



Autism: Transition to Secondary Resources for Primary Schools

Year 5

Encourage parents to visit Secondary schools while their learner is in year 5, and explain the process of applying for a Secondary school when required. Explain the different types of school provision available. Provide questions to consider when visiting the schools (see resources for parents)

Develop organisation

- ask them to note down their homework
- get them to check their timetable (try introducing a secondary style one page chart)
- include locations and get them used to reading the codes and moving round the school

Year 6

Create transition book

Request a transition pack from the secondary school - [they can use the template here if they don't already have one.](#)

Regular sessions

- Discuss fears
- Rate aspects of transition using 1-5 scale (main fears are being bullied, not making friends, getting lost, homework, not being able to do the work, travelling, not having the right equipment, not knowing what to do if there is a problem, not getting on with teachers, getting into trouble.
- Social story for first day

Plan extra visits

Look at photos and videos

Old Y6 (now Y7) student visit/talk

Keep a book of questions

[Anna Freud Resources](#)

AET Transition Toolkit

Strategies and resources to support students. Click rectangle to view.

Pupil Transition Booklet

Workbook to use with young people to prepare them. Click rectangle to view.

Personal Passport

Passport to complete with the young person to share important things that they want the new setting to know about them.

Autism: Transition to Secondary Secondary School Guidance



Liaise with the Primary

- Engage with the Primary school to understand the learner.
- Request all the required information before the learner is due to start.
- Whenever possible, visit the learner in their Primary school to understand the type of support that is in place for them.
- Find out if the learner is aware that they have autism, and whether they would like their peers to know about their diagnosis.

Preparing the young person

- Provide real and/ or virtual tour videos of the school setting.
- [Provide a transition booklet \(template here\)](#).
- Highlight where the learner can go if they need a quiet area.
- Introduce the key members of staff the learner needs to know and who they can go to with concerns (refer back to booklet).
- Provide subject colour-coded school map and timetable **before** they start at the school.
- Provide written school rules which learners are expected to follow, to reduce ambiguity.
- Create a school ambassador/peer mentor system, where current students provide support to new learners e.g. meeting on visit days, visiting the new students in their Primary school, sharing ideas and information with incoming learners through discussion forums on the school website.

Prepare for the first day

- Provide detailed information about what is expected on the first day at the school.
- Consider an earlier start date for year 7 learners, so that they have an opportunity to explore and understand the new school environment and rules without having to interact with large numbers of learners.
- Explore the possibility of having lessons based in fewer classrooms or even in one classroom in year 7. This can be beneficial not only for the learners with autism but for all the learners, while they are settling into a new environment.
- Autism awareness: Have autism awareness sessions for peers as part of teaching diversity. [Resources here](#)
- Provide autism training to all the staff in the school on a regular basis, whilst also emphasising the importance of understanding individual learners with autism. [Access videos here.](#)

First few weeks

Go through scenarios with young person to reduce anxiety. [Download here.](#)

Scenario	Strategies
I am late for school	Add strategy
I am lost in the school	Add strategy
I find the canteen noisy or uncomfortable	Add strategy
I am bullied	Add strategy
I have not managed to make a note of my homework	Add strategy
I can't understand what is being taught in the lesson	Add strategy
I feel anxious	Add strategy

Supporting learners with autism during transition



Autism: Transition to Secondary Resources for Parents/Carers

Choosing a secondary school - Questions to ask/consider

- **How big is the school? Are there any satellite buildings?**
- **Are there quiet areas which the learner can use during school hours?**
- **Is there any support with travel?**
- **What is the school's behaviour policy and do they make reasonable adjustments for learners with autism?**
- **Is there a homework club or any support with organisation?**
- **How welcoming do the school and the staff feel?**
- **What support is provided to learners with autism and other areas of neurodivergence?**

What transition support is there?

Primary School

Preparation in school - whole class and small groups, ELSA sessions, working through transition booklet, [Anna Freud Centre resources](#)

Secondary School

Additional visit days may be available, they should provide school/families with a transition pack, may allocate designated adults and confirm a safe space to go if there are problems.

Family

Go through the transition booklet at home, visit the new setting (even just outside), rehearse the journey, consider 'Plan Bs' if things go wrong.

SEN Transport / Travel Training



121 training to travel independently. Click image to view information and referral process.

