



TRANSITION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

How parents/carers can best support children as they make this significant transition

EXPECT A RANGE OF EMOTIONS

- Transition from primary to secondary school is an exciting time
- A mixture of excitement, anticipation, nervousness and anxiety is normal
- It is significant change for them (and you!) - leaving primary school means letting go of the familiar without knowing fully what will replace it, yet
- They are leaving teachers and friends who have been a constant since they were just out of being toddlers
- Some friends may be going to different schools – there will be an inevitable sense of loss
- Secondary school may be in a different area – new transport routines
- It also coincides with a period of enormous change and rapid growth for your children physically, emotionally and intellectually.

NORMAL CONCERNS

Often Year 6 children about to start secondary school are concerned about:

- catching public transport
- losing old friends and making new friends
- being bullied
- getting lost and getting to class on time
- remembering what books and other equipment is needed for each class
- following a timetable
- Failing subjects/school
- using a combination lock and locker
- the 'big kids'
- dealing with several different teachers/staff
- homework and assessments/study.

KEEP HOME SWEET HOME

- As they move into new environments and experience new things, the safe place called home is more important than ever – it is a constant, a haven from the energy they put into new changes
- Plan lots of family and individual time with parent/s siblings
- Focus on family celebrations, routines and rituals
- Small touches from home matter when spending time in new environments
- Spend time together planning - stationery, books. These things show that you are on their side, supporting this transition.

PREPARE TOGETHER

- ✓ **External preparation** – uniforms, books, transport, technology devices
 - ✓ **Internal preparation** – supporting your children to learn how they can best deal with this change and develop strategies for coping
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- Use affirming language - they will take leads from your on how to cope with change/transitions, new, different and unknown
 - Remind them how good change can be and how it is something to be embraced- they don't need to know all the answers, yet
 - If they start having “what if” worries, focus on ‘But you can ... statements’
 - Try to respond with actionable ideas- what they can do to think through solutions to concerns
 - Less use of the word ‘amazing’. It is okay to tell your child that it might take a while to make friends, or feel settled and get it all together, but that they will get there. Instead of saying, “You are going to have an AMAZING, day” you might consider saying, “Today is going to be the beginning of a wonderful journey.” Sometimes our encouragement doesn't leave a lot of room for the real ups and downs of school life.

SET UP NEW ROUTINES

- Weekly plan (a whiteboard in their room can be helpful for this) for everything your child does during the week
- Add cocurricular activities, time for homework and study, as well as family time and socialising
- Some schools will not set homework until Term 2 for Year 7s
- Do a practice run of transport to and from school, first with you, then on their own. Even if you live in walking distance, try to give the responsibility for transport to and from school to your child- try to avoid walking them or driving them (except on the 1st day with books!) - the independence is an important developmental transition and very age appropriate
- Consider what time they have to get up in the morning and how they can set an alarm for this. An alarm clock is a good idea, as phones/ipads in their room overnight are not recommended
- Set up a work area at home - it does not have to be in their bedroom - it could be a shared space, it just needs to be relatively distraction free.

SKILLS OF ORGANISATION

Diaries (paper) are integral for organisation but best use is a SKILL you need to learn (Digital diaries (alone) are NOT recommended for middle schoolers.)

Students need to practise habits of:

- writing in upcoming community activities, social and family events
- writing in diary each lesson set homework and assessment due dates. (These dates are usually published a term or semester in advance and available on the 'calendar' and your page of the school portal)
- using sticky notes for reminders/life admin (as in bring sports uniform etc)
- checking their diary several times a day in, and after, classes
- Sunday afternoon preparation - set up the week ahead with weekly to do lists (sticky notes) in diary and reminders
- each evening packing bag with everything for the next day
- using combination locks (it may be given to them at Orientation Day to practise with over the holidays)

Textbooks

- Encourage them to read English novels over the summer holidays
- School will let them/you know what they need to bring on the first day- they will not need ALL of your books- they bring them in over a couple of days and put in their lockers – but it might be a good idea to drive them if they have all their book on the first couple of days
- NAME all books
- Don't let them allocate a folder for every subject yet- they won't need one for them all- some can share
- Subjects that need a folder – English, Languages, SOSE, Maths, Science (PE, Health/wellbeing/CE, Music, Art, Drama, can all share)

HOMework AND STUDY

The purpose of homework is to consolidate learning from class through practice and learn the skills of revision/study for tests.

