

## Parents and Carers information – Transition 2019

Moving from primary to secondary school is an exciting and significant event in the life of your child.

Inevitably, most children have some worries about starting secondary school - some of these are social worries and some are to do with the organisational demands that they know will be placed upon them. However, most of the worries children have about starting secondary school diminish quickly in the first half term as students get used to the new routines and expectations.

Hopefully the following guidance will provide you with the information you need to support your child as they make the transition from primary school to secondary school.



**ST MARY'S  
COLLEGE**

### What are the main differences at secondary school?

- Your child may have to travel further to school, may have to make their way there independently and may have to catch a bus.
- Your child will be taught by at least ten different teachers and will have to get to know a whole range of adults in different roles within the school.
- The site is much bigger and students have to find their way around moving from classroom to classroom between lessons.
- Your child must look after all of their belongings throughout the school day.
- Your child will follow a timetable and use their planner effectively to ensure they are organised and ready for each school day.
- Your child will be fully responsible for ensuring they have the correct books, equipment, bus fare, PE kit etc.
- Your child will be given full responsibility for recording homework, completing it by the correct day and giving it in on time – effective use of the student planner facilitates this.
- Teaching and learning styles will differ amongst teachers.
- There is adult supervision at breaktime and lunchtime but students have to be more independent in terms buying their own snacks/lunch and getting to lessons on time.

### Getting to and from school:

- If your child will be travelling on the bus, before they start St Mary's College, time the journey to school or to the bus stop so you know how long it will take.
- Work out what time your child will need to get up to get to school on time.
- Agree a routine for the mornings and after school.
- Ensure your child packs their school bag the night before.
- Make sure your child has your contact numbers written in their planner.
- Make sure your child knows what to do if they are delayed for any reason getting to school or coming home.

### Uniform:

- Please be aware of St Mary's College uniform rules detailed in the booklet sent home in May, the handbook, on the website, and in the student planner.
- Make sure everything is ready to put on the evening before.
- Encourage your child to hang up their uniform straight away after school.

- Make sure a full PE Kit is taken to school on the days it is needed.
- NAME EVERYTHING!!! Marker pens that do not wash out, stick on labels or iron on labels are easy and fast to use.
- If your child's belongings are named, any misplaced items will generally be returned to your child – if they are **not** named, any misplaced belongings will probably not be returned to your child as they cannot be identified.

### Timetable:

- Encourage your child to learn what lessons they have on which days so that they can become independent in preparing for each school day.
- Make sure your child knows what to do if they are late to a lesson or get lost.
- Check your child knows where the classroom for each lesson is and who the teacher is.
- Remind your child they must get to lessons on time especially after breaktime/lunchtime.
- Students are encouraged to go to the toilet at breaktime and lunchtime so that they do not request this during lessons.

### Organising books and equipment:

- Help your child to be organised by ensuring they have a place for their school books and equipment at home.
- Ideally try to ensure your child has access to a desk to complete homework.
- Encourage your child to empty their school bag at least once a week to check for letters and ensure that any worksheets / homework sheets are completed and kept safely in the student planner or homework folder.
- Encourage your child to check their planner the night before, know what equipment is needed for each lesson and pack their school bag ready for the next day.

### Homework:

- Ensure your child understands how their planner works and that they must write down exactly what they have to do as homework and when it has to be done for.
- Check your child's planner with them for what homework needs to be done and when it must be done for.
- Encourage your child to do their homework on the night it is set, *not* the night before it is due in, to prevent homework building up.
- Agree a manageable routine for homework and be prepared to invest time at first to ensure your child is supported as they become more confident in managing their work independently.
- Offer support but *don't* do the homework for your child.
- Communicate with school if there is an issue with any homework so that departmental and pastoral support can be given prior to the deadline.
- Encourage your child to check with the teacher if they are not sure about a homework task before it is due in.
- Make sure your child takes the completed homework to school on the correct day – remind them to hand it in!
- Make sure your child's homework is presented well and reflects the quality of work they produce in lessons.

- Please reinforce the clear message that homework is valuable and important by taking an interest in the feedback your child receives and celebrating successes.

### **Contacting school:**

- Discuss school with your child regularly especially in the first half term so that you have a good idea of how your child is feeling about secondary school and any concerns or worries that they may have.
- If any aspect of school is a concern please contact school.
- You can communicate with your child's Personal Tutor via the student planner regarding minor concerns or general queries.
- You can also communicate with the Head of Year 7, Head of Transition and Year 7 Mentors via email: [admin@smchull.org](mailto:admin@smchull.org) – please put FAO Year 7 Team as the subject box and your email will be forwarded to the appropriate members of staff.
- Alternatively please contact the Year 7 office by telephone: 01482 851136
- If you are very concerned or have information which you would prefer to share in person please contact the school to arrange an appointment or meeting with the appropriate member(s) of staff from the Year 7 Team

### **Common worries at the end of Year 6 / start of Year 7:**

#### **Getting lost:**

Every year our new students navigate the site very well as they support each other and the older students and staff will help them. Transition week also assists with this. Ensure your child knows they MUST ask a member of staff or an older student if they are lost – tell them not to panic!

#### **Making new friends:**

Students are coming into a big year group so therefore have lots of opportunities to make new friends. Activities in Transition Week support with this. Encourage your child to be brave and try some clubs as this is where they will meet other students who share their interests.

#### **Being the youngest students in the school:**

Our older students are very supportive and caring with our new students. In Transition week Year 11 Mentors support in each Tutor Group which generally helps to alleviate any worries Year 6/7 students have about being the youngest.

#### **Homework:**

Homework is set consistently from almost all subject areas in Year 7 so there will be a notable increase compared to the homework set by most primary schools. Follow the advice in the homework section to ensure homework does not become an issue. If the completion of homework is problematic please contact your child's Personal Tutor or the Year 7 office so that appropriate strategies can be discussed to resolve the problems.

#### **Losing belongings:**

This is a common problem for children with organisational difficulties but increased responsibility at secondary school can be challenging for many children. Ensure EVERYTHING is named.

Contact your child's Personal Tutor or the Year 7 office if this remains a problem beyond the first half term so that strategies can be discussed to improve organisation.

**Falling out with friends:**

This is quite common as children form new friendships - give advice but be assured that most friendship patterns sort themselves fairly quickly.

If your child is upset or distressed about changes in their friendship group contact the Year 7 office.

**Most children make the transition from primary school to secondary school quickly and smoothly. Your child will be fully supported in making this transition at St Mary's College and any worries or issues will be addressed early to ensure your child's experience of starting secondary school is positive.**

**Thank you in advance for your support in ensuring your child is organised, confident and ready to be independent as they begin their secondary education at St Mary's College.**