



Transition from Primary School Year 6 to Secondary School Year 7 **Information for Parents**



Community Welfare Team – Education Welfare Service
www.shropshire.gov.uk

Your child will soon be starting at their new secondary school. This will involve extensive changes in their social and learning environment. The Education Welfare Service has designed this leaflet in order to equip parents with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage the transfer from primary to secondary school.

Contact between school and parents

Continue to be very optimistic about your child's transfer to secondary school even if your own educational experiences were not all positive.

- Try to become familiar with the names of your child's teachers.
- Stay aware of how your child is settling in; keep communicating with them, asking specific questions about what has happened on a daily basis. Be specific, for example ask 'what happened at break/lunch time, could you understand everything in your French lesson, who did you sit next to, did you find the bus easily?'
- If there are any problems these should be highlighted as soon as possible.
- Have clear arrangements regarding what will happen if your child needs to be sent home from school because they are unwell.
- Keep all relevant school names and numbers close to hand and always remember to contact school as soon as possible if your child is unable to attend, or if ever you or they have any concerns or worries.
- Remind them that their classmates are in the same position and that all the other older pupils were once in Year 7.

Travelling to school

For many parents the journey their child will have to make influences their choice of secondary school and in a rural area such as Shropshire this journey may be substantial.

- Before the Autumn term, parents should make sure that their child knows their home phone number, emergency numbers and other relevant contact numbers.
- If possible they should arrange to be at home when their child leaves for school and on their return.
- Encourage children to travel with friends and find out who these friends are.
- Teach them road safety.
- Time their journey to school.
- If travelling by bus find out the bus company name, phone number, pick up point, pick up time, drop off point and drop off time.
- Enquire whether there are designated seating arrangements on the bus and what the procedure is if children miss the bus.
- Find out how and when pupils get their bus passes and the cost.
- If there are any problems on the bus contact either school or the bus company straight away.

If your child walks or cycles to school

If your child walks to school

- Work out the best walking route.
- Find out if there are road crossings that can be used.
- The Department for Transport says that one fifth of child pedestrian casualties happen on the journey to or from school so parents need to feel assured that they have done everything they possibly can to ensure their child's safety.

If your child cycles to school

- Make sure that they have all the necessary safety equipment and that their cycle is in good working order.
- Negotiate the best cycle route for them and identify any difficult road hazards that need to be negotiated and time the journey to school.
- Once they arrive at school, find out where your child should put their bike and their safety equipment.

Lunch and break times

Lunch and break times should be periods of the day when your child can relax with their peers, but for those pupils who haven't integrated well these less structured times can be a problem.

- Encouraging your child to attend any lunch time clubs and activities that are available will help them settle in.
- Ask your child whether they want school dinners or packed lunches. Find out what types of food are available at break and lunch time for snacks.
- Enquire what the cost of an average meal will be and try to give your child a sufficient amount of money.
- If your child is entitled to free school meals ensure that any necessary paperwork is sorted out as soon as possible so that they can receive these.

Uniform

At the time of their transfer to secondary school, pupils are maturing at different rates, experiencing rapid and irregular growth with changes in their physical appearance and a new interest in how they look.

- Obtaining the right uniform can be a concern to both parents and pupils but this is an area that can be sorted out well in advance of the first day.
- Once you have decided upon your choice of secondary school for your child, find out precise details of skirt/trousers, shirt, sweatshirt/jumper, shoes, tie and P.E kit.
- Locate the shops where appropriate uniform can be bought from and also where you can obtain second hand uniform.
- Be aware of sanctions that will be imposed if your child wears the wrong uniform and what type of clothes most pupils wear on non uniform days.

Moving around school for lessons and detentions and sanctions

Moving around school for lessons

Your child's experiences at primary school are probably of a single classroom, familiar classmates and one main teacher. At secondary school they encounter a variety of different classrooms, hundreds of new students and dozens of different subject teachers in a large building.

- Pupils will have an advantage in finding their way around school if they attend any available induction days before September.
- Remember that they have gone from being the most responsible students at primary school to being the youngest and least confident in a more impersonal organisation.
- With moving around school for different lessons, ensure that they have everything they need for each day by getting them to pack their bags the night before.

Detentions and Sanctions

As your child goes into secondary school they will be eager to please and gain the approval of school staff. Some Year 6 pupils have a fear of receiving a detention for all sorts of minor misdemeanours. Through examining the school's rules, you can become familiar with the type of behaviour that would result in your child receiving a detention, sanction or punishment and what sort of behaviour results in rewards and commendations. Schools use various types of detentions, find out what they are and when and where they take place.

Homework

There will be a substantial increase in the amount of homework your child will receive once they get to secondary school.

- Examine their homework timetable and find out how much they will be expected to do each night.
- If the school provides a homework club consider whether it would be appropriate for your child to attend.
- Contact school to discover what steps you should take if your child can't complete their homework and if it would be alright for you to help them with it.
- Enquire what sanctions will be imposed upon them if they don't hand in any work that they are set.
- Try to designate a quiet place for them to work in, preferably not in front of the television.
- Constantly show an interest in the work that they are doing, while trying not to nag.

Your child will be experiencing a longer school day than they are used to and on their return they will be tired and hungry, therefore it is important to set a routine for completing homework (as it is for early and regular bedtimes).

Relationships with other pupils

At the time of transferring to secondary school, pupils have an intense need to belong and be accepted, particularly by their peers. This means that for the first time they may begin to question the rules and standards that parents have laid down for them as they begin to form and question their own identities.

- Parents should try to discover whether their child will be in the same class as their friends from primary school and if they will be put into 'streams'.
- Find out about seating arrangements in class and if their previous primary teachers will be maintaining any contact with them.
- Explain to them the reasons why they need to transfer to secondary school and the benefits of this change.
- If there are any summer activities taking place such as road shows, workshops etc encourage them to attend to meet up with some of their friends that they are transferring up with. During the summer holidays they can share concerns and make arrangements to meet up at their new school.
- Children may grieve over their previous primary school especially if they have parted from a special friend.
- Encourage new friendships and teach them the necessary social skills to be able to make new relationships, without alienating previous friends.

Bullying

None of the schools in Shropshire tolerate bullying, but fear of it is still a worry for some parents and pupils.

- Parents should be aware of what type of behaviour constitutes bullying, for example, being shoved in the corridor on purpose, name calling, being hit with bags, having money taken, being threatened, pupils whispering about your child or excluding them.
- Also any other type of behaviour which makes your child feel uncomfortable should be looked into.
- It is likely that rumours have been circulating in Year 6 regarding the treatment that Year 7s have to endure so discuss and challenge these with your child.

If they are being bullied who should your child talk to?

- Their parents or carers
- Form tutor
- Any teacher they feel comfortable with
- Older pupils
- The School Council
- The school's Education Welfare Officer
- Any other mentors that the school provides.

Examine the school's anti-bullying policy and find out what action the school will take over bullying and what action you should take if it continues. Keep communicating with your child and be sensitive to their moods but remember that tiredness and coping with their new environment as well as any bullying may make them irritable.



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