npc.ie/news-events/early-years-video> to see the video. This video can also be accessed via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
- ✓ Circulate/ put links on your school website/ social media to www.flyingstart.ie for additional tips, resources etc.

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Incoming Junior Infant Family Packs

Packs may include:

- Tips for starting school
- HSCL Coordinator photo and contact details
- Class teacher photo
- List of local supports (e.g. Tusla PPFs, Primary Care, Vincent de Paul, Community Welfare Officer, Money Advice Bureau, MABS etc.)
- Pencil, parer, paper, blank art sketch pad, colours, playdoh. *It is important that 'school work' is not given to children.*
- Story book
- If necessary a social story introducing a child to the school/classroom/teacher

Suggested Books

- ***Starting School*** by Roderick Hunt & Annemarie Young
- ***Going to School*** by Grace Jones
- ***Starting School*** by Janet & Allan Ahlberg
- ***Do I have to go to school? A first look at starting school*** by Pat Thomas
- ***Going to School: Usborne First Experiences*** by Anne Civardi
- ***Owl Babies*** by Martin Waddell (*deals with separation anxiety*)
- ***Tony Goes to School*** by Valerie Sheehan (*for parents and teachers of children who see the world differently*)

Supporting Home Learning

- ✓ www.helpmykidlearn.ie
- ✓ **Happy Talk Language Pack** - this week's language pack is Happy Talk 'Walking in the Woods' Pack (4 - 8 Years)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1va13P7Rrjz-49s3lR6v2jmn-atMmrzjO/view?usp=drivesdk>