

STARTING SECONDARY SCHOOL

The move to secondary school can seem scary for some young people as it can be quite different to primary school routines. Here are some helpful tips to help you and family feel more prepared for secondary school. Hopefully these will make your new school more fun and exciting.

Remember to have fun and enjoy your school time!

Preparation for the school day

- It is a good idea to read some information about your new school and visit it before you start there so you know what to expect.
- Make sure your alarm clock displays the correct time.
- Check that the alarm is set at a reasonable time – not too late so that you rush to school. Not too early so that you don't have enough sleep.
- It may be easier to pack your bag the night before so that you feel happy and prepared for the next day. This will also mean that there will be less chance of forgetting school kit as you will not be rushing.
- When you first start at secondary school the buildings can seem very big and spread over a large area compared to your previous primary school. Study a school map each night so you know where each lesson is. It may be useful to carry a map of the school in your bag so that you can have a quick check. Alternatively ask a friend or teacher if you are unsure.
- Wear a watch to school so you know when and where you need to be after each lesson.

Getting to and from school

- Make sure that you leave enough time to travel to school and know the bus / train times if appropriate.
- Wear suitable clothing, relevant to the weather conditions e.g. hat, scarf and waterproof coat.
- In the winter you will need to wear clothing that can be seen in the dark particularly when walking or cycling home e.g. reflective clothing.
- If walking try to walk with some friends or class mates. This will make the journey safer as well as fun.

Your timetable

- Keep a few copies of your timetable at home and school e.g. stick it into the front of your school diary and on the fridge in the kitchen. Then a timetable will always be available so that you know what you are doing and when.
- Keep an extra timetable in your schoolbag in case you misplace your diary.
- Colour code your timetable so that it is easier to read which lessons you have. Colour each subject in a different colour e.g. Maths in red, English in green and PE in blue.

Books

- You will probably get one exercise book for each subject. On each book write down who your teachers are for that subject and when you will have that lesson e.g. Mrs Smith, Mon lesson 2, Wed lesson 4 and Thurs lesson 5.
- You may choose to cover the exercise books with coloured book covers or sticky backed plastic to keep them neat. You may choose to co-ordinate the book covers with the colours of your timetable.
- You may be given extra sheets or notes to read. If you are allowed highlight key points, this will make them stand out and will be easier for you to recall when the information is required.
- For work that is not completed in exercise books e.g. A4 or A5 sheets keep a spare cardboard or plastic folder in your bag to put extra sheets of work in. This will help to keep your bag tidy, keep the work safe and neat.

Lessons

- If possible choose to sit where you can easily see the teacher or whiteboard comfortably without having to turn around in your seat. This means that it will be easier for you to copy work and understand what you need to do.
- Ask for help from your teacher or friend if you are unsure.
- Make sure you write all your homework in your diary. This will mean that it is easier for you to remember and for your parents to know what homework you are getting.



Writing

- It will be easier if you keep all your pens and stationery together in a pencil case.
- Try to remember all the key points about good writing – use the line for size and placement of letters, correct letter formation, spacing, and check it is readable.
- If you need to use a sloping surface for writing turn a ring binder or lever arch file sideways and lean on this.
- A lot of work at secondary school is now completed on the computer through Word documents, spread sheets, PowerPoint and the Internet. Make good use of a computer at home and school when you are allowed.



Extra equipment/lockers

- Ask your parents to name all your uniform, PE clothes and outside clothes. This will help you to keep them safe as your friends' school clothes will look similar.
- When you arrive in school put any big bags and your PE kit in your locker until you need them. This means your belongings will be safe and will not make your school bag too heavy. Make sure you have enough time to go to your locker e.g. lunch or break times.
- Keep your locker or house keys on a key ring on your trousers or securely in your bag.
- Look into new social or after school activities with your new friends. Keep in touch with your younger friends from primary school. They may be joining you at the same secondary school and you will be able to show them around.