Going to Secondary School

Tips For Parents

Children's Top Worries About Starting Secondary School

New and different lessons

Getting to school and back

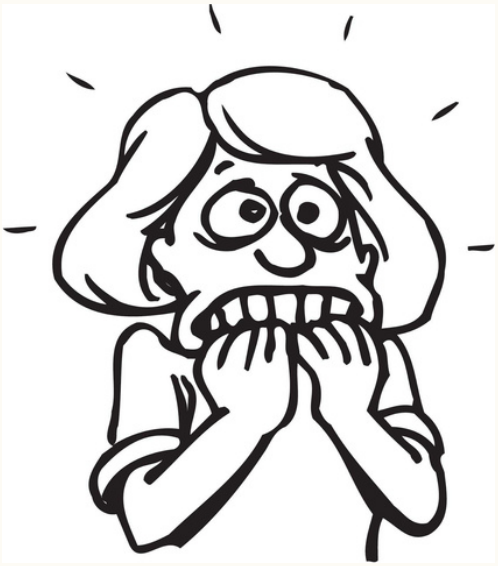
Getting into trouble

Not making friends

Homework

Not being able to do the work

Not knowing what to do if there is a problem



Not having the right equipment

Being bullied

Getting lost

Travelling to and from school

Having more responsibility

New rules and routines to learn

Leaving behind old school friends

Not getting on with the teachers

How Can I Help as a Parent?

Moving from primary or mainstream school to Friars Academy is a significant event in your child's life.

When your child starts at Friars Academy, they will undoubtedly encounter a variety of new experiences and routines. However, the skills needed to effectively cope with these changes and new routines do not spontaneously appear in the weeks leading up to their start; they have to be taught. It can take time to adjust, and your child may need support in developing them.

We are aware that families want to reassure their children, and support them in developing the skills they need to cope with any changes, but some may feel they lack the information and expertise to do so. At Friars, we aim to make these changes as stress free as possible. The two most common worries on the 'worry list' are social concerns. Although common, most children report that they are no longer worried about these issues after just a few weeks at their new school! The remaining worries are nearly all to do with the new organisational demands.

If your child expresses these worries, it can be useful to reassure them that these worries will calm down with time, and to emphasise that there will also be may other children feeling anxious about the same things. Talk to your child's class teacher, who can arrange for your child to have a safe space to be during break and lunch times, or perhaps a buddy until they feel comfortable.

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with the information you need to help your child to achieve independence, while supporting them in getting there. To achieve a balance of doing too much or too little for your child is hard – a useful rule of thumb is:

> ***'Never do anything regularly for your child that they are capable of doing for themselves'.***

This booklet is here as a guide and may provide some practical tips and ideas to help you help you child develop the skills for success.

What May Be Different About Friars Academy?

- Children often have to travel further, some may be making their way to and from school independently or catching school transport for the first time. Unfortunately the school does not have any influence over school taxi or minibus transport. You will need to apply to the **Local Authority** for this.

- They will have a different school uniform, and a new list of rules to remember.

- Instead of one teacher, who has known them since their early years, they will be taught by a number of different teachers and will have to get to know a number of different adults within the school.

- The site will be much bigger and the children will have to move between classrooms for different lessons, (support may be given to pupils in accordance to their needs).

- Class sizes may be smaller, they will not have a single person support, instead the Learning Support Assistant will be shared by the whole class.

- For the first time children may be responsible for ensuring they have the correct academic equipment (supplied) or PE kit for lessons.

- There may be new lessons on their timetable (e.g. PDC - Personal Development Curriculum) and new variations of familiar ones (science in a laboratory).
- Teaching and Learning styles may be different.

- Break and Lunch-time will be organised differently with different levels of supervision (depending on the needs of the child) and children having the independence in terms of getting to class on time.

- There is the option to have a hot lunch.

- As students move throughout the school they will be supported in being more independent, self-reliant and self organised. A welcome development for many pupils, and a challenge for most.

