



10 | 2 | 11

Preparing year 10 students for  
year 11 and beyond

# Parent/Carer Guide



“Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you **didn't** do than by the things you **did** do. So sail away from the safe harbour. **Explore, Dream, Discover.**”

Mark Twain

# The Challenge Ahead

Your child is about to enter not just year 11, but several years of transition as they prepare to live as an independent adult. This adjustment is not a quick journey, it is a process where teenagers discover who they are and who they want to be as the law and parents/guardians slacken the rules appropriately. There are new experiences ahead as they embrace everything from learning to drive, getting an Apprenticeship, going to Sixth Form or College, to alcohol and moving out of home in due course.

As parents we know that there are many joys coming for them, but there are also many pitfalls and both school and home need to help students prepare strong sails and rigging as they get ready for leaving the harbour of home. Just as you carefully encouraged your son or daughter to cross the road at an appropriate age, so they now need guidance to become confident in all areas of young adulthood. They will need resilience, initiative, financial awareness, communication skills and a dose of healthy independence to avoid the dangers that can lead to poor physical or mental health.

*“Character and resilience are the qualities, the inner resources that we call on to get us through the frustrations and setbacks that are part and parcel of life.”*



**Rt Hon Damian Hinds, former Education Secretary**

At Dene Magna, your son or daughter has already started their journey of independence as they have explored work experience relevant to their own career path in year 10. At the start of the year we asked them to arrange their own placement and take responsibility for choosing when that should be, including catching up on work if necessary.

Now at the end of the year your son or daughter will be doing one of two things during the week of **3rd – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024** depending on whether they have already been on/arranged their work experience. If they have already been on work experience (which most of them have), we would like them to spend the 3 days undertaking our renowned '10 | 2 | 11' life skills program.



# 10 | 2 | 11

*Learning life skills*

You may have already introduced your son or daughter to public transport, the kitchen cooker or the joys of ironing, but for many year 10s, there are many skills yet to be tried. How about reading a timetable to catch a train, speaking to a stranger on the phone to request information, or preparing a financial budget for moving out?

By working alongside the Department For Education, the Education Endowment Foundation, STEM Network and charities like Young Minds, we have identified a list of key skills necessary for year 11 and beyond.

- **Communication skills**
- **Financial awareness**
- **Creativity**
- **Responsibility**
- **Taking Risks**
- **Planning and organisation**
- **Social skills**
- **Time management**
- **Hygiene**
- **Domestic skills**

So at the point of transition between year 10 and 11, all students will be given a list of **challenges** to complete before they start year 11 in September. They have been designed to be achievable, practical and fun, but will develop these key 'soft skills' in your child to prepare them for the years ahead. They will also be a trigger for parents to consider how you will continue to encourage that crucial independence in years to come, as your child is prepared to set sail.

Some challenges are to be done alone, whilst others require team work. Some will be at home, and some are definitely outdoors. Most will need parental input or guidance from you in some form, so we hope you will value this initiative and join us in helping your child prepare for life. We will ask you to sign off each task so that you know what they are working on next. For students doing work experience between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5th July 2024, they can attempt these challenges at their leisure during the summer.

“You fail to recognise Harry that it matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be”.

Dumbledore in 'Harry Potter and the goblet of fire'

# Student Challenges

## 1. Communication

**Phone** at least one university (which offers a course you may one day have an interest in) and ask for a prospectus to be sent to you in the post. Alternatively, **phone** the National Apprenticeship Helpline (0800 015 0400) and ask for advice on where to start looking for jobs/placements next year.



You may have to talk them through what to say to start a verbal conversation on a phone. It can be daunting. They may appreciate a 'mock' phone call first using a family member on a mobile in another room etc. You may also need to encourage them to look online at University courses to find a suitable place to contact.

Sites like <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/courses> (or a library) can help identify places of study. Please ensure that they use the phone rather than email or a web form. The skill needed is confidence on a phone rather than staying 'safe' behind a keyboard.

## 2. Financial Awareness & Budgeting

Use a contactless card (with parental supervision), research opening a bank account, and prepare a financial budget for living alone.



You will need to support your son or daughter with this task, as they may need to be with you as you pay for something. You may want to open a bank account if they've not done so already (it will need an appointment and lots of ID). Students will be provided with a blank budget template but will probably have little idea of the cost of utilities, food, insurance etc. if living alone.

You will need to spend time going through your own experiences, and remember to use a sensible income for their chosen career. You can visit [www.reed.co.uk/average-salary](http://www.reed.co.uk/average-salary) (or a library) for average incomes for different jobs. We've asked them to use basic maths to account for tax (x 0.7 to account for tax) and a lower starting income in their career (x 0.6 for starter salary).

### 3. Creativity

Spend at least 2 hours reading a book, watch a thoughtful movie that you've not seen before, and take a 'reflective' photo of yourself (not a selfie).



