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# MOVING UP TO SECONDARY SCHOOL booklet



# A little book to support your move to secondary school

The move to secondary school can create lots of questions and emotions for year 6 children (and their parents/carers!). And with everything that's going on at the moment, we expect some of you might be feeling a bit confused.

We hope this booklet will answer some of your questions and help you feel more prepared for starting secondary, no matter how and when this takes place. We recommend year 6 pupils and parents/carers go through the booklet together to give everyone a chance to talk about their thoughts and feelings.

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## We're here to help!

Compass provide health and wellbeing services across England, supporting children, young people and families. To find out more about Compass and to see if we have a service in your area, please visit our website: [www.compass-uk.org](http://www.compass-uk.org)



# Introduction for parents/carers

This booklet has been compiled to help you and your child with the move to secondary school. Starting secondary school can be a big step for your child and may be an anxious time for both of you.

Your child will be moving from being the oldest in school to the youngest. They may be moving with friends and classmates from primary school, or they may not know anyone in their new school. For all children, there will be a lot to take in and to learn, particularly in the first few weeks.

There are lots of ways to help and support your child as they settle into year 7 and throughout their time at school. You do not need to be an expert in what your child is learning – being interested is the first and most important step. Parents/carers may find that the teenage years can be turbulent as young people find their own identity. Here are some tips to help you along the way:



Many parents/carers feel anxious when their child starts secondary school, but try not to let it show. Remember that schools work really hard to help your child settle in. You may feel conflicting emotions: proud that your child is growing up and at the same time sad that their primary school days are over. This is perfectly normal.



In the beginning, they might worry about practical things, like getting lost and having to cope with a locker. This should go in a few days as they learn their new routine and the layout of the school. Explain to them that these things will get easier with time.



They may also worry about their school work, or about making new friends. Discuss their fears and give reassurances. The work will get easier as they understand it more and new friendships may take a little time to develop.



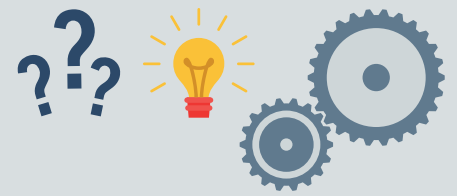
How is your child feeling? Rather than saying 'There's nothing to worry about', it can be more helpful to tell your child that feeling nervous is natural and that everyone gets nervous when facing new situations.



Remember to communicate with your child and discuss their concerns openly. Mealtimes can be a good place to talk about what has happened during the day and find out how they are feeling in a relaxed way. Try to be interested rather than pushy.



# Moving up checklist



As the move to secondary school gets closer, this checklist can help you prepare. Tick off each item as you complete it.



## VISIT THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

Visit the website for your new school and have a browse to find out as much useful information as possible. You can use Google to find the web address.



## PRACTISE PACKING

Practise packing all the things you will need to take to your new school. Get in the habit of packing the night before ahead of when you start.



## PRACTISE BUYING FOOD

Practise buying your own food and drinks in a cafe or shop, or role-play this with family members while social distancing measures are in place. Find out how the canteen and pay machines at your new school work.



## PLAN YOUR ROUTE

Plan the route to your new school and make a few trial runs when it's safe to do so. You can familiarise yourself with the route from home using Google Maps and 'street view'. Sort out a bus pass if you need one.



## PLANNER/DIARY

Do you use a planner or diary? If not, try and get hold of one and get used to using it.



## SCHOOL MAP

If you have a map of your new school, have a look at it and familiarise yourself with the layout.



## GET INTO A GOOD ROUTINE

Get in the habit of going to bed early and getting up in time to eat breakfast. Young people need plenty of sleep and fuel for the day!



## TALK TO FRIENDS

Talk to friends and family members and find out who else is moving to the same school as you and who already goes there.



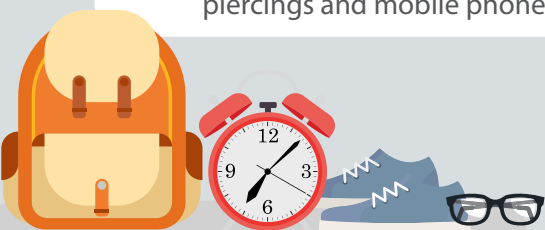
## PREPARE YOUR UNIFORM

Leave plenty of time to find out about your school uniform and order it. Make yourself aware of school policies on things like jewellery, piercings and mobile phones.



## TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Start taking responsibility for the things you need to do each day - getting your bag ready, doing work, and getting yourself ready in the mornings.





# Moving up activity

My current school is called...

My new school is called...

The journey to my current school takes....

The journey to my new school takes....

What is similar about the two schools?

