

## **Starting secondary school: Supporting your child**

Starting secondary school is an exciting milestone for every child. But it can come with worries, for both them and you.

After all, they're leaving the comfortable, settled surroundings of primary school, and venturing into new and bigger experiences.

To help make this transition positive and smooth all round, here are some tips.

### **Attend preparation meetings**

There will be transition meetings at your child's current primary school and introductory meetings at their soon-to-be secondary school.

Attending them will help you get to know the new school, as well as any vital information and advice about the move.

### **Talk to your child about their worries**

Take time to sit and chat about how they feel starting secondary school.

Encourage them to open up about any concerns they may have, like finding their way around or making new friends.

Explain that everyone in their year group will feel the same and there will be plenty of teachers and school staff around to help. You could also share your own experiences of moving from primary to secondary school.

### **Encourage them to try new activities**

When your child takes part in activities outside of school, like sports and youth clubs, they'll get the opportunity to meet children outside of their existing friendship groups.

They could even meet others going to the same secondary school.

### **Help them get organised**

To avoid last minute panics and rushes, help them plan everything they'll need well in advance of their first day.

This could include taking them shopping to get their new uniform and any stationery or books.

### **Plan for their first day**

Prepare bags and uniform the night before.

If any of your child's current friends are going to the same secondary school, help them arrange to meet on the first day so they can walk or catch the bus together.

Being around familiar faces will help make that first day feel easier and also calm any worries your child may have about getting to school.

It's also important to know that over time your child may form new friendship groups and see less of their old friends. This is completely normal. At secondary school they're likely to meet new people with similar interests.

However, being there to support your child if friendships break down is really important.

Be on hand for support

Finding new classrooms and getting more homework than ever before are just some of the changes they'll experience moving from primary to secondary school.

To help them feel settled and confident, create a homework schedule together and talk to them about their day - how they're finding lessons, what they're enjoying and whether they need any extra help in class.

Sending your child to secondary school can feel scary. But it's a great opportunity for them to gain more independence, grow in confidence, meet new people and thrive in their education.

For more advice for both you and your child on starting secondary school, visit [Health for Teens](#).