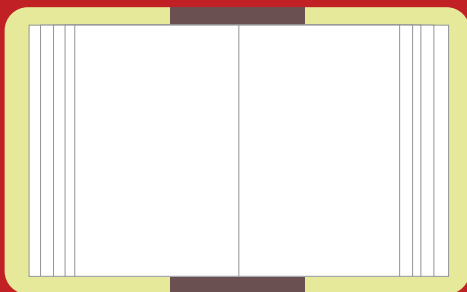
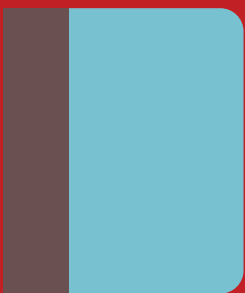
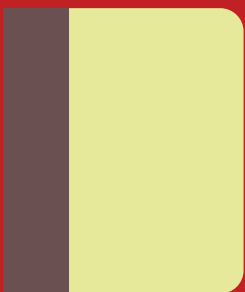
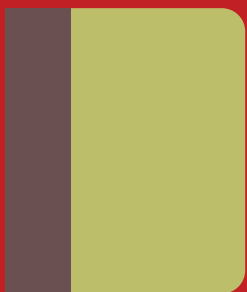
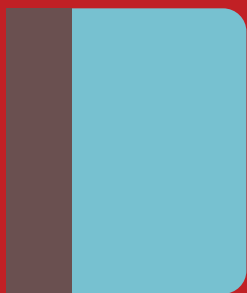


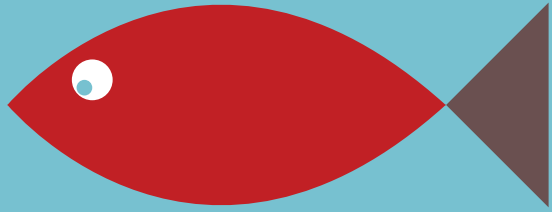
THE BRITISH SCHOOL  
OF BEIJING, Shunyi

MAKING A SUCCESSFUL  
TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO  
SECONDARY SCHOOL



THE BRITISH SCHOOL  
OF BEIJING, Shunyi





# BIG FISH TO SMALL FISH

By the time a child reaches their final years in primary school, they will be totally familiar with their school environment. They will know their teacher very well, be comfortable with most if not all of the people in their class and will probably know most of the other faces in the school too. By Year 6, they are the most senior people in their school, they will be used to being given responsibility and they tend to be looked up to by the younger boys and girls in the school.

Within a few short months these same students revert to being the most junior again in a brand new social environment, with a different atmosphere. Change can be a daunting task for any one of us but when you are 11 or 12 – with so many other ‘complications’ in your life - it is a change that takes quite a lot of adjusting to.

The important thing to remind yourself is that children and teenagers are more resilient and adaptable than we are (or give them credit for). Remember too, that within a few short weeks of the start of term, their new surroundings will become more familiar and they will be running from the gym to the Science Lab and on to the Art room without the slightest stumble. The first couple of weeks can be difficult though and this book offers both parent and child a survival guide to make the transition as smooth as possible.





## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS CHILDREN WORRY MOST ABOUT?

Making new friends

Getting lost

School rules and expectations

Being the smallest and youngest in a large environment filled with  
older and bigger students

Whether or not their new teachers will like them or be nice to them

Coping with a timetable of lessons

Forgetting things

Having different teachers for different subjects

Coping with greater academic expectations

Increased levels of homework

Detentions

## What helps to make a successful transition at BSB?

### Sanlitun Students

- Parents are sent a personal letter with information about secondary school at Shunyi in the first term.
- Parents and students are invited to an 'Introduction to the Secondary School' evening in Sanlitun campus.
- Parents are invited to visit the Shunyi campus and attend a Q&A session with the secondary school Senior Leadership Team. This visit includes a tour of the secondary school.
- Sanlitun students visit the Shunyi campus during the academic year for special events and will have visits from the secondary staff during the year.
- All Primary students are accustomed to having specialist teachers for Chinese, Music and Physical Education, and moving rooms for some of those lessons.
- Sanlitun students attend two formal secondary school days where they follow a secondary timetable and attend lessons in the core subjects and languages.
- Transition Day: Year 6 students have a day in secondary school which includes lessons, a tour of the facilities and focus on building a Form ethos with our team of Form Tutors.
- Q&A: Year 6 students have a question and answer session with Year 7 students on life in secondary school.
- Year 6 staff meet with Year 7 teachers, the Head of Year 7 and the Deputy Head of Learning and Teaching in late June or August to introduce and review individual students' attainment, progress and any issues that have arisen in the primary school.