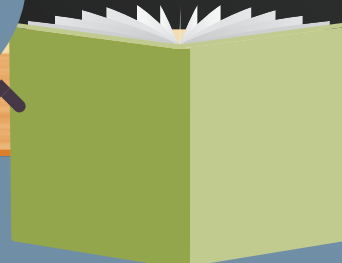
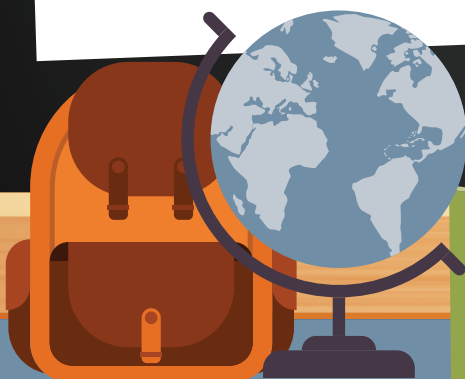
What is different?

Things that are special about my current school....

Things I have achieved at my current school....

Things I would like to know about my new school...

Things I am looking forward to...



# Helpful tips for when you start

Moving up to secondary school is an exciting time. You will meet lots of new people and be able to take part in new activities like sports and other clubs. However, it's also normal to be nervous about this big change in your life, so don't worry - lots of other students will be feeling the same. Here are some tips to help you settle in:

## MAKING NEW FRIENDS

- Introduce yourself to people even if it takes you out of your comfort zone - remember, most people will be in the same boat as you and will also be hoping to make new friends.
- Find common interests and pursue them together.
- Take your time - good friendships often form gradually as you naturally learn more about each other.
- Join a club or lunchtime/after-school activity to meet new people.
  - You will often be partnered or seated with different people in your classes, which can be a good opportunity to get to know people.



## GOOD FRIENDS ARE OFTEN:

- |                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| ☆ Honest         | ☆ Sensitive to other's needs |
| ☆ Reliable       | ☆ Humble (don't brag)        |
| ☆ Encouraging    | ☆ Not controlling            |
| ☆ Supportive     |                              |
| ☆ Good listeners |                              |

Look for these qualities in your new friends and try to display them yourself. This will help you form true friendships that last a long time.

## BULLYING

Many of the students you meet when you go to secondary school will be nice people who treat you with respect. However, there's a small chance some will try to pick on you. If you do experience bullying, here are some practical tips for dealing with it:

- Be assertive without being aggressive. This means standing up for yourself without getting angry or being rude back. It could be something simple like saying 'no' if someone asks you to do something you don't want to, or politely disagreeing with someone who tells you their hurtful opinion.
- If someone purposely upsets you or makes you angry, try not to show your reaction in front of them. It's really difficult to do this, but some people enjoy getting a negative reaction and will be more likely to leave you alone in the future if you act like you don't care. Vent later to someone you trust.
- Talk to someone. Your school is there to support you in these situations, so if someone bullies you, tell a teacher what has happened. It's also a good idea to talk to a friend/someone you trust, as this can help you process what has happened and decide if anything else needs to be done.

**Remember, your safety is top priority! If you think you are in danger, YELL to attract attention, RUN away from danger and TELL a teacher immediately.**



### Sources:

<https://kidscape.org.uk>  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>  
<https://www.childline.org.uk>

## GETTING LOST

Practise the route to school a few times with a trusted adult to make sure you know it well before you start. Your new school is likely to be much bigger than your current school, so for the first couple of weeks, you may get lost within the building! Carry your timetable with you all the time and ask a teacher for directions if you need them. You will quickly get used to the building layout and find it strange that you ever used to get lost.

## YOUR NEW CLASSES

Unlike in primary school, you will find that you have lots of different classes taught by different teachers in different classrooms. This might seem strange at first, but like learning your way around, it'll soon become second nature.

It's also a great chance to meet lots of different people from your year, as well as learning about lots of different things!



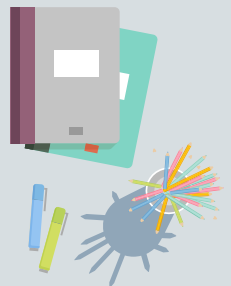
## GETTING LUNCH

Most schools now use either a lunch card or thumbprint system. Talk to your parent/carer about getting this set up. If you forget your card or forget to top it up, don't panic! Speak to the office or your form tutor who can help - no need to go hungry.

## HOMEWORK

You might get more homework than you're used to having. Stay on top of it by doing it the same day it's assigned. Work on long-term projects a little every day.

- If you haven't got your homework, tell your teacher at the start of the lesson, not when they ask for it. If there was a reason you couldn't do it, ask your parent/carer for a note.
- If you're feeling overwhelmed, ask for help! A parent/carer, older sibling or other trusted adult may be able to help with scheduling and give you some tips for getting on top of your work.



## BELONGINGS

- Choose a comfy, spacious school bag. You will have to carry this a lot and fit lots of heavy books in there! Be careful not to let food or drinks spill in your school bag as it's hard to get books clean.
- Always pack your bag the night before and check your timetable to make sure you remember your exercise books, textbooks, homework and any equipment you need.
- Don't carry any possessions or money you don't need, as things can get lost or stolen. Store your belongings in a safe place or carry them with you (including P.E kits).

