

Home School Community Liason

Advice for Parents

Supporting your child in their transition from Primary School to Finn Valley College

By the time a child has reached sixth class in Primary School s/he is familiar with and comfortable in the school environment. Sixth class students are the most senior in the school, they are used to the school policies and as senior students are often given responsibility by their Teacher.

With the passing of the summer holidays comes a drastic new change for these students. They find themselves in a situation quite different to where they had been just over two months ago. They have suddenly it seems, become the youngest students in a brand new and unfamiliar environment.

At Finn Valley College a lot of planning and work goes into making the move as smooth and as stress-free as possible for new students. We believe that a clearly developed and implemented Transition Plan can make the move to the 'big school' a positive experience for young people.

Moving to Secondary School can be exciting and fun once students are Supported.



1.

Schedule

A major change for students is from having one teacher all day in the same classroom to having up to nine different subjects , nine different teachers and often sitting in nine different classrooms can be a very daunting and scary prospect for children. However by the time your child starts with us they will have spent at least two full days at the school wherein they are introduced to several teachers, provided with practice reading timetables and moving throughout the school. Often there will be an SNA in the class at least at the beginning and s/he will help students find their bearings. There really is no need to worry about your child becoming lost. We have two straight corridors and students always move from room to room with their class group.

2.

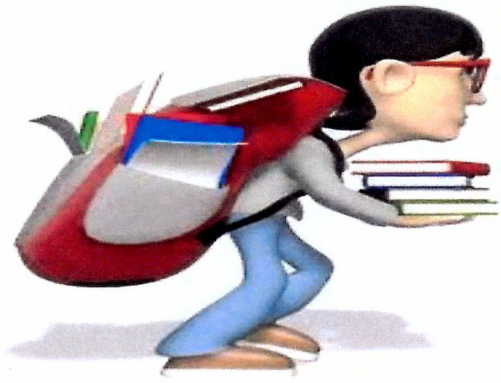
SUBJECT CHOICE



With so many new and unfamiliar subjects, selecting subjects that you will have to study for at least three years can be a serious decision for a First year student. This is why FVC offer a six week sampling programme where students get a 'taste' of all subjects and discover their aptitude for each subject before deciding on their final subject choice. After the six week period, students will have undergone a short assessment in each subject area and will be confident in picking subjects at which they have a natural ability for in addition to a real interest in. It is important that parents help their children in selecting subjects e.g. choosing to drop a certain subject/adopt another may have implications for their career choice at a later stage.

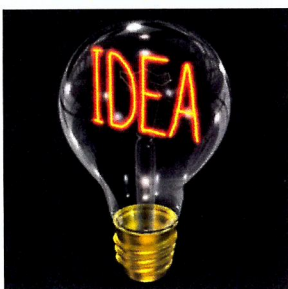
3. The Schoolbag!!

FVC has made a committed effort to reducing the heavy weight of our students' schoolbags. Your child will not be expected to carry every book to every class as most classrooms have class sets of texts. This means that the student can leave his/her book at home to do homework in the evening. If a student must take a text book to class, s/he will be advised to make good use of his/her locker e.g. to visit



- at 9:20am to arrange books for the first three classes
- At 11.30 to return morning books to locker and collect the books for the mid-morning three class periods.
- At lunchtime to follow the above step in preparation for afternoon classes.

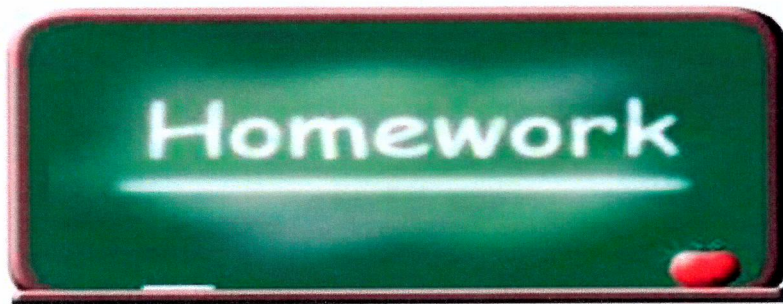
It is a good idea to encourage your child to check the homework diary and timetable and to pack his/her bag in the evening after homework has been completed. Don't forget to leave any extra materials such as Art folders/project work/P.E kit beside the bag so it is not forgotten in the morning. Forgetting class material/ homework may seem like a little thing to parents and teachers at the beginning but it can be a big stressor for the child.



