

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
St. Attracta's Junior National School
Meadowbrook
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Dublin 16

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SCHOOL PROSPECTUS



MISSION STATEMENT

"St. Attracta's Junior School has a Catholic ethos inclusive of pupils of different persuasions whose religious outlook is respected.

Acknowledging that parents are the primary educators, we are inspired by a shared vision of excellence and we espouse a partnership approach.

While we value high academic achievement, the social, personal and moral development of our pupils is of primary importance and we view the school as a learning organisation which is open to change and innovation while cherishing the best educational, cultural and religious traditions of our society."

BACKGROUND

St. Attracta's Junior School was established in 1977 to provide a Catholic education for girls and boys from Junior Infants to Second Class.

St. Attracta's lies at the foothills of the Dublin Mountains and is in close proximity to facilities such as Airfield House, Marlay Park, St. Enda's Park and the Dundrum Family Recreation Centre,

STAFF

The staff is comprised of, a principal, 12 classroom teachers and 4/5 Learning Support/Resource Teachers

SCHOOL HOURS

The school hours are:

8:50 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. for Junior and Senior Infants

8:50 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. for First and Second Classes

When the Junior Infants start school in September they are eased into the school day with a 12 o'clock closing for a period.

The full calendar for the academic year is available on the school website www.stattractasjns.ie

ACCESS

Bus Routes: 75, 14, 14A, 161

There are many cycle routes from the surrounding housing estates to the school.

UNIFORM

Navy trousers / skirt / pinafore

Navy jumper / cardigan

Sky blue shirt / blouse

Both girls & boys may wear trousers

All children must wear sturdy black shoes / boots only.
On Timetabled P.E. days ONLY, children may wear sturdy runners with no lights either on the soles or on the fabric of the runner.

All items can be purchased in any department store.

THE SCHOOL BUILDING

Each classroom in St. Attracta's has self-contained toilet facilities, a wet area for artwork and lunchtime, a Promethean Interactive Whiteboard, a well-stocked class library, computers and a vast assortment of educational materials for maths, language development and constructive play.

We have an exceptionally well-stocked, computerised **Library** with over three thousand fictional and non-fictional titles.

The school has an unusually **big hall** which facilitates P.E. activities, dance and drama.

There are a number of **Learning Support/Resource Teaching rooms** that cater for the needs of individual pupils requiring support teaching.

Outside, we have a **good-sized yard**.

HOME SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

We believe that the education of your child is a combined effort between parents and teachers. It is essential that there is trust between us and care and love for the child.

Within this atmosphere children will have the chance to develop into caring and responsible members of society. We encourage parents to take an active interest in the education of their children at all times and we welcome parents into the

school. We try to ensure that home and school work together to achieve the best all round education for every child.

CARE OF YOUR CHILD

The class teacher, who knows your child well, is responsible for his/her care. If parents have any concern, however minor, they can arrange to speak to the teacher. Equally if the teacher has concerns he/she will make an appointment to speak to you.

In the second term each year individual Parent / Teacher meetings are arranged. At the end of the school year a written report is sent home.

If your child is ill whilst at school or has an accident we will do everything we can to comfort him/her. However, home is always the best place when a child is ill, therefore it is essential that we have your home and work telephone numbers and the phone numbers of other designated contact persons in the event of you being unreachable.

We have a policy on the Administration of Medicine that is available for inspection.

ABSENCES

In accordance with the **Education Welfare Act**, when a child returns to school following an absence, a letter explaining the reason and dates of the absence must accompany him/her. Under the act the school is obliged to report to the Education Welfare officer the names of all children who miss 20 days or more in any given year.

The school discourages parents from taking children on holiday during term time, especially at the start of the school year, as it is very disruptive to your child settling into school.

COMMUNICATION

As our children are very young all messages from school are communicated to the parent body in writing. In June, the holiday list for the following academic year is sent home. We try to advise parents of forthcoming school events in good time and of other closures, such as Confirmation Day or Election Days as soon as we ourselves are advised.

BEHAVIOUR / DISCIPLINE

We aim for self discipline and encourage children to be caring and thoughtful to those around them. Our Whole School Behaviour Policy is a model that promotes positive behaviour and self esteem. The "Circle Time Golden Rules" are our school code.

