



Welcome to Juniper Green Primary

An Introduction to Primary 1



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Welcome

Welcome to Juniper Green Primary School. We are looking forward to your child starting school and working in partnership with you. We hope that this booklet will be of some help in ensuring that the transition from nursery is a smooth and happy experience for both you and your child.

For the first years of your child's life you have nurtured and taught your child. Building on their pre-school learning experience, we aim to continue and share a journey of life long learning which gives your child the opportunity to develop their full potential.

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us. You can phone the school office on 442 2121 and leave a message with our office staff for them to pass on to your child's class teacher. You can also speak with myself, Ingrid Donaldson, Depute Headteacher or Mrs Pope, our Head Teacher.

We hope that you find this booklet helpful and that it will answer most of the questions you may have about your child's first year at school.

If you feel that anything has been omitted, or that there are any improvements we can make to our Introduction to Primary 1, please let us know.

We hope that your child will have a happy and successful time at Juniper Green Primary School.

How can you help?

By asking you child about school and other important things; encourage talk.

By listening to your child and encouraging him or her to listen to you.

By reading to and with your child as often as possible.

By allowing your child to draw with pencils and crayons as often as possible.

By allowing your child to practise using scissors.

By providing and name-tagging school uniform, gym shoes, shorts, etc.

By providing and name-tagging, packed lunch boxes and school bags.

By using the online 'Parent Pay' system to order what your child would like to eat for lunch. To also use 'Parent Pay' to order and pay for milk or any school trips.

By keeping us informed of any medical problems.

By looking in your child's book bag daily for any school letters.

By keeping your child's reading book in the book bag provided.

By informing the school if your child is going to be late or absent by 9am by leaving a brief message on the school answer machine.

If your child has sickness or diarrhoea, please follow the health service advice and keep them off school for 48 hours to prevent spread of infection.

How can we help each other?

Home and school working in partnership is the best way to ensure that learning is made easier and more enjoyable for your child.

Keeping in close contact and communicating with each other ensures a strong partnership.

Before your child comes to School

Before your child comes to school you can prepare him or her in many different ways.

Don't worry if your child cannot do all of these things yet, they are just suggestions of organisational things that will help them!

Can your child.....

Share and be prepared to 'take turns'?

Wash and dry his or her hands/hand sanitise?

Dress and undress himself or herself. Zip up coat, put on shoes?

Use the toilet properly and flush the toilet after use?

Use a knife and fork?

Recognise his or her own name?

Tidy up and clear away games and small equipment?

Follow instructions?

Parent Involvement

Over the past two years it has been difficult to work with parents within school due to Covid restrictions, but we are delighted that this is now easing, and we can get back to welcoming parents into school to be more involved in their child's learning. Parents can assist us in the daily work of the school including supervising the activities of small groups of children or by accompanying pupils and teachers on excursions. The school welcomes parental involvement of this kind and is deeply grateful to the parents who so willingly give of their time to help.

Parents or other volunteers who wish to assist in the school on a regular basis will be asked to complete a PVG (protecting vulnerable groups) check and sign our volunteer policy agreement.

If you can offer any help please get in touch. You may have time or expertise that you can share with the class.

Parent Council

The parents of Juniper Green Primary operate a very active Parent Council, the objectives of which are:

- To promote partnership between the school, the pupils and the parents
- To develop and engage in activities which support and promote the education and welfare of the pupils
- To identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided and other matters affecting the education and welfare of pupils
- To fundraise and support the school to buy extra resources

The Parent Council management group consists of 8 parents who represent each of the year groups at the school from nursery to P7. The Chair of our Parent Council is currently Lee Picken. If you have any questions relating to the Parent Council, wish to raise a concern or wish to volunteer some time, please email your details to junipergreenparents@googlemail.com, or send a note addressed to the Chair of the Parent Council via the school. The parent Council meet monthly Our first meeting and AGM is always in September so look out for more information on this next term and come along to meet new families and feel more involved in the school.

School Meals

The school kitchen, through our catering supplier Chartwells, provides meals with a choice of main courses and desserts. There is always a hot meat or vegetarian option and packed lunch option on offer, except on Fridays when lunch is always a packed lunch option. A three-week menu is set for a six-month period and then changes to a new three-week menu for the next six months. Parents order what they would like their child to eat through our on-line ordering system called 'ParentPay'. Pupils in P1 - P5 are entitled to free school dinners every day.

Some children choose to bring a packed lunch from home which is fine if that is your preference. Initially keep the amount small, as the excitement of this new experience can be overwhelming. Again, please ensure that any lunch boxes are labelled and that any drinks are in a suitable container. Lunchtime is a time to refuel, relax and be sociable with friends.

