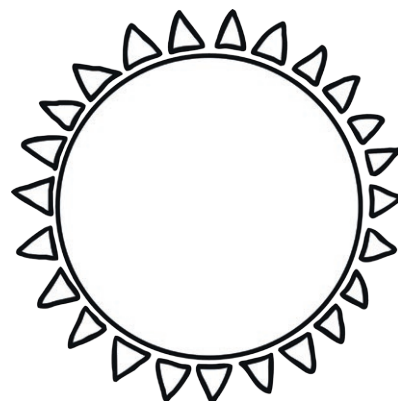


Transition Ideas

Transition of any kind can be difficult for young people but the move from primary to secondary school can be very worrying. Ensuring that young people have a positive transition to Secondary School is key. A successful transition ensures young people are happy, engaged and ready to learn. It reduces the number of behavioural and attendance issues which can be problematic for both the young person and the school.

Here are some suggestions to create a positive transition experience for all young people.

1. Create a memory booklet of the young person's experiences at primary school. This memory booklet can be taken with them and used by the pupil's teachers at secondary school, or can be used as a comfort and keepsake for the young person at home.
2. Organise holiday activities, for example a drama/music workshop, for young people before they join their secondary school. This will help young people to feel comfortable on their first day at the school. They will also be able to navigate around the school building, which will inevitably help them when the school is busy with other young people in September. Encourage independent travel to the activities wherever possible. Again, this will support them to be ready for independent travel in September.
3. Create a fun and interesting treasure hunt around the building so young people are able to find where all their classrooms are located. Ask the young people to find key locations, such as the main office, dining hall, library, school bus pick up point, etc. This will alleviate a number of anxieties about getting lost in the school and possibly being late to lessons.
4. Give the young people their planners and timetable prior to their start in September so they can familiarise themselves with the school rules, the timetable of the day, the uniform code and other important information. This will hopefully prevent any issues within the first few days.
5. Encourage transition visits from previous pupils into year 6 classrooms. Young people prefer to listen to their peers about the experiences they had when starting in year 7.
6. Ask key secondary school staff to come and spend time getting to know the young people at their primary schools. The young people will then have a familiar face to go to when they arrive at school, which will support them and reduce their anxieties. Equally, the staff will be in a better position to plan and support the young person on an individual basis.
7. Encourage several transition visits to the secondary school, both when the school is closed after lessons have finished and during the day when all year groups are present. This will give the young person a thorough insight into what the school looks like and feels like at these times.
8. Wherever possible, encourage the young people to finish their primary school earlier in the term and move to the secondary school for the end of the summer term. This will allow young people to develop key relationships with staff and peers. It will allow them to become settled and established within the new school system before the summer holidays start. Many secondary schools already offer this opportunity for a number of young people.



9. Organise a pastoral staff visit to the most vulnerable young people at home over the summer holidays. Key information needs to be re-given at this visit, such as the start date, starting time, what equipment is needed, what uniform is required, etc.
10. Allocate a year 7/8 buddy to the new starters, so they have an immediate peer contact within the school for support. Ask both young people to complete a 'getting to know me' style resource and encourage at least one meeting before September to develop the relationship as much as possible. The young people are more likely to share any issues or difficulties they are having with their buddy/peer, so ensure the buddy understands the importance of sharing this information with staff when necessary.

These are just a few ideas to support and encourage positive transitions. Any further ideas which encourage young people to spend time at their new school, with their new peers, will have a positive effect when they start in September.