

# Getting prepared

## Time to start year 7 – A parent's guide to starting high school



You may be wondering where to begin in getting your child prepared for high school. We recognise that it's a big step for everybody, so we've put together this guide to share some practical tips that may help smooth the way for a more comfortable start.

Before orientation day, you might even want to sit down and write up a list of questions to ask while you're there.

Developing a positive relationship with you to support your child's learning is important to us. We have a team of highly qualified teachers and support staff to give your child the best possible start to high school.

Your first contact with the school may be with the school administrative staff. They are the friendly faces at the school office. They help by giving you guidance and any general information you may need. They can also help by making appointments for you with the principal, your child's teachers or other school staff.

### Our best advice is

#### Go to your high school's orientation/transition days

High school orientation days help you and your child become familiar with their new school and new routine. Contact your school to find out when these days will be. If you've missed them, don't worry. Your school will still give you all the information you need for your child to settle in quickly.

#### At orientation/transition days you can:

- tour the school and get a sense of its size and layout
- meet a variety of teachers
- encourage your child to meet students from other schools (a great head start towards making new friends!)
- find out about the school uniform and any other requirements the school may have
- learn what your child will be doing in their first year of high school
- ask questions and resolve any worries you may have
- meet other parents
- find out ways to become involved in the school.

## Travel Passes

Application forms for train, bus and/or ferry passes will be available from your child's high school in Term 4. These forms are often mailed out with the enrolment application form, or sometimes distributed at the Year 6 orientation day. They should be returned to the high school before the end of the school year to make sure that all passes are available for the start of the next school year.

The Ministry of Transport manages the School Student Transport Scheme. If you have any further enquiries please call 1800 227 774 or (02) 9891 8900 or visit their website on [www.transport.nsw.gov.au/concess\\_grants/ssts.html](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/concess_grants/ssts.html)

## Special needs

If your child has special needs please make an appointment to talk with the principal as early as possible. The school can then make arrangements for your child.

## Label everything!

In a bigger and more crowded school your child's belongings are more likely to get lost. Make sure their name is on all their belongings. These include books, notebooks, pencil case, clothing and school bag.

## Allergies and medical conditions

It's essential to tell the principal before your child starts high school if he or she has any allergies or medical conditions. In the first instance you will be able to do this by completing the information requested in the application to enrol. This could then be followed up by a phone call or appointment if you wish to provide additional information. Please note that it is very important for you to also let the school know of any major changes to your child's health as soon as you are aware of them.

## Uniforms and school clothing pools

A school's uniform is determined by the school community. Dress code guidelines are available from the school's front office and are usually included in the school's handbook or prospectus. Schools often operate a uniform pool or the school can advise you which shops supply their uniform.

## School contributions and education expenses

Public high schools have two types of expenses.

- A general voluntary contribution to help the school provide a wider variety of resources and learning opportunities for students
- Subject fees for specific classes such as food technology and visual arts. These fees help to cover the cost of materials used by your child in each of these courses

If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please talk it over confidentially with your principal. Help with the cost of subject materials as well as other expenses such as school uniform, equipment, school excursions and camps may be available.

Helping your child to get the required resources and equipment as soon as possible will help them to fit in and get off to a good start.

## Mobile phones and MP3 players

The use of mobile phones and other electronic communication devices such as MP3 players during school hours is actively discouraged in our schools. Phones certainly cannot be used during lesson times. Parents are asked to avoid ringing or sending SMS messages to their children during school time wherever possible. If necessary, messages can be passed onto students via the school office.

It's also important to remind your child that the less they carry valuable things around the less likely they are to lose them.

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## Further information

For further information talk to your school principal, contact your regional office or go to [www.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au)

For translated information go to [www.det.nsw.edu.au/languagesupport](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/languagesupport)