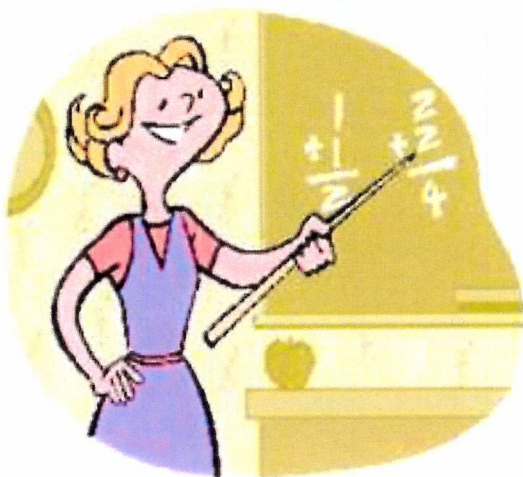
Display a copy of the Child's Timetable where they do their homework. This will help your child' become independent in organisation.



4.



Homework is an important part of Learning at FVC. The school has a strict homework policy see p.32 student diary/website. All classes are given a reasonable amount of homework that is pitched at an appropriate level for your child.



Junior Students should spend an average of 1.5 to 2 hours per night on

The Homework Diary has a section for parents to sign every evening. Parents should check that their children have completed all tasks recorded in the diary. Your signature shows that you are supporting the school and your child in ensuring homework is completed.

***There is no such thing as 'No Homework'.
Where there is no written homework your child
should revise what they covered in class for
each subject that day.***

5.



it's not "just play"

Play is an essential part of early learning.

It is the lifeblood of the learning process.

As children play they are developing the cognitive, socio-emotional and physical skills they will need to take them into a successful adulthood.

They are developing their curiosity, problem solving, intentionality, flexibility, and verbal & non verbal skills.

Socio-emotionally they are developing their emotional intelligence - learning confidence, cooperation, negotiation, sharing, empathy and how to communicate appropriately.

Physically their fine motor and gross motor skills are being practised and developed.

It's not "just play" they are
skills for life!

MHC Early Childhood Solutions

FOOTBALL

GAELIC

GIRL'S ACTIVE

VARIETY SHOW

PAIRED READING

LIBRARY CLUB

STUDENT COUNCIL

SCHOOL CHOIR



(FOR YOU!)

As parents worrying and fretting about our children is a normal part of our day to day lives! However there are times when parents need a little bit of extra support. These are often times of transition in the lives of our children e.g. new mothers returning to work, babies starting crèche, starting Primary School and Secondary School.

We have spoken to hundreds of parents throughout the years. The worries are the same. Will s/he get lost? What if the work is too hard? Will s/he make friends? What will I do if my child is bullied? ...

Please remember that through our Induction Programme your child is well supported in their transition to FVC.

Supports available to parents during the final year of Primary School:

- Open Night
- Transfer meetings in the Primary School for parents with children with additional needs.
- Transfer Programme for Parents of incoming first year scheduled as evening classes during final term.
- Individual meetings with relevant school staff as necessary e.g. Principal, Career Guidance, SEN Coordinator, HSCL Coordinator, Year Head.

Supports available to parents during the first year of Secondary School:

- Meeting for parents of first years
- Parent-Teacher Meetings
- Classes, courses and coffee mornings for parents.
- Individual meetings with key staff as needed.



Thank You!

For choosing to work with Finn Valley College in supporting your child's education. Your children and their teachers appreciate it!

Angela Ward, HSCL

Signature

October 2016

Date

