



Supporting Transition To Selly Park Girls' School: Parent and Carers Guide



Supporting your child in moving from primary to Selly Park Girls' School

Discuss starting Selly Park Girls' School with your child

The move from primary to secondary school is very exciting, but also challenging and sometimes scary. As a parent/carer there is a lot you can do to help your child manage the transition and minimise anxiety, whatever their situation.

Talk about how they are feeling and how it will be different from primary; for instance a bigger school, new people, changing teachers and rooms for subjects, and more homework.

Reassure them that nerves about starting something new are normal, as is some sadness at leaving familiar things, and that these feelings usually subside.

But, be careful not to impose your own worries. Focus on exciting opportunities too – new subjects, activities and friends. Celebrating the milestone of finishing primary school, and all the ways they have grown, can boost self-esteem and confidence.

Let them know that starting Selly Park Girls' School is the next step in their exciting life!



Familiarise your child with their new school

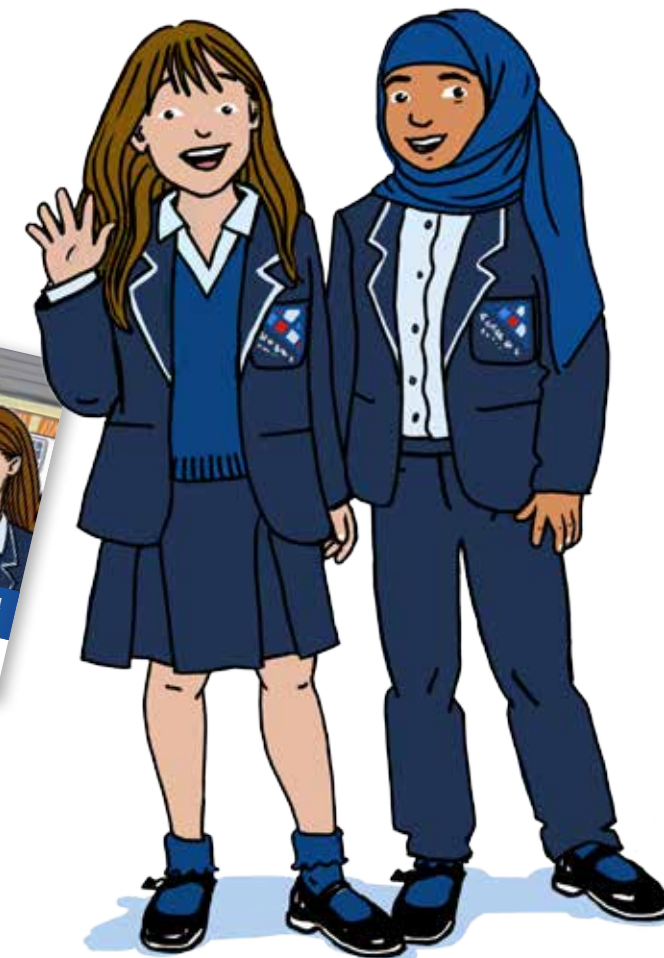
Selly Park Girls' School organises Year 6 transition events including the Transition Day where all Year 6 in the city visit their secondary school, a Transition Evening to invite parents in to see the school and meet key staff members and also Summer School.

Meeting your teachers

These days are a great opportunity to meet teachers, other starters and find out about the school layout and day. If possible, print a school map to look at with your child too.

Reducing anxiety

Helping children understand what will be happening on their first few days will reduce anxiety. At Selly Park Girls' School we produce a 'Transition Pocket Guide Comic' that takes you through what to prepare for that first day and what will happen on the first few days... and has a school map on the back page.



Preparing for Selly Park Girls' School

- The transition from primary to Selly Park Girls' School is exciting for children and marks a new phase in their lives. Children recognise it as part of growing up and are aware that their lives are about to change in an important way. Like any change, it can also bring uncertainty.
- Most children will manage the transition to secondary school successfully. However, there may be ups and downs. It's easy for children to slip from feeling happy and confident one minute, to feeling nervous or anxious and back again as they find their feet. As a parent/carer there is much you can do to help your child through the transition period with careful and sensitive preparation.



Dealing with change

The move from primary to Selly Park Girls' School comes at a time of great change for children. As well as adapting to their new school environment and developing new relationships, they are dealing with the **physical and psychological changes** that the start of adolescence brings.

All children are different and the move to a new school, or even moving to a new part of a school, may affect each of them in distinct and sometimes unexpected ways.

Some respond well to change, and will feel ready for the move, while others will need more reassurance and preparation. Sometimes children who have enjoyed primary school and are expected to make a smooth transition may unexpectedly struggle with the change.

Most children adapt to secondary school well. However, if your child struggles with their new environment, it can be stressful not only to them, but for you as parents and carers, too. It's important to take this into account as you help your child prepare for secondary school.

