



Years 7 – 8

# Transition to Secondary School



Supporting your child  
through their next steps

**UNIVERSITY  
OF WARWICK**

# Supporting your child's transition to secondary school

## Familiarity

To help put your child's mind at ease, it can be helpful to support them in becoming familiar with their new school and what this next step will involve. This might include attending transition days or open days, which allow them to see the school, meet staff, and get to know new classmates. Some schools also offer summer school programmes. Preparing together over the summer can further help your child feel more confident and ready for the change.

## Preparation

In preparation, starting to get back-to-school items earlier, including their new uniform, will help your child prepare for starting a new school.

Other forms of preparation could involve giving your child more independence (in things such as chores or going to the shops on their own). This will help them to adjust to their new responsibilities and growing independence.

## Friendships

Friendships are important for development and wellbeing! Allowing your child to stay connected with their primary school friends and encouraging them to make new friends through classes or extracurricular activities will help them through their transition to secondary.



## Timeline for study

### YEAR 7 – YEAR 8 (KS3)

All follow the same national curriculum (around 9 core subjects), to develop foundational skills and knowledge (and a taste of what subjects they enjoy!)

### YEAR 9 (KS3)

Continue learning the curriculum

Start to make choices for GCSEs, usually 4 optional subjects

### YEAR 10 – YEAR 11 (KS4)

Begin studying optional subjects in addition to the compulsory curriculum (English Language, English Literature, Maths, Sciences etc.)

This is usually 9-10 subjects in total

### YEAR 12 – YEAR 13 (KS5)

Maximum of 4 subjects

Dependent on the qualification (e.g. A-Level/T-Level/NVQ)\*

*\*See more information about post-16 education options in the Further Education factsheet*

### UNIVERSITY

1 to 2 subjects for 3 to 4 years (full-time)



## SEN support

### General support

Secondary schools provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) support through a range of measures, such as differentiated teaching, specialist staff, and intervention programmes.

Schools should have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who you can contact and be updated on their SEN support plans for your child.

### Local Authority (LA) & Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (IPSEA)

IPSEA is a registered charity that can provide support and advice for parents.

In addition to this, your LA is legally responsible for creating an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) for young people under 25 who need more support than standard SEN provisions. A formal diagnosis is not required for an EHCP. An EHCP assessment can be requested by a parent, medical professional or a teacher.

Schools are legally required to implement the provisions outlined in the EHCP. If this is not followed, you should recontact your local authority.

### Specialist schools

If your child has SENs that cannot be met in a mainstream school, even with extra support, they may need to go to a specialist school that specialises in teaching children with greater SEN. These children must have their EHC plan, and will then be considered by the LA.

Moving on to further/higher education, this support is explored in the Further Education and University factsheets

## Financial support

### School uniform

If you're on a low income, your local council might help you with some costs such as for school uniforms or music lessons. Schools should also provide information about how to buy second-hand uniforms on their website.

### Transport

If your child is aged 5 to 16, your local council might help with free or lower-cost transport if you don't live near school or your child is unable to walk there. If your child cannot walk to school due to SEN or other disabilities, they could also be entitled to free transport.

### Trips

Your child's school can ask you to pay for some activities such as museum or theatre trips. They should tell you if it's a voluntary payment - if you can't afford to pay, they can't stop your child from attending.

## Widening Participation & Outreach

### What is Widening Participation and Outreach?

Widening participation and outreach involves university teams running events and activities targeted at young people from underrepresented backgrounds, who may have faced barriers beyond their control. This may include being on free school meals, being in local authority care and being from areas with lower progression to higher education.

### Events

Depending on your child's school's location/attainment, they may already be involved in widening participation outreach activities in collaboration with teams from local universities. The aim of these events is to ensure equal opportunities and access.

### Other opportunities

For areas with attainment gaps, there are some opportunities for mentoring, training and tutoring. This can be through university programmes or through partnerships with charities.



Scan the QR code to read a YoungMinds article with practical advice for parents on supporting children's emotional wellbeing during the transition to secondary school.