Getting There and Back - Tips for Students

Tasks for Pupils

1. Get up on time.
2. Get washed and dressed without a fuss.
3. Leave on time for transport.
4. Be in the right place at the end of the school day.
5. Know what to do if there is a delay.

Getting There and Back - Tips for Parents

Before Your Child Starts

1. Know how long you have in the morning before transport arrives / your child has to leave and add 10 minutes!
2. Be sure your child is clear about what time they are expected home / who will be there / what strategies to use if they are late.
3. Make sure they know how to contact you.
4. Agree a routine for the morning:
    - Will they shower/ bath in the morning or evening?
    - Who will get their bag ready?
    - Will they have a hot or cold lunch?
5. Agree a suitable bed-time for school days, so they get enough sleep.
6. Have a practice run.

When They Start

7. Go through the routine regularly. It may help to create a tick list.
8. Insist that the routine is stuck to.

Uniform Matters

At Friars Academy we wear:

- A black polo shirt with a logo or a white shirt and tie.
- A black cardigan / jumper with a red trim and / or a blazer with our logo.
- Black school trousers or skirt.
- Plain black shoes.

Jewellery, make up and extreme hairstyles or hair that is not of a natural colour is not allowed.

For PE pupils are required to wear:

- Black and red PE top (purchased from The Uniform Shop)
- Plain black shorts or tracksuit bottoms.
- Plain black sweatshirt for cold weather
- Trainers or plimsolls

Uniform is available for purchase from the uniform shop.
www.uniformshopwellingborough.co.uk

- Please make sure everything is named, even shoes. It is almost impossible to return items that are not named. A marker pen is as good as labels.

The main school office has some items of high quality pre loved clothing in a variety of sizes available at a reduced cost. If you wish to access these please contact them on: office@friars.northants.sch.uk or by calling 01933 304950.

The New Timetable - Tips for Students

Tasks for Pupils

1.Get to know what lessons are on which days.
2.Get to know where the classrooms for each lesson are.
3.Get to know who your different teachers are.
4.Look at your timetable. If you are unsure about it tell your teacher, who will go over it with you or put it into symbols if that is easier.

You will get your new timetable in your first few days.

	8.55 - 9.00	9.00 - 9.45	9.45 - 10.30	10.30 -10.45	10.45- 11.00	11.00 - 11.45	11.45 - 12.30	12.30 - 1.15	1.15 - 2.00	2.00- 2.05	2.05 -3.00
Mon	**RE**	English TSt Room 11	Maths TSt Room 11	**B**	**S**	Science TSt Room 11	Music LDo	Ethics TSt Room 11	**L**	**RE**	PSHE TSt Room 11
Tue	**GI**	Assembly KS3	English Phonics	**R**	**O**	C&N CBa	History TSt Room 11	Maths TSt Room 11	**U**	**GI**	PE
Wed	**ST**	Computing TSt Room 11	PE CFa	**E**	**C**	English TSt Room 11	PDC TSt Room 11	Maths TSt Room 11	**N**	**ST**	PD AGa
Thu	**RAT**	English TSt Room 11	Geog TSt Room 11	**A**	**IA**	Drama GBa	Maths TSt Room 11	Science TSt Room 11	**C**	**RAT**	Form Studies Room 11
Fri	**ION**	Assembly	PE CFa	**K**	**L**	Maths TSt Room 11	English TSt Room 11	Science TSt Room 11	**H**	**ION**	Art Room 33 TUn

(Sample Year 7 Timetable)

The New Timetable - Tips for Parents

Tips for Parents

1. Get a copy of your child's timetable. These are sent home in the first week, but if you are in any doubt just ask your child's class teacher.
2. Encourage your child to learn what lessons they have on which days so that they can become independent.
3. Make sure your child knows what to do if they arrive late to school (go to reception).
4. Reassure your child that they will quickly get to know their way around (most have mastered it within a couple of weeks), and that they will move around as a group to start with. Teachers are very understanding about children getting lost to begin with, and help is at hand if it is needed.
5. Friars provide all basic school equipment. So you do not need to worry about this.
6. At Friars, we provide a homework menu. This is linked to our learning blocks – you can find this on the school website. Homework is not compulsory. However, it is encouraged.

