



MOVING TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

For parents who have children
with additional needs in years 4 to 6 in mainstream school



Moving to Secondary School guide

Parent Carer Voice **work with parents to provide compassion,** **guidance and hope for the whole family.**

Working across Herefordshire , PCV supports families who have a child or young person, aged 0-25, with any additional need or disability.

There ARE a variety of services and resources and no formal diagnosis or professional referral is necessary to access our support

PCV offers a combination of in-person and remote services to meet the needs of its families in partnership with Hands hub

- Helpline via WhatsApp
- in-person Face to Face Parent Support
- Specialist Talks and Training Courses
- Online Directory and Information Network
- Benefit Advice
- Library of Specialist Books and Resources

Hands Hub also provide

- Parent and Children Sessions
- After-School and Holiday Sessions for Children and Young People & Sibling Support



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Choosing a good school

For families who have a child in years 4 or 5 it can be helpful to do some research on your local secondary schools before your child starts in year 6.

Generally, for those applying through normal admission routes, applications for secondary school places open in the September your child starts in Year 6 and close in late October.

However if your child has an EHCP you may be asked even earlier to name your choice of secondary school.

If your decision is not clear cut, starting your search in the September of Year 6 may not feel like enough time to look properly at a selection of schools and speak to the relevant people, so starting earlier can be helpful.

On the next page are some questions that are worth considering when deciding which school will be best suited to your child.

If you already know which school your child is going to, it is worth checking you know the answers to the questions below, in case there is something you need to check before they start.



Choosing a good school

Questions to consider when choosing a school:

Which is my catchment school?

Have you looked at the admissions criteria for each school? This can help you judge how likely it is your child will get a place. Even if your child has an EHCP the local authority will want you to consider your catchment school first. If you want your child to go elsewhere, can you give reasons as to why you feel the catchment school is not suitable and another school is?

How big is the school?

Think about not only the number of pupils and class sizes, but the size of the school grounds and how easily your child will be able to navigate and get from class to class. Could there be any accessibility issues?

What subjects do they offer, and what extra curricular activities do they have?

Will there be opportunities for your child to build on their strengths, skills and interests? Is there a mix of practical or vocational subjects as well as academic ones?

How much homework is set?

Is this done online and are there support resources to help? Does the school have opportunities to complete homework whilst at school or get extra support with homework tasks?

How does the school provide extra support to those with special educational needs?

How is this done within a lesson? What types of intervention groups do they run? Is there support during lunch and break times? Do they have a place to go, or someone to talk to if your child is feeling overwhelmed?



What training and experience do the staff have?

Does this match up to supporting your child's specific needs?

Are they willing to undertake more training if not? Which specialists are they able to consult with for strategies and support?

How does the school manage behaviour and deal with bullying incidents? Does the behaviour policy include the need for flexibility when children have additional needs? How is bullying dealt with and what pastoral support is there?

What reasonable adjustments are the school able to make?

Are they willing to apply this to their practice and policies to fully support your child's needs?

What are the transport options for my child to get to and from school?

If it is not within walking distance, does the school provide access to private coach services, or is public transport the only option? If your child has an EHCP, will they meet the transport eligibility criteria?

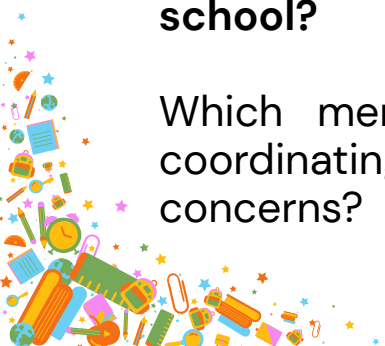
Will my child know anyone at the school when they start?

It is important to think about the potential peer group your child will have. Already knowing others attending the school can be a positive but not always. Will there be positive role models and supportive friends who can provide help or advice during the school day?

If they will only know a couple of people, or no-one at all, are there any opportunities to meet others before school starts, or clubs that can encourage friendships with children who share their interests?

Which staff are part of the inclusion or SEND team at the school?

Which members of staff will be supporting your child or coordinating the support? Who can you speak to about any concerns?



Good sources of information about schools

When it comes to looking at schools, parents often describe getting a gut feeling when going to visit. If you are unable to visit, or you need specific answers or feedback, then it is worth looking at a range of sources. By doing so you can build a picture of what school life might be like for your child.

School website

Secondary school websites have a wealth of information available online. Some even include videos or virtual tours of the school grounds. Most will have staff lists, curriculum and club information, access to their school policies and SEN School Offer. They will also have lists of uniform and equipment needed.

