
Top Tips to help your child be ready for secondary school

Making the change from primary to secondary school can be a daunting time, both for your child and for you! This guide is for you as a parent to read and share with your child to help you both prepare for the transition. As a parent there's lots of practical matters you'll need to consider before the start of school and thereafter.

Practical Tips

- * Practice over the holidays how your child will get to school. Use buses, walking, alternative routes and problem solving (what to do if they miss the bus).
- * Practice road safety and encourage independent skills when out together, so you can be reassured they know how to be safe.
- * Establish an honest and open relationship with school. If you or your child has any concerns, contact your child's new school or current primary school so that issues can be addressed.
- * If you consider your child as particularly vulnerable, establish a key person in their new school that you can work closely with to help your child. This may refer to any concern including health, disability, behaviour or family circumstances.
- * If you have any needs also, such as a disability, tell the school for their information and support.
- * Ensure uniform is correct and appropriate including footwear and hairstyles. Any questions or issues with regards to cost, contact school.
- * Attend the Parent Induction Evening. This will tell you everything you need to know about your child starting at the school and how things work, it will also help you and the new teachers get to know each other.
- * Read the prospectus, know how to access school policies and know the schools procedures with regards to all aspects of school but especially phones and attendance/ punctuality.
- * Help your child take responsibility for their belongings before they start at secondary school. Encourage them to use a locker at school to keep belongings safe.
- * Help your child organise their homework routine and contact school with any concerns or difficulties.
- * Set up your lunch payment account, whether it is a cashless system or your child is on Free School Meals, know how it works and what is available.
- * Your child will receive a planner; ensure you are familiar with the contents and check it regularly.
- * Ensure children conduct themselves safely online and encourage them to concentrate on developing their friendships face to face and resolving differences respectfully.
- * If your child has a need for emergency medication, ensure arrangements are made for them to be able to access it at all times and complete the correct documentation with regards to medication/ health needs.
- * Ensure your school has up to date contact and telephone numbers at all times.



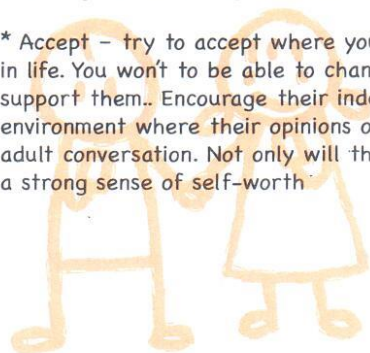
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Do you remember your first day at big school? Were you daunted by how large your new school seemed or maybe you felt a bit lost amongst all those teenagers? How about all the new subjects, the fact that you had lots of different teachers and, of course, new school mates to try and make friends with? When preparing your child for secondary school it can help to step back in time and remember all those emotions you felt as you stood in your new school uniform and prepared to make the leap into the great unknown.

Whatever you do, don't dismiss any apprehension your child says they're feeling about starting secondary school. It's important to listen to their worries and have a think about what you can do to help.

Emotional Tips

- * Try not to worry – the transition from primary to secondary is daunting for any parent. It can leave you feeling out of the loop. You no longer drop your child off at school and may not even know their new teachers. Your son or daughter will make new friends and this may also add to your anxiety but try not to worry. See this as an exciting time and the start of your child's adult life.
- * Communicate – don't feel you can't speak to the school. Secondary is very different from Primary but they will welcome any correspondence from you and they'll be grateful that they have your support. Talking to other parents is also very comforting and will offer reassurance and you'll soon realise that you are not the only one experiencing these changes.
- * Be patient – your son or daughter is going through lots of changes both physically and emotionally. They might be struggling to see where they fit with their new friendships. They may be short tempered and grumpy but try to keep your cool.
- * Listen – try to spend a few minutes a day asking about how their day has been. Ask about what they're learning about and their new friends but try not to pry. Let them know they can tell you anything but don't forget to have fun together and share stories from your school days.
- * Accept – try to accept where your son or daughter is in their only personal development and journey in life. You won't be able to change anything by trying to force the issue. Just let them know you support them. Encourage their independence and free thinking. Try to provide a stimulating home environment where their opinions on things (such as current affairs) are listened to and part of an adult conversation. Not only will this help your child to develop good social skills but it will give them a strong sense of self-worth.



BIG SCHOOL!!

