

PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

A Support Guide for Parents and Carers



Introduction

The transition from primary to secondary school is a significant milestone for children in Year 6. As parents and caregivers our support plays a vital role in helping them to understand this time of change. We can also provide the necessary tools to help our children navigate their way through this journey and to make the process as smooth as possible.



We have put together some information and guidance on how we can help children through the Year 6/7 Transition as well as some practical suggestions as they prepare to leave primary school and move to secondary school.

Thoughts and emotions which Year 6 typically experience at this time

- Concerns and excitement about leaving primary school
- Thoughts about saying goodbye to current friends and finding new ones
- Worries about the changes ahead and how they will cope with them
- Concerns about new buildings, new subjects, new classmates and new teachers
- Worries about how the journey to the new school will be, especially if they will be travelling without parents/carers for the first time

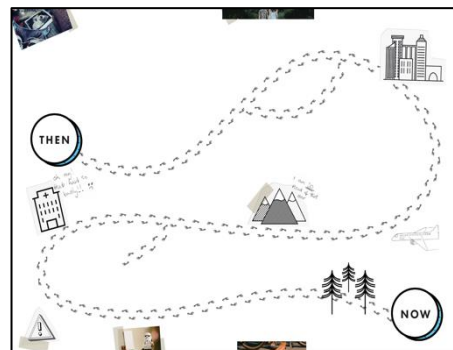
What we can do to help our Year 6 children through the transition process

- Find as much time as possible to listen to your child and to discuss their thoughts and feelings. As an adult it isn't always easy to hear about the difficult emotions but the more we encourage our children to talk, the better it is for them as they face this time of change
- Remember to show them lots of love and care as they prepare to move forwards...
- Talk about change and remind your child that it is a natural process which happens throughout life. It might help to look at this diagram and explain that change happens by moving up and down the ladder through the different stages, sometimes more than once, until the process is fully complete
- Discuss all the times they have coped with change in the past and some of the everyday challenges they have faced at primary school
- Try to provide them with as many opportunities as possible to deal with small challenges and to problem solve between now and September. This gives children confidence to know that they can cope with change
- Encourage your child to learn (and practise) how to ask for help, creating a list of who they can ask
- Encourage your child to express their feelings about leaving primary school, thinking about what they have valued and will miss as well reflecting on any difficult and challenging times
- Remember that good endings provide a sense of closure as children move to a new phase of life
- Help them to see the positives of change and the new adventure which lies ahead!
- Provide a warm, supportive environment with time and help to develop effective coping skills



Some practical suggestions for supporting your child through the Year 6/7 transition

- Make a scrapbook or create a box full of memories including photographs of happy and fun moments, class trips and diary entries, not forgetting to create space to reflect on sad/difficult times
- Take lots of photographs of those final few weeks in Year 6
- Keep talking and remembering by arranging plenty of one-to-one time – this could include a day trip out or going to a favourite café or park
- Make a timeline of their time at primary school
- Keep a diary with lots of positive thoughts and memories from the final few weeks at school to look back over in the future
- Create a list of the people they know who will support them both inside and outside school. Some of the people on this list will be people they have known for a long time, showing that not everything will change
- Put together a 'Worry Jar' by writing down all the different worries they may be feeling on pieces of paper and putting them into a jar or box. Take time to look at each worry over the coming weeks and work out what will help to make it feel better
- Encourage your child to include relaxing and calming activities and as much self-care as possible into their day, especially when they are worrying
- Create a list with your child of all their qualities, gifts and talents. Talking about how these will help them as they move to secondary school
- Practise walking the route to school or taking the bus together, if possible
- Find a day to go out shopping for the new school uniform as well as the other equipment your child will need. Practise wearing the uniform at home over the holidays
- If your child is worried about how they will find their way around the new buildings, ask if it is possible to arrange an extra visit to look around
- Start to look at the new timetable and routines as soon as possible
- Finally, try to keep as much of their current routine in place as you can over the next few months as this helps with creating a sense of security



Useful signposting

<https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/resources/supporting-childrens-transition-to-secondary-school-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/media/20djlktz/top-ten-tips-for-parents.pdf>

About Wilmslow Youth

Wilmslow Youth is a charity providing support to young people who live in the Wilmslow area. Based in the Undercroft of the United Reformed Church, we provide an after-school drop-in cafe on a Wednesday-Friday each week (term-time only), one-to-one and group wellbeing services inside and outside Wilmslow High School and parenting courses for parents/carers with teenage children.

Further support...

On **Wednesday 15th June at 7.30pm** we are holding an Open Evening for anyone who would like to find out more about the support we offer to young people in the area. We will also be providing some more ideas and advice as you prepare your children for the transition to secondary school.

For more information or to book a place at our Open Evening please contact us at

hello@wilmslowyouth.com