The curriculum:
We offer a varied curriculum at Friars that contains a mixture of class based lessons working in the local community. Each class will have an individual risk assessment to ensure that all students are safe and have the correct levels of support.

How the school building is arranged:
The school currently has KS3, KS4 and a very small post 16 provision. There are no set areas for each key stage, although everyone does have their own class base. Most students move on to colleges or 6th form pro- visions when they reach 16. We will support you with this.

Clubs:
Friars Academy offer a number of lunchtime and after school clubs. These are non fee paying clubs. A list of these clubs will be sent home within the first few weeks. If your child chooses to attend one of these clubs we ask that they can commit to every week. Lunchtime clubs can be found on the display board near the admin corridor.

Problems Children May Experience When They First Start a New School, and What to Do About Them

Falling out with friends:
This is very common as children form new friendships and new 'pecking orders' are established. Please give constructive advice but don't overreact in front of the child. Most friendship patterns sort themselves out without adult intervention, but if you are concerned let your child's class teacher know.

Many children use the term 'bullying' after one incident. The hallmarks of bullying are intentionality (a deliberate attempt to make someone unhappy); persistence (i.e. an ongoing 'campaign', not isolated incidents or arguments about specific issues) and an imbalance of power (if the perpetrators are older, bigger, more powerful or if they are operating as a gang against an individual).

At Friars Academy we have an anti-bullying action group with a clear charter, which we take seriously. Our aim is for Friars to be a safe and happy environment for all.

What to do / who to talk to if something is worrying you:

Please tell a member of staff, it doesn't matter who. We cannot help if we do not know there is a problem. After you have been at Friars for a while you can pick a special person to talk to called a mentor.

What you should do if you don't feel well:

If you feel ill you need to let a member of staff know as soon as possible. They can then send a green card to alert a trained first aider who will come and assess you. The first aiders can also give medication to those pupils who need to have it during school.

Frequently Asked Questions

What Happens On the First Day?

(when and where pupils report to school)
All students are greeted by members of staff as they enter the green gates. In the morning all pupils wait in the playground until it is time for school to start (a whistle will blow). There are lots of staff on duty that you can talk to if you want to. On your first day a member of staff will wait by the school playground and collect the students in their class.

The Friary - canteen facilities:

- Snack: During the morning all classes have social time. Social time is when all students have the opportunity to have a snack and drink (provided by school) and talk to the staff and people in their class base. Tuck shop: One day per week year 7 can go to the Friary at break time to purchase a snack or a drink from the tuck shop there is a maximum £1 spend.
- Lunch: The school can provide hot meals. The menu can be found on the school website. If you have free school meals the main office can provide you with the correct forms to fill in if necessary. We run a cashless system so all meal payments are made through Parent Pay. You will be given this information once your child starts.

What to do at break and lunchtime:

During break and lunch time there are lots of different structured play activities which you can to join in with. There are also many different lunchtime clubs which you can choose to join. These are displayed in the library. There are lots of staff on duty, so if you are not sure ask them and they will help you.

Toilet facilities:

There are several male, female, and accessible toilets (inc a hygiene suite) around the school building. Students are encouraged to use these during break and lunchtimes to cause minimum disruption to lessons. However, staff may let pupils go during lessons under certain circumstances.

Fire drills and safety information:

There are plans which show the fire exit in every room. On the first day your teacher will show you where the fire exit is in your room and where you need to go if there is a fire. We have practices every term so that we know what to do.

