



Getting ready for high school

Get ready for high school



Tick off the tasks that apply to you.

Before you start

- Does your child have allergies, a health condition or additional needs? If so, talk to the high school principal as soon as possible.
- Encourage your child to participate in any transition to high school program offered to them.
- Watch videos about high school at education.nsw.gov.au/high-school
- Buy school uniforms, books, stationery, school bag, drink bottle, house key and any other supplies.
- Label everything.
- Break in school shoes to make them more comfortable.
- Practise travelling to and from school with your child using their new mode of transport or travel route.
- Teach them how to use their transport app and read the timetable for the bus, train or ferry as appropriate.
- Join your school and the department on social media to get all the updates.
- Apply for a school Opal card if needed. Go to apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts or phone 131 500.

At high school orientation

- Find out about school uniforms (including sports uniforms) – where and when to buy them.
- Get a map of the school to identify buildings, entry points and bike racks.
- Note school start and finish times.
- Get details on programs the school offers.
- Make a list of book packs and school supplies.
- Learn how you can become involved in the school.
- Meet the Year 7 adviser.
- Connect with other parents and carers on social media.
- Find out whether your child requires a device such as a laptop.
- Find out the school's position on mobile phones and discuss it with your child.

At home

- Talk positively to your child about the move to high school.
- Ask them what's exciting about high school. Does anything worry them?
- Make sure your child has a quiet work area and extra stationery supplies.
- Organise personal hygiene items in school bags.
- Decide what your child will do before and after school, and what time they need to be home.
- Discuss emergency and safety issues with them.
- Remind them they can always speak to the counselling staff at their school.
- Discuss the dangers of being distracted when crossing the road or riding – including talking and texting on the phone, and wearing headphones.
- Work out a backup plan in case their travel routes change or they miss their transport.

Starting high school



Tick off the tasks that apply to you.

The first day

- Help set your child's alarm. Encourage them to get themselves ready on time.
- Provide your child with money and your contact numbers in case of emergencies.
- Make sure you have the school's phone number with you.
- Pack a healthy lunch or encourage healthy choices if your school has a canteen.
healthyschoolcanteens.nsw.gov.au

The first week

- Photocopy school timetables to place in school diaries, inside locker doors and on the fridge.
- Remind your child to note all assignments, homework and events in their diary.
- Check through the timetable each night while your child packs their bag. Encourage your child to eat healthy food and get a good night's sleep.
- Give the school your current contact details.

Studying at high school



Once your child is in high school, regular study also becomes important. Study time is completely different from doing set homework.

Suggestions for effective study

There is no one 'best' way to study. Students often find different methods and times to study to suit themselves. The key is regular study, not cramming before a test or exam. Does your child have a homework and study planner or diary? Some will prefer scheduling homework and setting reminders on their iPad or phone, but you still need to check they are keeping up with their homework and study each week.

Staying balanced

Encourage your child to keep a balance in their high school life. They still need time to relax, have fun and spend time with friends and family. They also need healthy food, exercise and a good night's sleep.

NAPLAN

Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in Australian schools sit the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

NAPLAN is held in May and involves four different tests:

- language conventions (spelling, punctuation and grammar)
- writing
- reading
- numeracy.

They are neither English nor maths tests, rather NAPLAN assesses students' general literacy and numeracy skills, which are required in all subject areas. Texts used in NAPLAN come from a variety of key learning areas.

Students with disability or additional learning and support needs may qualify for some adjustments. Contact your school to discuss further.

What to expect in high school

Starting high school is an exciting time for students as well as their parents and carers.

Going to high school will be a new experience for your child. The school is likely to be much bigger than the primary school and your child may feel a little insecure at first. Instead of being a senior in a small school, they are now a beginner in a big school. However, it is also an exciting time with many opportunities and a broader curriculum.



New experiences

From Day 1, there will be many changes to get used to including having a number of different teachers and different classrooms, often spread across a larger campus. Set class periods on particular subjects may also be of a longer duration than in primary school. Students carry around notes and books, sometimes heavy, from class to class.



New teachers

In high school students usually have eight or more teachers and a student or year adviser to coordinate their activities. There are also head teachers for different key learning areas, and classmates can vary from class to class.



New subjects

Year 7 students will be introduced to subjects they haven't experienced before. They will also be expected to be more independent, self-reliant and self-motivated than in primary school. Lessons will often be more student-centred and teachers will become resources and guides, rather than instructors.



