



Transition To Secondary School

A parent's guide

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.

By taking into account some practical and emotional considerations about your child's education you should both be able to negotiate the transition with ease and enjoy this milestone event as you did their first steps!

.Reflect



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 at lunch time? All the new subjects, 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.



Big Fish to Little Fish Again!

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. Perhaps they're worried about the bus journey they'll be making to school? Or it might be that they're nervous about making friends, so be sure to emphasise the fact that everyone will be feeling the same. In many cases, they'll be starting alongside friends from primary so they won't be 'alone'. Whatever fears your child may have, they're all equally valid, so try not to dismiss them. **And if you didn't have a**

very positive experience at school try not to let that influence your child!

In the early days of starting at secondary give your child a bit of leeway - they're going to need a bit of 'bedding in' to their new routine, getting used to following a timetable, increased responsibility and absorbing all those new subjects.. Expect your child to be tired at the end of the day so cut them some slack.



However it will pay to get into a routine regarding homework sooner rather than later. Study and revising will become part of your child's education for the next few years so helping them to get into good homework habits early will reap huge rewards for your child. Having some self-discipline and an ability to work to a deadline is something they will get used to through doing their homework. Ensure that they are eating and sleeping well to give them the energy to cope with the increase of workload.

Preparation

As a parent there's lots of practical matters you'll need to consider before the start of school. School uniform is an obvious one, stationery, were lucky at Merville Community Collage the stress and expense of purchasing books is resolved by the book rental scheme. Remember information on school policies can be found on the school website.



Once your child gets a timetable, help them to understand it, make a checklist of equipment, books needed, names of teachers, subjects, rooms etc. If you family is split and your children divide time between two households, ensure they have a replica checklist and timetable at both homes.

Attendance

It is you the parent's legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time. Punctuality is an important part



of a routine and will prepare them for the world of work in the long term.



Important information can be missed if your child is late to school and it can leave them feeling lost, unsettled and unprepared for the day ahead. Ensure your child arrives at least 5 minutes before assembly begins to get materials needed from their locker beforehand.

If your child is absent from school for any reason you must inform the school, if possible before 9.30am and on your child's return provide a note. Lengthy absence due to illness may require a doctor's note.



Non-emergency medical and dental appointments or holidays should not be planned during school time. Every day counts at school and with the increase of subjects and coursework any time missed can be difficult for you child to catch up on if they are absent. Remember time missed can cause students to have gaps in their education, causing disquiet in school.

Building your Child's Confidence

As your child prepares to enter a new, unknown world of secondary education there is never a more important time to nurture their confidence and self-esteem. Of course, parents praise, encourage and give love, affection and attention to their children throughout their childhood, but it can often be at this point in their lives that many children can become self-doubting,

introverted and unsure of their place in the big, wide world.



Ensure you help your child grow in confidence as they prepare for the new demands of secondary school. From having the self- belief to tackle difficult new academic challenges to developing their social skills as they widen their group of friends, confidence and assertiveness will be invaluable in ensuring their time at secondary school is both happy and successful.



Give praise willingly and often – don't highlight your child's shortcomings or show frustration if they are struggling with something. Concentrate on what they are doing well and let them know how pleased you are with them, then work together on the things that don't come so naturally to them.



If you think there's a problem, ask your child. Listen carefully and explain you are not angry with them. Take their concerns seriously and take action by contacting the school. Never let a small problem grow. Remember- Most problems can be solved when the home and the school work together.

Communicating with the School

If your child is going through a difficult time such as divorce, bereavement or any family medical problems, tell the school HSCL or Class Tutor so they will know to act gently and help support your child.

If there are any problems, ring, don't wait for a Parent Teacher Meeting.



Angeline Kelly
087 2118973

Home School Community Liaison aims to

Link you the parent with the school and help you support your child's education. Enable you to become more involved in your child's learning both at home and in school. Provide information about the services within the community. Help guide you to further education or training courses. At all times break down the barriers that prevent you supporting your child's education fully.

I am available to speak with you at any time, just pick up the phone. I can meet you at home, in the school

parent's room or even in a coffee shop!

I will promote co-operation between home and school to empower you the parents and thus retain happy young people in the education system.

All first year parents are invited to drop in for coffee between 9am and 11am in the first week. Let them see you taking an interest, meet other parents. Feel free to take or make something nice! It's important you don't become a stranger to the school, call in and experience something of the newness your child is experiencing within the first few days.

Take heart! This time next year, your child will enter the school like they own it. They will laugh at the new first years for getting lost, again, and may even boss them around with all the authority that a second year student can assume.