Online payments to school with ParentPay

Juniper Green, along with all City of Edinburgh Council schools, uses the ParentPay system. ParentPay offers a more convenient way to pay for, milk, trips, and much more online. The system also enables parents to choose school meal options online. Making a payment is straightforward and ParentPay holds a payment history for you to view at a later date; no card details are stored in any part of the system. Once you have activated your account you can make online payments straight away. You will receive your unique ParentPay Account activation details and full step-by-step instructions on how to log in to the system when your child starts P1.

For further information on ParentPay please visit www.parentpay.com. There is a FAQ document about parent pay on the school website under the information tab, school lunches sub menu.

Children are encouraged to bring water to school in an appropriate bottle with their name on it. Most children also bring a healthy snack/play-piece to eat mid-morning. Snack is usually eaten in class during story time, just before or after break so that playtime can be a time to play, run about and socialise with friends. As we are a health promoting school **no fizzy drinks or sweets** should be brought to school.

School Uniform

Wearing our school uniform contributes to the ethos of the school. It helps pupils to identify with the school and encourages a sense of belonging.

Our school colours are green and red. Uniform incorporating the school crest can be ordered online through our uniform supplier - www.schoolwearmadeeasy.com

There is no necessity however to purchase items with the school crest. Sweatshirts and polo shirts in the school colours are acceptable without the Juniper Green badge.

Girls

Black or charcoal grey skirt/trousers

White blouse

School tie

Red/ green polo shirt, jumper,
cardigan

or sweatshirt

Black school shoes/**black** trainers

Red or green fleece

Red or green checked summer dresses

Green tartan skirt

Boys

Black or charcoal grey trousers/shorts

White shirt

School tie

Red/ green polo shirt jumper or sweatshirt

Black school shoes/**black** trainers

Red or green fleece

Articles of clothing can get lost or picked up by another child by mistake, to help with this we would ask that all items of clothing have your **child's name on them**. Lost property within the school is always overflowing with unnamed items of clothing that all look the same.

School Hours

The Primary 1 & Primary 2 pupils' school hours are as follows: -

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday:

Pupils begin at **8.45 am** and leave at **2.45pm**

Friday: Pupils begin at **8.45 am** and leave at **12noon**

P3-P7 - Mon-Thursday is 8.30-3pm & Friday is 8.30-12noon

Useful Information

Wet mornings

Please try to bring your child to school as near to bell time as possible. If the rain is heavy Pupil Support Assistants will take the P1 children into their class from 8.40am

Bad weather playtimes/lunchtimes

We try where at all possible to ensure that the children have fresh air and time to play outside so please ensure that your child has suitable clothing for our Scottish weather. If there is a red weather warning, then children will stay in class and will be supervised by our Pupil Support Assistants.

Administration of medication

If your child needs to take medication during the school day, please speak to your child's teacher or a member of staff at reception. He/she will ask you to complete a "Request to give Medicine" form, with clear instructions, before any medicine can be given.

School Assemblies

Assemblies are held regularly, where opportunities are taken to share our school ethos and good things happening in the classroom with the whole school. It also provides the opportunity to discuss events of importance in the outside world, thereby developing an awareness of responsibility for our world. It allows us to share in the many cultures of children both in and out of our school, emphasising our similarities as part of the human race.

Daily Routine

The work that your child does in school and how they learn may differ from your own experiences and the methods of learning you encountered as a child. We place a strong emphasis on active and interactive learning and strive to discover children's preferred

learning styles. All the activities in a Primary 1 classroom are designed and structured to help your child acquire and develop knowledge, skills and understanding at their own level.

We place high priority on providing a settled and happy school atmosphere since it is a well-established fact that children are at their most receptive to learning when they are settled and happy. Part of feeling settled is derived from a security in knowing how things are done at school and following well established routines, thus in the initial stages of Primary 1, time is spent guiding the children in learning the way the classroom and their work is organised and what is expected of them as a member of the class.

The entire classroom organisation is designed to equip the children with skills for independent learning and raise their self-esteem as they begin to realise how much they can do for themselves. They are encouraged to increase their social skills and to learn to be part of a larger group where other people's needs have to be taken into account as well as their own.

The Curriculum

All schools in Scotland follow the **Curriculum for Excellence** which provides rich opportunities for children to develop into:

Successful Learners

Confident individuals

Responsible citizens

Effective contributors

Our aim is to encourage pupil's learning through **play** and a wide range of curricular experiences, aiming for each individual to flourish and achieve to their best potential. All curricular areas are supported with a range of ICT. Children learn best when they are engaged in practical tasks that they can **see, touch, explore** and **ask questions about**.

Active Learning

In their time at nursery each child will have gained their own independent knowledge, skills and interest through structured play activities. To build on that learning,

children's previous experiences, their own needs & interests and the unique way they learn have to be considered.

Your child's Primary 1 classroom is an exciting environment with structured active learning activities set out to reinforce and consolidate skills and concepts taught.