School staff

School staff are generally open to answering parents' questions in person or by phone, but email is often more effective. It directs questions to the appropriate staff member and allows for thoughtful responses without pressure. Additionally, email provides a reference for future inquiries.

Ofsted

Ofsted reports provide insights into school management and student behavior, but it's crucial to read the full report rather than rely solely on the grade ratings. A 'Good' rating may not reflect the experience of children with SEN. Additionally, inspections only capture a snapshot of the school's condition during the visit.

Ofsted invites parents to provide feedback during school inspections, offering insights into communication and overall satisfaction. However, this should not be the sole source of information, as feedback may be biased, with responses often coming from those with very positive or negative experiences.



Parents with a child currently at the school

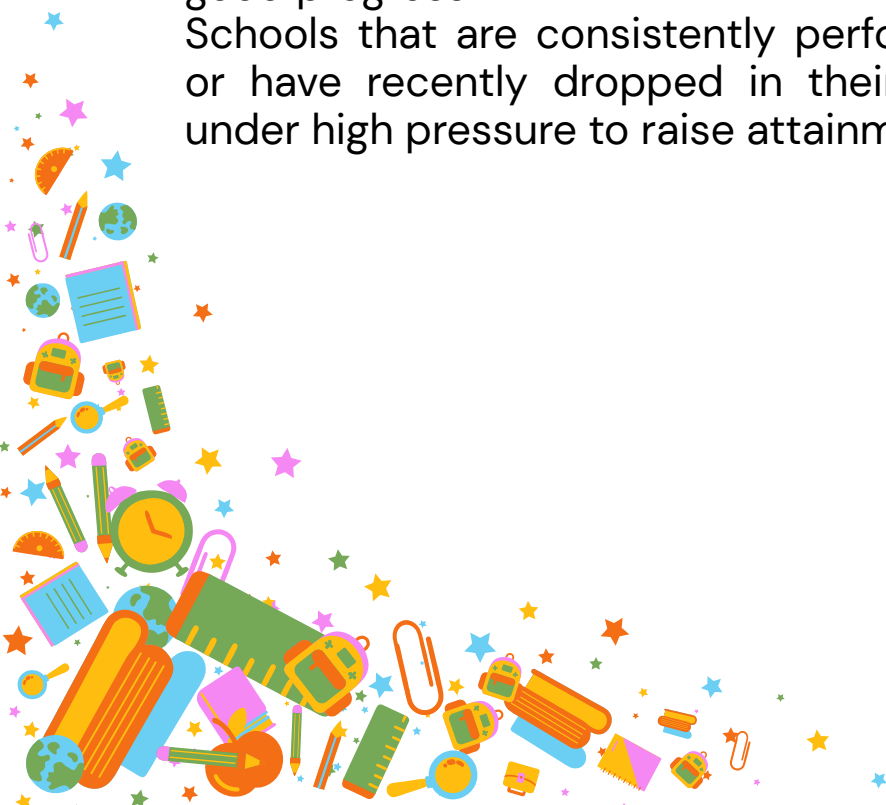
Being able to speak directly to another parent about their experiences can be helpful. At SNAP we are often surprised by the wide range of experiences different families can have at the same school, so it is worth trying to get a couple of different views. It can also be helpful if they have a child who is similar to yours. Schools can change dramatically when there is a change in staff – particularly senior leadership staff– so bear this in mind if hearing the views of people whose children attended the school several years ago

Exam league tables and Government performance statistics

Exam league tables might be meaningful and important to some families and of no importance to others. However, even if you don't particularly care about exam results it may still provide a few insights.

Schools that perform consistently 'well above average' in exams often have a strong academic focus and this can sometimes come with an element of pressure to achieve – but this may be an environment that your child will thrive and make good progress in.

Schools that are consistently performing 'well below average' or have recently dropped in their positioning may also be under high pressure to raise attainment.



Thinking about your child's individual needs

Strengths and challenges

Any support with change and transition needs to be targeted and purposeful for your child as an individual.

One child might be fantastic at being organised but struggle in social situations, and another child might be the complete opposite.

By thinking about both your child's strengths and challenges first, it can help you to focus and prioritise next steps.

You may be able to do this just from knowing your child, but it is always helpful to speak with them about what they feel they are good at in school and what they might need some help with, as you might be surprised by the answers!

Talking about what we find difficult isn't always an easy topic, so focus on strengths, and comment on things you have noticed they are good at.

