

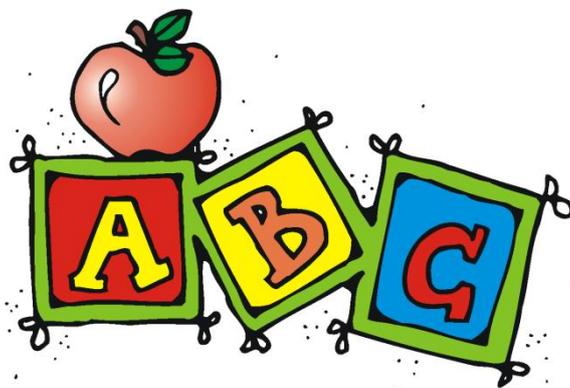


Welcome to Fossa National School



A Guide to Junior Infants

The start of a new adventure





Aistear



Information for Parents

WHAT is Aistear? Aistear is a curriculum framework for children from birth to six years in Ireland. It gives information to help plan for and provide enjoyable and challenging learning experiences so that all children can grow and develop as competent and confident learners.

WHEN is Aistear being introduced? Fossa N.S. is introducing the Aistear framework for early childhood learning from September 2014. It will be introduced in both Junior and Senior Infants.

HOW does Aistear work? The Aistear framework is based on 12 broad principles – many of which are similar to the aims and objectives of the primary school curriculum.

Practically speaking this means that teachers will deliver the curriculum in an integrated / thematic way. Teachers will prioritise play in the classroom and school environment.

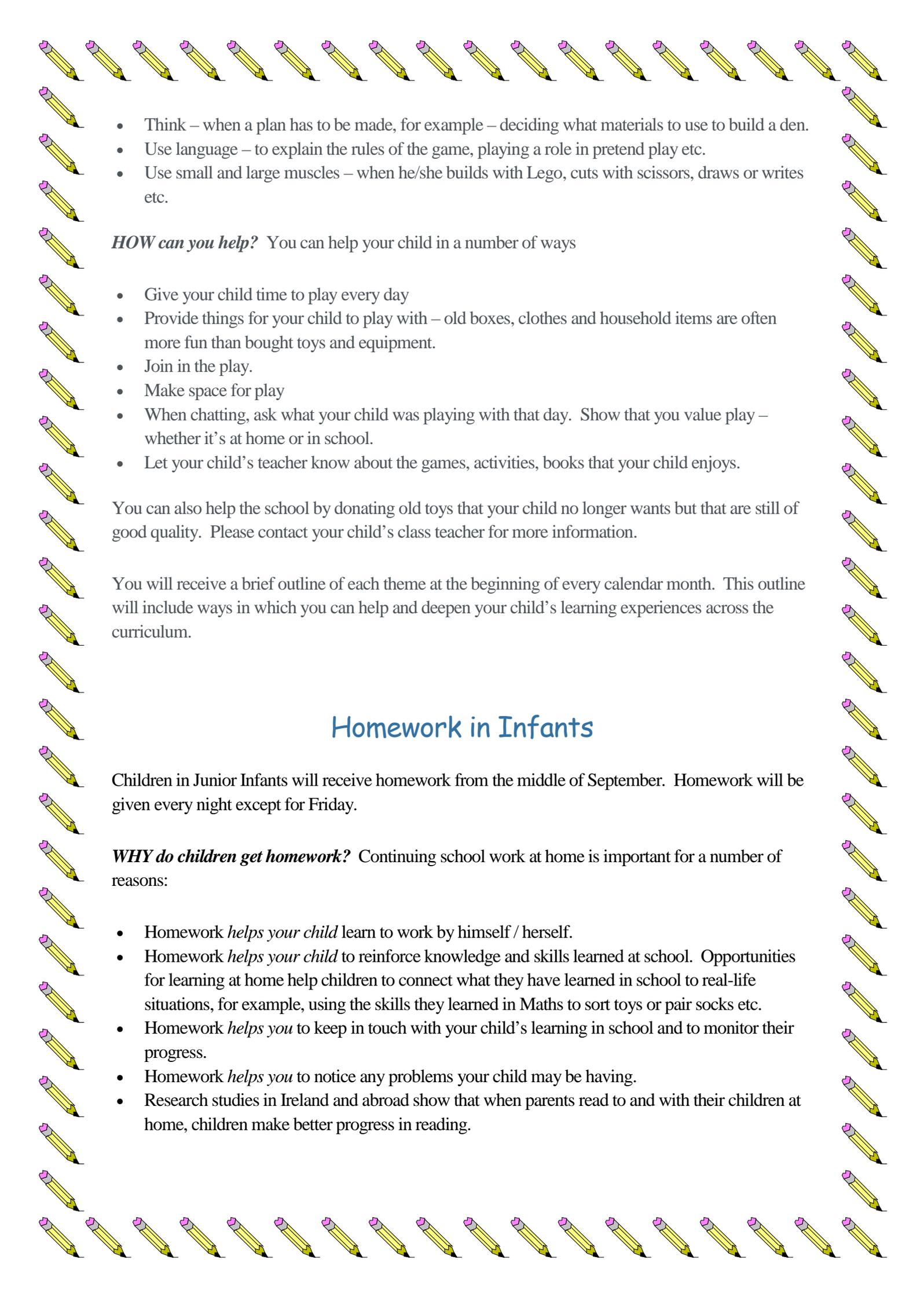
To see Aistear in action in the classrooms next year you will be able to visit our website;

