

## **From Primary School up to Secondary School**

### ***How to help your child make this important transition***

The psychological leap from Primary to Secondary Education inevitably causes apprehension for both children and their parents, no more so than when this involves a transition from local village primary school to town-based secondary school. Life coach and former primary school teacher, Amanda Williamson, provides practical tips to help you give your child the best chance possible of adapting to the change with confidence.

#### **The journey to school**

Try some 'dummy runs' up to the school gates. This will help to familiarise your child with the new journey, especially if the school is further from home than previously.

Take a bus to/from the school with him/her. This could be useful if they miss the school bus or decide to stay after school to take part in extended services.

#### **New friends**

Enrol your child in summer activities so that they get used to meeting and making new friends. This is particularly important for children who may have had the same friends throughout their primary years, especially so in small rural schools.

Role play how to make simple introductions e.g. *Hi. My name's Ben. What's your name? Would you like to meet up at break time? Are you joining any of the clubs or teams?*

#### **Getting used to schedules**

Download a school timetable and help your child to understand how the day is structured into sections.

Let him/her have a try at recording a week of activities on the planner.

Your child needs to get used to the idea that he/she will be moving around the school to attend different lessons with different teachers. Check your child has the necessary time management skills to do this.

#### **Homework**

Set up a work area at home for dedicated study time.

Help your child to get used to a variety of research methods (library /internet /dictionaries and encyclopaedias). Provide short, interesting 'practice assignments' to help them develop independent research skills.

#### **Independence**

Discuss your expectations and communicate openly about changes to independence re: dating/parties/curfews. Better to sort these things out before problems arise!

Communicate any concerns you may have relating to smoking/drug taking/sexual behaviour. Teach your child how to deal with requests and how to say NO when they need to.

#### **Positive Body Language**

Help your child to understand the importance of positive body language e.g. how to look confident by 'walking tall' and using effective eye contact –this could mean they are less likely to attract negative attention from school bullies.

Build awareness about the different forms of bullying: verbal, psychological and physical. Teach your child to respond assertively when they are being made to feel uncomfortable.

#### **From 'little pond' to 'big pond'...**

Moving from 'the little pond' to 'the big pond' is understandably more worrying for some children than others, but by taking the time to prepare your child, you are ensuring they will have the skills and tools they need, not only for their next school, but for life.

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Amanda Williamson has fifteen years experience as a former full time primary school teacher and latterly a school manager, together with eight years experience working in a coaching/mentoring capacity. She offers individual coaching for adults, children, and young people, from her bases at the Church Street Practice, Melton and Syston Health Centre. She also delivers group coaching courses for the Adult Learning Service and for the NHS 'Well-Being at Work' programme. She has an enhanced CRB and recent 'Safeguarding of Children' training.

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