Although we don’t want Christmas and the holidays to come and go too quickly, our minds do tend to wander to next year. This is true of the children too. Questions like – Which grade will I be in next year? Who will be my teacher? Which friends will I be with? Will the work be hard next year? – all run through their minds at some stage. For our Year 6’s the uncertainties of moving on to Secondary school raise even more questions – However will I work out that timetable? Will I get homework every day? Will I get a detention? Whether it’s moving from Kindergarten to Prep, Year 6 to Year 7 or moving up to the next grade in Primary school, each of these transitions involves students’ expectations and concerns – leaving one location & settling into another, leaving old friends, making new friends and continuing learning and development.

How we help our children prepare for and manage these transitions will influence whether or not the transition is a positive and successful experience. An attention to making the transition an exciting challenge, can ensure that students remain engaged with their learning. The holidays, when there is time to chat, can be a good time to begin the process. Kids are surprisingly resilient when it comes to change and for the vast majority of children transitions throughout their school life happen smoothly. However for some it is not an easy process. Instead of it being a time excitedly anticipated, it becomes a time of anxiety and fear.

How can we help our kids to feel comfortable and happy about their transitions? What can we do to help ourselves to feel the same? Perhaps some of the tips below may be useful to answer these questions.

Our ORIENTATION DAY is tomorrow - they may also be helpful in the lead up to that.

**KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS**

- Let them know you care. **Listen** to their concerns but also **reinforce their ability** to cope on their own.
- **Talk about the positives**; what are the good things about being in a different grade with different people.
- Children absorb their parent’s anxiety, so **model optimism and confidence** for your child.
- **Encourage them to talk** about their feelings but **don’t dwell on all the negatives**. Kids can have a knack of making their parents think that the **whole day was terrible** when really it might only have been ‘a bit bad for 5 minutes’.
- **IT’S NOT ALL ABOUT THE KIDS…**
- **Freeze a few easy dinners**. It will be much easier on you if you have dinner prepared so that meal preparation will not add to household tensions during the first week of school.