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Moving from **Primary to Secondary** School: Parent information

Your child is about to go through some big changes in their life, moving from Primary School up to Secondary School. There will be lots for you both to think about but it's important to begin to prepare your child for the new journey from home to school.

SCHOOL YEAR S, 7, 8, 9

Statistics show that Years 7 to 9 pupils are twice as likely to be hurt on the road compared to Year to 4 to 6 pupils.

Young people are in a higher risk group as road users during the early years of secondary school. Research shows that Year 7 to 9 pupils are twice as likely to be hurt on the roads compared to Year 4 to 6 pupils.

This may be the first time your child is travelling to school without you. Help prepare them for their new school journey and make sure they have the skills needed to judge traffic and make safer decisions.

Before your child starts school in September discuss and practise the new school route together. Use the same mode of transport e.g. walking, bicycle or bus.

Does your school offer Footsteps pedestrian skills training or run the New Journey school journey transition programme? Find out more at **schooltravelplanning.com/schools/initiatives/**

For more information contact:
School Travel Planning
Buckinghamshire County Council
County Hall, Walton Street
Aylesbury, HP20 1UY
Email: **schooltravelplanning@buckscc.gov.uk**

Tips for planning the route:

WALKING

- Practise the route during the school holidays; even though the traffic is likely to be lighter or different from the normal school run, it will help.
- Under your guidance, let your child plan their route, and maybe alternative's as well, allowing them to work out problems for themselves as far as possible.
- Discuss any changes to the routine, such as visits to friend's houses, after-school clubs or late finishing and how this might affect their safety, e.g. might it be dark, could the route involve busy roads, will they be alone or in a group?
- Discuss with your child about using mobile phones and MP3 players while walking. Is it a safe thing to do? Can they concentrate on traffic if they are distracted or cannot hear?
- Talk about behaviour on the journey to school, how to overcome peer pressure and stay sensible.
- Is your child worried about this new journey or are they feeling confident?

BUSES

If the new route to school involves a bus journey, consider where the bus might stop at the school. Will a road need to be crossed and if so where is the best place to do this?

- Talk about timings morning and afternoon.
- Looking after their bus pass.
- Ask your child if they would be allowed to travel if they have forgotten or lost their bus pass.
- How to ensure they always have their pass with them?
- If they miss the bus what is their plan of action?
- Talk about after-school clubs or any changes to the routine and how this might affect the journey.
- Behaviour on the bus - Ask your child what sort of bad behaviour might make it difficult for the driver to concentrate.
- Could silly / dangerous behaviour by one person put everyone at risk?
- If they see bad behaviour on the bus, make sure they tell you so you can report this to school.
- Ask your child do they understand the importance of wearing their seatbelt, even if there are other students who aren't?
- Ask your child why is important to wait until the bus has moved off before crossing the road, if this is necessary.
- Once the clocks change it could be dark in morning or after school. Is your child likely to be alone at the bus stop?
- Is your child worried about this new journey or are they feeling confident?

CYCLING

As with walking, practice the route before the first day at school, discussing alternatives routes for various reasons.

- Has your child completed Cycle Training at school?
- Do they own and wear a cycle helmet?
- Do they have and wear high visibility clothing?
- Is the bike in good working order, particularly the brakes, tyres and steering?
- Does the bike have good lights for dark, gloomy or foggy conditions?
- Do they know the rules of the road (Highway Code) for cyclists?
- Discuss with your child about using mobile phones and MP3 players while cycling. Is it a safe thing to do? Can they concentrate on traffic if they are distracted or cannot hear?
- It is important to obey traffic signals and, in particular, not to cycle up inside of large vehicles. Ask your child what are the risks of doing this?
- Shared pedestrian / cycle paths. Ask them if they understand the need to respect pedestrians and give-way to them as necessary?
- Moving off cycle paths on to the road. Ask your child what they must do before joining the road?
- Can they resist peer pressure? Ask, what would they do if other children make fun of them for wearing a cycle helmet or hi visibility clothing?
- Is your child worried about this new journey or are they feeling confident?

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