

TRANSITION TO Chace Community School – GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

Negotiating new choices

Understand your child's strengths and weaknesses. Help your child choose subjects that are suited to their ability. Try to strike a balance between pursuing interests, trying new things and what you would like or expect them to study or explore. Be aware that peer pressure, fear of failure and following a dream might be factors affecting their choice. These are often, either too easy or too hard for your child. They may want, or be pressured, to be in groups with their "new" friends and you can help advise and guide while still allowing them an important part of the negotiating.

On the first day

Make sure your child goes to school well prepared for the day by:

- Being well rested after eight or nine hours sleep
- Having a good breakfast
- Wearing the correct uniform
- Arriving in plenty of time
- Knowing where to meet friends inside the school grounds
- Knowing where to assemble
- Taking a file, organised into sections, notepaper and pencil case
- Taking / choosing healthy food for morning break and lunch
- Having all belongings clearly named
- Arranging a clear pick-up time and place.

Be calm and reassuring

It will help your child feel more at ease if you are calm. Listen to any last minute concerns and talk about them before seeing your child off for the day. After school, talk about their day, their teachers, their new subjects and new friends.

Reassure your child that it's OK if it takes a little while to adjust to the changes and feel settled.

Making friends

Talk about meeting new people, making friends and getting to know the teachers and other students as soon as possible – without rushing.

This is especially important if your child is the only one from his/her primary school, because they might be on the look out for company. The best way to make friends is to be friendly. Here are some tips for your child:

Speak to other students.

- Introduce yourself and ask questions about topics such as sport or music.
- Be positive and talk about good things.
- Find out about clubs/activities and join one that interests you. You will have something in common with the other members.
- Be helpful if you see someone seems a little lost or lonely.
- Join in. Don't hang back hoping someone will talk with you – they might think you are not interested.
- Ask what classes they have next and if they're going in the same direction.
- Listen to what others are talking about and then join in, without taking over.
- Try to remember one or two names each day. Write them in your diary if that helps.

Responsibility and independence

Plan an out-of-school routine with your child that promotes a balanced lifestyle. You can help your child set up a quiet area for study in your home away from distractions.

Making a study timetable early in the year will help your child complete tasks by the due date and be ready for tests. This will take away a lot of anxieties. Successful students agree that consistent work throughout the year, rather than last minute 'cramming', is a key to success.

For overall success as well as your child's wellbeing, study needs to be balanced with recreation, friends and a healthy diet. Research shows that a healthy breakfast is a very important start to every day – not cool fizzy drink and crisps on the way to school!

Plenty of sleep is also very important for growing bodies. Help your child get into a routine and become responsible about being organised for school.

This includes:

- planning a homework schedule and doing homework each day
- Completing work before or by the due date
- Taking the PE kit on day when timetabled
- Saving planners and permission slips signed and returned when due
- Setting up a sensible "filing" system so time is not wasted searching for things before a lesson (label file dividers for each subject and have spare paper in each section).

Your child can successfully manage their school work if they:

- know the due date
- check they understand the task
- know the format required
- do the research when relevant
- write, edit and re-write
- include a bibliography if applicable
- hand them in on time.

What to do if you are concerned about your child

Call us – ask to speak or leave a message to form tutor in the first instance.

Arrange a meeting if necessary to discuss any issues with your child's form tutor or the head of learning.

If you suspect your child is being bullied, contact the school and work with us to address the issue. Here are some tips that may help your child deal with the situation. Reinforce that it is good to talk with friends, family and teachers. Bullying thrives on silence.

Communication with the school

Always keep Chace advised of information that is helpful for us and contributes to the wellbeing of your child, such as:

- strengths/talents/weaknesses
- major commitments that impact on study time or attendance
- conditions such as allergies, dyslexia, ADHD
- illness
- living arrangements such as sharing between households (extra newsletter if required), family splits, parent/carer travelling or working away
- change of address, telephone number or emails
- major illness or situations within the family or close friends

ALWAYS read the Chace Bulletin. Check our website on a regular basis. Ask if anything has been handed out. Keep up to date with what is coming up and, if necessary, help your child be prepared and equipped. It will help to have a timetable on the fridge. Play an active role in our Parents Association (which is made up of parents and teachers) and be involved in decisions that affect the education of your child.

Questions often asked by new students These are some questions frequently asked by new students. You can help your child be prepared by talking about these and any others that your child may have.

- **What time do I have to be at school?** When and how long are break and lunch breaks? When does school finish? Check the Welcome booklet.
- **What will I do if I get lost?** In a big school this is not uncommon in the first day or so, but easily fixed. Stay calm and ask for directions. People will be keen to help.
- **Am I allowed to have a mobile telephone, pager or iPod at school?** Go through our rules on the use of electronic devices. If in doubt, leave them at home because if valuable items are lost or confiscated it is very distressing.
- **What do I do if I am absent or late?** If your child is going to be away, contact us as soon as possible. If your child will just be late, organise for your child to have a late note.
- **How do I get /pay for my lunch?** If you don't know or are unsure of our cashless catering arrangements our office staff or your child's form tutor will be glad to explain.
- **Where can I leave my bicycle when I get to school?** Find out where bikes can be safely left during the day. You will need to organise for a bike locker if available.
- **How will I know when each lesson ends?** Your teachers will tell you. Make sure your child wears a watch to school.
- **What do I do if I feel I need help for any reason?** Tell your teacher, the teaching assistant, go to the head of learning or a member of our School Leadership Team. All those people are here especially to help – no matter what the problem is. We will make sure your child knows where to go to find these people/places.
- **What do I do if I need to leave school early?** Your child should always tell his/her form tutor and have a note to inform us, signed by yourself.