

Secondary School

Zekeriyaköy Mahallesi, Kilyos Caddesi No: 227/1,2 Sarıyer-İstanbul

Tel: +90 212 202 7027 Ext 111/112

+90 212 202 7709 Ext 111/112

Fax +90 212 202 7796

@bisistanbul.org



23rd May 2016

Year 6 Parent Transition Pack

Dear Parents,

The transition programme at BISI has begun! This is an exciting time for your child as they make the leap from primary to secondary school. The purpose of this letter is to let you know what to expect over the coming weeks and inform you of some important dates for your diary.

Before their Swim Gala on **Wednesday 1st June**, I will have a relaxed meeting with all year 6 students in the Zek amphitheatre. It will be nice for students from both campuses to meet and share their questions and queries at this time. I plan to meet with Etiler parents at the City Coffee Morning on **Thursday 2nd June**. The following day, **Friday 3rd June**, I will meet with Zek parents at our Zek coffee morning.

2 weeks later, on **Thursday 16th – Friday 17th June**, your children will spend two days following a secondary school timetable, meeting some of their new teachers and getting used to the layout and rules of their new environment. Etiler transportation details will follow shortly. Generally, these remain as normal with students coming to school by private driver or AZAL buses with pick up points/times changing to match the secondary's 08.50 start.

The transition programme also includes 2 wonderful trips. The year 6 Cappadocia trip from **Monday 20th – Friday 24th June** looks at building responsibility, learning self-management skills and sets the scene of what to expect in terms of 'year 7 level' instructions. The year 7 Gallipoli trip in the new academic year, **Monday 3rd – Friday 7th October**, focuses more on team-building, the advantages of collaboration with the new mix of students in the classes and 'getting to know' your form tutors. This is an exciting time for your child and we hope they enjoy all of the transition experiences.

I have had the pleasure of knowing, and in Zek, teaching all of the current year 6. They are a wonderful bunch of individuals with an amazing range of characters coming through that are bound to challenge, delight and terrify our secondary staff! It is with a heavy heart that I inform you all that I will not be coordinating KS3 in the new academic year. This role goes to Miss Penelope James who will be working with me throughout the transition process from now until the end of the school year. I hope you all support Penelope as you have done with me and wish her every success in her new post.

Penelope and I hope that the transition experience serves as a worthwhile introduction to our 'secondary ways'. We look forward to meeting you at the upcoming coffee mornings and in the event that you cannot make it, we have attached a 'guide to secondary school' to this letter. Alternatively you can email me or Penelope should you have any immediate questions or queries.

Kind regards,
Carolynne Bell



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Transition Information for Parents 2016

As well as the June coffee mornings, Penelope will meet with parents in the new school year (September 2016) so that you can discuss any concerns or queries in person and also welcome any new parents to our community. In the meantime, I hope this list eases your minds and helps you and your child prepare for the move to KS3.

1. School uniform

The school uniform policy is the same as in primary: school polo shirt, navy blue skirt / trousers and plain black shoes (a plain black sports shoe is also acceptable but these must be changed for PE). PE kit is a white BISI t-shirt and plain navy blue shorts. House shirts may only be worn at house events. In the winter, tights should be plain black or blue and any layered clothing must be white and worn under the school polo shirt. It is important that the outermost layer of clothing shows the school logo.

We limit jewelry to one piece for secondary students (a bracelet or a necklace) and we also allow small earrings. Make up should not be worn.

2. School Email Addresses and Contacting Teachers with Complaints

Every student is given a BISI email address in the first week of term. We expect these to be used for all school related communication and checked daily. The format is, [studentsfirstandsecondname\(with no space between\)@bisistanbul.org](mailto:studentsfirstandsecondname(with no space between)@bisistanbul.org) with access passwords being issued in September.

Teacher emails are in the format: fristinitial.surname@bisistanbul.org

If you have concerns/complaints, we ask that contact be made through the Key Stage Coordinator (Penelope) or the Dean of Students (Ms. Sandra Scotland). Please do not email individual teachers or a group of teachers, especially in matters that may cause contention. Using just one contact (the KS3C), means we can monitor communication, disperse it where appropriate and in many cases, clarify and diffuse problems quickly. If the matter you have is purely departmental or isolated to one particular classroom incident and you prefer to email the particular Head of Department directly, we also request that the KS3 Coordinator be CC'd/BCC'd in. This keeps us in the loop and allows us to effectively monitor your child's progress and intervene with help if necessary.