HEALTHY EATING

Our "Whole School Food Policy" is a shared, evolving document for ALL those involved with our school. It encourages all aspects of food to be brought together clearly, coherently and consistently. "Food in School" includes the formal curriculum; participation in projects such as "The Green School Project" and "Healthy Eating Week"; consumption of food at school; events at school; pastoral care and welfare issues. Children are not permitted any items in their lunchboxes with a sugar content, items such as sweets, cakes, biscuits, cereal bars, sugary drinks etc

HEALTH AND SAFETY

For the safety of one and all, parents' cars are not allowed onto the school grounds except in an emergency. Cycling/scooting/skateboarding etc within the school grounds is not permitted.

The Staff Car Park is for staff cars only. It is not a "drop off" point for parents dropping children to school as child safety is compromised when a high number of cars reverse in and out in a short space of time. In the interest of safety, parents and children entering the school grounds are requested not to walk through the car park but to use the many other gates provided.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school site.

All visitors to the school must ring the bell at the Main Door to gain access. This will ensure that we know who is in and around the school, particularly in the event of a fire drill.

BOOK BILLS

We do our best to keep the costs as low as possible. We run a Book Pool Rental Scheme that helps reduce costs. Also, in the Infant Classes we produce and photocopy a lot of our own worksheets rather than purchase numerous workbooks.

THE ENVIRONMENT

We are hugely committed to protecting the environment and to instilling in children a love for, and appreciation of, their natural surroundings. We avidly **REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE!!**

We have a **school garden**, which the parents, children and staff care for. The Junior School has been awarded the coveted **Green School's Flag by An Taisce** four times and the fifth flag for biodiversity is imminent.

We have a **Green School's Committee** made up of children, teachers, our caretaker and parents, who each year actively work through an Environmental Action Plan for the environment.

THE CURRICULUM

The school curriculum is that laid down by the Department of Education and Skills. We implement the Revised Curriculum designed by the N.C.C.A. (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)

LANGUAGES

Irish is taught in all classes. We try to use it incidentally during the school day and we encourage all parents to use the "cúpla focal" that you remember from school!

Throughout the curriculum but in the early years of school in particular, there is a huge emphasis in **English and all other subject areas too** on the development of *oral language*. Research indicates that there is a strong relationship between the quality of a child's oral language and how well a child will do in school.

There is a big commitment to **literacy**. The school is a "print rich" environment. We run a **C.A.P.E.R.** project (Children and Parents Enjoying Reading) which promotes reading for pleasure. We have an annual **Book Week** where visiting authors and storytellers visit the school. Part of the Book Week is a **Book Fair**. We have an excellent, computerised library and very well stocked class libraries.

In the area of writing we are engaged in **Process Writing** and a number of classes take part in the **Write - A - Book Project**.

MATHEMATICS

In this curriculum area, there is again a big emphasis on the language of maths at all levels. We have a Curriculum Maths Policy, which places great emphasis on practical maths, and so have invested quite a lot of money in the purchase of support

materials. We encourage both children and parents to have "maths eyes" in everyday living; that is to see the maths that surrounds us all day, every day.

S.P.H.E. (Social Personal and Health Education)

We teach an R.S.E. (Relationship and Sexuality Education) Programme in all classes. Our RSE policy is distributed to all parents when a child starts school.

We teach an element of the *Stay Safe Programme* in all classes and the full programme in First Class.

S.E.S.E. (Social Environmental and Scientific Education)

As already stated we have a huge commitment to an Environmental Protection Programme with which the children are actively engaged.

A Science Programme is taught in all classes.

ARTS EDUCATION (Music, the Visual Arts and Drama)

MUSIC

All children listen to and take part in music making.

We have adopted the "Ceol Ireland" programme in early music education. This provides children with a well-balanced music education, introducing them to listening and responding, performing, composing and musical concepts, built incrementally.

THE VISUAL ARTS

Over the years we have had a number of Artists in Residence work in the school with the children on a particular project. The fruits of these projects are visible all over the school especially in the school hall where one can see a project based on the Planets.

In implementing the revised curriculum in the Visual Arts we try to strike a balance between the process involved and the end product.

DRAMA

The Drama Curriculum provides children with ways to explore our cultural heritage and new dimensions of a changing world. Language plays a critical role in drama. This curriculum contributes to developing the child's competence and confidence in English, Irish and other languages.