www.fossanationalschool.com

Below is a summary of the information given to parents on the ncca website – <http://www.ncca.ie>

WHY play? Play is often described as children's 'work'. Playing helps your child to

- Build relationships – by playing with others, sharing and taking turns; solving problems and negotiating etc.
- Be creative – when he/she has to create an outfit from old clothes, build a house out of junk material etc.
- Read and write – when he/she reads or retells a story
- Learn about numbers – when he/she pays for things in a pretend shop etc

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- Think – when a plan has to be made, for example – deciding what materials to use to build a den.
 - Use language – to explain the rules of the game, playing a role in pretend play etc.
 - Use small and large muscles – when he/she builds with Lego, cuts with scissors, draws or writes etc.

HOW can you help? You can help your child in a number of ways

- Give your child time to play every day
- Provide things for your child to play with – old boxes, clothes and household items are often more fun than bought toys and equipment.
- Join in the play.
- Make space for play
- When chatting, ask what your child was playing with that day. Show that you value play – whether it's at home or in school.
- Let your child's teacher know about the games, activities, books that your child enjoys.

You can also help the school by donating old toys that your child no longer wants but that are still of good quality. Please contact your child's class teacher for more information.

You will receive a brief outline of each theme at the beginning of every calendar month. This outline will include ways in which you can help and deepen your child's learning experiences across the curriculum.

Homework in Infants

Children in Junior Infants will receive homework from the middle of September. Homework will be given every night except for Friday.

WHY do children get homework? Continuing school work at home is important for a number of reasons:

- Homework *helps your child* learn to work by himself / herself.
- Homework *helps your child* to reinforce knowledge and skills learned at school. Opportunities for learning at home help children to connect what they have learned in school to real-life situations, for example, using the skills they learned in Maths to sort toys or pair socks etc.
- Homework *helps you* to keep in touch with your child's learning in school and to monitor their progress.
- Homework *helps you* to notice any problems your child may be having.
- Research studies in Ireland and abroad show that when parents read to and with their children at home, children make better progress in reading.



WHAT homework will my child be getting? The homework in Junior Infants will involve both written and oral work. It should take no more than 20 minutes to complete. Please initial or sign your son/daughters homework every night but do not do it for them.

HOW can I support my child with homework? The most important thing you can do to support your child's learning is to show an interest in what they are doing. Ask questions and praise your child's efforts. Help your child plan their homework by choosing an appropriate space and time for homework. If your child needs help with homework, support him/her to find ways to solve the problem rather than doing the work for your child.

The class teachers will be able to answer any questions you may have about helping your child with homework.

(Information taken from 'The What, Why and How of Your Child's Learning – full document available online at www.ncca.ie)

Infant Curriculum

Brief Overview of the Curriculum for Junior Infants

English

We follow the Jolly Phonics programme in Fossa N.S. This is a phonetic approach to learning how to read. Children learn the sounds of letters and how to blend these sounds together to make words. They learn to read and write concurrently.