What does successful transition look like?

Transition can be challenging

Transition can be challenging for a number of reasons. For example, some children may worry about making new friends. Others may have concerns around organisation and understanding new systems; being in a larger environment, knowing that they have different lessons in different classrooms, or having more homework to do.

Multiple teachers

Children in primary school are generally used to having one teacher most of the time. Changing to having multiple teachers, who will have high expectations and additional classroom rules may feel daunting, especially if they have formed close bonds with their primary school teachers.



Successful transition

How can you tell whether your child is settling in well at secondary school? Research shows that the signs of a successful transition are as follows:

- Developing new friendships.
- Maintaining good self-esteem and confidence.
- Showing an increasing interest in school and schoolwork.
- Getting used to their new routines and school organisation with ease.
- Experiencing continuity in learning.



How best to support your child in transitioning to Selly Park Girls' School

As a parent/carer, you will probably have walked your child to their primary school. You might have had the chance to chat to your child's primary school teacher at pick up to discuss any concerns you or they have.

Secondary school is different for parents/carers as well as children. During the Transition Evening you will have a chance to speak to your daughter's form tutor, Head of Year and key senior staff linked to the year group



Four ways to help your child

We have summarised **four** ways to support your child through their transition to Selly Park Girls' School. They are:

1. Encouraging them to explore their feelings.
2. Helping them connect to their school.
3. Building friendships and relationships.
4. Empowering them by building their confidence and independence.



Helping your child feel comfortable with Selly Park Girls' School

Helping your child to feel connected and comfortable with Selly Park Girls' School is important, and will help your child settle in. Look at Selly Park Girls' School website with your child and take part in any induction events, in person or virtual. We have recorded video content called "A day in the life at Selly Park".

Take the opportunity to meet any key members of staff and get to know how best to communicate with the school during Transition Evening we ensure there are staff available from our SEND and Safeguarding teams. It may be beneficial for you and your child to identify a teacher or other trusted adult at the school (for example a Form Tutor or Head of Year), who can be a first point of contact for any worries. Help your child plan out their journey to school.

Practice your child's journey to school with them several times, so they feel confident in that journey.

If, after a few weeks, your child is struggling with their new school, get in touch with us via email enquiry@sellyparkgirls.org and this will be sent to your daughter's form tutor.



Supporting your child

- The most valuable thing you can do to **support your child** is encourage them to explore their thoughts and to know that they can talk openly about their feelings, both positive and negative. You can also try the following:
- **Conversations** can help pave the way to talking about your child's emotions as they prepare for their new school. Make sure you mark the end of your child's primary school experience.
- **Talk about any favourite memories** from primary school and recognise all the things they will miss.
- **Discuss** with your child what they are looking forward to, and whether they are worried about anything. It can be helpful to think about how you felt when you were preparing for secondary school and share this with your child.
- **How did you settle in?** Your experiences may give you clues about how your child is feeling. Find out what your child's primary school has been doing to support the transition with year 6's. Continue the conversation at home with your child or encourage conversations with older siblings, older cousins or anyone the child feels comfortable with.



Making friends

Whether your child is going to a school where a lot of their friends are going, or they are going to a school where they do not know anyone, it's important to start talking about friendships. Help your child think about how to approach meeting new people and starting conversations.

Explain to them that all children in their year are in the same situation. You could even do some role-play at home.

It can be helpful to encourage children to join some extracurricular activities at their new school as another way of meeting like-minded young people.

If possible, plan activities over the summer holidays which allow your children to meet up with others.



Empowering your child

- Building your child's independence and confidence will help them with the transition. Empower and support them to take steps towards **independence** however big or small, as well as taking on small responsibilities in the home to build up their **confidence and independence** in preparation for this new and exciting phase of their life.
- Give your child lots of praise where you can and notice the things that they are doing well. The greatest source of strength for any child going through change is knowing that they can fall back on the love and support of their parents and carers.
- Providing stability and security is what you do best, and this gives children the confidence to **explore** and test their new environment and seek out new experiences. It means that transition can be an exciting and positive experience and that if there are any wobbles on the way, they can come to you for reassurance and help.
- Remember, too, that you don't have to have all the answers and that you don't have to do this on your own. Your school is there to help and between you, school staff and your child you have all the skills and resources you need to help your child make a **successful transition**.



Working together with your child to get organised

Sharing key information with Selly Park Girls' School

- This is really important for children with SEND or worries. Check your primary has shared paperwork and spoken with Selly Park Girls' School, so we are aware of your child's needs.
- Parents can also request a meeting with secondary staff, to discuss support, particularly if your child has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. Familiarise yourself with the SEN policy on our website.

"Students' major concerns are getting lost or told off for being late. We expect that in the first few weeks. All staff will be looking out for the Year 7s. Reassure them it's not a problem."

