

Dear future AGGS student,

I hope your looking forward to starting AGGS. I know it's probably extra scary for you because you don't have an induction day, but I thought I would give you some advice for starting out at AGGS that will make things a lot easier. After reading this, I hope you feel a lot more prepared and comforted. Just remember, everyone's in the same boat.

Clubs

First of all, I recommend joining clubs. Through joining a club, you'll meet lots of new people and hopefully make lots of new friends. Don't join too many because you don't want to be too busy and overwhelmed. Try and join a club that is something you're interested in or something you find fun, that way you'll have common interests with the other people from the club.

Homework

At primary school, you generally don't get set a lot of homework compared to high school. So, try to do your homework the night it's set, that way you can stay on top of it and be more organised. When you start at AGGS, you'll be given a planner. In this, you can write down your homework and timetable. I strongly recommend using this to its full advantages: keep track of homework, knowing when and where all your classes are, knowing when tests are and what you need to study for them. The planner will help you SO much, so I really encourage you to use it.

Bags and Books

At AGGS, you have 16 subjects. For each of these you have an exercise book. Because there are so many books, I would recommend decorating them to make each unique. That way, it makes it easier to differentiate them from each other. When it comes to packing bags, I strongly advise that you pack your bag the night before. You will probably have heard this a lot, but this really does help. There have been multiple times that I have not packed my bag the night before and have forgotten a book. To prevent this from happening, the best solution is to pack it the night before.

If you do happen to forget a book, don't worry. Within the first month, most teachers are quite lenient about this and it happens to everyone so don't worry about it. Also, to keep your books in good condition, I suggest backing them with some sticky back plastic. However, I'm sure that your teachers will already tell you this.

Your bags and lockers

In year 7, you will have a heavy bag. Almost every year 7 has a heavy bag at the start of the year. This is because you probably won't find the best way to carry around all your books. So, don't put too much stuff in your bag. You don't need fancy pens and highlighters, even though everyone else does. And you want to get a bag that is big enough, but not too big.

I found that the best way to carry your books is to only bring the books you have for that day. If you carry around ALL your books, it's going to be extremely hard to carry. So only bring the books you need for *that day*. Also, instead of leaving your books in your lockers all the time, I suggest leaving them at home. This way, when you get set homework, you have everything you need at home with you and you don't have to carry lots of books home.

At AGGS, you are given 2 lockers. A locker for just you, where you leave your bag at lunch and a sports locker where you leave your hockey stick, tennis racket and PE bag. For your normal locker, I'd advise for you to only use that for putting you bag in at lunch. If you use it for anything else, you'll find yourself constantly going back and forth, and when you don't know the school that well, this can take a long time. So, the best thing to do is only use it to put your bag in at lunch.

Sports Equipment

You generally have quite a lot of sports kit at AGGS, and if you carry it all around with you, it won't be easy. I kept all my sports kit at home – including my hockey stick and tennis racket - and then on days where I had PE or dance, I would only bring in the kit that I needed for that activity. If you do this, you will find yourself carrying less stuff and your life will be a lot easier.

I hoped that this letter will help you out and now you have a few tips and tricks up your sleeve. Don't be worried about starting school; I wasn't in a form with any of my friends and within 2 days, I already has a new great group of friends. Be yourself and don't be afraid to ask questions. Good luck with starting AGGS and I really hope you enjoy it.

From Poppy