- KS2 students at Shunyi are routinely taught by PE and music staff who also teach in Secondary and already use many of the facilities also used by Y7 and above (dining room, theatre, pool, etc).
- All Primary students are accustomed to having specialist teachers for Chinese, Music and Physical Education, and moving rooms for those lessons.
- Upper Key Stage 2 classes use the Science Labs on occasion for lessons led by secondary science teachers.
- Year 6 students have a staggered lunch/playtime with the secondary students each day.
- Parent meetings: In the second and third term parents meet with the Head of Secondary and senior staff to have an introduction to the secondary school and receive relevant printed information.
- Open Days: BSB parents are invited to Open Days when they may tour the secondary school, observe lessons and speak with staff.
- Shunyi students attend two formal secondary school days where they follow a secondary timetable and attend lessons in the core subjects and languages.
- Transition Day: Year 6 students have a day in secondary school which includes lessons, a tour of the facilities and focus on building a Form ethos with our team of Form Tutors.
- Q&A: Year 6 students have a question session with Year 7 students on life in secondary school.
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**Shunyi Students**



## A TYPICAL TRANSITION DAY AT BSB

As part of the move up to secondary school, our transition days provide an invaluable experience for both the students and parents. Below is a sample of a typical transition day programme.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>
9.40	Meet with the Head of Secondary, Deputy Head of Learning and Teaching and the Head of Year 7.
10.00	Tour of the School, discussion with Head of Secondary
10.30	Break with Secondary
11.00	Experiencing lessons in Secondary School
12.30	Lunch (Year 7 accompany students to lunch)
1.00	Q&A with Year 7 pupils, Head Boy and Head Girl
1.00	Parents arrive
1.15	Meet parents and guided tour of the School
1.30	Parents and students meet up
2.00	Tour with Admissions with a Q&A session
2.30	Year 6 return to lessons



## HOW CAN YOU FEEL CONFIDENT THAT BOTH YOU AND YOUR CHILD ARE WELL - PREPARED?

- Keep up the dialogue between you and your child and be honest about both the positive and negative aspects of transition.
- Support this stage of growing independence in their lives by identifying ways your child can have greater independence at home.
- Spend a little time remembering back to your own move to secondary school and talk to them about it – your child may have a very different experience to you but it will help you to be empathetic and understanding.
- Drive or walk past the school whenever you can, or visit for an event.
- Support your child to get involved in local activities or clubs where they will come across other children who already go to the school.
- Encourage your child to get involved in clubs and activities in their new school.
- Suggest time management techniques to your child or help them set up a study area.
- Make an appointment to talk to the Head of Year 7.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCES ANY DIFFICULTIES OR PROBLEMS?

If you think your child is overly anxious about going to secondary school, or they are not settling well, it is important to tackle the situation as quickly as possible. Your child may be finding it hard to settle in secondary school for a number of reasons; because they have not made friends yet, they are in a new country and missing home, or they are struggling with the language. Talk to your child and try to find out what the problem is. Often it is better not to ask directly but to make opportunities where they feel comfortable to open up about what is going on for them, perhaps during a family meal or whilst doing some kind of activity together. If they do not open up, or don't feel able to talk to you, arrange to talk to their primary school teacher. If they are already at secondary school you could arrange to talk to their form tutor or Head of Year.