How to move safely around the school:

All pupils are expected to move around school in a sensible manner - this means no running. We have this rule because there are a number of pupils at our school who are unsteady on their feet or who are visually impaired.

Medical Needs:

If your child has medical need, including the need for medication to be administered during the day and or, they require support with toileting. You will need to get in touch with us to make sure a medical form or an intimate care plan has been completed. Without these essential documents we will not be able to support your child.

Additional Information

Your child will be placed in a form prior to their entry into the school. This will be based on the information received from your child's primary school.

Most of your child's lessons will take place in their form room, though they will mix with other peers throughout the school week.

The Key stage 3 Manager will continually assess the students in the first few days and weeks to make sure they are in the correct group. If they feel that a change of form needs to be made, they will notify you before this happens to discuss the reasons.

Contacting the Academy

During this transition period, during term 6, and the summer holiday, there is an email address you can use to contact us with any questions or concerns:

For many parents the use of a communication book is essential. Once your child has started Friars Academy we have diaries for this. This allows home and school to communicate about everyday issues that may have an effect on your child.

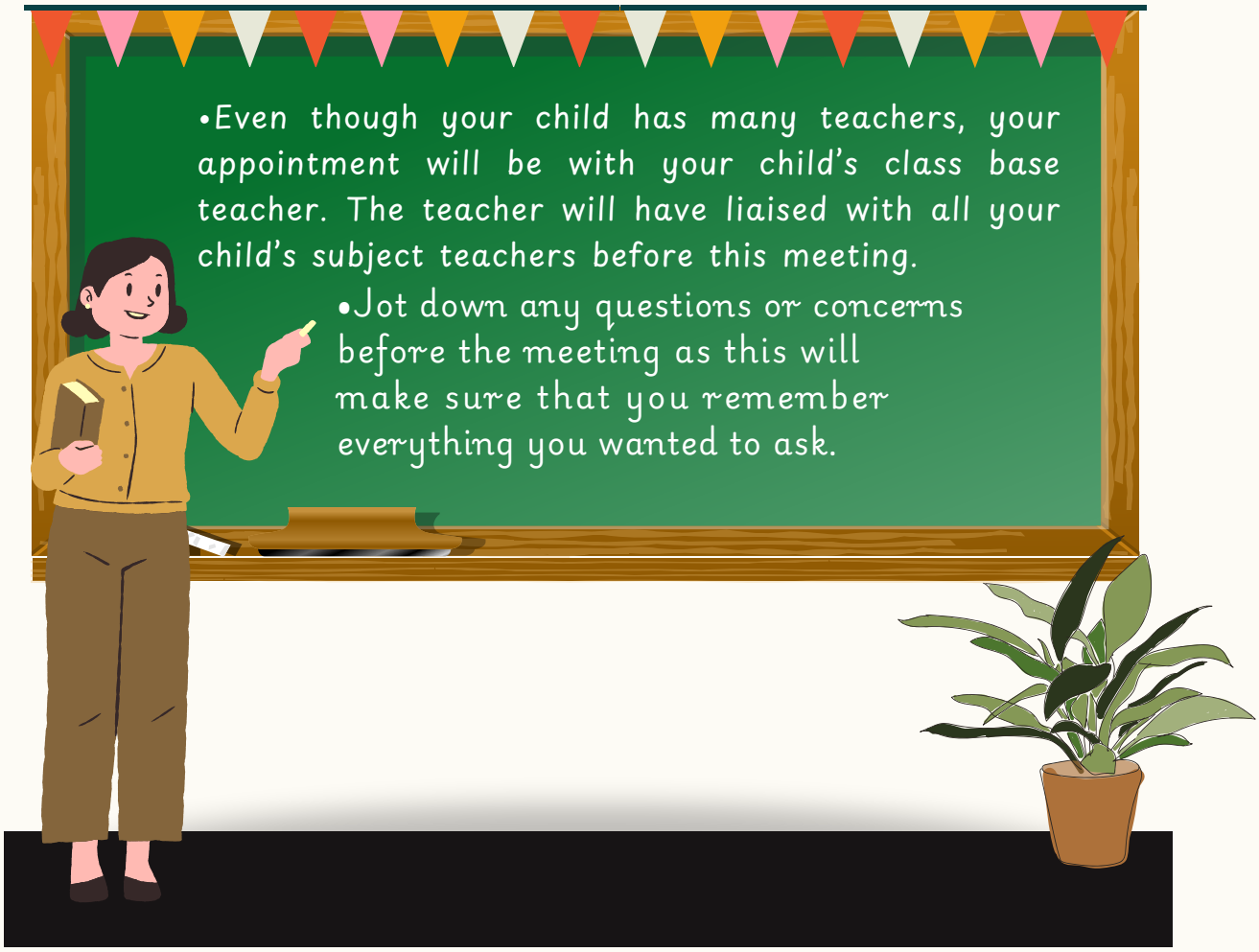
You know your child best, and if there is any aspect of school life is persistently distressing them it is best to err on the side of caution and intervene early. We want the Friars experience to be a positive one for them.

