



Transition to Secondary School

Home Information Sheet

Dear parent,

As your child will be attending secondary school soon, they may benefit from the transition to secondary school programme. This programme aims to support your child at this time of change.

The following goals are the targets of this programme.

For your child :

1. To discuss the differences between primary and secondary school.
2. To explore and discuss different feelings about going to secondary school
3. To develop an understanding of reading and using timetables, maps and homework diaries
4. To develop organisation skills relating to preparing for the school day
5. To problem solve a range of situations such as friendships/bullying
6. To practise using strategies to support access to the secondary classroom e.g. learning new vocabulary, identifying and rehearsing key words instead of a whole instruction and asking for help appropriately.



Tips for exploring the transition to secondary school with your child

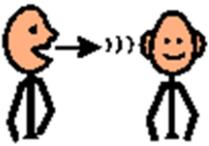
- Have a look at the website for the secondary school your child will be attending. This may give you and your child some specific information about how the school is run. You can use it to look at pictures, find out who the Head Teacher is, what the uniform might look like etc. This may help your child to visualise the school before they go there in September.
- If you have older children/family members/friends or neighbours already attending the secondary school (or any secondary school), it may be helpful for you and/or your child to have a conversation with them (via face to face/telephone) and ask some questions that your child might have about what the school is like/ what secondary school is like compared to primary school.

Activity Sheet

Transition to Secondary school

Activities:

Discuss the differences between primary and secondary school and our feelings:



Discussion: Ask your child to think about how secondary school is going to be different from primary school. If they find it hard to generate differences you can ask leading questions e.g. 'Will you stay in the same classroom all day?' 'Will you have the same teacher all day?' (Other suggestions: bigger building, more subjects, new teachers, moving between classes, school bag, lockers, finding classrooms on your own, homework, bigger children, taking money to school, travelling to school, timetables, new children, new places e.g. science labs, art studios, detentions, trips abroad).

Tell them to think about whether they think these differences are good or something they are worried about. You will focus on these things your child is worried about in the next sessions e.g. bigger school, so hopefully they will feel less worried as the sessions go on.

Reading and using timetables:

Use the timetable resource

Talk about the main things a timetable shows us:

- Days of week
- Periods/lessons
- Time of lessons (start and finish) = WHEN
- Subject = WHAT
- Place i.e. classroom = WHERE
- Teacher = WHO.

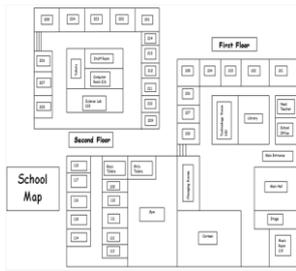
Discussion: Where else do we see timetables? E.g. TV guide, bus timetables.

School timetable- Discuss the different subjects, in particular new subjects e.g. textiles. Talk about what the new subjects will involve e.g. in Design Technology you will make things out of wood, metal or plastic. Which parts of the timetable are the same every day? E.g. registration, assembly, breaks, lunchtime. Look at the subject abbreviations e.g. ICT, RE, PE. What do the abbreviations stand for? E.g. ICT = Information Communications Technology which means 'computers', = Design Technology which means "making things" ..

Quiz: Use the timetable and quiz questions to practise using a timetable.

Reading and using maps:

Use the school map



Look at the school map together. Talk through the different things a map shows us: floors, stairs, subject rooms, toilets, gym, computer room, hall, canteen, library, staff room.

Demonstrate a few examples of reading a map e.g. What floor is room 103 on? (1st floor) Ask questions such as:

- What room is next to the staff room? (Computer room)
- Where is the Head Teacher's office? (Opposite the library and next to the school office)

Remember this is just an example map, your school map will be different!

Discussion: What other maps do we use? E.g. Google maps when going to school, tube map or maps in shopping centres.

Organising our school bag

Use the big timetable, a bag, and things that would go into a school bag.



Introduce the idea your child will have to learn to pack their school bag when they go to secondary school. Remind them that they won't have a tray like they have at primary school.

What goes into your school bag will depend on the day and some things you will have to take every day. Discuss with them what will go in their bag. (Books, homework, diary, timetable, map, wallet, bus pass, lunch, pencil case, PE kit etc.)

Bag it: Choose a day from the big timetable and ask your child to "pack a bag". What subjects/equipment will they need? When will they pack their bag? You won't have all the items - just discuss these!

Using a homework diary

Use the homework diary example



Talk about homework diaries and what they are used for: e.g. to write down homework, to keep your timetable, reminders e.g. swimming, what you need to bring to school.

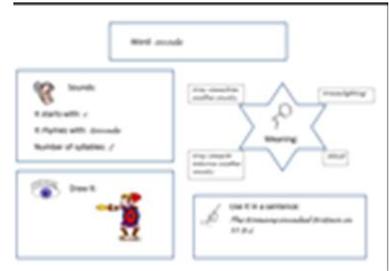
Practise giving your child 'homework' by asking them to write down in their journal the information you give them e.g. 'Pgs. 142 and 143 of the science textbook to be completed for Monday'.

Using self-help strategies

Learning new vocabulary (look at the word webs)

Talk about how your child will come across new vocabulary, and how they may not have heard some of these words before, especially those relating to new subjects.

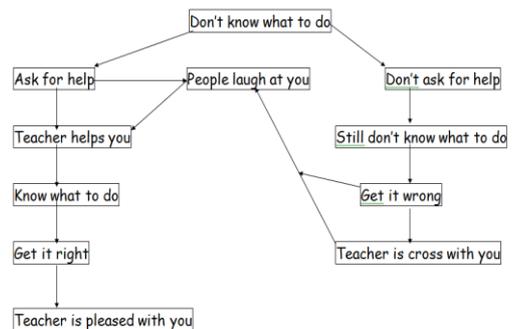
Word webs: Look at the example word web, this is a strategy we can use to learn and remember new words. Think of a new word- e.g. a word your child has heard on the news and does not know the meaning of and practise filling a word web out.



(Picture very fuzzy)

Asking for help (use the help flowchart)

Talk through the asking for help flowchart. Ask your child which of these strategies they already use, and which ones they think they could use more of in the classroom.



Prompt sheet (use the prompt sheet)

Look through the prompt sheet and discuss each prompt. Ask your child when would be a good time to use each prompt.

Extra activity (Only complete these activities if you feel your child has grasped the previous activities)

Friendship:

What makes a friend?

Discuss what makes someone your friend, think of a friend your child has and discuss what makes them a good friend. (e.g. kind, share things, make you laugh, like similar things, listen to you, stick up for you, know each other well, etc)

When things go wrong (use friendship problem solving cards)



Cut up the 'friendship cards'. Discuss that sometimes things can go wrong in a friendship. Introduce each card and discuss the possible solutions to the problem

Bullying:



Introduce the idea of bullying vs. not bullying by giving a brief definition of bullying and not bullying.

- **Bullying** = something happening continuously, one person or group of people targeting you on purpose, making you feel scared and upset, hurting you etc.
- **Not bullying** = something happening only once, the person didn't mean to hurt you (accidental) although it may upset you.

Is it bullying or not bullying? (Use the bullying/not bullying cards)

Beforehand, cut and mix up the 'Is it bullying or not bullying?' cards. Introduce each card one at a time. Ask your child to decide whether it's bullying or not bullying. Discuss reasons why it's bullying or not bullying e.g. it was an accident so it's not bullying or it keeps happening again and again so it is bullying.

Think of solutions to bullying. Discuss why some solutions may not be suitable i.e. don't be tempted to hit back because you could get hurt or get into trouble.

Space for notes/comments