We also spend time learning Nursery Rhymes, poems, word families, playing oral language games and sharing stories at storytime each day.

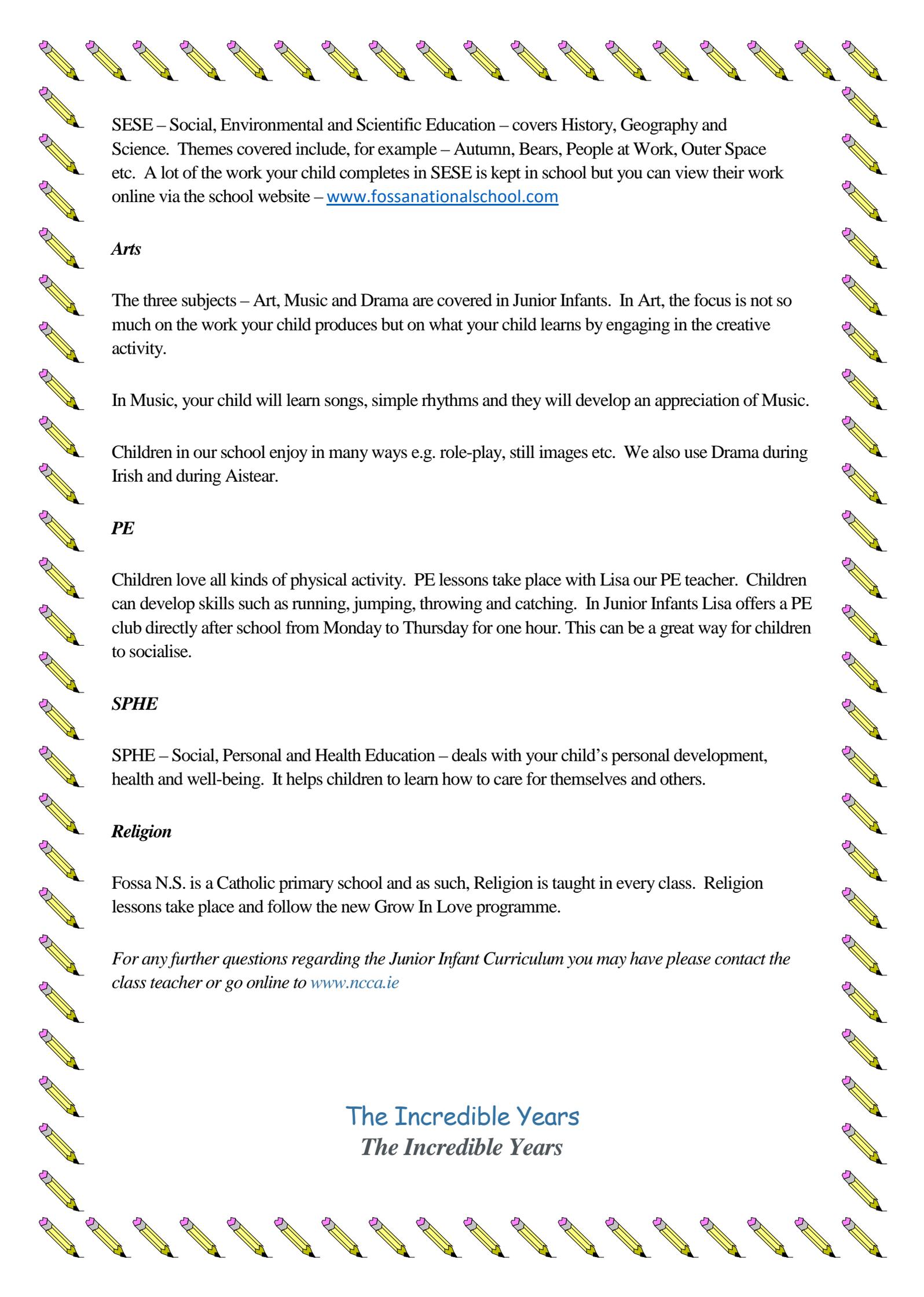
Irish

Children are taught Irish orally / aurally in Infants. We do not read or write in Irish. We learn common phrases, rhymes and some vocabulary. We listen to stories and sing songs in Irish. It would be a huge help to your child if you could use some of the words / phrases etc. at home also.

