



St. Lawrence College

The British School in Greece

How Will My Child Develop in **Key Stage Two** (Years 3 to 6)?

A Guide for Parents

Although all children develop at different rates, there are certain areas that develop quickly in each year as they progress through school. Here are some ideas of how your child is developing during Key Stage 2, ways you can support this development, as well as potential pitfalls and how to deal with them.

So what will your child be doing in Key Stage Two? In four short years, you are likely to see your child develop rapidly. In Year 3, they are fresh out of the 'infant' phase of their education and will still seem very young in their approach to life, but by the end of Year 6, they are hovering at the edge of adolescence, puberty is likely to be hitting soon (if it has not already!) and they will be growing in maturity by the day. As your child moves through Key Stage 2, their friends, their school life and social life start to become more and more important to them, and their parents' role at the centre of their world is reduced. They will want and need to become more independent and they will take more responsibility for organising themselves and making decisions.

In Year 3 your child may be:

- keen to have more responsibility and independence
- concerned about what others think of them
- drawn to friends of the same gender
- forgetful occasionally and easily distracted
- likely to have strong feelings about their teacher – these could be good or bad feelings.



In Year 4 your child may be:

- good at making new friends, particularly with children of the same gender
- more secretive and needing more privacy at home
- keen to take part in after-school clubs and activities
- mostly laidback, affectionate, helpful and considerate
- sometimes silly, giggly, rude and demanding.

In Year 5 your child may be:

- wanting to spend most of their time with their friends, who will mostly be of the same gender
- wanting to be more independent and 'grown up' (wanting to be alone, asking to redecorate their bedroom, etc.)
- pushing boundaries at home and testing your patience, and possibly becoming a little rebellious at school also
- usually reliable, truthful and trustworthy, as they begin to better understand the importance of these qualities in relationships
- obsessed with fairness and developing a strong sense of conscience relating to their own personal situation as they continue to negotiate their relationships with friends
- develop an interest in wider issues in the world such as the environment or animal cruelty
- concerned about being accepted by others and finding it very difficult if they are not.



In Year 6 your child may be:

- affectionate towards you, but often unwilling to show this in public
- becoming more selective about friendships, preferring one or two best friends
- still very impressionable and easily influenced by their friends, family and the media
- developing an increasing interest in popular culture (television programmes, music, musicians and fashion)
- needing and requesting more privacy at home, and perhaps becoming more self-conscious about their bodies and changes they are beginning to experience
- developing a strong sense of morality, both with regard to their own personal relationships but also concerning what they see going on in the world around them
- receiving more homework from school, and potentially feeling anxious about end of year 'Cambridge' tests and the transition to high school
- dealing less well with the increased responsibility and need for independent home study habits
- feeling anxious about the move to high school, even if you are staying at St. Lawrence College, and if you are relocating to a completely new environment or moving home, their anxiety levels may be even higher.

How to help your child develop their skills:

- Encourage social opportunities for your child, and support them to work through issues with friends. Social and friendship anxieties can be one of the biggest problems during Upper Key Stage 2 and having a supportive listening ear at home can be of huge benefit to children who are struggling.
- Respect your child's need for privacy but continue to reassure them that you are there to talk if they need you. It is important to create a culture of openness about feelings and emotions at home by sharing some of your own worries and listening to your child's concerns without judgement.

*They may forget
what you **said** but
they will never
forget how you
made them **feel!***

- Keep encouraging independence. Your child will thank you for it when they are at high school. Develop increasing expectations that your child will:
 1. carry out simple chores at home,
 2. remember things they need for school, such as homework and sports kit,
 3. be responsible for their own learning by completing homework independently or doing music practice regularly without needing constant reminders
- Encourage your child to complete homework tasks fully and on time – this will be excellent preparation for high school.
- Encourage your child to talk about social and moral issues and about what is right and wrong. Do not shy away from talking about things that are happening in the world at a level appropriate to your child.
- If your child is rude or confrontational at home, try to deal with them patiently and without confrontation. Talk about why their behaviour is unacceptable but acknowledge the feelings that have led them to behave this way.
- Involve your child in the decisions that are made about their high school, including asking them what they want and need from high school.

Potential pitfalls

Social issues can be one of the main causes of problems in Upper Key Stage 2. Children are becoming acutely aware of social groupings and of their own sense of belonging. They are more aware of what it means to be 'cool' or 'uncool' and are concerned about what people think of them. Children are also becoming more and more aware of how their own academic performance compares to their classmates. By Year 6, children can often become anxious about the move to senior school, and some may also be feeling the pressure of the end of year tests.



During Key Stage 2 it's important to watch out for:

- children becoming withdrawn if they feel anxious or upset
- becoming reluctant to talk about what is bothering them
- signs of stress, such as irrational fears, sleep problems, mood swings, tearfulness or anger. You should also be aware of the signs of body image issues, such as wanting to diet, or to exercise excessively.

We are pleased to inform you that we work with Dr Katingo Hadjipateras Giannoulis, Chartered Clinical Psychologist, when her expertise is called for. She is available by appointment at specific times to meet with parents who have real concerns and are in need of further help. Appointments can be requested through the junior school office.

Here at St. Lawrence College, we are ready and willing to help wherever possible as your child grows and blossoms under our care and yours. We are united in our approach as we help your child navigate the changes that each year brings. Do not hesitate to share with us your concerns whenever we can help.



Ready, respectful and safe!