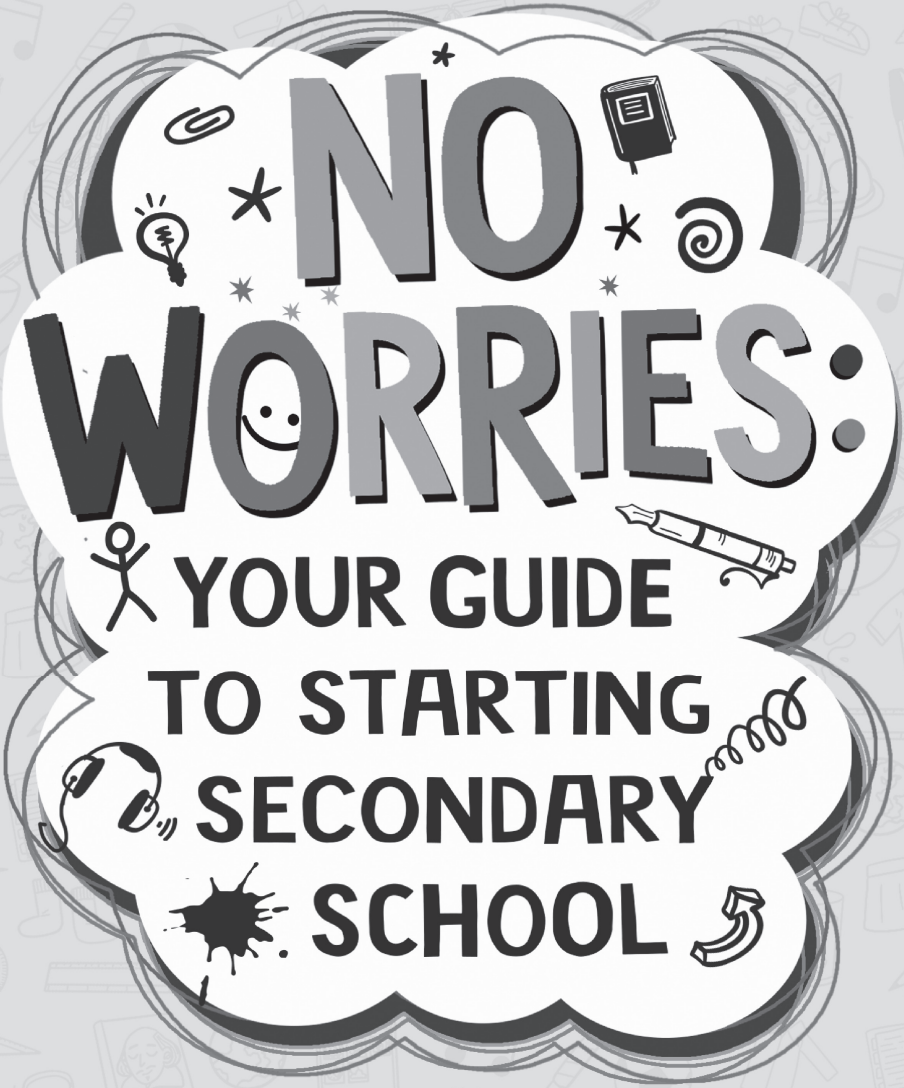


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1 Going up!

Going up to secondary school is like going on safari – it's a great adventure but sometimes, before you go, you can get a touch of the 'what ifs'.

Worries are a natural part of every new adventure. Some people handle them better than others, and some people hide them better, but everyone has them – and that's good because worries are nature's way of making you prepare.





One way of preparing is by getting information

This book is full of information about going up to secondary school. It covers all the most common worries. If you're the sort of person who doesn't like change, you might have quite a lot of worries. If you love a challenge, you probably won't. If you're a pessimist who always expects things to go wrong, you might feel very worried, but if you're an optimist your worries will probably be quite mild.

The particular things you might be worried about will also depend on what type of person you are, for instance:



- If you're a shy person, you might be worried about making new friends.
- If you haven't got much money, you might be worried about having the right stuff.
- If you've got big brothers and sisters, you probably won't be so bothered about bullying.
- If you're a whiz at map reading you won't have to worry about getting lost.

Going up to secondary school is a big step. Most secondary schools are huge; they have tons of teachers, busloads of bigger kids and weird rules you don't know anything about. If you're worried – don't worry! It's only natural.

