



MOVING TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

The transition from primary to secondary school is likely to be quite stressful for any child and at the very least is a major change in a child's life. For a child with special educational needs, the move can present additional concerns and difficulties, which may be longer lasting.

The new school could involve long or complicated travel arrangements and the school itself could be a radical departure from the small, familiar primary school they are moving from.

Changes could include:

- A large or several new buildings
- More teachers for different subjects
- A much larger school population
- New timetables
- Different support systems
- New and different routines, e.g. dinner-time arrangements
- Being the youngest year group in the school
- A new peer group, friends and potential social difficulties

Preparation

Good preparation will go a long way towards smoothing the transition. It is usual for the children to visit the school more than once before September. Ideally the secondary SENCo will also visit the primary school to get a full picture of the child's individual needs and to obtain copies of individual support plans. Parents can also contact the SENCo themselves to find out about strategies that may be available such as a 'buddy' system and more IT support. Talk about specific things you are concerned about and establish a system of communication (often email) between you and the school.

How can I help my child to prepare for their new school?

- Familiarise your child with the journey and route to school, including where to walk, where to wait for the bus/taxi and where to get off, and practise road safety skills. Remember to also practice what to do if transport is running late – particularly if relying on public transport such as buses or trains.
- Check the uniform list and label everything. Make sure the clothes are manageable and practice tie wearing if this is a new skill.
- Explain how to purchase food from school as many use electronic systems – the school website should have information. Practise money handling for if the school still uses this system.
- Obtain a map of the school to learn various landmarks which can be used to describe locations, e.g. library, main office, tutor room or toilets. Colour code if helpful.



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- When your child receives their timetable, take lots of copies and find a way to make it clearer, especially if it is a two week timetable. Use colour coding or symbols for different subjects and week 1 or 2 if appropriate. Make sure they understand the time of each lesson change and the teacher's full name if only initials are given. Have a copy of the time table prominently displayed at home. Laminating can make it more durable and easier to find in their bag or pocket. Attach a map of the school and their timetable to their homework diary.
- Put some simple instructions in the back of the homework diary for situations that may cause stress. For example, 'what to do if I forget my homework. . .'
- Prepare checklists of equipment and uniform needed for each lesson or day. These could be laminated cards or written in the homework diary.
- Get your child into the habit of preparing for school the night before and have boxes or magazine files at home for keeping books, equipment and worksheets relating to each subject.
- Repetitive and consistent storage of important items will help your child to keep track of things. For example, encourage them to keep their keys or wallet in a particular pocket of their blazer or bag.
- Put a memory jogger at the front door for important items.
- If your child tends to lose things, have an emergency pencil case in the bottom of their bag, or buy some second hand uniform items to keep in reserve.
- The SNAP library has some books and information sheets that may help with the transition process and also specific areas of concern around school.
- SNAP runs a Moving to Secondary School course each year in the summer term, for parents of children in Years 4, 5 and 6. The sessions examine your child's learning style, help you to create a pupil profile and gives you lots of tips and strategies to help. Call The SNAP Centre to put your name on the interested list for the next course.

School Admissions:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Admissions/Pages/Admissions.aspx>

<http://www.havering.gov.uk/Pages/Category/School-admissions.aspx>

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/school-admissions>

http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200176/school_admissions_and_home_education



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Useful websites:

<https://imindmap.com/how-to-mind-map/> – website to help with organisational skills through mind mapping

www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk – providing support with education for children with ASD

www.boxofideas.org – practical skills for home and in education

www.do2learn.com - provides pages of social skills, visual supports, communication cards etc.

www.autismspectrumeducation.com/uploads/6/9/9/1/699189/primary_to_secondary_transition_workbook.pdf - Primary to Secondary Transition Workbook

<https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/special-educational-needs/family/starting-a-new-school-when-your-child-has-sen>

<https://specialneedsjungle.com/>

Revision Websites

www.eduapps.org - Download my study bar, a PC software study aid to assist people with dyslexia or other difficulties

www.topmarks.co.uk – a gateway to revision sites for every subject

www.getrevising.co.uk – lots of useful tools to aid revision, including a revision timetable and practise exam papers

www.teachingtime.co.uk – downloadable clocks, games and worksheets for use at school and home

www.literacy-resources.co.uk - games to help with punctuation, grammar and spelling

www.teachingfractions.co.uk – resources to help teach fractions, decimals and percentages

www.bbc.com/bitesize - KS1, KS2, KS3, GCSE and post 16 Functional Skills revision

www.cgpbooks.co.uk – revision and homework guides

www.primaryresources.co.uk

www.meetthesqueebles.blogspot.co.uk

Websites to buy resources:

www.ldlearning.com

www.cheapdisabilityaids.co.uk

www.orkidideas.com

www.amazon.co.uk

www.sensetoys.com

www.specialdirect.com

www.crossboweducation.com – Dyslexia equipment

www.flexitable.co.uk

www.tts-group.co.uk

www.chartmedia.co.uk

<https://www.tinknstink.co.uk/>



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Questions for Choosing a Secondary School:

<http://www.theschoolrun.com/secondary-school-advice>

<http://www.goodtoknow.co.uk/family/278309/How-to-choose-a-secondary-school>

<https://www.familiesonline.co.uk/locations/national/education-childcare/education-and-schools/guide-to-choosing-a-secondary-school>

<https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/for-parents/>

<https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/special-educational-needs/learning/mainstream-schools-for-special-needs>

Residential School Trips:

<https://senmagazine.co.uk/articles/articles/senarticles/asd-and-school-trips>

<https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/special-educational-needs/family/residential-trips>

Learning styles questionnaires:

<http://www.schoolfamily.com/school-family-articles/article/836-learning-styles-quiz>

http://www.acceleratedlearning.com/method/test_flash.html

Apps:

Squeebles - Spelling Test and Times Table Apps

Sorted: Master Your Day – task lists and calendar

Talking About Secondary School - <https://www.blacksheepress.co.uk/product/talking-about-secondary-school/>

SimpleMind Free - Intuitive Mind Mapping

My Study Life - School Planner

Duolingo – language learning

Brainscape Flashcards

Photomath – the “camera calculator” that recognises on screen maths equations and gives step by step solutions

Useful Books:

‘Choosing a School for a Child with Special Needs’ – Ruth Birnbaum

‘Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Transition into Secondary School’ – Marianna Murin, Josselyn Hellriegel and Will Mandy

‘Succeeding at Secondary School: An Essential Guide for Students and their Parents’ – Martin and Maria Adams

The contacts and links given via this SNAP information sheet have been shared as a starting point for your own research. We believe the information to be genuine and correct at the time of publishing, however no responsibility for loss occasioned by any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of the material contained herein can be accepted by SNAP.