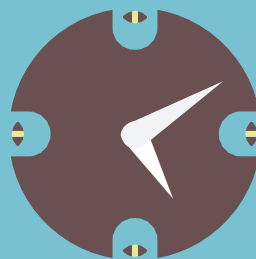
## CONSTANT ROUTINE BECOMES CONSTANT CHANGE

The biggest change when entering the secondary school system is probably the constant change in the day-to-day routine. In primary school, they had one teacher all day in the one classroom. In secondary school however, that routine completely changes. There is a subject change approximately every hour, and with this subject change there is a change of teacher. It is not unusual for a student to encounter eight or nine different teachers during a typical school day. A tip to help your child cope with this is to advise them to write down the name of each new teacher beside the name of the subject.

Some subject changes will involve a change of classroom, so the second big challenge that the new Year 7 students must cope with is the movement between classrooms throughout the day. Depending on their subject choices, students will be moving all around the school. Getting lost during the first few weeks will be inevitable for some. A good tip is to advise your child to always stay with at least one other person from the class... there is definitely safety and confidence in numbers!

All of this 'new-ness' is bound to have some effect on the students. In these early days of adjusting, parents should try to be supportive, understanding and encouraging, ensuring their child eats well and gets plenty of rest and 'down time'.

Another big adjustment is the number of specific subjects your child is studying. In Year 7, our students can cover anything up to 15 different subjects.

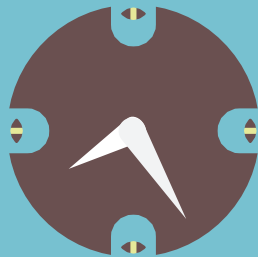


## THE SUBJECTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Mathematics	Design & Technology (DT)	Modern Foreign Languages (French, Spanish or German)
Mandarin	Geography	History
Science	Music	Art
English	Mathematics	Drama
Physical Education (PE)	Information Computer Technology (ICT)	Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

As you can see, from Year 7 our students study a diversity range of subjects. It is therefore important to help them to develop a methodical approach to learning at an early stage. Discuss all the subjects at home. Asking your child to explain what they have learnt so far in a particular subject will have two beneficial effects; it will help you to better understand a subject and it also helps your child to summarise a subject - an exercise which helps to highlight in their mind where they are with it.

It is important to try to encourage a balance between all subjects. Everyone will have their favourites and will excel at certain subjects. Problems occur when a subject is neglected in the early stages. This may happen because of perceived difficulty of the subject or maybe a personality clash with a teacher and it may have an impact on subject choices in future years.





## THE SCHOOLBAG

Their timetable will take a lot of getting used to. Part of this new routine will involve the organisation of the schoolbag before each day. This is a new skill that some may struggle with and a little help in the early days will ensure they bring the right books and the right homework on the right day!

A few things that are essential:

A good, strong schoolbag or backpack that will hold all their books

A pencil case with pens (red, green, blue and black), pencils, coloured pencils, a glue stick, a ruler, a sharpener and an eraser

A scientific calculator

A Mathematics set; a set square, protractor and compass

## HOMWORK, COMMUNICATION AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### Homework

Homework time is obviously going to increase and with it comes several new adjustments from the primary school homework routine. In Year 7, students receive homework in up to 3 subjects per night. One of the best skills you can help your child to learn is that of effective time management. Help your child to even out their homework pattern by encouraging them to develop a homework timetable. Help them to devise a method to spread out the workload over the 5 nights of the week. Do not underestimate the importance of getting a structure and a sense of organisation at an early stage of their secondary school lives. Learning how to successfully manage their time is an invaluable life skill and will make the transition into their new environment a whole lot easier.