Maths

Children learn mathematical concepts such as sorting, matching, comparing and ordering different objects. We also learn to read and write the numbers 0 – 5. We practise rote counting and play mathematical games.

SESE



SESE – Social, Environmental and Scientific Education – covers History, Geography and Science. Themes covered include, for example – Autumn, Bears, People at Work, Outer Space etc. A lot of the work your child completes in SESE is kept in school but you can view their work online via the school website – www.fossanationalschool.com

Arts

The three subjects – Art, Music and Drama are covered in Junior Infants. In Art, the focus is not so much on the work your child produces but on what your child learns by engaging in the creative activity.

In Music, your child will learn songs, simple rhythms and they will develop an appreciation of Music.

Children in our school enjoy in many ways e.g. role-play, still images etc. We also use Drama during Irish and during Aistear.

PE

Children love all kinds of physical activity. PE lessons take place with Lisa our PE teacher. Children can develop skills such as running, jumping, throwing and catching. In Junior Infants Lisa offers a PE club directly after school from Monday to Thursday for one hour. This can be a great way for children to socialise.

SPHE

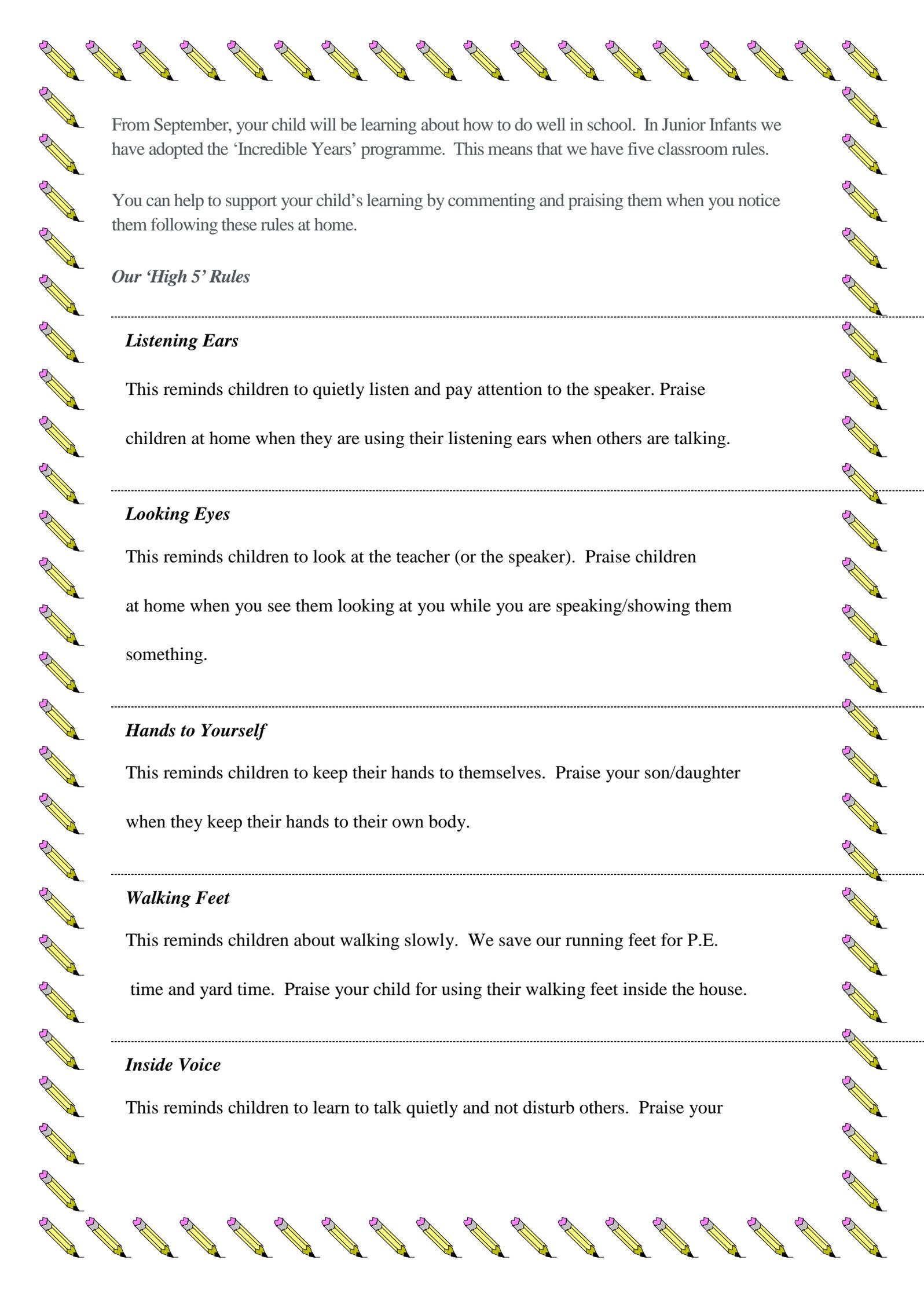
SPHE – Social, Personal and Health Education – deals with your child’s personal development, health and well-being. It helps children to learn how to care for themselves and others.

