

# Your Pocket Guide to starting secondary school



# What is this Pocket Guide about?

We know you must be thinking about the move to secondary school. You will have lots of questions and some worries. We have written this guide to answer some of the most common questions students ask and give you some advice and tips about things we know you may be worried about.

We want to tell you all the brilliant things about secondary school!

It is normal to feel a mixture of excitement and nervousness about big changes. Moving to secondary school is a big event!

You may have read books or seen films or TV programmes which may have given you (the wrong) ideas about what secondary schools are like. In this guide, we will talk about what they are REALLY like!

We have put all this information in a handy pocket-size guide so it is easy to keep with you.



# Questions and Answers

We know you are all different and will have different thoughts and feelings but here are some questions and worries we hear every year:

## How will I make new friends?

A big thing to remember is that everyone in Year 7 will be new as well. They may look confident on the outside but they are probably feeling the same as you on the inside. Your school will usually do some activities to 'break the ice' and help you get to know your new classmates. It also helps to be brave and go up to people and start a conversation. They will probably be grateful that you made the first move. Don't expect to be best friends with anyone straight away. Give it a little bit of time and you will soon make some brilliant new friends.

## How will I keep in touch with old friends?

Through social media, it is easier than ever to stay connected with old friends. As you are getting older, you may be getting more freedom to see friends independently outside of school, which will help as well.



## How will I keep up with schoolwork?

Although you will be studying at a higher level than in primary, your teachers will give you lots of help to adapt.

They will be expert teachers and teach you in a variety of engaging and exciting ways.

## What about homework?

You will receive regular homework. Make sure you plan out your week so that you have time to complete it but also have time for hobbies, clubs, etc. Lots of schools have homework clubs after school so you can complete it before you go home and get help if you need it. Look at what you have been given when you get it and let your teacher know if you have any questions straightaway.

## How will I manage getting to school?

Some of you will be going to school by yourselves for the first time. Don't worry – you will soon get used to it and enjoy being more independent. Make sure you know the times of any buses or trains you will be using. And make sure you have plenty of time for your journey.

## What happens if I get lost finding my way round my new school?

Your secondary school will probably be much bigger than your primary, and on your first visit there you may wonder if you are ever going to know where everything is.



Staff and students will show you round on any visits you have and usually again when you start. They will give you a map and there will be signs to show where things are.

The big thing to remember is that if you do get lost, you can just ask a teacher or another student. Everyone will be happy to help you!

## What happens if I am bullied?

It will feel very different, going from being the oldest children in your primary to being the youngest at your new school. The other students may seem very big and you may feel a bit intimidated. You may have seen films or read books where being bullied is quite common and teachers turn a blind eye to it.

It really isn't like that in secondary schools. Your teachers will take bullying very seriously and it will never be tolerated. If you are being bullied or know it is happening to someone you know, speak to a teacher straightaway and they will deal with it.

## What happens if I need help?

Secondary schools have whole teams of people dedicated to looking after your welfare. You will see a lot of your form teacher and you will get to know each other well. You can speak to your form teacher whenever you need help. Your school will also give you the names of other teachers who can help, such as the Head of Year 7 or a pastoral teacher or team. They will be able to help with any problems you have inside school or outside.



# What can I look forward to at secondary school?

## Making new friends

Because there will be more students in your year, there will be a bigger pool of potential friends, so you will find other people who you have lots in common with. You may even find a club in something you are interested in and make friends that way.

## New subjects and brilliant facilities

You will study some new subjects which you will love – they may be something you study after school or you will be interested in for the rest of your life. There will also be great sports facilities and classrooms, drama and dance facilities and lots more!



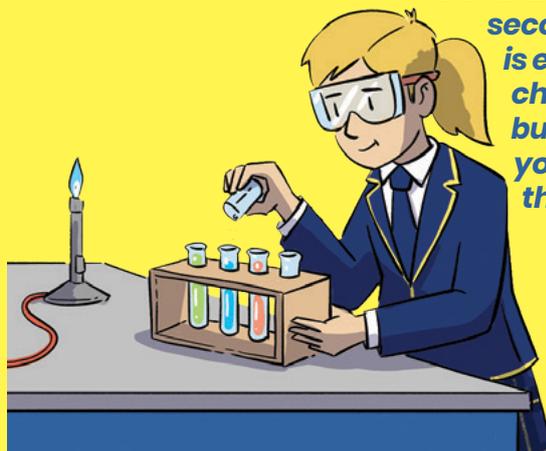
## Lots of extra-curricular activities

There will be a great range of clubs and activities at your new school. There will be sports clubs and teams, hobby clubs and clubs for subjects you are studying. There will be trips to theatres, sports events and lots more. There will also be trips overseas and some schools offer the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, offering you once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. Extra-curricular activities are a big part of secondary school life, so have a look at what is on offer and get ready to get involved.

## More freedom

You will notice very quickly that you will be treated in a 'grown-up' way. Your teachers will expect more from you in terms of behaviour and personal responsibility. But you will be allowed more freedom as well! So, for example, you will have more choice about how you spend your break times and you will be able to leave school by yourself at the end of the school day.

*The transition to secondary school is exciting and challenging, but remember – you only grow through change.*



# Here are some tips from our expert current Year 7s:



“Get organised! As you get older, you may have more things going on in the evenings and at weekends but don't forget to fit your homework in.”

“Try out the route to school a couple of times before you start in September.”

“See if you can travel to school with some old or new friends. That is one of the best parts of the day for me!”

“They really mean what they say about wearing the correct uniform. Stick to the rules!”

“Make copies of your timetable. They often get lost.”

“The teachers will be brilliant!”

“Don't be scared of the older kids! They are really friendly.”

“Don't worry if you don't feel right for a little while. I missed my old school and teacher. But I soon made new friends and felt at home!”

“Ask for help if you are worried about anything – everyone is friendly and they will help.”

“I thought it would be harder settling in than it was. Now I really love my new school and friends!”



*This guide has been produced by:*

Meridian High School, Fairchildes Avenue,  
New Addington, Croydon, CR0 0AH  
Tel: 020 3943 1328 Website: [meridianhigh.london](http://meridianhigh.london)  
Email: TBC