- Most secondary schools will recommend that a Year 7 student completes 90 minutes of homework each school night
- Most of this will be consolidating exercises, and completion of tasks that have been started/set in class.
- If your child has questions about homework, guide them to ask the class teacher either in person, or via email themselves
- Reinforce the difference between homework (working on set tasks) and study/revision, which is summary and practice of units of study.
- Test and other assessment dates will be published in advance and should be put in their diary
- Reinforce *chunking* (breaking things down into smaller parts to be completed over a period of time) for tests/assignments
- Encourage 30minute study blocks on each subject Encourage different study techniques: flash cards, mind maps, posters, *quizlet* and other apps

ASSESSMENTS

- Year 7s have a lot of different subjects: *English, Maths, Science*, History, Geography, Physical Education, LOTE (Languages other than English- they may learn two), Music, Drama, Art, Food Tech., Digital Tech., Religious Education/Ethics/Wellbeing
- Each subject will have both *formative* and *summative* (reportable) assessments (including assignments, projects, tests), approximately **four** summative a semester
- With up to 12 subjects, that could mean 24 assessments a term (10 weeks)- so up to 2/3 a week
- Parents will be given login details to the school's LMS (Learning Management System) portal/pages. It is expected that parents will regularly access the portal LMS to view communications from the school such as bulletins, newsletters and important announcements. You should also be able to access your child's class/subject information such as due dates as well as assessments, results and reports
- Most schools use online *continuous reporting*. When teachers have graded (summative) assessments, the results will be live straight away on the LMS for parents (and students) to view with assessment rubrics and comments.

Week 1



An example Year 7 timetable:

	Monday 1	Tuesday 1	Wednesday 1	Thursday 1	Friday 1
Roll Call 8.25 – 8.35	Roll Call	Roll Call	Roll Call	Roll Call	Roll Call
Period 1 8.35 – 9.27	C.E. SC 101	Maths SC 101	French SC 102	Maths SC 101	French SC 102
Period 2 9.27 – 10.20	Science S 1	History SC 101	French SC 102	Maths SC 101	History SC 101
General 10.20–10.45	General	General	General	General	General
Recess 10.45–11.10	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
Period 3 11.10-12.02	Food Tech C 105	Commerce SC 103	English SC 101	Science S 1	Food Tech. C 105
Period 4 12.02-12.55	Commerce SC 103	Commerce SC 103	English SC 101	Science S 1	Food Tech. C 105
Lunch 12.55-1.40	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Period 5 1.40- 2.32	English SC 101	English SC 101	P.E.	History SC 101	Science S 1
Period 6 2.32 – 3.25	Maths SC 101	French SC 102	Food Tech. C 105	P.E.	Commerce SC 103

Week 2

	Monday 2	Tuesday 2	Wednesday 2	Thursday 2	Friday 2
Roll Call 8.25 – 8.35	Roll Call	Roll Call	Roll Call	Roll Call	Roll Call
Period 1 8.35 – 9.27	C.E. SC 101	English SC 101	French SC 102	Maths SC 101	Maths SC 101
Period 2 9.27 – 10.20	Science S 1	English SC 101	French SC 102	Maths SC 101	French SC 102
General 10.20–10.45	General	General	General	General	General
Recess 10.45–11.10	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
Period 3 11.10-12.02	P.E.	Commerce SC 103	History SC 101	Science S 1	Food Tech. C 105
Period 4 12.02-12.55	Commerce SC 103	Commerce SC 103	English SC 101	Science S 1	Food Tech. C 105
Lunch 12.55-1.40	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Period 5 1.40- 2.32	Maths SC 101	History SC 101	Food Tech. C105	History SC 101	Science S 1
Period 6 2.32 – 3.25	English SC 101	Maths SC 101	English SC 101	P.E.	History SC 101