### Communication

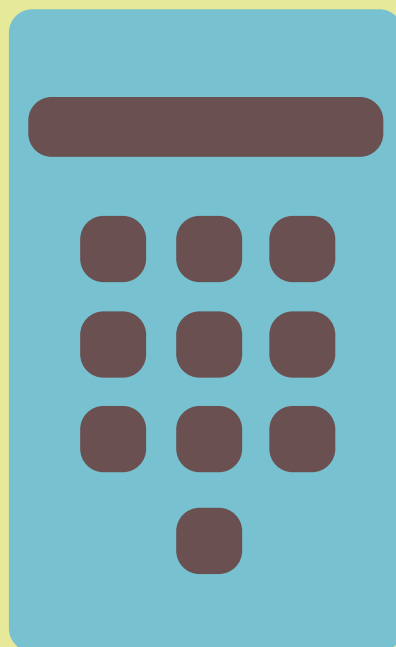
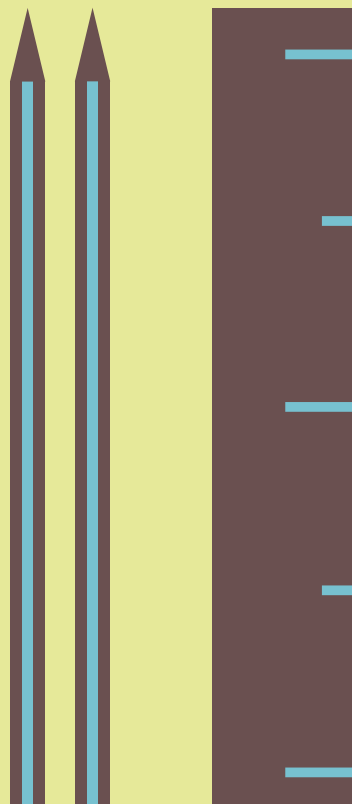
As in the primary school, you will receive regular updates from your child's form tutor. Aside from the school reports, you will receive a daily email, detailing the classes your child has taken and any homework requirements for that day. Your child will also have a planner to record homework; **this will need to be signed by you on a weekly basis.**

### After school activities and lunchtime activities

Taking part in after school activities (ASAs) is a great way of getting to know more students in the School. Whether it is in the school play, the computer club or on the playing field, each student should find activities which they enjoy. Taking part in such activities builds confidence; they get to mix with other students from other years, and as a result, they settle into the school environment a lot quicker. Students should be encouraged, from both home and school, to try out new activities. Even if they do not know what the activity entails, students should be encouraged to try practically everything available through the school.

### Residentials and Trips

Every year, students in Secondary take part in a week-long residential trip. These residentials give Year 7 students the opportunity to work in a completely different environment, with different types of people. It enables them to challenge themselves and create a strong bond with other students and teachers.

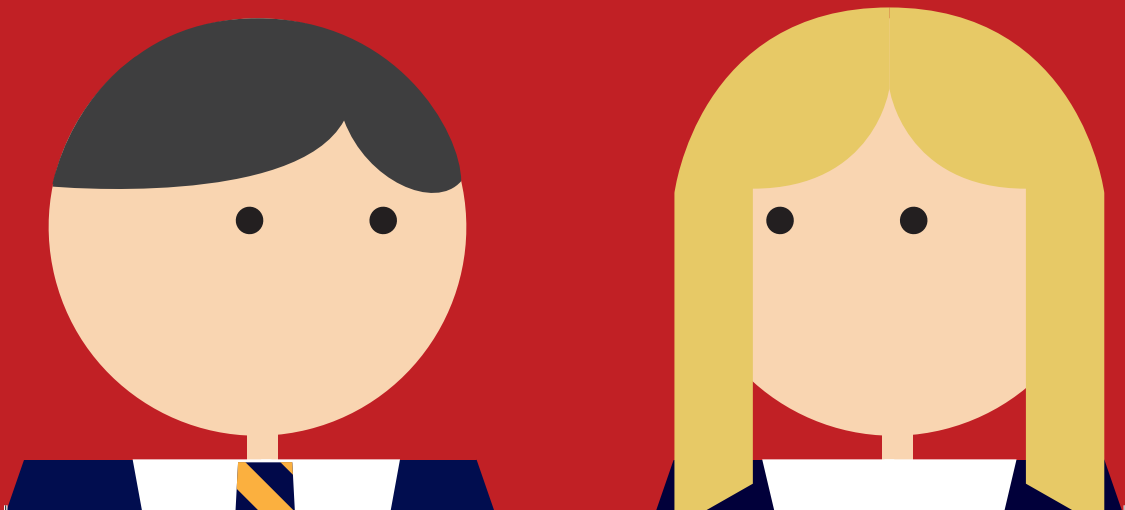


## SUPPORT NETWORK: PEER 2 PEER (P2P PROGRAMME)

As previously mentioned, most children take the transition from primary school to secondary school in their stride. In our secondary school our students are supported by their Form Tutor, the pastoral care system and our P2P Programme.

