

## Vision Team

### Top tips for transition Year 6 to Year 7 – for Parents

	Challenges	How to reduce challenges
<b>Leaving primary school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your child may be sad to leave primary school, particularly if they haven't been back into school.</li> <li>You and your child may have struggled with home learning.</li> <li>Your child wants to see / say goodbye to their friends and school staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Share memories</b> and talk about how you feel</li> <li><b>Send Goodbye cards</b> to staff and friends who may not be going to the same secondary school.</li> <li><b>Communicate with primary school</b> even if your child isn't attending, join in with any 'goodbye' events they are organising.</li> <li><b>Arrange socially distanced outdoor meetings with friends</b> – maybe meet in the park or garden, have a picnic or go for a walk.</li> </ul>
<b>Communicating with the new school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making links and building relationships while face to face meetings aren't possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Make early contact with the SENCO</b> – talk about your child and their needs, share any worries, help to find solutions to any issues.</li> <li><b>Ask for telephone or video communication with key staff</b> such as form tutor or key person / TA.</li> </ul>
<b>Getting to know the new school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You / your child are anxious about the change.</li> <li>Understanding how school will 'work', knowing what to expect.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Talk about school / transition</b> as openly and frequently as possible, acknowledge how you feel.</li> <li><b>Talk to siblings, friends or neighbours</b> who already attend the school, ask questions.</li> <li><b>Walk / drive to the school</b>, look from the outside.</li> <li><b>Look on the school website</b> and social media pages – if these aren't visually accessible to your child, ask school for alternative information.</li> </ul>
<b>Getting to know the new environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your child is worried about getting lost.</li> <li>Finding your way around is harder for students with VI.</li> <li>Visits to school aren't possible this year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ask about a visit</b> – this might still be possible at a time when no students are in school. Take photographs or make a video to look at during the summer holidays. Film the route from the entrance to key locations such as form room.</li> <li>If a visit isn't possible, ask if the school has a <b>virtual tour</b> available.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Travelling to school</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travelling independently for the first time.</li> <li>• Mobility training hasn't been available this year.</li> <li>• Using public transport won't be 'normal'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Plan early</b> – how will your child travel? Will they go with friends or siblings? Can anyone drive them initially?</li> <li>• <b>If travelling independently, plan and practise</b> – travel the route with your child in both directions, do this repeatedly until you both feel confident. Look for landmarks, safe places to cross roads and potential hazards.</li> <li>• <b>Use the bus</b> - if your child will use the bus, practice, teach them to read / use a timetable (you may need to get a large print version or access it online), get a Gold Card from the council and get a face covering.</li> <li>• <b>Role play – help your child to work out what to do if things go wrong.</b> What if you get lost? What if the bus is late / full? What if you miss the bus? What if you miss your stop and get off in the wrong place?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Making friends</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being at a different school from some old friends.</li> <li>• Being in a much bigger school with lots of older students, worries about bullying.</li> <li>• Making new friends when you can't always see people's faces or when it's hard to find them in a busy place like the canteen or playground.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Connect with current students</b> – make links with friends and neighbours who attend the school.</li> <li>• <b>Find out which primary school friends are going to the same school</b> - make / maintain links over the summer holidays.</li> <li>• <b>Talk about the challenges</b> of social interaction and communication, particularly while social distancing. <b>Role play</b> situations which may be challenging and talk about what to do / say in different situations. Develop your child's self-advocacy skills.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meeting new staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to know new staff.</li> <li>• Having a larger number of adults to get to know.</li> <li>• Worrying that not all teachers will remember what your child needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Make a list</b> - write a list of the key people you and your child need to know e.g. SENCO, Head of Year, Form Tutor, Teaching Assistant.</li> <li>• <b>Keep communicating</b></li> <li>• <b>Make recordings</b> – ask if key staff could make a short, clear video introducing themselves. Your child can play this repeatedly, getting to know the voices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Getting organised</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the timetable.</li> <li>• Organising books and equipment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Look at a sample timetable</b> – help your child to understand it and check with school that they will provide a large print version if needed.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Organise space at home</b> – decide where school books and equipment will be stored and support your child to organise their bag for each day. Support them to organise folders for worksheets and paperwork – if they use large print materials these will need more space than standard folders / exercise books. Think about how to carry any magnifiers or other equipment your child needs daily. Think about organising other practical resources such as ingredients for Food Tech lessons. Work towards your child doing all of this independently.</li> </ul>
<b>Doing homework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The increased demands of secondary school homework.</li> <li>• The potential need for some continuation of home learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Think about where your child will work</b> – a table or desk in a quieter room with suitable lighting and space for books and resources is ideal but this may not be practical in every home. Starting with good work habits and routines will support independent study as your child gets older.</li> <li>• <b>Think about IT / internet access</b> – if you don't have a computer at home, talk to school about alternative ways of accessing homework. If you do have a computer, check that settings are such that your child can see what they need to access.</li> </ul>
<b>Helping yourself</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When your child is at secondary school, there will be an expectation that they will be more independent.</li> <li>• They will need to understand their own needs and speak up if they need more help.</li> <li>• They will be taught by a lot of different people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Talk openly with your child about their VI.</b> Talk about what they need and why. Talk about how this makes them different from their peers (but doesn't mean they can't do as well at school or can't do any activities their friends are doing). Talk about their strengths and the things they are good at too. Let them talk about their feelings. Help your child to think of things other students who don't know them might ask, such as why they always sit at the front, why they have large print work or why they aren't that good at ball games. Help your child to think of answers to these questions and practise saying them confidently.</li> </ul>
<b>Summer holidays</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping busy and having fun while restrictions remain in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keep talking positively about the new school and do as much practise and preparation as you can.</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparing for a new school when no one knows yet what school will look like in September or when your child will start.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Keep talking to the school and to your VI teacher about any concerns.</b></li><li>• <b>Use some of the time at home to review your child's independent living skills.</b> Perhaps this would be a good time to begin learning some kitchen skills ready to make their own packed lunch or to prepare ingredients for Food Tech lessons. Or some sewing skills while helping to label their new uniform.</li></ul>
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