ASSESSMENTS IN ONE SUBJECT

Year 7 English - 2020							
Term 1	Jan 30 - Mar 27	Term 2	Apr 15 - Jun 26	Term 3	Jul 14 - Sep 11	Term 4	Oct 6 - Dec 8
Week 1: Thursday January 30 (Australia Day Holiday Mon 27/1) Introduction – <i>Falling From Grace</i>	Week 1: Wednesday April 15 <i>Falling From Grace</i> Essay Paragraphs due	Week 1: Tuesday July 14 <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Week 1: Tuesday October 6 Debating – preparation				
Week 2: February 3 <i>Falling From Grace</i> Grammar – 1 lesson per cycle	Week 2: April 20 (Anzac Day 25/4) Preparation POV Oral Presentations Grammar – 1 lesson per cycle	Week 2: July 20 <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Week 2: October 12 Debating – preparation				
Week 3: February 10 <i>Falling From Grace</i>	Week 3: April 27 POV Oral Presentations - due	Week 3: July 27 <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Week 3: October 19 Debating – preparation				
Week 4: February 17 <i>Falling From Grace</i> Grammar – 1 lesson per cycle	Week 4: May 4 Grammar intensive – pre-NAPLAN	Week 4: August 3 <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Week 4: October 26 Debating – presentations due				
Week 5: February 24 <i>Falling From Grace</i> Creative Response Assessment due	Week 5: May 11 NAPLAN: Tuesday 12 th , Wednesday 13 th and Friday 15 th May	Week 5: August 10 <i>A Christmas Carol</i> Creative Response Assessment due	Week 5: November 2 (Cup Eve Mon 2/11, Cup Day Tue 3/11) Comparative Poetry				
Week 6: March 2 CAMP – 2ND – 6TH MARCH	Week 6: May 18 <i>The Watertower</i> Grammar – 1 lesson per cycle	Week 6: August 17 <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Week 6: November 9 Comparative Poetry Years 10 and 11 Examinations				
Week 7: March 9 (Labour Day Mon 9/3) <i>Falling From Grace</i>	Week 7: May 25 <i>The Watertower</i>	Week 7: August 24 <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Week 7: November 16 Comparative Poetry Analysis Text Response due Years 10 and 11 Examinations				
Week 8: March 16 <i>Falling From Grace</i> Grammar – 1 lesson per cycle	Week 8: June 1 <i>The Watertower</i> Creative Response Assessment due	Week 8: August 31 <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Week 8: November 23 EOYP				
Week 9: March 23 <i>Falling From Grace</i> – Analysis Text Response due	Week 9: June 8 <i>The Watertower</i> Grammar – 1 lesson per cycle	Week 9: September 7 <i>A Christmas Carol</i> Analysis Text Response due	Week 9: November 30 EOYP				
	Week 10: June 15 <i>The Watertower</i> Grammar – 1 lesson per cycle		Week 10: December 7 EOYP				
	Week 11: June 22 <i>The Watertower</i> Analysis Text Response due						

ACADEMIC RESILIENCE

- One of the most important predictors of success at school is the ability to take on feedback
- Your child will receive a lot of feedback – verbal, written, comments, grades, rubrics
- Teachers will try to give praise as well as constructive feedback, based on the criteria of the task
- Encourage your child to make new goals with feedback, and seek clarification from teachers if required
- Comparisons with others is not helpful
- Teachers will contact parents if results are a concern
- Secondary schools do a lot of work to assess **academic potential**, and academic achievement – and have strategies for helping your child to achieve results that reach, or exceed, potential
- Results can be in the form of numbers, out of 10, 20, 30 etc., or letter grades. The school will have a conversion chart that they use for grades – they could differ between subjects as some assessments will be standardised
- At VCE, grade ranges are set by VCAA and school based assessments moderated through external examinations and the GAT.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA RUBRIC

Year 7 English

'A Christmas Carol'



Analytical Text Response

Name:

	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>
Thought and Content: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Deals with the topic and the ideas it raises.➤ Depth and complexity of ideas.➤ Uses evidence from text to support claims.			
Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Essay shows evidence of planning and logical organisation.➤ Use of the TEEL structure with an introduction, paragraphs, topic sentences and conclusion.➤ Development of ideas			
Language: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Control of spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.➤ Appropriate use of vocabulary.➤ Language is fluent, expressive and appropriate for task			

