

Moving up to secondary school!

Moving to secondary school is an exciting time. You will make lots of new friends and there will be loads of interesting activities you can get involved in. It is also normal to be a bit nervous, as the school is usually much bigger and meeting new people can be scary. However, the majority of students will all be feeling the same, so will be eager to make new friends and settle in.

To make this transition just a little bit easier, Kidscape has come up with some practical tips on how to deal with the most common fears about moving up to secondary school.

Making new friends

Meeting new people—practical tips

- Make the first move and introduce yourself.
- Be responsive, join in conversations and activities.
- Find common interests and pursue them together.
- Join a club or lunchtime activity.
- Remember not to pressurise or be clingy, making good friends takes time

What makes a good friend

Meeting new people is only half way to making new friends, as being a **good** friend is what keeps relationships strong. Choose the right friends for you, and treat others how you want to be treated. In general, good friends are:

honest and trustworthy	supportive
reliable	encouraging and inspiring
great listeners	positive and optimistic
not controlling	sensitive and do not brag

Bullying

The majority of people in your new school are going to be really nice and want to make friends. However, you may find that some might try and pick on you. Bullies tend to only target those they think won't stand up for themselves, so if you find yourself in this situation, it is important that you follow our practical tips on how to respond.

Responding to bullies

Start saying 'NO!'

For a tiny word, it can feel very hard to say, but it's completely within your rights to use it. Say 'no' as if you mean it. Say it forcefully, clearly and loud enough to be heard: 'NO!' It must be backed up with assertive body language: look them in the eye, stand tall and appear confident (even if you're not!).

If someone asks you to do something that you don't want to do

Keep saying 'NO!' until the bully gets the message.

If someone says an offensive comment

It will be very hard, but try not to let them know that you are upset or angry. Bullies like to get a reaction and will continue to target those who give them one.

If someone makes fun of you

Come up with a creative, non aggressive response. For example: "Your bag is ugly." Answer: "That's your opinion. I like it."

Remember to stay safe!

These techniques should only be used when you feel safe. If you feel under threat, always YELL to attract attention, RUN away from danger and TELL a teacher immediately. If you are being threatened for a possession, hand it over. No object, no matter how new or expensive, is more important than your safety.

Don't give your personal and online contact details to people you do not trust. There may be some people who will use these to cause you harm.

Report it

Bullying is always wrong. If you experience bullying, or see someone being targeted, report it to a teacher immediately.

Lunch and break time

If you forget your money or your lunch card, don't worry and don't go hungry! Speak to your form tutor or someone in the office, as they will be able to help.

Find out about what you can do on breaks and at lunch. Some schools have clubs and activities, others allow you to go to local shops.

Getting lost

It might sound strange but many students get lost either going to their new school or in the school itself. Practise your route to school and until you know where you are going, keep a lesson timetable with you at all times.

Teachers and classes

It is likely you will find that you have six or more teachers and six or more different subjects and classrooms.

It may be slightly confusing at first, but you will get to know your surroundings very quickly.

Keep your lesson timetable with you always, stick with a group or ask any teacher if you forget where to go.

Homework

- Do your homework the same day it is assigned.
- It is better to hand in something than nothing.
- If you have a long-term project, do some work on it every day. Set yourself a schedule and stick to it.
- If you forget or couldn't do your homework, tell the teacher before the lesson, not when they ask for it. Most teachers prefer a note from home.
- If your school has a homework club, use it!
- Pace yourself. Don't try to do too much too soon. Work to a healthy and realistic schedule.

General tips

- Make sure your school bag is comfortable to carry — not all schools have lockers.
- Pack your bag the night before going to bed. Check your timetable for the next day to make sure you have everything you need.
- Cover exercise books in different coloured paper to avoid confusion.
- Keep possessions and money in a safe place, as theft can be a problem in some schools. Only carry what you need, otherwise you have more to lose, misplace or have stolen.



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