Timetables

Students are given timetables with subjects, times and room locations listed. They need to check their timetables each night to make sure they have the correct books, equipment and homework completed for the next day's classes. Reading and understanding timetables can take some time to get used to, and moving from room to room might unsettle and tire them.



New friends

Making new friends can be a daunting task for Year 7 students. Students often come from a variety of primary schools and they may find themselves in classes filled with children they don't know. Fitting in is often important to Year 7 students – finding people they like and who share their interests helps motivate them and increase their self-esteem. Discuss their new school experiences each day, the people they've met or observations they've made – that way there is an awareness of difficulties when they arise rather than when it's too late.



Peer pressure

Making new friends and a desire to fit in sometimes means students do things they might not normally do – just so they can be liked or be one of the crowd. Letting children know they don't have to do everything their peers do is an important way of ensuring the friendships they make are genuine and positive – not based on pressure or conformity. A valuable message is that a real friend is someone who likes them for who they are.



Homework and study

Homework set will vary in amount and type because of the number of teachers and subjects each day. Most students will need to do some homework every night. It might be a review of the day's lesson, completion of exercises or starting an assignment that is due later.

Study time is different from homework. During study time, students should go over the day's work, read their textbooks or notes, create summaries and try to increase their understanding of concepts covered in class.



Year 7

Year 7

Many schools begin a transition program during Semester 2 of Year 6. Make sure you attend any orientation or 'meet the teacher' events offered by your school. It will make Year 7 easier if you know what to expect, how the school works and who to talk to about issues. Staying in touch with your child's progress is harder than primary school as they may have a different teacher for each subject. Getting to know the staff is important.

Ask the school

Some questions to ask at information sessions:

- Is there a parent or student portal with details of timetables, assessment tasks, excursions and so on? How do you access it?
- Who is the year adviser for Year 7 and how do you contact them?
- How do you contact individual teachers with any concerns?



All NSW public schools actively prevent bullying and encourage appropriate behaviour by helping students build self-esteem and respect for others.
antibullying.nsw.gov.au



Engaging with your child's education

Your school is committed to working with you to ensure you have all the information and support you need to help your child get the most out of school. You have the right to feel welcome in school, to be treated fairly and to be able to actively participate in your child's schooling.

We ask that in return you commit to making your interactions with teachers, school staff, parents and other children positive. We are all partners in our children's education. Every child has the right to expect their best interests will shape our decision-making and actions.

School staff have the right to feel safe in their workplace and be free of intimidating actions or language, as well as inappropriate or unhelpful communications. All our interactions and communications - including those about difficult or complex issues - should be timely, respectful, transparent and focused on solutions.

All public schools in NSW have a School Community Charter which provides the framework for school-based behaviour and interactions. The charter creates clear expectations by which we can all be held to account. If at any time you think a communication or interaction has not been handled in accordance with the charter, please raise this with your school or the department.

education.nsw.gov.au/school-community-charter

How to find the right person if you have a question or issue

We understand that you may have questions about your child going to high school. Our students' wellbeing is our priority, and we want to work with parents, carers and families to support them during this transition. If you have a question or issue and want to talk to someone before your child starts high school, you can contact your local school and ask to speak someone. Once your child starts high school, the subject teacher can discuss your child's progress in that subject. The head teacher of a specific subject or the year adviser can also be a good place to start.

education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback

Useful websites

Quick guide for parents and carers - everything you need to know

education.nsw.gov.au/parent-guide

Practical help with homework, school transitions and supporting students

education.nsw.gov.au/back-to-school

For complaints, compliments and suggestions

education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback

Disability, learning and support

education.nsw.gov.au/disability-learning-and-support



2020 term dates for NSW public schools

Starting and finishing dates may vary between schools. Check these dates with your school and write the date your child starts each term in the space below.

Term 1

Tuesday 28 January to Thursday 9 April
for Eastern division

Tuesday 4 February to Thursday 9 April
for Western division

Term 2

Monday 27 April to Friday 3 July

Term 3

Monday 20 July to Friday 25 September

Term 4

Monday 12 October to Friday 18 December

education.nsw.gov.au/calendars

School information

We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay our respect to Country.

Say hello

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education.nsw.gov.au

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