Total: /20

Things done well:

Things to improve next time:

GRADE RANGES EXAMPLE

GRADE CONVERSION

Grade	%	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
A+	90-100	9	13.5 -15	18-20	22.5-25	27-30	31.5-35	36-40
A	80-89	8	12-13	16-17.5	20-22	24-26.5	28-31	32-35
B+	75-79	7.5	11.5	15-15.5	19-19.5	22.5-23.5	26.5-27.5	30-31
B	70-74	7	10.5-11	14-14.5	17-18.5	21-22	24.5-26	28-29
C+	65-69	6.5	10	13-13.5	16.5-17	19.5-20.5	23-24	26-27
C	60-64	6	9-9.5	12-12.5	15-16	18-19	21-22.5	24-25
D+	55-59	5.5	8.5	11-11.5	14-14.5	16.5-17.5	19.5-20	22-23
D	50-54	5	7.5-8	10-10.5	12.5-13.5	15-16	17.5-19	20-21
E+	45-49	4.5	7	9-9.5	11.5-12	13.5-14.5	16-17	18-19
E	40-44	4	6-6.5	8-8.5	10-11	12-13	14-15.5	16-17
UG	0-39	0-3	0-5.5	0-7.5	0-9.5	0-11.5	0-13.5	0-15

ENCOURAGE BEING A JOINER

The best and quickest way for your child to settle and make connections is to seek out new opportunities to be involved in the life of the school.

- Encourage your child to get involved straight away, signing up to sports, music, drama and other activities on offer
- Encourage your child to introduce themselves to lots of different people on orientation day- not just stick with those they know already
- Students who are unhappy at school are almost always not involved in any cocurricular activities
- They will probably have different teachers for each subject but stay with the same core group for most subjects. They might be in different class mixes for elective languages, and maths, for example. They usually stick to those they know already, and those in their homeroom class for Term 1, then begin to make new connections
- Exercise - in any form - is critical to adolescent wellbeing. Those involved in sport/movement are invariably, better connected, happier, healthier, more organised and do better academically. Even a daily walk with a friend can help.

BIG FRIENDSHIP CIRCLES

According to Michael Carr Gregg (adolescent psychologist) one of the greatest predictors of success in high school is a **large friendship circle**. It is also the number one factor why students are either happy at school or unhappy. Academic success comes a clear second.

Therefore, learning how to connect with others and find a social place at school is absolutely critical. These skills come naturally to some, but mostly need to be learned.

- Encourage your child to have a big circle, not just one bestie.
- Your child's social life will become a significant part of all your lives. For many, it does not come naturally. Some children will need some help in how to engineer opportunities to extend friendships. Allow lots of social interactions, friends over, and get to know their friends
- Encourage them to keep up involvement in local community sports and activities. Having another friendship circle is a bonus when things are challenging at school
- Encourage them to stay away from drama
- Don't get involved.
- Use neutral language about friends and other school mates- even when the stories you hear are emotional and negative.

MANAGE SLEEP

- The Australian Department of Health recommends **between 9 and 11 hours of sleep for children (aged 5-13 years)** and between 8 and 10 hours of sleep for adolescents (aged 14-17 years) Physical exercise will help override this – the more physically fatigued your adolescent is, the more likely they are to sleep well
- Set a realistic bedtime and establish non negotiable boundaries for no phones in their bedrooms
- This can be tricky. Teenager’s brains release melatonin (the hormone which makes us sleepy) about 2 hours later adults do. For example, their bedtime might be at 9pm, but their body clock may set it at 11pm. Also, their melatonin takes longer to wear off in the morning, so they will be sleepier for longer. All this usually calls for parents to have a lot of patience, especially in the morning!
- Exercise and routine can help counteract this and allow for a steadier, predictable release of melatonin.

SUPPORT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

- The more school a child misses, the more behind and disconnected they will feel, and the less they will want to go
- Staying at home should very rarely be an option- encourage attendance and seek support from the school if you are struggling to get your child to school
- School refusal is very serious and the long term outcomes for students who do not attend school are very poor. They may need to look at different options from Year 10 onwards rather than VCE/IB such as VCAL or industry training, but start with a focus on full attendance from Year 7
- Once in secondary school, it is hard to take time off during term time.