In addition to the classroom, we have an active learning area which is planned for and set up with a wealth of play activities to motivate and challenge the children's learning. We are lucky to have the provision of an Early Years Practitioner working in our area in P1 to support the children. In this area "hands on" learning is fostered through inquiry, investigation, problem solving and experimentation. Children have the opportunity to take part in planning, creating, exploring, communicating, role and fantasy play, art/craft and painting

Language

Listening and talking

The ability to listen, sustain attention, to express oneself and to offer an opinion are vital life skills and ones which we seek to foster right from the start of school. Children will be required to listen and to talk in a variety of situations and for different purposes, e.g. as a class, in small groups, one-to-one, with the teacher, to their peers, to a visitor, to find or give information, to follow a set of instructions, etc. As teachers we provide lots of opportunities to develop talking and listening skills in all of these situations.

Reading

At Juniper Green Primary we use a reading scheme called the "Oxford Reading Tree", which features well-written stories that the children (and adults) find interesting and amusing. Initially it is important that the books are read in their entirety so that the children experience the pleasure of the story line rather than just decoding words. We try not to lose sight of our ultimate aim, namely to foster a love of reading and books, rather than merely to teach children to read

Learning to read can be hard work. If the children are to tackle the task with enthusiasm they need to find it rewarding in itself.

We want their reading to be purposeful and enjoyable, at home as well as at school. Reading scheme books will be sent home to be shared and it is best to establish a regular time each day for reading together in a relaxed atmosphere free from any pressure.

Choose a time when your child is fresh, and as far as possible can have your individual attention. Let your child see that reading has a high priority with you.

At first simple shared readers will be sent home for you to enjoy with your child. Then Stage 1 of the reading scheme will follow with books and key words sent home to practise.

Feel free to jot down any comments, questions or concerns you may have and sign the Reading Record as a form of communication with the class teacher.

Learning to read involves a variety of skills and responses and different children rely more heavily on some skills than others. Most use a combination of all the skills. These skills include the ability to recognise & blend the sounds in words and correspond these to the written symbol, the ability to memorise words from their appearance, the ability to predict the word that will come next to make sense of what they are reading, the ability to use the pictures and context of the story to work out what the word may be.

We seek to foster all these skills in the early stages of reading and it is great if they are encouraged at home too. If after examining all the clues your child struggles over a word, simply tell them the word and let them move on to ensure that the story flows.

Learning the letter sounds

We use the 'Jolly Phonics' programme to teach letter, sounds recognition and word building.

The scheme teaches the 42 main sounds of English, not just the alphabet sounds.

We begin teaching initial sounds where children learn to segment, word build and blend as soon as they have been taught the first three sounds.

The first group - "s a t i p n" - has been chosen because they make simpler three letter words than any other six letters.

After they have learned the 26 sounds and can confidently build three letter words, the children progress onto consonant digraphs for example ch, sh, wh etc. and then vowel digraphs ai, ay, oo, ew etc.

The two sounds oi and oy are taught together and the children are taught that in most cases, one is in the middle of a word and the other is at the end e.g. rain, ray, pain,

pay. All the sounds and words will be practised in class using a variety of approaches that are fun and multi sensory.

The children are taught to encode, where they split the letters up (m-a-t) to work out unknown words when reading and join the letters together (ma-t) when trying to hear the sounds and write words for themselves.

Most children grasp this part quite quickly. It is a technique your child will need to learn and it improves with practice. Some children take longer to do this than others.

To start with you should sound out the word and see if your child can hear it. The sounds must be said quickly to hear the word.

This goes hand and hand with decoding words by reading the three sounds and blending the letters together to say words.

Tricky Words

Some common words cannot be sounded out or spelt correctly by listening for the sounds in them; the, was, put. These are called the "Tricky Words" and have to be learnt. As your child becomes more fluent at reading and writing, they will be taught how to cope with Tricky Words. These words will be sent home in their homework book bag and it is important to practise reading and spelling the words regularly. This practise is the first step towards your child becoming an independent writer.

Once the children have settled into school, sounds homework will normally be given to your child. New sounds are taught and revised throughout the week. It is very good practise and important to help reinforce work to repeat previous sounds learned.

This all sounds a great deal of work, but it goes in stages and is spread over a considerable period of time. Little and often is best. Your child may be tired after school but don't worry. It is better to leave it than to push it too hard. There is no doubt that the effort on your part, at this stage, is well worth it.

Writing

We spend a lot of time in the initial stages of Primary 1 developing the children's handwriting. Writing, at first takes the form of children drawing pictures using black felt-tip pens. The children are encouraged to draw their story and then talk about what is happening to the teacher, who in turn scribes the story for them until they are able to write it for themselves.

We expect the children to put as much detail into their drawing as they can to tell their story.

This is an initial way of developing their imaginations and the planning and organisation of thought which is essential to good writing.

