

Transition from Primary to Secondary School

The transition from primary school to secondary school can be daunting for children with dyslexia. Most primary and secondary schools work together to put in place strategies which will help. Arrangements must be made before the child moves to secondary school. If you are unsure about what the arrangements are, contact your child's primary and secondary schools.

Transition – the difficulties

Moving to secondary school can create the difficulties for some of these reasons:

- There are lots more teachers and more children – have to remember more names
- Change of classroom every period – have to get to know new locations
- Finding their way around – directional difficulties
- Timetables – have to know where they should be and when
- More books and equipment – what is needed each day is different
- Lots of homework – what to do each evening needs organisation
- New terminology in subjects – information overload
- Lack of confidence because of unfamiliarity
- New support staff

Transition – how to help

- Make sure all teachers know that your child is dyslexic. You might have to do this each year
- Help your child to read timetables. Make several small blank timetables which you can help your child to fill in (keep spares for when they get lost)
- Help your child to colour code books/equipment and match it to a colour on the timetable
- Encourage your child to put a big copy of their timetable on their bedroom wall or somewhere it can be seen easily
- Remind your child each evening what day it is and what equipment is needed for the next day. Get them to prepare their bag the night before
- Get them into the habit of checking their bag for homework each night

- Ask the secondary school to consider a buddy being allocated to them to help with directions, where to go etc
- Ask the school for a glossary of terms used in new subjects so that you can find out the meaning of words before work begins
- Provide access to as much technology as possible. Ideally your child should have their own laptop with spellchecker, predictive software and access to a printer at home
- Encourage your child to explain to teachers how they learn best and what they need to support the learning process
- A meeting should be held after a few weeks settling in to review progress and identify any difficulties
- School staff should have a knowledge of the relevant legislation, rights of the child and responsibilities of the parent or carer to best support the pupil before, during and after transition

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