

MOVING UP

A parent/carer's guide
to supporting children
through the move to
secondary school

Moving from primary to secondary school

The move to secondary school means a number of major changes for children. Most children will cope with these and get used to the changes by the end of the first couple of weeks. However, the move can be worrying for some parents/carers and their children.

This booklet aims to show some of the differences between primary and secondary schools and offer parents and carers some advice on how to support their child through this period of transition.



**North
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www.northlincs.gov.uk

What will be different at secondary school?

Parents/carers, and often the children themselves, don't know what life will be like in their new secondary school.

Knowing what to expect can help.

Here are some ways that secondary schools can be different from primary:

- Class sizes may be larger.
- A bigger school environment.
- Lots more people.
- More unsupervised time e.g. movement between lessons.
- New behaviour rules and reward systems to learn.
- No personal desks and the use of lockers to store belongings.
- Needing own equipment for lessons.
- More teachers and different ones for most subjects.
- Unfamiliar subjects e.g. Spanish.
- Having a timetable.
- Homework – greater volume, expectation and independent learning.
- Needing to be more organised for lessons and to meet homework deadlines.
- Independent travel to and from school.
- Less face-to-face parental contact with school – more electronic communication such as texts, e-mails and website.

Common worries for parents/carers

New People

- Making new friends. Losing old friends.
- Coping in a crowd and with older children.
- Being bullied.
- Falling in with the wrong crowd and getting into trouble.

New Routines

- What happens at break and dinner times.
- What the toilets are like and when they use them.
- Understanding and following new behaviour rules.
- Being organised each day.
- Getting around a building independently without getting lost.
- Getting to school and on time.

New Costs

- Affording school dinners.
- Coping with the food choices and a self-service cafeteria system.
- Spending dinner money wisely.
- Affording the uniform.
- Sending them in the wrong uniform or without the right equipment.
- Losing expensive items – of equipment or uniform.
- Affording the extra equipment.

New Expectations

- Coping with harder work.
- Having extra homework.
- Having lots of new teachers.
- Teachers knowing them and their needs.
- What to do if there is a problem.

You might want to discuss this list with your child to see if they share these worries, or have any other concerns.

How can I help my child to prepare for, and settle into, secondary school?

- Visit the new school yourself, such as on open days or ring to make an appointment to look round.
- Contact the new school's SENCo if your child has specific learning difficulties, or the Head of Year if there is a problem you think the school should know about.
- Find out the name of their tutor (main class teacher) and their contact details.
- Provide a larger sturdy bag to transport books, equipment and PE kit in.
- Put a copy of their new timetable somewhere on view around the house.
- Talk to them about their homework and help them make up a homework timetable. Find them a quiet space and time for them to do it. Speak to the school if this is difficult.
- Check what uniform/equipment is needed e.g. ties/calculators and contact the school if you can't provide them.
- Prepare for the school day the night before by getting them to put out their uniform and pack their own school bag.
- Get them to practise buying things in shops to build confidence in the school canteen.
- Have a trial run of the route to school where possible. If walking, arrange for any friends also going to that school to walk with them.
- Show an interest in their school day but don't bombard them with questions. Remember you're only hearing their view, so contact the school immediately with any concerns.

Further resources and advice

Further resources and advice to support the move to secondary school

School admissions

www.northlincs.gov.uk/schooladmissions

School transport

www.northlincs.gov.uk/schooltransport

Free school meals

www.northlincs.gov.uk/FSM

School clothing grant

www.northlincs.gov.uk/clothinggrant

Special Educational Needs and Disability, Information and Advice Service (SENDIASS)

www.northlincslocaloffer.com/special-educational-needs-and-disability-sendiass

Also see the website for your child's new school – they may have a specific section with advice for new parents and carers.