When talking about difficulties make sure to give examples of how there are lots of things that you still need help with even as an adult. You may prefer to talk about it in terms of aspects of school that they enjoy or dislike.

Navigating the school day

Talking about what we find difficult isn't always an easy topic, so focus on strengths, and comment on things you have noticed they are good at.

When talking about difficulties make sure to give examples of how there are lots of things that you still need help with even as an adult. You may prefer to talk about it in terms of aspects of school that they enjoy or dislike.

Next, think about the types of things your child will need to do to navigate a school day. Think about things that are already a strength for your child and also things that they will need some extra support with.

This may be organisational skills, social skills, emotional and/or sensory regulation skills and problem solving skills. Below are a few examples:



Organisation

- getting to and from school
- having the right books and equipment
- reading a timetable
- navigating their way to class
- keeping track of time
- getting changed before and after PE
- following instructions
- doing homework on time
- keeping hold of their belongings

Social

- making new friends
- balancing new and existing friendships
- speaking to adults respectfully
- working with students they don't know

Emotional

- managing emotions in different situations
- knowing when they are becoming overwhelmed
- dealing with unexpected change (e.g. supply teacher)

Sensory

- knowing how to manage their sensory needs
- using sensory regulation strategies unprompted

Problem solving

- knowing what to do if they have forgotten something
- knowing what to do if lost
- knowing what to do if late for school or miss their bus

Some of these skills may already be a strength and these can be used to boost confidence and overcome worries.



Support plans and one page profile

The SEND code of practice

6.44 SEN Support In Schools

“Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil’s needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes.”

This “four part cycle” is known as the

“Assess – Plan – Do – Review” – Cycle

There is an expectation from local authorities that children who have been identified as having special educational needs will also have a support plan in place. These are funded by the schools “SEN Support” budget. Herefordshire Local Authority refers to this, however other local authorities or schools may give them a different name – such as IEP (individual education plan), ISP (individual support plan), Provision Plan, Provision Passport – the list is endless!

The plan will be sent to your child’s secondary school and it is important that it is updated by the new school to reflect the provision strategies and interventions they use.

Most schools will suggest that the plan is reviewed with the parents in the second half of the Autumn term, to allow the child time to settle and give the school time to fully assess their needs.

However this does not mean your child will be unsupported in that time.

If you have not already been in contact with the secondary SENCO – it can be helpful to send them an email at the beginning of the new academic year, to make sure they have received your child’s plan from their primary school, and book an appointment to complete a review of the plan later in the term.



If your child also has an EHCP – the secondary school will have been formally consulted as part of the admissions process by accepting the child as a pupil and being named on the plan – the school have a duty to implement all provisions listed in Section F of the plan.

ONE PAGE PROFILES

Often these are created alongside SEN Support Plans and EHCPs. But not all schools have these in place.

They are an A4 page that includes the child's photograph and important information about how best to support them. These can be invaluable in secondary schools.

Due to the much higher number of staff that will have contact with your child, these profiles give them a quick snapshot of how to work with your child and are easy to read and understand.

It is likely that your child has one written by their primary school - but it is important that it is up to date and a true reflection.

There are lots of templates online and by creating your own version you can guarantee that the most important information is included. Hard copies and electronic copies can then be given out to relevant staff.

TOP TIPS FOR WRITING A ONE PAGE PROFILE

- **Make sure it reflects your child's views on how they want to be supported – try to involve them in a way you feel most appropriate**
- **Prioritise the order you write things – with the most important points at the top of each section**
- **Keep it as brief and easy to read as possible**
- **Time how long it takes to read through – if it is taking more than a couple of minutes it may need a little editing**
- **Ask someone to read it who doesn't know your child very well – ask them if there were any parts that weren't clear or how confident they feel they have a clearer understanding?**



Creating a transition book

A transition book is a valuable resource for children preparing to change schools. It visually presents information about the new environment, similar to how one would research a holiday destination. Children may require more detailed and clear information about what to expect. Transition books can be customized and created with or by the child, taking various forms such as a physical booklet, a PowerPoint presentation, or digital photos. It's recommended to personalize the content to suit the child's preferences.