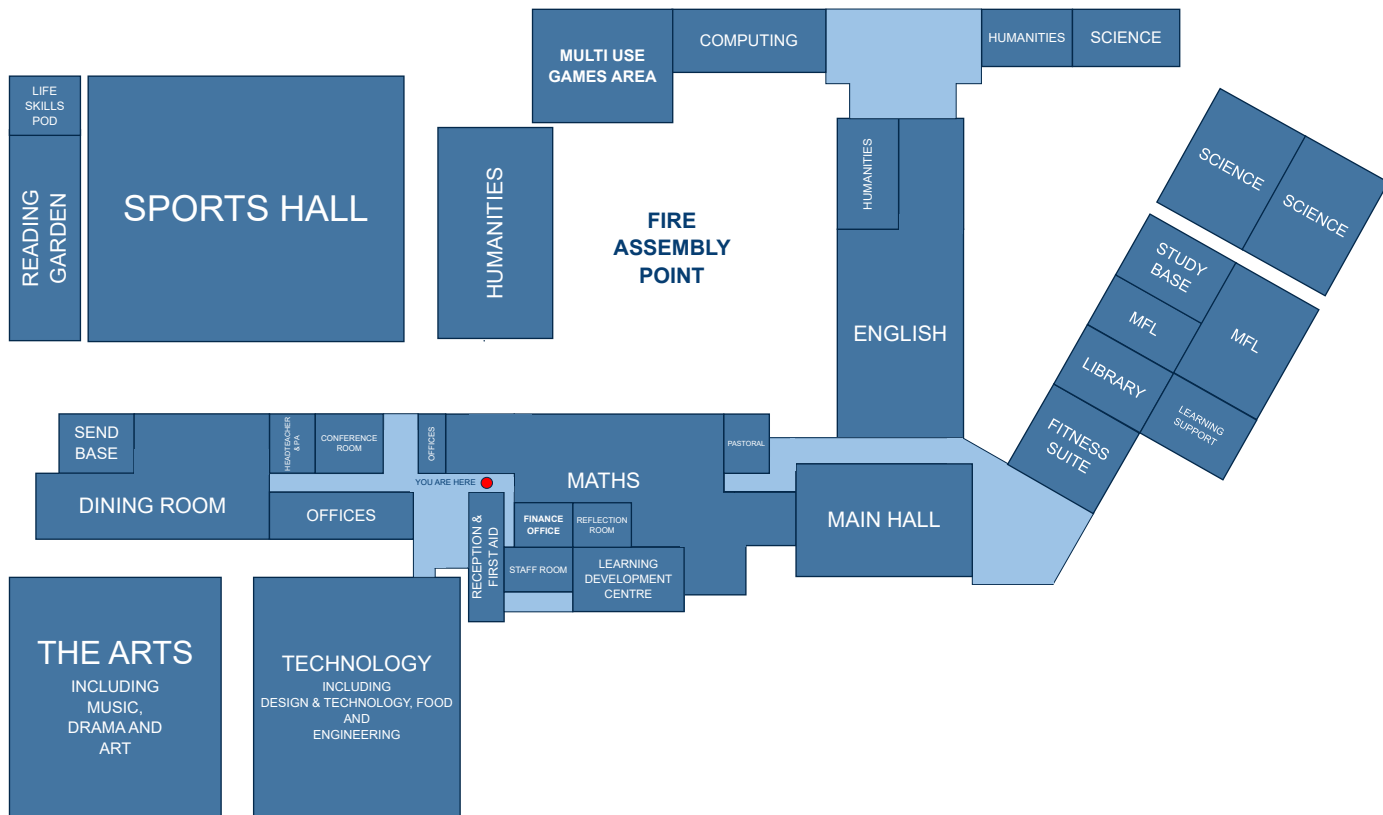
Secondary school teacher

Prepare early

- Get organised over the summer rather than leaving it to the last minute, which can be stressful for parent and child.
- A trip to buy uniform, get a haircut or choose new stationery is an opportunity to spend time together, chat and boost confidence too.
- Uniform stockists include: Mansuri: www.mansuri.co.uk/ and Clive Mark: <https://clivemark.co.uk/>
- Secondary students often travel independently for the first time.
- Work out the first day plan in September. Your child may prefer to go with you to start, or to meet a friend on the way.

Developing independence and organisation

- Secondary school demands are greater, so preparation should help build their own skills and confidence. This will help them settle quicker.
- Don't do it all for them. Could they arrange to meet friends, do shopping errands (good lunchtime practice) or organise their bag for a day out?
- Be guided by what feels manageable for your child. It's fine if they need more support than some others.
- Once school starts, try developing independent organisation with post-it notes listing what's needed each day; boxes to store other books and worksheets; and an evening habit of checking their school planner and preparing uniform and bag.



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