

## **Starting secondary school**

Moving from primary school to secondary school can be really exciting. There's new surroundings, new friends and new routines to get to know.

But it's totally normal if you feel a little nervous. You won't be the only one with questions or worries.

Here are some tips to help you get ready for your new secondary school. They'll help you feel prepared before you move and as you settle in.

### **Your new school**

Take any opportunity you get to visit your new secondary school. This will help you get to know the layout and different areas and classrooms.

Then, on your first day, it'll all feel familiar and you'll be confident moving around.

Some school's websites have a virtual tour you can take. Have a look at yours to see if they do.

### **You and your friends**

The thought of making new friends at secondary school can be intimidating but think of it as an opportunity to grow your existing friendship group, meet new people and experience new things.

Buddying up with someone in your form group and joining after-school clubs are both great ways of forming new friendships.

Remember, it's okay to have old and new friends. The most important thing is that you're all kind and respectful to one another.

### **Your timetable and schedule**

Unlike at primary, in secondary school you'll be moving around a lot, as each lesson will be in a different classroom. This can be a little disorientating.

This feeling is completely normal though, and if you're unsure of where to go, or if you get lost, ask a teacher, member of staff or older student. They'll be understanding and will be able to help you. In fact, many of them will have felt the same as you do now when they started in their secondary school.

It may take a few weeks to get used to the school layout and timetable, but you won't be the only one. It may help to print off your timetable so you know what lessons you have and where you need to be.

If you are catching a bus to school, have a trial run beforehand. This will help you get to know what time the buses come and which stops to get on and off at.

### **The final few things**

Being prepared is really important, so pack your school bag the night before and make sure you have your stationery, lunch and any books you've been told you'll need.

Get your uniform ready too, so in the morning you can simply get up and put it on without having to rush.

It's important to get a good night's sleep, so don't go to bed too late. Switch off your phone or games at least one hour before you go to sleep. This will help you to wind down and drift off.

If you feel nervous or worried about what the next day will bring, do something nice and relaxing, like having a bath, reading a book or listening to some music.

Be sure to eat breakfast on your first day. This will set you up for the day and help you learn better. It's hard to concentrate when you're hungry!

It's also important to stay hydrated throughout the day, so take a water bottle and keep it topped up.

Remember, worrying is normal. Everyone has worries and starting a new school is a huge thing, so it's perfectly understandable that you may have some anxieties.

If you're still really worried about starting secondary school though, it's important to talk to someone about how you're feeling. This could be a teacher, your parents or carers, a school nurse or any other adult that you trust.

If it feels hard to talk to them, try writing down or drawing your worries and giving it to them.

Starting secondary school is a great opportunity to become more independent, learn interesting new things and make new friends.

For more advice around starting a new school, making new friends and handling your emotions, take a look at [Health for Teens](#).