Ideas for inclusion in a school transition guide:

- **Introduction:**
- **School name, photos of grounds, and buildings, plus any child visit photos.**
- **Travel Information:** Maps or pictures of routes, bus stops, or train stations.
- **Staff Info:** Photos and details of key staff members to help in making friends.
- **Subjects & Activities:** Lists of subjects and extracurricular clubs available.
- **Lunch & Break:** Details on lunch arrangements, eating locations, and break activities.
- **Vocabulary:** New terms like “form teacher” or “head of year.”
- **Uniform:** List of uniform items with photos, especially if already purchased.
- **School Timings:** Daily schedule, including transport and wake-up times, with clock visuals if needed.
- **Lesson Timetable:** To be included when available.
- **Support Scenarios:** “What if” scenarios and help resources.
- **School Rules:** Important rules and potential consequences, with sensitivity to avoid anxiety.
- **Familiar Faces** List of known individuals in the school, if applicable.
- **Expectations :** Lists of things they look forward to and worries, along with coping strategies.
- **First Day Plan :** Outline for the initial day at school.



Organisational Strategies

Effective strategies for remembering important tasks include:

- Writing it down: Cultivate the habit of recording thoughts to avoid forgetfulness, especially for individuals with executive function challenges.
- Using planners: Teach children to use calendars, planners, or timetables for organization. Consider if they prefer a personal planner for clarity.
- Regular updates: Encourage setting aside time for updates, with extra prompting as needed.
- Immediate access: Ensure tools for writing are readily available, like using phone notes or carrying a notepad and pen.
- Note-taking practice: Teach how to take clear notes, specifying what needs to be remembered, avoiding vague reminders.
- Focus on priorities: Help children identify essential tasks to remember, steering clear of distractions like gaming reminders.
- Using a camera can assist students with writing or reading challenges by providing visual reminders, like photos of items to take home.
- Checklists by the front door can help avoid forgetting homework.
- Organizing items into dedicated spaces at home and school reduces stress, making it easier to find clothing and supplies.
- A designated box for school items, placed where belongings are often dropped, can streamline packing.
- Encouraging children to prepare their bags in the evening and using smaller containers for specific subjects can further enhance organization.

Top tip!

If you use zippy wallets, the whole wallet can be placed into your child's bag so that the equipment stays organised in there too.



Uniform and bag

To keep uniforms organized, encourage your child to hang them on their bedroom or wardrobe door and use a nearby box to minimize misplacement. Advise them to prepare their uniform the night before and swap shirts as needed. School shoes should be stored next to the box to ensure they leave with their bag. When choosing a school and PE bag, opt for one with multiple pockets, and encourage your child to consistently place items in the same pockets to help track important belongings.

Top tip!

Ensure the inner pocket of the blazer closes securely with a fastening like a zip or Velcro. If adding a zip is beyond your skill level, consider using clothing alteration or dry cleaning services for an affordable solution. This pocket can safely hold important items like a phone or bus pass, preventing potential loss.

Keeping spares

Teaching children to value their possessions is important, but organizational challenges can lead to lost items, especially in secondary school where expectations are higher. To mitigate stress from losing important equipment or uniforms, having spare items is beneficial, provided the child actively searches for the original. Using basic, affordable spares can reduce costs and encourage care of originals. Involving children in choosing spare items can foster responsibility and budgeting skills.



Enhancing Organization with Color Coding for School Items

Our brains are naturally adept at processing colors and symbols swiftly. Therefore, utilizing these elements to label or categorize school items can significantly enhance organization and help locate what you need more efficiently. Color coding is not only effective but also quick and easy to implement.

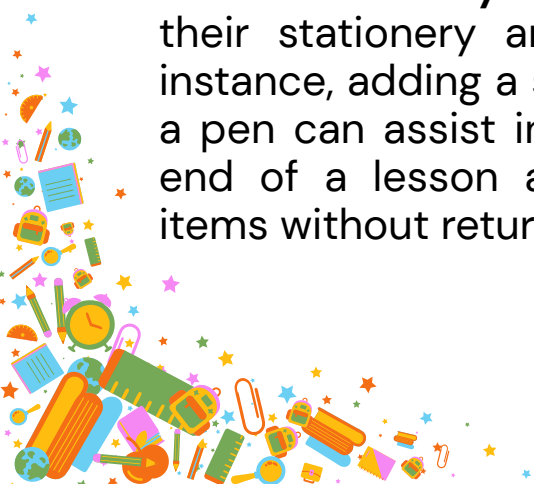
- Start with the Timetable: -Encourage your child to color code their timetable, assigning a different color to each subject.
- Extend the Coding: Use the assigned color on all related materials such as:
 - a.The classroom location on the school map
 - b.Their textbooks
 - c.Subject-specific tools

This can be as simple as applying a small colored sticker or a dot of marker pen. If you're using separate storage items, like wallets or folders, coordinating their colors can be beneficial too.

