

Primary to secondary transition in Camden





In Camden, it is a priority for us that your child moves smoothly and successfully between early years, schools and colleges so that they enjoy school, love learning and thrive.

Camden's commitment:




We work together in a coordinated way that is helpful to children and parents and we will keep improving what we do, learning from good practice in Camden and beyond.

This leaflet focuses on primary to secondary transition since it is the most challenging transition and has been shown to affect children's attainment and well-being in the longer term.



What is a successful transition from primary to secondary?

A child making a successful move from primary school to secondary school will show:

-  **Emotional wellbeing:** coping with the changes, inevitable anxieties, highs and lows
-  **Successful peer relationships:** making new friends and successfully negotiating the larger setting with its more complex social groupings
-  **Academic progress:** building on their previous learning and quickly getting to grips with the secondary curriculum

Why is this sometimes a difficult time?

Children are often anxious at this time:

The top concerns are:

- The secondary school is so big
– will I get lost?
- There are so many older children
– will I get bullied?
- How does ‘discipline’ work?
Will I get detention?
- Will the homework be too difficult?
How will I get it all done?
- Will I be able to make new friends as my best friends are going to different schools?

Parents are often anxious too – about the same things as children but also:

- The practical stuff: How do we pay for meals?
Can they take their mobile phone to school?
- Will they be safe travelling to and from school?
I want them to be independent but I’m worried
- Will my child’s needs get lost in the secondary school? It’s so big. I knew who to talk to in primary school and they knew my child so well.

The secondary transfer process

There is an online system for applying to secondary schools which operates for the whole of London.



Click the QR code to go to the forms and guidance.

To help you make your application and state your preferences, you can attend Camden’s **‘Moving on’ event held every year** where you can find out more about our secondary schools and meet staff and students – all in one place. This date will be well publicised each year. This is in addition to the individual school open mornings, days or evenings which are advertised as part of the secondary transfer process. Your primary school may also hold an event to explain the secondary transfer process – and can help you if you find the process difficult for any reason.

Being prepared

Preparation for transition to secondary school begins in primary school. In Camden, our primary schools will:

- Give children opportunities to discuss their worries about change, helping them understand that anxiety about moving schools is normal and giving them strategies to cope. This will be in lessons and special assemblies
- Welcome staff from secondary schools to meet children ahead of transfer and so that children can ask questions about the school they are going to
- Hold special groups and sessions for children who may be more likely to find the move to secondary school difficult
- Share information with secondary schools in a responsible and appropriate way so that the secondary school has an understanding of your child's strengths and needs and where a child has additional needs, ensure that these are understood.

Meet the Parents is a parent-led scheme that is unique to Camden. If your primary school is hosting a Meet the Parents event, you can go along and ask whatever you want from a friendly panel of pupils and parents at Camden secondaries. You can also speak individually to panellists afterwards and ask about specific schools. If there's no MTP event at your primary you can go to any of the events at other schools, usually in September.



Click the QR code for more information.

Before September...

Before Year 7 starts, as well as linking up with your child's primary school, the Camden secondary school will:

- Hold an inspiring and stimulating **induction day** for all children starting in Year 7 so that they feel more confident and excited about the start of term
- Offer **summer schools** to help children feel ready and excited about secondary school
- Hold **extended transition days** for children who will benefit from some extra preparation
- Invite parents to a **welcome conversation**, a personal meeting with every child's parents/carers during the summer term
- (at some schools) Discuss and share a **Home School Agreement** which helps to clarify expectations between pupils, families and the secondary school
- Provide you with **web based information** that can help you with preparing your child for the start of term – for example maps of the school, model timetables, classroom photos, virtual tours as well as web based resources on preparing for secondary school.



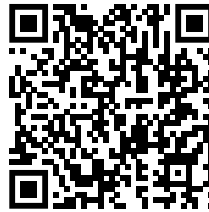
Once Year 7 starts...

The beginning of secondary school is an exciting and demanding time for everyone. To help it go as smoothly as possible, our Camden secondary schools will:

- Organise the beginning of term to allow for settling in – this may include having the first day for **Year 7s only**
- Give you a **clear line of communication** to the school, usually via the form tutor so that problems and concerns can be picked up and dealt with quickly
- Provide you with **feedback on how your child is settling in**. How this is done will vary from school to school – it may be through open evenings, written reports or other ways
- Provide **opportunities for parents** to meet each other and staff at the school in an informal way so that you can feel part of the school community.

How can you help your child?

Find out more...



Camden Council has produced a useful booklet **Life in Secondary School – a guide for parents** to help you understand secondary schools, especially if you yourself have been through a different education system.



The Anna Freud Centre has a useful booklet **Supporting children's transition to secondary school – A guide for parents and carers**.



If your child has special educational needs or disabilities, you can get useful and impartial advice from **SENDIASS**.

Top tips:

- **Build a connection** with the secondary school, especially the class tutor so you know who is who
- **Make contact** as soon as you feel there is a problem since it is better to tackle small problems before they become big problems. Email is often the best way
- **Meet other parents** and network to find sources of advice and support
- **Every day at school is important** right from the beginning of Year 7. Full attendance at school will set your child up for success





Successful secondary transition is a priority in Building Back Stronger:
Camden's education strategy to 2030.

Read more about this and other priorities by clicking the QR code below:



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