Please, please share good news too! Positive mails are much appreciated. If your child is successful in an event / tournament outside school, please let us know so that we are able to share and celebrate their success with others.



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3. Form Tutors & The Start of Day

Students begin the day in form classes from 08.50 – 09.00. Students are expected to be in school no later than 08.45, giving them 5 mins to prepare their learning materials and get to form rooms for a prompt 08.50 start. Form time is a short but important 10 min slot. Form tutors check and monitor attendance, ensure homework diaries are signed and uniform is correct. They also read the daily bulletin to students and when the time comes to choose after school and Friday activities, they sign students up with their preferred option. Please let the form tutors know of any absences in advance, where possible, and in the case of illness / injury please send them in any medical notes or reasoning so that these may be recorded.

The **daily bulletin** contains messages from teachers about events and activities going on each week. It is updated daily so it is essential that students get in to the habit of seeking out and reading this document. A copy is also posted outside Ms. Scotland's office should students need to remind themselves of its content at any time. The bulletin contains information about team sport trials, school trips, student council meetings.....everything!

4. Lockers

Your child will be assigned a locker. Where possible, we will try to have these located next to their form class but logistically, this is not always possible. We recommend that lockers be secured with a number-coded padlock. Students are asked to email themselves their number code just in case they forget it.

Students are expected to visit lockers at the following times only:

| | |
|-------|--|
| 08.45 | Drop bags and collect learning materials for lessons 1 & 2 |
| 11.00 | Return 1 & 2's learning materials and go to break |
| 11.20 | Collect learning materials for lessons 3 & 4 |
| 13.05 | Return 3 & 4's learning materials and go to lunch |
| 13.45 | Collect learning materials for lessons 5 & 6 |
| 15.30 | Clear locker for the day and collect school bag |

Students are not permitted to carry bags around the school nor should they be visiting lockers between or during lessons. Students are expected to be prepared in advance which means organisation of their time and learning materials is a vital skill that they are expected to develop quickly.

5. Homework Diaries (HWDs) and Homework

The HWDs are the first step to ensuring personal organisation skills are developed and clear lines of communication are open. Parents are expected to sign these diaries



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at the end of each week, ensuring all homework issued for that week has been completed on time (or before the deadline, if possible). There is space in the diary for you to write notes and make comments that can be shown to class / form teachers. Feedback is appreciated.

Student diaries should not be blank!

The suggested guideline in secondary is that students do approximately 1.5h of homework / revision each night. This translates to 15 mins of study per subject per day. If homework is not formally issued, students are expected to use the time to revise and reinforce what they have learned and perhaps do some consolidation / extension work of their own. Rather than record homework in the space available, students can write the main lesson objectives to revise instead.

When homework is formally issued, this is rarely expected to be submitted the following day unless it is a short (15min) task; spelling lists / sentences for English, necessary repetition of Modern Foreign Language vocabulary, a short Math question sheet etc.

In most cases students have 2-7 days to complete tasks which may take from 15 mins to 2 hours or more for project-type work. Time management is a key skill. Please be reminded that we have 2 ICT suites and a school library that are open during breaks and lunch times. Students may use these areas to complete homework in school time if they prefer. We appreciate that students have many after school commitments and that some may prefer to set aside study / homework time at weekends instead. Either way, we ask that parents support the school by regularly checking and signing HWDs and frequently engaging in discussions at home surrounding what your child has learned or is learning. Adjusting to the demands of secondary school can be tough but managing their time is key to a finding a healthy school-work-life balance.

6. Student Responsibility & Parent-Teacher Communication

This is undoubtedly the biggest change. We do expect that your child 'steps up' from their first day in year 7. Proper use of their homework diary, proactively reading the daily bulletin, initiating learning discussions with parents at home, organising their own personal study timetable.... These are all ways in which students can build and develop Self-Management skills.