Not much parental support needed for this one, apart from supplying a book or an appropriate movie. The film could be a classic like *The Wizard of Oz* or *Gone with the Wind*, or thoughtful like *Chariots of Fire*, *Apollo 13*, *Wonder* or *The boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. Maybe encourage a 'no make-up' picture?

### 4. Responsibility

Do at least 1 hour of volunteering. Pick up litter, serve in a charity shop etc. Do at least one random act of kindness - offer to carry shopping for someone, allow a person in a queue with only a small item to go in front of you, or offer to walk a neighbour's dog.



A sense of contribution to society may not be the first thing that you think your son or daughter needs, but it is important for them to play a role that has responsibility attached. Please make sure that they do this safely and during daylight – we don't want them knocking on a stranger's door! If you plan to leave them with adults in a shop for example, you need to confirm that the adult is approved to work with children.

### 5. Independence skills

Plan and cook a hot meal for your whole family. It must be a balanced meal requiring either the oven or hob (or both) and not just pizza or a microwave meal!



Get them to plan a meal (considering ease of cooking, cost and nutritional value if possible). You'll probably need to supervise some if not all of the purchasing and cooking, but please make sure they know enough about hobs/ovens to stay safe. You may want to push the boat out and ask them to bake a dessert too!

## 6. Planning & Organisation

Use online tools to plan a weekend away in Disneyland Paris. Investigate transport, hotel options and don't forget the cost of tickets and food.



A holiday is a special time that needs organisation for it to succeed. Your son or daughter will have been given a template to complete, so please encourage them to research costs and travel times of all modes of transport. Get them to use tools like Google Maps to plan the route and manage travel times. Using the internet to find and gather facts is a crucial skill for them

## 7. Risk

Try at least one food **and** one activity that you've not tried before.



Please consider buying a food item or two that you normally wouldn't. Calamari? Crab? Goose? Avocado? Ask your son or daughter to research places where those foods are normal. For a new activity they could play football at the park maybe, go swimming (they ideally should be able to swim) or attend a youth club perhaps. Something out of the house preferably.

## 8. Public Transport

Use public transport to meet up in town with friends. If possible, meet in Gloucester by bus then catch a train together to Cheltenham.



For Further Education, Apprenticeships or University life, students will need to be comfortable catching buses and trains. Please make sure they are safe, maybe giving 'emergency money' and checking that they have a working mobile with them. If they miss a bus/train, if safe to do so, don't bail them out by picking them up – let them wait for the next one!

## 9. Domestic Skills

Put on a load of washing in the washing machine and iron a shirt (or two). Tidy and Hoover a room, and clean a bathroom.



These domestic challenges will give students an appreciation for university or solo living, and may need your input. Show them safe use of an iron, and how to use the washing machine. Introduce them to anti-bacterial wipes and rubber gloves! This really is an important challenge, and you may want to use this as a lead into make-up and shaving discussions! We've also suggested (if you're happy) that they try mowing the lawn, using a drill and hammer, painting a wall or putting up a tent!

## 10. Socialising & Fun

In groups, how much fun can you have with £10 each? The team must agree how to spend it to maximise the fun level!



This is probably best combined with the task of meeting up in town, but it is a fun way of encouraging negotiation and teamwork. Maybe a movie? Ten pin bowling? Crazy Golf? A meal together?

### **Super-Challenge (only if you are really happy...)**!

Instead of challenge 10, by negotiating with public transport providers ahead of time, how far can you get away from school with £10?



This is an option only if you feel your son/daughter can handle this challenge. You will need to confirm and be happy whatever 'deal' they are offered by bus or rail companies, but they must be safe at all times. Probably best to stay in the UK, even if offered flights!

# Preparing for stormy waters



The best way that we can prepare year 11 students (and beyond) to cope emotionally with the many decisions and challenges ahead is by providing experiences and boundaries within a safe environment. That starts ideally before a storm hits. Your son or daughter may soon be (or is now) navigating choppy waters of handling pressure, personal confidence and identity along with social issues of alcohol use and partying. That's in addition to making choices about their post-GCSE destination.

If you will permit us to share our experiences from both school and our own families, we would like to offer the following suggestions:

- Think beforehand how you (and your spouse/partner) will handle various situations. As parent figures, agree on what is acceptable or not so you send a consistent message, otherwise you may be played off against each other.
- Consider sitting down calmly ahead of time with your son/daughter to agree boundaries. For some it will be partying issues whilst for others it could be time spent on gaming or maybe relationship issues. Once agreed, it is then easier to enforce them in the heat of the moment. You don't want to be negotiating just before the party starts. Whatever agreements you make, make sure you stick to them, and insist that they stick to them too.
- Find ways in which they can earn your trust – try to find compromise that will give them exposure to the adult world (including responsibility) without putting them in danger. Yes go to the party, but maybe an agreed pick up time? A reward perhaps for a tidy room?
- You may want to consider different 'rules' or 'expectations' during term time and out of term time, or on weekdays versus weekends.
- Don't bail them out of consequences too much! Exploring boundaries safely (along with consequences) is much better than no exploring.

**Together we can keep them safe whilst they develop independence.**

