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| **Schools and Families Specialist Services**  **Cognition & Learning Team** |

**Ideas for parents to help support their year six children with the transition**

**from primary school to secondary school**

It’s normal for children to feel stressed about leaving their primary school and moving to a new school. It can also be a worrying time for parents too. In these strange and uncertain times, some of the usual transition activities may not be able to happen. If you are a parent of a year six child, some of the ideas and resources below might help support your child with their move to secondary school.

**Plan and prepare**

* Start to plan the journey to school. Will they walk, cycle, travel by bus or car? Where will they get on/off the bus? Where will you pick them up at the end of the day? Who might they walk to school with? What time will you need to leave the house? If they are travelling independently, plan the route using Google maps or using bus timetables. If you can, walk the new route to school until they are familiar with it
* Look at the school website and other social media platforms for key information
* Draw up a shopping list for equipment needed and buy this together. Create a list for packing their school bag and let them have a go at doing this. Try using any equipment they may not have used before
* Find out the school’s rules about the use of mobile phones and agree how you will manage this
* If they will be having school dinners, prepare them for managing new payment systems and support them to be able to make choices independently when ordering food
* Make sure your child knows how to wear their uniform. Practice putting it on, making sure they can do this independently. Check what the rules are regarding uniform (including hair, make-up, nails and footwear) to make sure they don’t get into trouble!
* Think about the new morning routine. If they’ve been enjoying a lie in during the holidays, try to get them to wake up earlier during the last week – this way it won’t be such a shock on the first day back! Bed time routines might need adjusting too.

**Helping them to say goodbye to primary school**

It’s possible that your child will miss some of the end of year six rituals which usually take place, such as a prom, shirt signing, and leavers assembly. Think about how you could celebrate their time in school and achievements in your own special way and provide some kind of closure, before they move onto secondary school. You could:

* Create a memory book or box. Collate together things such as certificates, school reports, work and books which have been sent home, photographs of events in school, and any other mementos they may have collected over the years. Ask your child to write and/or draw things their favourite things, or memorable events from primary school
* Write letters or make and send cards to school staff and any special friends who might not be going to the same secondary school.

**Share any questions and concerns**

Although things may be different at the moment, be assured that your child’s current school and their new secondary will be liaising and doing whatever they can to make sure transition runs smoothly. If you have any questions or concerns, make a note of these and consider how you might be able to have these answered and help put your mind at ease. You could:

* Visit the school’s website
* Talk to other parents who have children at the school already. Can they tell you anything you need to know?
* Contact your child’s current school and/or their new school and ask to talk to a member of staff
* Make a note of any important information that your child’s new school will need to know. If your child has special educational needs, you could complete the pupil profile document (in the resource file) as a way of sharing information with the school
* Talk to your child about their own worries. How could these be addressed?
* Read the *Dealing with Change* leaflet for parents, included in the resource pack.

**Activities and resources, you can use at home to help support transition to secondary school**

* Children and parents could work together to complete the home learning activities in the ‘Moving up’ activity book, produced by *The Parental Engagement Network*
* Get your child to create an ‘All about me’ profile about themselves to share with their new teachers. This could be done on paper or electronically and take any format you like.
* Play the printable transition board game. If you can’t print, try making one of your own. This will help your child prepare for some of the changes and expectations of secondary school
* Try the R4S (Ready for Secondary) games and activities at home. Your child may have been doing this at school, but we’ve included some of the easier activities in the resource file for you to play at home
* Talk about any worries together and try and come up with possible solutions. Watch the Young Minds video clip: <https://youngminds.org.uk/resources/school-resources/find-your-feet-transitioning-to-secondary-school/> if your child is feeling anxious about the move. They have other useful resources to support too
* Try to keep your child engaged in some formal learning if they are not able to attend school. This will help to keep them school ready, and not completely switched off to learning
* Direct your child to the websites below. They have been designed to be used by children to help support their transition to secondary school.

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| **BBC Bitesize Starting Secondary School website**  Lots of tips and advice for students (and their parents) who are about to start secondary. A great free resource!  <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/tags/zh4wy9q/starting-secondary-school/1>  **BBC Bitesize - What's the difference between primary and secondary school?**  Five animated learner guides for Y6 pupils, from the BBC Bitesize daily lessons materials. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zjgck2p/articles/zvw48mn>  **BBC Newsround Back 2 skool website**  Information aimed at kids about starting secondary school, including quizzes and press pack reports.  <http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/find_out/guides/uk/back_2_skool/newsid_2188000/2188695.stm> |

**Other useful websites for parents:**

**Nottinghamshire Local Offer**

Transition information for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs. <https://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/kb5/nottinghamshire/directory/site.page?id=VUQI_ctahXw&newdirectorychannel=9>

**The School Run.com**

Articles and advice for parents to help support transition to secondary school. <https://www.theschoolrun.com/school-life/transition-secondary-school>

**SFSS Inclusive Transitions Webpage**

Information and resources for schools, parents and young people to support different educational transitions.

<http://www.em-edsupport.org.uk/Page/10962>

**Young Minds**

Advice and information on where you can get help if you think your child might be anxious about school. Lots of other subjects covered too.

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-school-anxiety/>

**Family Lives**

General information about supporting your child as they start secondary school.

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/secondary/learning-school/starting-secondary-school/>