In primary there is one teacher for approximately 18 students so communication is simpler and students and parents often rely heavily on that specific class teacher for reminders and information. In secondary, your child will see 7 teachers every day. As you can imagine, communicating with everyone is a little more complicated for students and staff alike. Please also be reminded that class teachers in secondary can teach up to 15 different students every hour so it is not possible for them to regularly



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email specific parents or students, let alone individuals. It is for this reason that students are expected to be proactive and responsible for listening to and recording in their diaries, any information they are given and more importantly, sharing this at home.

If students feel they are falling behind or do not understand lesson content or a piece of homework, **we expect the students to communicate directly with the class teacher** in the first instance either verbally or via email. If students lack the confidence to do so, they can ask Penelope for help. We appreciate that it is tough at first but please where possible, please allow and encourage your child to solve their own problems and seek out the best course of action independently. This will help them build valuable life skills such as communication and problem solving.

To support their child, parents are encouraged to read all of the newsletters and pay close attention to the School Calendar which is posted on our school website (you can also find all current and archived letters here too as well as copied of all handbooks and school policies). The school calendar is extremely detailed and you can see an overview of the whole year's events, competitions, parent's evenings and all sorts! If any new event is organised a letter will be emailed to you by Mrs. Helen Kiran (Communications). Please check your spam accounts as sometimes school emails end up here. If you are not getting school emails, please contact Helen to let her know.

7. Friday Activities and After School Clubs

Ms. Nursena Kamas (Activities Coordinator) will send out a list of Friday Activities to all form tutors on the first week of school. These options are also displayed outside Nursena's room. Students are given approximately one week to choose their activities and once done, these are not changeable. Friday activities take place during lessons 5 & 6 on a Friday afternoon and are aimed at promoting extra-curricular skills. These are mandatory sessions and although they are relaxed, they serve a special purpose in helping students develop a range of life and social skills. Please encourage them to talk about their option with you at home and make sure they pick activities that they can commit to and will enjoy.

The after school club list follows in week 2 of the new term. Again, students write down the activities they are interested in, discuss these with you at home and sign up in form time when that decision has been made. Any students staying for an after school club **MUST** sign and return a permission for to Nursena so that she may book a late bus for students on the relevant days and so that we have accurate records of who is on campus in case of an emergency. The school calendar clearly shows when the club cycles start and end (in primary clubs ran for 6 weeks per term, in secondary they are much longer).



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8. Electronic Devices and Mobile Phones

These are to be on silent mode and not used during school hours unless a teacher allows it for educational purposes. Therefore, a phone can be on your person but it is to remain out of sight. Any student wishing to contact parents are directed to the secretary to make any outgoing calls. If using personal mobiles to make and receive calls, this should be done at reception or in a closed classroom, out of sight. Students walking around blatantly using phones or wearing head phones and listening to music while wandering around campus, are likely to have these items confiscated. Please be aware that any personal property brought in to the school is at students own risk. School will not be held responsible for loss, damage or theft.

Finally, in the first few weeks there will be mistakes and your child may encounter a little stress. Homework's will be missed, wrong books will be packed in bags, students will forget things in lockers.....this is all perfectly normal. Failing and making mistakes is part of the learning process. Personally, I tend to allow students from the start of term until the half term break to settle in and adjust (approximately 8 weeks). Some students have no problems and simply get on with it from the outset, some rise to the challenge and exceed their own expectations and others find the process rather daunting, requiring reassurance and a little extra support.

In my experience, parents find the transition process more frightening than their children! This is understandable, your children are 'growing up' and it can be scary and worrying at times. However, please remember that your children are excited, enthusiastic and eager to get to secondary school so let's work together to support them on their way and maintain the positive energy that they exude.

Thank you for taking the time to read this pack. I do hope you have found it useful. If you have any suggestions to add to this page, to help next year's parents, please let myself or Penelope know. If for some reason you cannot attend the coffee morning but have some questions or queries, please contact me by email or phone. Alternatively, you can arrange by email to visit me at the Zek campus between now and the 30th June. All my contact details are on this letterhead.

For those who will be available for coffee, Penelope and I look forward to meeting you in person.

Kind regards,

Carolynne Bell
(KS3 Coordinator)



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