Mrs Rutter, our Family Support Worker is always available to talk to about any issue surrounding your child and their welfare. Please call the office on 01933 304950 and ask to speak with her.

You will be invited into school to attend your child's annual review, and "parents' evenings". Please do not feel you have to wait until this time to raise any concerns. We are more than happy to talk to you throughout the year.

A Guide to Parents Evening

Structured Conversations



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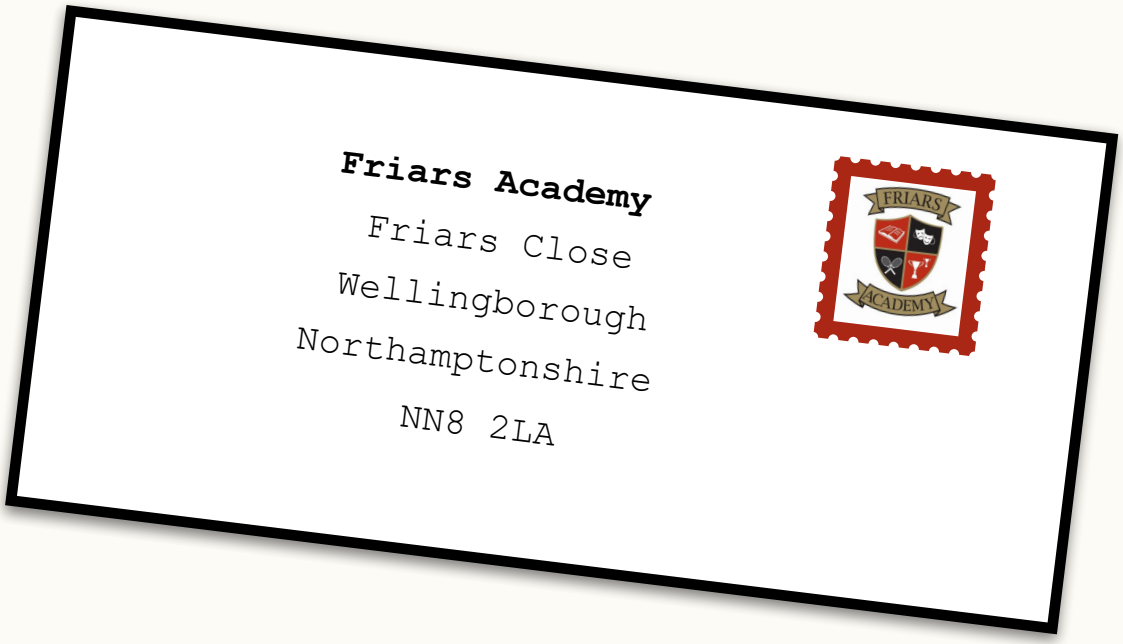

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