Religion

Fossa N.S. is a Catholic primary school and as such, Religion is taught in every class. Religion lessons take place and follow the new Grow In Love programme.

For any further questions regarding the Junior Infant Curriculum you may have please contact the class teacher or go online to www.ncca.ie

The Incredible Years
The Incredible Years



From September, your child will be learning about how to do well in school. In Junior Infants we have adopted the 'Incredible Years' programme. This means that we have five classroom rules.

You can help to support your child's learning by commenting and praising them when you notice them following these rules at home.

Our 'High 5' Rules

Listening Ears

This reminds children to quietly listen and pay attention to the speaker. Praise children at home when they are using their listening ears when others are talking.

Looking Eyes

This reminds children to look at the teacher (or the speaker). Praise children at home when you see them looking at you while you are speaking/showing them something.

Hands to Yourself

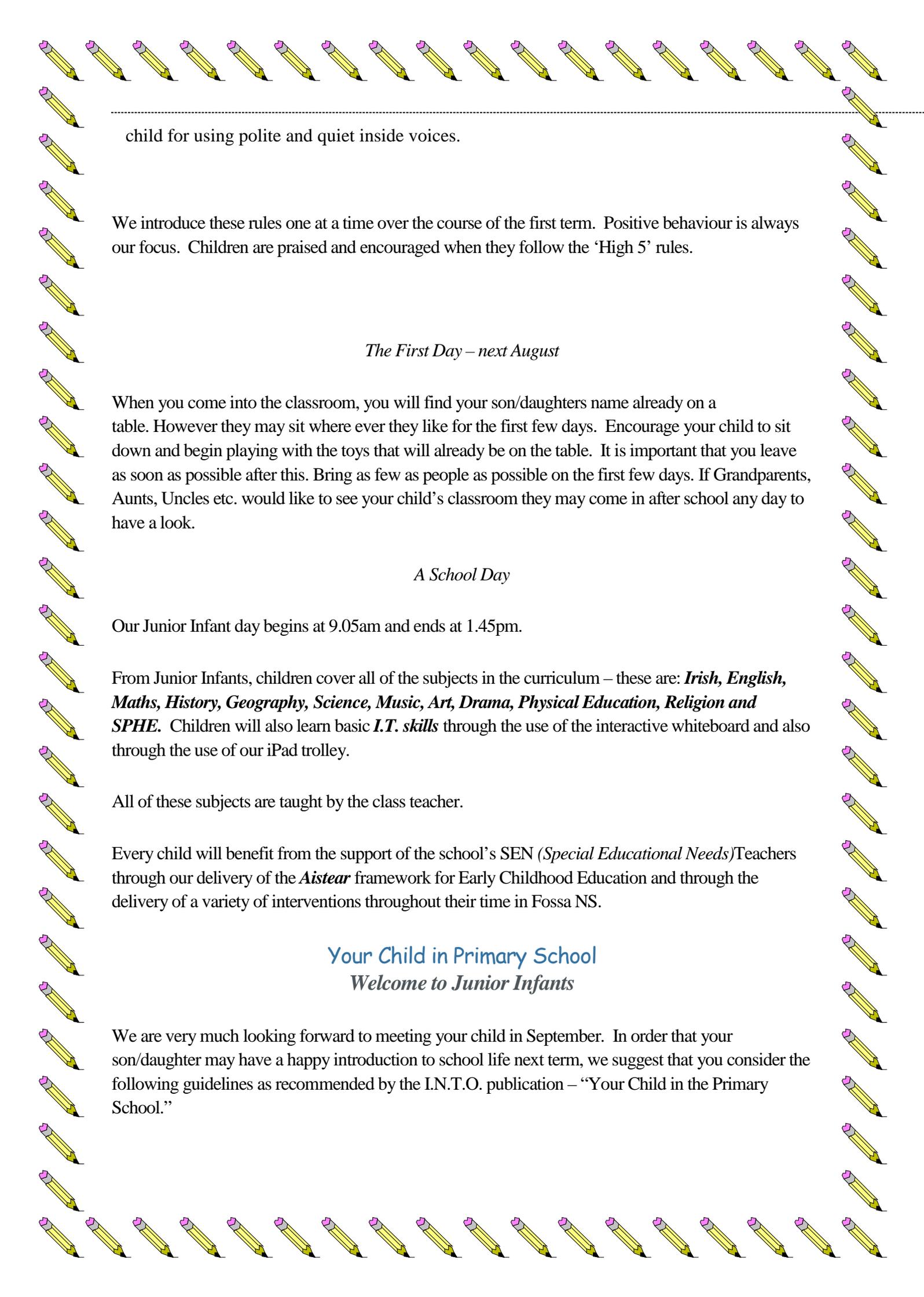
This reminds children to keep their hands to themselves. Praise your son/daughter when they keep their hands to their own body.