While it's crucial for children to learn to value their possessions and not depend on others for replacements if they misplace something, it's realistic to acknowledge that organization may not always be their strong suit. Consequently, it's likely that something important may be forgotten or lost at least once.

- Label Uniforms:- Clearly labeling your child's uniform with their name is essential. Consider adding an extra hidden name label on pricier or easily misplaced items like blazers and ties.

Make Stationery Stand Out:- To help your child easily identify their stationery and equipment, make them distinctive. For instance, adding a small dot of permanent marker on the end of a pen can assist in quickly recognizing their belongings at the end of a lesson and discourage classmates from borrowing items without returning them.



Problem solving strategies

As adults, we acquire problem-solving strategies through our experiences, enabling us to swiftly recall solutions for a variety of situations. Conversely, many children often find it difficult to create new plans when confronted with unexpected obstacles.

To improve their problem-solving abilities, we can simulate scenarios they may face at school, such as what to do if they forget their next lesson.

Encouraging children to brainstorm solutions fosters discussions about the most favorable outcomes. For those who struggle to come up with ideas, offering them options can be beneficial. Additionally, having written solutions or a list of staff members they can approach for support can be helpful.

Teaching children effective ways to ask for assistance can lead to more positive outcomes, such as using polite phrases rather than simple statements.

Role play or games

It can be helpful to practise some scenarios in a fun way to help embed the memory. You could create a simple board game or quiz where they have to answer "what should I do if ." questions, or choose the option with the best outcome to win more points. Role playing the situation can also help them practise their communication skills. It can be fun to flip the roles, with them playing the teacher/adult and you showing how you would ask for help, or explain why you are late to class etc.

Drawing comic strips of situations, or acting it out using figures/toys can take the pressure off it being about them. You could choose two different characters, one who makes poor decisions and the other who makes more sensible decisions.

You could incorporate using characters connected to any special interests to make it more engaging. Some children may benefit from having the activity videoed so that they can watch it again.



Real life practice

Putting the skills you have talked about into real life practice can be a powerful tool, particularly when we don't have to really worry about the outcome.

For example, practising the route to school before the term starts so that we remove the negative outcome of being late for school if something doesn't go to plan.

Some children may need to watch you navigate the scenario first before trying it themselves. It is a great opportunity to externalise your thought process and talk to them about what you are thinking and the options you are trying.

You can also use situations that are not school specific but help teach an important life skill that they will need at secondary school.

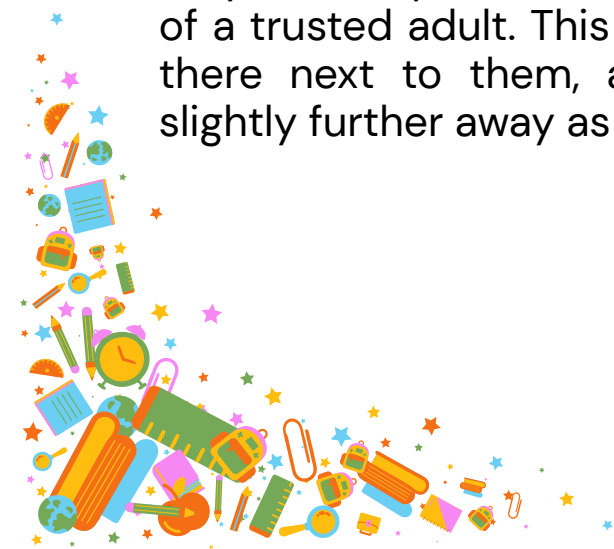
For example; asking someone for help to find something.

This could be practised by asking a shop assistant which aisle a certain item is on.

This may also be a good point to ensure your child understands who it is OK to speak to when we need help, and how we speak to different types of people. . .

It can be helpful to talk to them about how they can use those skills at school, as some children find it difficult to transfer knowledge to different situations.

Any real life practice should always be done under supervision of a trusted adult. This may start with having that person right there next to them, and then moving to supervising from slightly further away as they grow in confidence.



Emotional regulation

For many children and young people, keeping check of their emotions and using self calming or alerting strategies can be one of the biggest challenges they face before, during or after school

Secondary school students are often expected to have emotional maturity and cope with challenges like disappointment and frustration.

However, they may struggle to identify their own feelings. Recognizing physical signs of emotions (e.g., a hot face when embarrassed) is crucial.

