



Top Tips for Parents to Help With Transition to Secondary School

- Arrange for several visits to the school to familiarise your child with the site and buildings and the new route/journey to school.
- Ask the school for a copy of a school map to help your child learn the location of classrooms, the school office, toilets and the canteen/lunch hall. Put a copy of the map in the homework diary.
- Take some photographs of the school and main areas and use them to recall visits with your child.
- Discuss the school rules with your child at home and make sure they understand what happens if they are broken.
- Speak to your child's tutor or Head of Year and ask for regular feedback about progress, including academic work and social interaction. If you have any concerns, share them and find a solution.
- Ask if all staff will be given a copy of your child's statement, so that they are aware of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision, understand the objectives and have some indication of your child's difficulties.
- Ask what supervision/help is available for unstructured time such as before and after school, break and lunch time.
- Suggest strategies that can be used to help your child if they experience anxiety or become upset.
- Tell the school about any medical conditions, sensory difficulties or special dietary needs and ensure that this information is disseminated to all staff.
- Try the new school uniform on at least a week before so that you can find out if there are any problems which need addressing.
- Talk to your child about how they are settling into school and ask them if they have any problems they want to share. Find out if they are coping with anxiety and managing frustration/anger.

Above all, be positive, praise your child for every small achievement, encourage independence and boost their self esteem at every opportunity.

Handout A

Organisation

- Ensure that your child has the correct stationery and equipment for their pencil case e.g. spare ink cartridges!
- Encourage the child to become independent and more organised. Suggest that they pack everything they need for school the night before, such as school books, homework to be handed in, dinner money, sports kit etc.
- Make sure that your child knows your mobile/home telephone number and address and consider giving them a phone card for emergencies.
- Have a good routine for the morning and evening to give your child a familiar structure. Make a visual day planner/checklist.
- Keep a regular supply of change for dinner money and the bus and remember to give your child the correct amount each day.
- Give your child a purse/wallet/key ring that can clip safely to their trousers/school bag so that it does not get lost or fall out.
- Check your child's homework diary and schoolbag each evening and make sure that you see all letters that come home from school.
- Make sure that your child has the correct equipment for school such as the necessary ingredients for food technology.
- Colour code your child's timetable to correspond with their exercise books and laminate. Display a copy of the timetable on the fridge and in the child's bedroom for everyone to see.
- Use different colour-zipped sleeves to keep all loose stationery and handouts for each subject.

Make homework part of your child's routine and to help with organisation, construct a visual planner/timetable. Clear a space somewhere for them to work quietly at home, preferably away from the TV, computer and other distractions. Make sure that they label their homework and write the date, title and their name on it if it is on a loose sheet.

Most parents naturally feel some anxieties about the move to secondary. However most children settle down and enjoy secondary school without too many problems.