

TRANSITION TO *Secondary School*



Tips by Joan Shanahan who has over **20 years of experience** in developing transition plans for students moving from primary to secondary school.

(Important to consider transition to place as the most important, as staff and students may change)

MUST DO

- Visit the school and walk around the buildings (video this to play back at home, completed by the student or parent)
- Locate the office where you go for assistance (important to use positive language e.g. when unsure someone will be able to assist)
- Speak with the year Co-ordinator for Year 7 about the daily routine and timetable cycle
- Obtain a map of the school layout with building names and numbers
- Obtain examples of Term One timetable for Year 7
- Location of the toilet blocks and change rooms, visit these (can be sensory overload with smells)
- Student writes an introduction of themselves, what they like and enjoy, also include things that work for them and what they find hard, what gives them anxiety e.g. being asked to read in class, making speeches
- Answer/s for what the student wants to know about secondary school
- Any fidget aid needs to be age appropriate e.g. "happy sack"





IDEAL

- Start transition the year before
- Allocation of locker to be on the edge of the set
- Colour code subjects for books and folders
- Visit off-site locations e.g. Ag block
- Review dates build into the plan e.g. monthly to check what is working and if there are any problems to be addressed (don't leave until the end of the term as a concern may develop into a larger problem)
- Uniform consideration and the change for sport lessons (visit the clothing pool to see and feel uniforms)
- Year 6 Class starts transition the term before with their class timetable and books needed for each lesson while still in Year 6. Year 6 changing their way of operating in Term 4 to follow secondary format e.g. desks are not yours, sit in different places each day, follow a timetable and bring materials and books needed. Some lessons located away from the classroom
- Transition Plan, this may involve partial attendance, building to a full day
- Bus transport needs a transition plan too

EXTRAS FOR THE GREATEST SUCCESS

- School visits to different subject classes and sit in
- School visits to read timetable and locate classrooms, practise runs over several days throughout the year
- A collection of graphic organisers that could be used by subject teachers as a starter or when stuck
- A mentor introduced, an older student who checks in the following year, especially when on the playground
- Meet students going into the year level, student attend orientation days
- Establish signal or sign that the student can use that indicates they are unsure or unable to start e.g. a specific marker on the desk or ruler turned over (This avoids teachers constantly asking if they are all right)
- Home link for parents to check assignments due date or activities planned
- Other options in Year 7 for recess and lunch breaks e.g. library or clubs
- Video from Year 7 students explaining what they do and what they have done, from their perspective



LISTEN TO PODCAST EPISODE 168:

*How to Transition from Primary to Secondary:
Interview with Expert Joan Shanahan*

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