Our P2P Programme consists of a group of students who are responsible for the transition and settling in of any new students. All new students are put into contact initially by email with a member of the P2P Programme. This will be followed up by a presentation at school. Our P2P students will be a friendly face for the first days of school. Many of these students your child may already know and recognize as a previous student of the school.

As parents, we can often feel a little helpless – our role is to be supportive, interested and encouraging. If you have any concerns about your child, the advice is to contact us.





JOSH KWAK

## A SANLITUN STUDENT'S TRANSFER UP TO SECONDARY

Last year, I came to Beijing with my family. My first school was BSB Sanlitun, which is small and has only two classes in Year 6, but actually I like it. The atmosphere was so friendly and warm, like a family feeling, that I can remember all the people's names. But, now I'm in BSB Shunyi and there are also good things.

The first one is the facilities. It's much bigger than BSB Sanlitun. There are lots of Music rooms, Art rooms, a Gym. Also, they have a DT classroom. What is more, I can choose lots of different food, e.g. Western station, Italian station, Asian station and the sandwich station. Also on Wednesdays, there is a special menu in the Italian station like Mexican day, French day, Korean day...like that.

The second one is students. Lots of students means lots of friends. Lots of friends means a never-boring school life. Sometimes just watching a lot of students in a big, beautiful campus gives me pride. That is so good.

The third one is teachers. There are different subject teachers, like English teachers, DT teachers, Art teachers and a Drama teacher etc. Also the teachers are very kind and they will take care of you a lot. If I did a mistake, they help me a lot.

The last one is atmosphere. The students all concentration on studying, so I can concentrate on studying. That is really helpful to become a great learner.

I'm very pleased to introduce my school life in BSB Shunyi with good teachers and good friends. I want to be a great student in BSB Shunyi.



GEORGE BOURNE

## A SHUNYI STUDENT TALKS ABOUT TRANSITION DAY

Hello! My name is George Bourne and I am going to talk to you about my Transition Day last year. I was really interested to find out what Secondary School was like.

First we went to a science lesson. We had to make parachutes for our eggs. My partners were Joseph and Ibrahim. Sadly, when we tested our parachute, the egg fell off the holder and splat - the test failed!

After science, we did D.T. (Design and Technology). In D.T., we made lots of things on the computers such as aliens and our own planets! Lunch was followed by tug of war! The teams were the houses and boys versus girls.

The day made me feel a bit sad because some of my friends would be leaving the school and the country; they would not be with me next year. Nevertheless, I can keep in touch by Skype. I think that Transition Day is very helpful for students so they can feel what it will be like next year. I like Transition Day!





SARAH QIU

## A SHUNYI STUDENT'S TRANSFER UP TO SECONDARY

Hi my name is Sarah Qiu and I am a Year 7 student. I joined The British School of Beijing two-and-a-half years ago from a local school - Shijia Hutong Primary School.

I have been in Secondary for more than two months now and I found that there are many similarities as well as differences between Primary and Secondary. There are some really big changes in Secondary, such as:

1. There is more homework to do. In Primary, we usually only have homework on Friday. Now we have homework everyday. Sometimes I have to work and stay up late to get the day's job done.
2. There are more classrooms to go to. In Primary, the same tutor would teach us different subjects in the same classroom for the entire year, except Maths. Now, while we have the same Form Tutor, we rush from one classroom to another after each class, learning various lessons from different teachers. I always ask myself to be more organised and try to be punctual so that I don't get any detention!

While life has been absolutely busier since Secondary school began, it has been of more substance. I like Secondary, because I feel I am being treated as if I am an adult.

"IF WE DON'T CHANGE, WE DON'T GROW.  
IF WE DON'T GROW, WE AREN'T REALLY LIVING."

- GAIL SHEEHY

A teal background with a central notebook, several white Polaroid-style photos, and yellow paper scraps with blue dotted lines. A red ribbon is tied around the bottom left of the notebook. The notebook has a dark brown spine and a light green cover with the text 'BSB MEMORIES' written in a simple, hand-drawn font.

BSB MEMORIES



THE BRITISH SCHOOL  
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