MANAGING TECHNOLOGY

Year 7 usually heralds the time of new technology devices and get access to social media and/or have their own phone in the lead up to high school. Exciting but this comes with potential dangers. Now is the time for you to set up some clear expectations and boundaries, and be willing to re-negotiate as the secondary years pass by.

Two clear facts:

1. Digital technologies and the internet are, and will be, integral parts of your child's world. They **MUST** learn how to use both safely and well. Avoidance is not a strategy
1. The internet can be dangerous world for young people (and old, too).

- Most secondary schools will be either BYOD (bring your own laptop, ipad device) or they will request your purchase a school recommended laptop/tablet. A few have 'laptop banks' (trolleys with class sets available for students to use in class/the library under teacher direction).
- Regardless, they will have access to the internet, and if they also have a smart phone or a device on 3G or the home network, they will not have the school's filters and protections in place. While at school on the school's network on a school device, your child is relatively safe. But if they have a 3G phone at school, it is your network, and your home digital device rules apply
- Every action they take on the school's network (even if on their own ipad/laptop) can be traced by the school's IT department. But as soon as they go on their phone, or ipad on a 3G network that you provide, they are out of the school's control
- The school will have some sort of **Responsible Digital Technology User Agreement** which will be on the school portal.

General Digital Safety Tips

- Set your own family/house rules about use of devices, including where they are stored at night
- stay up to date with the sorts of things your children are doing and the technology they are using
- talk regularly with your children about digital issues in the media
- continually reinforce to your children that they can tell you anything and they will not be punished- they need to know they can talk to you should things go wrong.
- **Review social media/gaming safety rules for every app/game/site**
 - ✓ watch, play and engage with any that your child is using - know the content and (age/maturity) appropriateness for your child
 - ✓ Does your child know the difference between friends and followers?
 - ✓ Does your child know how to mute, block or report people?
 - ✓ Does your child know how to abort a conversation that isn't going well?
 - ✓ How does your child know that an online friend is exactly who they say they are?
 - ✓ Does your child know that their mood can affect how they engage with people online?
 - ✓ Would your child know how/if to respond to a nasty comment?
 - ✓ Would your child know to always save sensitive conversations for real life?
 - ✓ How would your child react to unwanted online contact or attention?
 - ✓ Could your child be basing their self worth on the judgements of strangers?
 - ✓ Does your child believe everything just because it is written?
 - ✓ Does your child have a clear understanding of their digital footprint?

Some final important tips:

- **You** control (pay for/own the router) the phone and internet account, and thus the release of the internet password/account. Access to either **should be privilege** based on demonstrated responsibility.
- Despite what they tell you, in most subjects, secondary school students do NOT need a laptop/the internet do do their homework. Use of laptop/the internet for homework should be limited and supervised at Year 7. Give time **limits** for internet use so they can access information and communicate - give graduated independence
- Set limits to when they have can have their phone with them, and when and where it needs to be at other times (homework/study/sleeping).
- Notifications are extremely detrimental to learning – make sure they know how to turn them off on ALL apps
- Don't answer texts from your child during school hours - at all. Don't call or text them during the school hours
- Most importantly - make sure they don't have their phone with them while studying, or at night in their bedrooms. Most online bullying and inappropriate behaviours occur at night, in a child's bedroom. Without sleep, everything goes pear shaped. Buy a cheap alarm clock.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

- Contact (homeroom) teachers via email, *but only if your child can't solve whatever it is on their own.* Their contact details will be on the school portal. Hold yourself back from dropping off items left at home to them at school
- However, if there is something going on at home or in your child's life outside of school that is affecting their physical or emotional wellbeing- it is helpful to email the homeroom teacher/Year Level Coordinator to let them know. If they are unhappy – let the school know
- Be prepared for Parent Teacher Interview sessions. Review your child's grades and comments online before going
- The school will have procedures in place to intervene if things are not going well academically
- **It is always a three-way relationship- school/parents/child.** Stay involved. Schools will have the expectation that parents read emails, notices and keep up to date with results. Support the school's policies and procedures about uniform and other rules.

All of us at Team Monty wish your beautiful children the very best for the coming transition.