Walking Feet

This reminds children about walking slowly. We save our running feet for P.E. time and yard time. Praise your child for using their walking feet inside the house.

Inside Voice

This reminds children to learn to talk quietly and not disturb others. Praise your



child for using polite and quiet inside voices.

We introduce these rules one at a time over the course of the first term. Positive behaviour is always our focus. Children are praised and encouraged when they follow the 'High 5' rules.

The First Day – next August

When you come into the classroom, you will find your son/daughters name already on a table. However they may sit where ever they like for the first few days. Encourage your child to sit down and begin playing with the toys that will already be on the table. It is important that you leave as soon as possible after this. Bring as few as people as possible on the first few days. If Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles etc. would like to see your child's classroom they may come in after school any day to have a look.

A School Day

Our Junior Infant day begins at 9.05am and ends at 1.45pm.

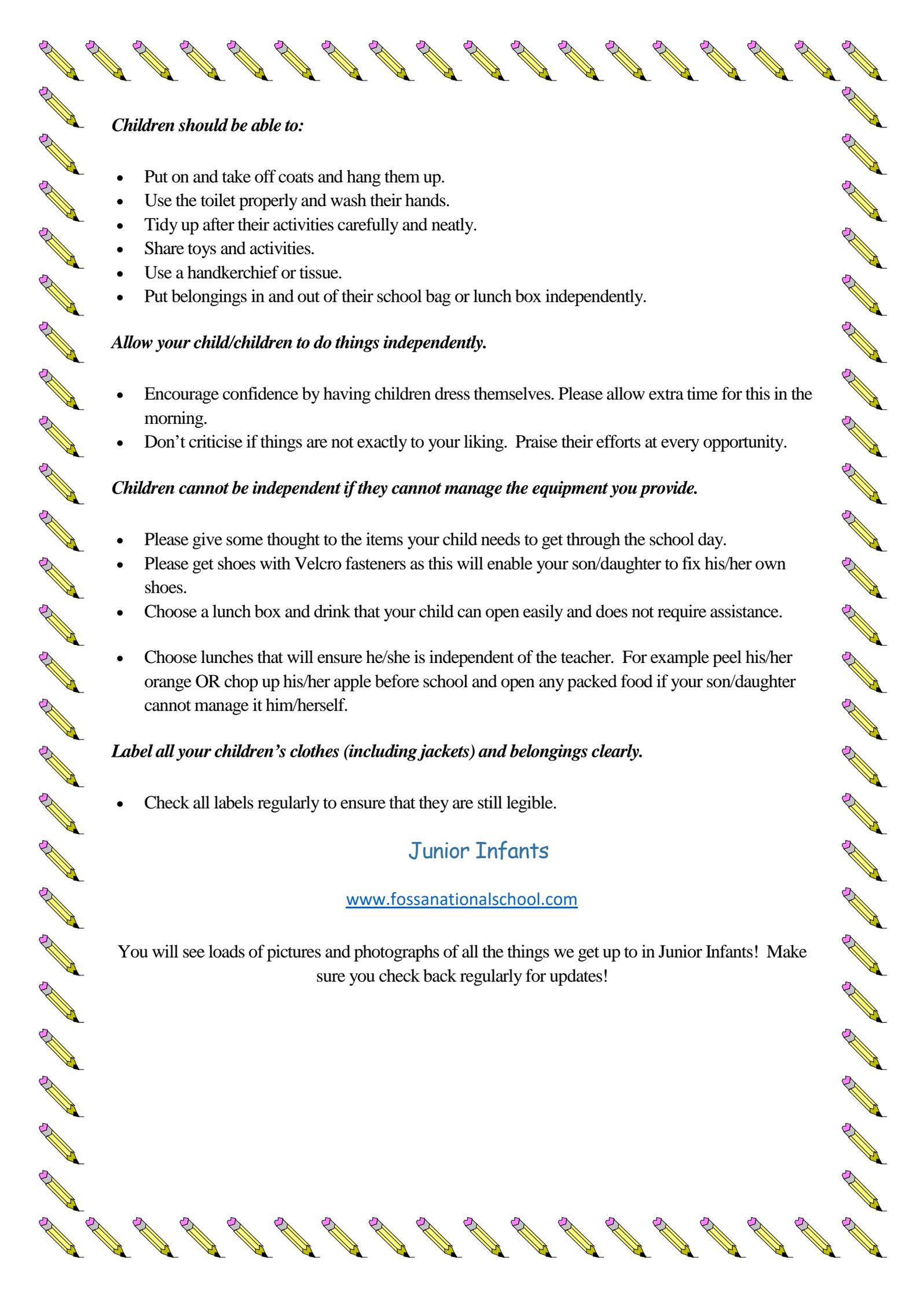
From Junior Infants, children cover all of the subjects in the curriculum – these are: ***Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, Science, Music, Art, Drama, Physical Education, Religion and SPHE.*** Children will also learn basic ***I.T. skills*** through the use of the interactive whiteboard and also through the use of our iPad trolley.

All of these subjects are taught by the class teacher.

Every child will benefit from the support of the school's SEN (*Special Educational Needs*) Teachers through our delivery of the ***Aistear*** framework for Early Childhood Education and through the delivery of a variety of interventions throughout their time in Fossa NS.