At the same time the children are taught how to form the letters of the alphabet correctly, concentrating on correct pencil grip and correct letter routes.

At this stage we are aiming towards automatic and speedy recall in the writing of all initial sounds learned through the literacy programme and the ability of the children to transfer their phonetic and tricky word knowledge into becoming confident, independent writers.

Mathematics

From an early age, your child has been developing mathematical concepts. At Juniper Green we want to build on this and develop your child's confidence and love of maths. We use the SEAL approach (Stages in early Arithmetic Learning) to teaching numeracy. SEAL is an evidence based, practical numeracy programme that builds systematically on children's knowledge and understanding of numbers. The majority of SEAL work is oral/practical learning with some written activities to support/reinforce the concepts that the children have been working on. There is a strong emphasis on playing with numbers using concrete materials, counting forwards & backwards from different numbers, building number bond knowledge, sharing items and making equal groups to introduce multiplication and division.

First and foremost, in Primary 1 we aim to ensure that the children have a secure understanding of numbers, i.e., that the number symbol corresponds to the quantity of objects that they see and count and that this remains constant.

Once the children have a firm grasp of the numbers 1-10 and can count consistently and accurately, we introduce the concept of addition and subtraction. Throughout the school we place great emphasis on mental maths (the fast recall of number bonds, e.g., $2+2=4$) and this begins at P1. Children will be encouraged to practise these at home later on in the year and we would appreciate your support in helping them develop this fast recall.

We also explore early mathematical rules pertaining to shape, measurement, information handling and problem solving. A lot of this work will involve the use of

concrete material to make the learning a tangible experience and encourage the children to explore the different properties involved.

Interdisciplinary Learning

Interdisciplinary learning enables children to make connections across learning through exploring clear and relevant links across the curriculum. It supports the use and application of what has been taught and learned in new and different ways

In Interdisciplinary learning, your child will learn about the world we live in. He or she will learn of its people and places, past and present, develop an informed attitude to looking after the environment and how they can participate as a citizen within a global society

Through observation and simple investigations, they will begin to practise basic scientific skills. They will have the opportunity to learn about science, social studies, technology and health. Their work will be incorporated into themes that provide a relevant context for learning.

Health and Wellbeing

Within our health and wellbeing programme we aim to help every child and young person to feel cared for and valued as an individual. Learning about health and wellbeing will help them cope with uncertainties in life, have confidence to try new and different things and make the most of opportunities that come along. Within our Health and Wellbeing programme children learn about: -

- mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- planning for choices and changes
- physical education/activity & sport
- food and health
- Relationships/families

As a school we promote a sense of being part of our school Juniper Green family 'Where we can be *ourselves*; be the *best* we can be; and *help* others to do the same'.

We have a small number of easily remembered rules/values which everyone in our learning community knows. These are summarised in three short phrases known as

'The Juni Way' where *everyone has the right to:*

Be Respected

Be Safe

Learn and Play

Expressive Arts

Music, Drama, Art and Dance all play an important part in the curriculum and in your child's creative, physical and emotional development, critical appreciation and interpersonal skills.

In Primary 1, your child will have opportunities to express themselves creatively through painting, model making, drawing, dancing and making music.

Expressive Arts activities allow self-expression, develop concentration and observation skills, and promote a sense of achievement. As part of the weekly balance of the curriculum children will have regular opportunities to take part in, Dance and Drama which develops co-ordination, agility and gross motor skills.

A variety of musical experiences will also be available which will give your child the opportunity to create, perform, respond and gain skills in music through active participation.

Support for Learning

All children are different. Just as they learn to talk or to walk at different times so too will they make different progress in learning. Some children are more receptive to certain aspects of learning than others when they come to school. Some children may not initially have the motivation and concentration necessary for learning some specific things.

At Juniper Green Primary we try to identify the children who may experience difficulty as early as possible and intervene to give them the extra support and practise they may require. Extra help at this early stage is often only required short term, however some children may need on-going support.

Homework

Homework activities will be varied but will always relate to current class work. Homework is important because it extends or provides practice in class work, it encourages pupils to become independent learners and above all it provides parents

with the opportunity to share in their child's learning. Class teachers send home a digital SWAY at the end of each week, which shares the learning that the children have been doing that week, photos of the children in class and an overview of the homework for that week.

Try to find a time that is suitable to your child's and your own needs to make the experience as rewarding as it can be. Homework tasks in Primary 1 should be fun and shared between parent and child. In general, homework shouldn't last longer than 15 minutes. If you are unsure of any work sent home or are having difficulties with your child doing their homework, please get in touch with the class teacher.

Contact Details

If you have any queries or need advice the school contacts are: -

School Office - Alison Goldie (School Administrator)

Telephone 0131 442 2121

E-mail - admin@junipergreen.edin.sch.uk

Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for the early years

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