Staff may misinterpret outbursts as defiance, and children might internalize their feelings, leading to communication issues. It's important for school staff to be aware of each child's emotional needs and triggers, documented in profiles to prevent oversight.

Strategies like labeling emotions with numbers or colors can aid expression, using systems like the Zones of Regulation.

Children often release pent-up emotions at home, so schools should allow time for decompression and teach emotional awareness and regulation strategies, ensuring staff understand and support these needs without punishment.



Sensory regulation

Our brains process, filter and respond to sensory input constantly, even whilst we sleep. The way our brains do this will differ slightly from person to person, and individuals with additional needs may be affected more by their sensory differences.

We all have ways of managing our sensory experiences such as wearing sunglasses when it is bright out, earplugs when the clock ticking is stopping us sleeping, or a long sleeve top under that particularly itchy jumper! To be able to manage their sensory experiences we need to help our children understand what they are over or under responsive to, and help them build a toolkit to cope in a sensory-heavy environment.

Taking pre-emptive steps can be a helpful starting point. Think about the different areas of the school, are there things you can already identify as being possible sensory trouble spots? As children get older they may not wish to use strategies that make them “stand out” so it can be helpful to think about more discrete alternatives.

Are there strategies that are more subtle or that can be concealed easier?—e.g. Ear plugs or headphone buds as opposed to large ear defenders.

Sensory needs do not disappear just because a child has gone to secondary school – so it is important to speak to the school SENCO about how they can be managed and supported in school.

Is there a room that they can sit in for a sensory break that is quiet, has low lighting and plain walls?

Can sensory breaks be worked into their timetable – rather than “when they say they need it”.

It can also be helpful to schedule some “sensory chill out time” as soon as your child gets home from school.

Before asking them questions about their day or to do chores/homework, allow them to go to somewhere in the house to decompress.



SENSORY REGULATION (CONT)

Depending on your child's individual needs this may need to be a calm and relaxing space where they can rest, or something more stimulating to help them "let off steam" and meet their proprioceptive or vestibular needs such as bouncing on a trampoline or kicking a football. If they are doing something physical to burn off excess energy, introduce a short calming activity straight after to help balance things out.

Using calming sensory strategies throughout the day can also work to help with emotional regulation

Sensory processing differences is a substantial topic that is very individualised to each person. You and your child may already have a fairly good idea which sensory areas impact them the most, but speaking to a sensory occupational therapist or learning more about sensory processing may bring other areas to light, as well as knowing some strategies to support.

CALMING ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE RELAXATION

Here are several suggestions for soothing activities.

Some focus on sensory experiences, while others involve gentle practices that can assist individuals in unwinding.

BLOW BUBBLES	EAT CRUNCHY OR CHEWY FOOD	MASSAGE LIGHT OR FIRM	THROWING AND CATCHING BOUNCE A BALL
PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION	LISTEN TO SOFT/RELAXING MUSIC	READING	WEIGHTED ITEMS
BEING IN A DARK OR DIMLY LIT ROOM	YOGA	MINDFULNESS/ MEDITATION ACTIVITIES	HAVING SOMETHING TO FIDDLE WITH
COLOURING & OTHER CRAFT ACTIVITIES	A TIGHT HUG / HAVING A PEANUT BALL ROLLED OVER THEM	WRAPPED UP TIGHTLY IN A BLANKET	ROCK BACK AND FORTH SLOWLY



SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING

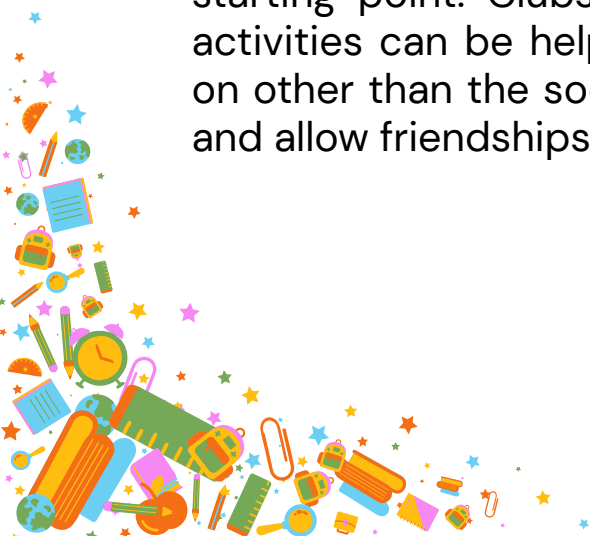
ADJUST YOUR EXPECTATIONS

As adults we tend to realise that when it comes to friendships, quality is far more important than quantity. However, as children and adolescents, the world around us tells us that when it comes to friends it's "the more the better". This message is further exacerbated when we enter the world of social media where our number of "friends/followers" is on display for all to see.