Every two years we have a **Christmas Concert** where each child gets a chance "to tread the boards"!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

We have a well-equipped P.E. hall. All classes have P.E. twice a week.

We use a variety of apparatus to develop and improve fine and gross motor skills.

Each year all classes from Senior Infants to Second Class receive a module on games' skills from a qualified G.A.A. coach attached to our local St. John's G.A.A. club.

Every June we have a **Sports Day** - the emphasis is on enjoyment and participation rather than winning.

ICT (INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY)

In St. Attracta's Junior School we use information and communication technology in the classroom as a tool in the teaching and learning process. We have a wide range of software.

Each classroom has 2-4 computers. Promethean Interactive White Boards have been installed in all classrooms.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school follows the *Alive O'* programme as prescribed by the Archdiocese of Dublin.

Catholic children are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist in Second Class.

The school has a Beginning of the Year Service in October and a Carol Service in December.

HOMework

In St. Attracta's Junior School we regard homework as valuable for the following reasons:

- It allows pupils the opportunity to revisit, revise and consolidate skills learned in class
- It can help pupils make more rapid progress in learning
- It provides a link between home and school
- It gives pupils the valuable experience of working to a deadline and completing tasks within a given timeframe
- It provides an opportunity for independent study and learning
- It develops in children a good work ethic

It also enables teachers

- To monitor pupil progress with a view to improving standards
- To provide pupils and parents with clear and relevant feedback
- To suggest strategies for improvement and for goals to be achieved
- To seek extra resources to support pupils most in need of help

THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

St. Attracta's Junior & Senior Schools have a joint active Parents' Association, which is affiliated to the National Parents' Council.

Each September/October an A.G.M. is held at which committee members are elected. The committee meets approximately once a month.

The school and Parents' Association work closely together at all times.

The Parents' Association welcomes volunteers to help out at the many events organised by the school and the association.

FOLLOW ON SCHOOL

To complete their primary education the children - almost without exception - transfer from the Junior School to St. Attracta's Senior School, which is on the same campus.

We have very close links and an excellent relationship of co-operation with the Senior School Staff led by Iníon Uí Mháirtín, the school principal.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

Many parents are eager to help prepare their child for starting school. These are some of the skills and experiences which will prove useful to your child when starting school:

To be able to:

- dress and undress
- turn clothes the right way out
- distinguish between left and right footwear
- use the toilet and wash their hands
- open and close school bag, lunchbox/drink
- hold a pencil correctly
- hang up a coat
- play, take turns and share toys with others
- tidy up
- listen to stories, songs and rhymes

Your child will benefit greatly if you:

- read to him/her
- talk and listen to your child
- visit the library
- encourage counting and matching activities
- encourage colouring and jig-saw making

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Boards of Management are responsible for the direct governance of schools. The board has eight members two of who are Parents Representatives.

The Board is elected for a four-year term.

The duties of the Board of Management include the following:

- The appointment of teachers and ancillary staff
- Approving school closures
- Approving teacher absences for a variety of reasons
- The appointment of teachers to deputy-principalship and other posts of responsibility
- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation
- Ensuring that schools are adequately insured and maintained.

SOME USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

www.stattractasjns.ie (St. Attracta's Junior N.S. Website)

www.education.ie

Documents of interest to parents available in English, Irish, German, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Spanish

General Introduction to the Curriculum

http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Parents/Primary/Your_childs_learning_2000.pdfwww.ncca.ie (National Council for Curriculum & Assessment)

Play - Tips Sheet

http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Early_Childhood_Education/Aistear_Toolkit/Tip-sheet_on_play_Parents_of_young_children.pdf

www.newb.ie (National Education Welfare Board)

www.ncse.ie (National Council for Special Education)

www.scoilnet.ie (Portal for Irish Education)

www.helpmykidlearn.ie

www.focal.ie A database of Irish terms containing over 270,000 terms, searchable under both Irish and English version

www.PrimaryScience.ie Discover Primary Science - the programme aims to show children how important and fun science can be!

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.

If children live with ridicule, they learn to feel shy.

If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel envy.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.

If children live with tolerance, they learn patience.

If children live with praise, they learn appreciation.

If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.

If children live with sharing, they learn generosity.

If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.

If children live with fairness, they learn justice.

If children live with kindness and consideration, they learn respect.

If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and those about them.

If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to live.