

Dealing with change



The move to secondary school, for many parents, is a time of major change, bringing great anticipation and anxiety. Some parents, who have experienced this move before with older children, will be more familiar and probably confident about the process. However, even for 'experienced' parents and especially for 'first time' parents, there are many uncertainties. Every child is different and will respond differently to the move.

It can also be useful to remind yourself of how you cope with being in a new situation:-

- How does it feel when you go into a building you don't know?
- What do you want to look for first?
- What do you do when you don't see anyone you know?
- What do you do if you think you're lost?

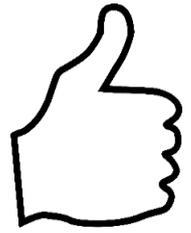
Moving to secondary school is the time when many parents see their child as becoming more independent, moving to being adults. Some parents find this change hard, wanting to extend childhood and protect their children from any threat or danger. Children need to learn how to manage their own lives. They need help and support on the way - to be encouraged to try new things, take risks with you as their safety net. By encouraging children to be more independent and responsible for themselves when they move to secondary school, you will be helping them to become confident and competent about managing their own lives and making sensible decisions

Inside this booklet you will find some things you may like to think about when helping your child to move to secondary school.



DO:

- Listen to your child's hopes and fears
- Be positive about the move to secondary school
- Think of ways through any problems that might arise
- If possible, visit the school and find out what it's like. If you are unable to visit, have a look at the school's website or talk to friends who have children at that school
- Work out the journey to school with your child
- Help your child to buy all the equipment they need
- Find out how to talk with teachers about how your child is getting on
- Find out who to talk to if there is a problem
- Encourage your child to tell you things they have enjoyed and things that are bothering them
- Always talk about the small issues before they become big problems!



TRY NOT TO

- Pass on myths and stories that may worry your child
- Be negative about the school
- Expect your child to manage the transfer by themselves
- Do everything for them
- Ask older brothers/sisters or other children you know to be responsible for them
- Expect the secondary school to work in the same way as the primary school.





IF THERE'S A PROBLEM

Does your child know?

- How to contact you if you're not at home?
- What to do if they get lost or lose their friends on the way to school?
- What to do if they lose their key?
- What to do if they are going to be late?
- What to do if someone offers them a lift home/to school?
- Who to tell if they are being bullied?
- Who to tell if they are offered something inappropriate?



Do you know?

- Who to contact at school if there's a problem?
- What to do if your child is away from school?
- Who to contact if your child is late home?
- What to do if your child is bullied?
- What to say if your child is offered something inappropriate?

CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO DO/HAVE



- A copy of the school brochure/prospectus
- Start and finish times of the school day
- A copy of your child's timetable to put up somewhere obvious
- Holiday and other 'non-school' dates
- A contact number for the school
- The name of your child's contact teacher
- A school uniform and equipment list
- A copy of the school behaviour/bullying policy
- A copy of the special needs policy
- Information on parents' evenings
- Information on homework requirements
- Information on out of school hours activities

If you are unable to visit the school prior to your child starting due to the current situation regarding Covid-19, some of this information will be found on the school's website. You might receive it from the school in the post or via email, or you could telephone the school and try and find out more.