As parents, it is only natural to want your child to have a big circle of friends and want to encourage them to meet new people and spend more time socialising. However, it is important that we listen carefully to the social needs of our children rather than impose our own expectations on them and then use this as a measure of social success. Many young people and adults with additional needs, particularly those on the autism spectrum, often explain that having a small group of friends who understand them and allow them to be themselves, is far more fulfilling than having a large number of more shallow friendships with people with whom they have to spend a lot of time masking their true self.

FOCUS ON BUILDING POSITIVE SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

The strongest friendships are often built on shared views and common interests. Secondary school offers an opportunity to come into contact with more people, meaning that the likelihood of your child finding someone who they have something in common with increases. However, helping them find opportunities to mix with more students within the school and also make friends outside school makes this easier. Finding clubs or groups around a subject they are interested in is a great starting point. Clubs that have some kind of structure or set activities can be helpful, as this gives them something to focus on other than the social aspect, which can take the pressure off and allow friendships to happen more naturally.



Understanding tricky aspects of “typical” friendships:-

There are certain types of behavioural expectations within most friendships and some of these can be tricky areas to navigate for many young people, but particularly those who have social understanding difficulties. Some of these skills may need to be worked on over time and explicitly taught. This can be done through role play, talking about social situations from TV and films, social stories, comic strip conversations, or even using figurines to act out the scenario.

Interpreting non-verbal cues – Looking at facial expressions and body language and how this is a big part of communication.

Emotional support – Friendship often involves supporting your friends when they are feeling low and can even be tricky for adults to figure out what to do when someone needs emotional support.

Looking at, and talking about how friends respond to each other's problems in films, TV programmes and books can help.

Compromise and flexibility – Good friendships are balanced, and therefore require an element of flexibility and compromise.

Understanding that friends may not want to do the same thing as them, or that they are allowed to change their mind can be difficult. It is also important that the same is applied back, they should not have to do everything a friend says, and they are allowed to say no or change their mind too!

Social maintenance – Friendships need maintaining, particularly as they grow older and parents step back from organising social opportunities. Whilst this is easier to do when you see someone each day at school, some children struggle with maintaining a friendship over the holidays, and it may not even occur to them to get in touch or see their friends outside of school!

Change and ends of friendships – This can be difficult for everyone at any age, but it is important for our children to understand it is a normal part of life and that it is OK. Again, also understanding that it applies to them too; they do not need to stay friends with someone if they do not wish to.



Dealing with bullying

Focus on friendships

Focusing on helping our children to develop a positive peer relationship, even if it is with just one or two individuals, should be our focus when it comes to worries about bullying. Not only are children less likely to be bullied if they are not alone, but should there be any incidents of unkindness or bullying, having a friend to support and reassure them hugely decreases the long term negative impact bullying can have. Also ensuring that your child understands what makes a good friendship will make them less vulnerable to manipulative, fake friendships.

Understanding why people bully others

Bullying should not happen, and often when people talk about the “reasons” bullying occurs we often focus on why the victim was a target. However, we should focus more on what the bully is trying to achieve –which is a sense of power over an individual. This, by default, allows them to gain status over their peer group through fear, intimidation and in some cases a warped sense of respect.

Often individuals who bully have their own ongoing issues and this status boosts their ego and inflates their own sense of self worth. If we know what the bully is trying to achieve and that their actions are purely about them, then we can sometimes put a stop to it in its early stages and lessen the impact on the self esteem of the person being targeted.

The main goal of verbal bullying is the “reaction” from the intended target. The bully is aiming to either upset or anger their victim, and the bigger the reaction the more power they feel over that person. So often the best strategies involve trying not to give them the response they are aiming for.

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Strategies for the person being bullied

- Try to remain calm and ignore them completely if possible.
- Have a selection of short, bland, non aggressive phrases to use in response e.g. “that’s nice” or “that is your opinion”.
- Alternatively, if able to, use assertive statements starting with the word “I”.

For example “I don’t deserve that, I want you to stop”– this should be said in a strong confident voice.

- Potentially try “disarming with kindness” some research has shown that it is difficult for people to engage in continued spitefulness when the person they are aiming it at is being nothing but kind to them in return. However, this is quite a skill when faced with a bully and not a natural response!
- Move away quickly to a safe space, preferably one where there are adults present. Try to avoid going somewhere alone where you are isolated.
- Do not accept friend requests/follows on social media from people you are not good friends with.