Use your worries to show you what information you need. When you've got it, the worries will have served their purpose, and then they will just fade away.

Do the Quick Tick Quiz to see if this book can help.

Quick Tick Quiz

When I think about going up to secondary school, I sometimes wonder (tick the relevant boxes)...

- ☐ **1**. What if I've got the wrong stuff?
- ☐ **2**. What if I get lost?
- ☐ **3**. What if the school cook puts poison in the chips?
- ☐ **4**. What if I don't fit in?
- ☐ **5**. What if pigs could fly?*
- ☐ **6**. What if the older kids are horrible to me?
- ☐ **7**. What if the teachers are scary?
- ☐ **8**. What if I can't do the work?
- ☐ **9**. What if someone crossed a chicken with a cement mixer?**
- ☐ **10**. What if I get into trouble?



*The price of bacon would go up. **They'd get a bricklayer.

RESULTS

If you ticked number 3 – You've been watching too many scary movies - read on to get real.

If you ticked numbers 5 or 9 – you've got a short attention span but you like a laugh – read on for the jokes.

If you ticked any of numbers 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 or 10 – you need some information. Read on!

2 What if... I've got the wrong stuff?

Obviously, when you go up to secondary school you want to look OK and not like a nerd. Well, then uniform is your friend! Almost all secondary schools have a uniform, and you can check out the details of yours on the school's website or in its brochure.



There are three things that aren't usually covered by uniform rules – coats, shoes and bags. Schools usually specify no boots or trainers but, beyond that, they just say these items should be 'sensible' or 'suitable'. Which isn't really a lot of help.

How to get the right coat, shoes and bag

Why are football stars so cool?
Because they've got lots of fans!

They've also got lots of money – unlike most kids at secondary school. You don't need to spend a fortune to fit in, but it's worth investing a bit of time in doing some research.

Big brothers and sisters – your own or somebody else's – can be a useful source of information. Notice what they wear to school. If you get on well with them, ask their advice. (This is probably not a good idea if you don't get on well.)



Go and watch the big kids when they come out of school. Check out their choice of shoes, coats and bags – but be discreet! Take one of your mates and stand at a bus stop nearby as if you're waiting for a bus, or sit in a café on the high street, or go secondary-student-spotting in the local shopping centre. Ideally, do it a couple of times, in different weather conditions.

Sometimes parents get it into their heads that everyone at secondary school will be wearing 'sensible lace-ups'. If the kids at your secondary school aren't, take your parents secondary-student-spotting with you so that they can see for themselves.

KIT **TIP**



Remember that your parents have already had to cough up the cash for your uniform. Don't give them a hard time if they recoil at buying the most expensive trainers. When you've done the research, you'll see you don't need them, and they're probably against the rules anyway.

What's in the bag?

You can check out the best sort of bag by simply noticing what the big kids have – but what about the stuff that's inside the bag? On the first day, you'll just need a pencil



case, plus any items the school suggests, such as a pocket dictionary for the foreign language you'll be studying. You might also want to put in a snack, in case lunchtime at your new school is much later than you're used to. Your school might use a cashless system for lunch money, that your parents can top up online, but if there are any problems, you can always go along to the office – they'll make sure you don't go hungry.



Don't take more money than you need to for bus fares, etc. Most schools don't like students bringing in cartloads of cash! A lot of schools aren't keen on mobile phones either, and have strict rules about them, which usually include:

- Phones should not be seen or heard during the school day.
- Headphones should not be seen either. (It's hard trying to explain the human digestive system to someone who's blasting hip-hop.)
- Portable speakers – absolutely not!



Phones are rarely stolen at school but they can go missing, and if you lose yours, that will be your responsibility.

WATER TIP

If you take a bottle of water to school, make sure you screw the lid on properly. Research shows that 100% of students soak all the books in their bag at least once in the course of their school career.

The pencil case

You're going to need a good-sized pencil case because some or all of these things will have to fit into it (your new school will say on its website exactly what they want you to bring):

- pens
- pencils (plain and coloured)
- highlighters
- geometry set
- pocket calculator (even if you already know how many pockets you've got!)
- eraser (What did the eraser say to the pencil? 'Take me to your ruler...')
- ruler!