Who can I speak to after the transition?

First point of call is the school SENCo/Inclusion Lead. You may also want support from [SIASS](#).

Click on each image/logo for more information

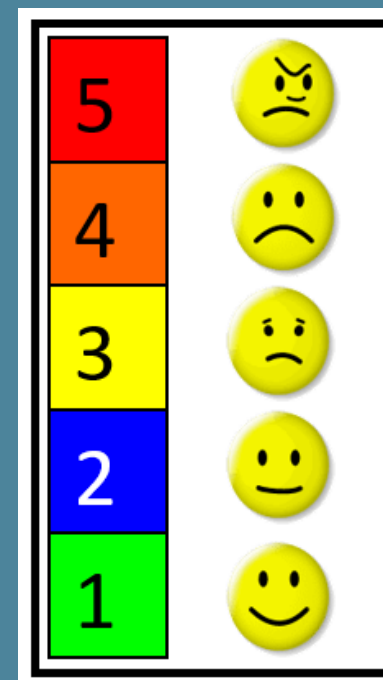


Autism: Transition to Secondary Activities to do at home and school

Examine and address common fears and 'normalise' these. Use a 1-5 scale to rate their initial feelings on each topic. Come back to these to see how their feelings change. Compare with others.

The top ten reported worries young people have about starting a new school are:

- being bullied
- not making friends
- getting lost
- homework
- not being able to do the work
- travelling to and from school
- not having the right books and equipment
- not knowing what to do if there is a problem
- not getting on with teachers
- getting into trouble



Create a list of people the young person can go to if they have a problem or are worried in school. e.g.

- Form tutor (name)
- Pastoral lead
- SENCo/Inclusion lead



Autism: Transition to Secondary Activities to do at home and school

- Reflect on their time at primary school – seeing change as a necessary part of life and as a 'positive'
- Recognise the changes between primary and secondary.
- Make a daily schedule for their new day at Secondary School – put this on the fridge so that the student has time to get used to the new timings and regime.
- Practise and talk through safe travel plans and what to do if trains/buses are late or cancelled, and what they need to do when they arrive at school if late.
- Think about what questions they might like to ask when they go to meet the staff at their new school.
- Think about creating a personalised workspace at home for completion of homework and easy organisation of belongings.
- Identify any issues with school uniform and work to overcome these.
- Prepare for 'Plan B' scenarios (e.g. losing dinner money) – you can record this visually.



Autism: Transition to Secondary Developing Organisation

- Laminate a mini copy of the timetable and attach it to the blazer with a lanyard or springy clip.
- Organise an easy to use wallet and/or key ring for dinner money and locker key.
- Safety pin lanyards/ID cards to the inside of jackets.
- Keep a copy of the timetable at home.
- Keep 2 sets of stationery - 1 at home and 1 at school/that stays in school bag.
- Produce checklists for equipment and uniform to scaffold independence.
- Organise books and resources into colour coded plastic wallets, according to subjects. Store these in a set location (plastic box with suspension files works well) with colour coded timetable on display, to make packing bags easier.
- Stick coloured labels onto books so they can easily see which ones they need for each subject/which ones belong to them in class.
- Create a morning checklist to encourage independence (laminated and use a dry wipe marker for the young person to tick off as they complete or try phone/tablet apps such as Google Keep or Todoist)
- Set reminders on a phone or smart watch to prompt the young person throughout the day e.g. as a reminder of where to go or if they need to remember something specific such as an after school club.



Autism: Transition to Secondary

Packing your School Bag



- Always plan ahead and pack your bag the night before.
- Use a checklist to support you to pack your school bag and pencil case. You can create one on your phone (try apps such as Google Keep or Todoist) and tick off each item as you complete it.
- If you find it difficult to remember to pack all of your equipment at the end of each lesson or just need a reminder of what to pack into your bag generally, you could try using a visual key fob reminder with pictures or a list on.
- Use different parts of your bag for different things e.g. keys and money in front pocket
- Create PE checklist for Gym days
- At home use a plastic box and suspension files with all items required for each subject. If you place a zip up folder in each section all you have to do is lift the folder when packing your bag.

- Planner
- Pencil case
- Reading book
- PE kit
- Homework
- Snack
- Bottle of water
- Packed lunch
- Bus pass