When the bullying moves to online it can become relentless.

- Ensure anyone who is actively unkind to you is blocked or unable to view any of your information. Make sure your social media accounts are set to private and ask a trusted adult to check what can be seen by someone who is not “following” you.

Most importantly, tell someone you can trust.



Strategies for parents/trusted adults

- Keep a written log of any incidents you are aware of. Make sure you put a date and take any photographic evidence if applicable – particularly in the case of online bullying.
- Make sure school are aware as soon as possible and as often as possible.
- Look at the school's anti-bullying policy and ensure it is being followed.
- Boost your child's self esteem, find lots of opportunities for them to do something they are good at.
- Explain the reasons bullying occurs and what the bully is trying to achieve – help them to understand that it is not their fault they are being bullied.
- Show them what the people who matter really think about them – ask friends, relatives and people they look up to, to write things down that they like about your child. This can be given to the child so that they can look at it. Some families have put this in a book, or on a poster in their room, or asked friends to record video messages.
- Try to find opportunities for positive social interactions and to make friends with like minded peers.
- Help them with any social understanding difficulties – do they know how to start conversations with people and how to maintain positive friendships?
- Practise and role play strategies.
- Use comic strip conversations to show thoughts, words and actions e.g. Other children may not help because they are scared – not because they don't like you.
- It is also important that the difference between good and bad friends is explained— not only to help them be a good friend but to make sure that they have good friends too



Links to further resources and information

Secondary Transition and Education Support

BBC Bitesize - Starting Secondary School

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/tags/zh4wy9q/starting-secondary-school/1>

Oxford Owl - Tips for Starting Secondary School

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/tips-for-starting-secondary-school/>

Autism Education Trust -

Resources for Schools, Parents, Children and Young People around autism in school

<http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk>

Special Needs Jungle - SEND Information <http://specialneedsjungle.com/category/send>

One Page Profiles - <https://www.sheffkids.co.uk/resources/>

Learning Style Strategies - <https://vark-learn.com/strategies/>

Organisation

Calendarpedia - Word, Excel and PDF timetable templates

<https://www.calendarpedia.co.uk/timetable-excel-templates.html>

Microsoft - Schedule Templates

<https://create.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/schedules>

Ayoo - website to help with organisational skills through mind mapping

<https://www.ayoo.com/mind-mapping/software/>

Zip Wallets (lots of different brands available on Amazon)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Document-Durable-Plastic-Zipper-Wallet/dp/B07DKVFT82>

Gator GPS Watch

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Techsixtyfour-Smartwatch-Wearable-Mobile-Tracker/dp/B07KDS6SCY>

Emotional Regulation

Zones of Regulation

<https://zonesofregulation.com/resources/>

The Incredible 5 Point Scale

<https://www.5pointscale.com>

SENSORY PROCESSING

Corinna Laurie Sensory Strategies “When is Behaviour not Behaviour?” (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eH2Oh0U4V0c>

NHS Making Sense of Sensory Behaviour

<https://www.nhs.uk/guidance/realising-the-potential-of-sensory-processing-disorders-in-children-and-young-people/falkirk-booklet.pdf>

FRIENDSHIPS/BULLYING

Do2Learn <https://do2learn.com/SocialSkills/overview.htm>

Sarah Hendrickx - Social and Personal Relationships on the Autism Spectrum

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-lfwh2QcE8>

Brook Gibbs - How to Stop A Bully

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7oKjW1Oljuw>

NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

Online safety resources

https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/11_18/

RESOURCES/EQUIPMENT

Tink n Stink - sensory and educational

<https://www.tinknstink.co.uk>

Sensory Oojamabobs - chewy items (including pencil toppers, hoodie and zip chews, and chewlery) and Fidgi Flips - small discrete fiddle toy

<https://sensoryoojamabobs.co.uk/shop/>

TTS - educational equipment, SEN, social & emotional resources

<https://www.tts-group.co.uk/secondary/sen/>

Crossbow Education- dyslexia resources <https://www.crossboweducation.com>

Flexitable (foldable maths grids)

<https://flexitable.co.uk>

WHITEBOARD TIMETABLES/PLANNERS

Wilko <https://www.wilko.com/en-uk/wilko-weekly-planner-set/p/0349365>

Amazon <https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=whiteboard+planner>

Smart Panda <https://smartpanda.co.uk/collections/>



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