Your Child in Primary School *Welcome to Junior Infants*

We are very much looking forward to meeting your child in September. In order that your son/daughter may have a happy introduction to school life next term, we suggest that you consider the following guidelines as recommended by the I.N.T.O. publication – "Your Child in the Primary School."



Children should be able to:

- Put on and take off coats and hang them up.
- Use the toilet properly and wash their hands.
- Tidy up after their activities carefully and neatly.
- Share toys and activities.
- Use a handkerchief or tissue.
- Put belongings in and out of their school bag or lunch box independently.

Allow your child/children to do things independently.

- Encourage confidence by having children dress themselves. Please allow extra time for this in the morning.
- Don't criticise if things are not exactly to your liking. Praise their efforts at every opportunity.

Children cannot be independent if they cannot manage the equipment you provide.

- Please give some thought to the items your child needs to get through the school day.
- Please get shoes with Velcro fasteners as this will enable your son/daughter to fix his/her own shoes.
- Choose a lunch box and drink that your child can open easily and does not require assistance.
- Choose lunches that will ensure he/she is independent of the teacher. For example peel his/her orange OR chop up his/her apple before school and open any packed food if your son/daughter cannot manage it him/herself.

Label all your children's clothes (including jackets) and belongings clearly.

- Check all labels regularly to ensure that they are still legible.

Junior Infants

www.fossanationalschool.com

You will see loads of pictures and photographs of all the things we get up to in Junior Infants! Make sure you check back regularly for updates!