

Transition to High School for ASD

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Why Plan Transition?

- Students with ASD need time to process information.
- Transition activities allow individuals to preview an activity or event before it occurs so that it becomes more predictable.
- Prior to transitioning to a new location, it is helpful to prepare the individual for what they can expect.
- Reduce anxiety in students.
- These are some of the characteristics of ASD that may impact their transition:
 - Difficulty with change
 - Understanding social skills
 - Organisation
 - Rigid thinking and inflexibility
 - Literal thinking
 - Sensory sensitivities

Transition Plan

- Identify individuals involved in transition process.
 - Teachers, Learning and Support Team, Welfare Coordinator, Learning and Support Teacher, School Counsellor, Executive staff, Parents, Outside agencies, Student
- Arrange key stakeholders to meet. Develop Transition Plan.
 - Consider the who, when, where, what, and how.

Sample Transition Plan

Transition plan

Supportive partnerships
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Student name: _____ DOB: _____ Parent/carers: _____		
Current setting: _____ Principal: _____ Teacher: _____		
Phone: _____		
Other personnel: _____		
Receiving setting: _____ Principal: _____ Teacher: _____		
Phone: _____		
Other personnel: _____		
Assessments: _____		
Time frame and dates	Support during and post transition Who is responsible	Accommodations and adjustments

From Positive Partnerships

What to Put in a Transition Plan

- What are the student's needs?
 - Plan and implement activities that address the student's needs.
 - What successful adjustments and strategies does the student have at the primary school?
- What are the student's strengths?
 - Plan and implement activities that address the student's strengths.
- Who can implement or assist in the activity?
 - Plan visits with parents, primary and high school, guests, teachers, etc.
- When will the activity occur?
 - Begin transition in term 4. Activities may need to continue into the first term of year 7.

Considerations for Transition

- Students may need to develop skills in:
 - Asking for help – who, where to go for help. Do they need a help card or a specific person?
 - Understanding different subjects and what they involve.
 - Studying, planning, completing and presenting homework. Do they need a homework checklist or timetable?
 - Note taking and extracting meaning from text. Do they need notes prepared ahead or can they copy from the board?
 - Using a diary. Do they need reminders to write in their diary? Do they know what to write in their diary? Introduce a high school diary and have the student practice using it.
 - Using a timetable. Do they know how to read it? Do they need the subjects colour coded?

Considerations for Transition

- Students may need to develop skills in:
 - Navigating through the school. Do they need a map of the school? Do they need to tour the school so the student is familiar with the grounds?
 - Packing their bag for the different days. Do they need a list or daily reminder for packing their bag?
 - Social interactions – working with others, making and keeping friends, dealing with bullying, where to go on the playground.
 - Understanding school rules and behaviours. Discuss rules, games and behaviour expected at the school. Be explicit.
 - Using a locker. Teach the student how to use and keep a locker organised.

Considerations for Transition

- Allow students to visit the high school during the school day. Prepare staff or mentor students to provide tours or have shadows.
- Arrange and maintain a buddy or mentor system for the student.
- Prepare students for changing classes and teachers. Plan days at primary school where they move teachers each 'period.'
- Obtain orientation material from the high school. Review the material with the students.
- Show Year 6 students work that expected in Year 7.
- Organise guest speakers from the high school to visit the primary school.

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Considerations for Transition

- Travel training. Practice using bus system or walking to school.
- Make a collage of pictures and names that the student will encounter in high school.
- Show the student where to go to be safe/calm. Can they go to the library? Deputy Principals office? Staff room? Sick bay?
- Teach student's about break times: where to go, where to sit, lunch clubs, where to go for help.
- Have the student write a letter to the high school about themselves.

Considerations for Transition

- Primary school
 - Organise farewell event(s). Celebrate the completion and graduation.
 - Make it a positive farewell.
 - Plan to implement transition activities
- High School
 - Organise welcome event(s) and orientation.
 - Train staff on working with individuals with ASD. Positive Partnerships or Inclusion online – Understanding ASD.
 - Continue adjustments and strategies that the primary school had in place.
 - Transition strategies may need to continue into year 7.

Considerations for Transition

- Social stories or videos. Students with ASD are visual learners.
- Priming through Print
 - Individuals may be prepared for transitions through the use of written stories.
 - Social stories:
 - Present information and situations in a visual format that may increase understanding for individuals with ASD.
 - Are a method for explaining what is happening and what is expected across different settings.

Transition Strategies

- Priming through Video
 - If watching videos is a preferred activity for an individual, video priming may be an effective strategy in preparing for a transition.
 - Go through the High School with a video camera. Walk through the steps that will be required (e.g., where to enter, where to play, classrooms, lockers, canteen) while taping and provide a simple narration about the process and requirements.
 - View the movie with the individual several times over several days prior to the transition.
 - <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/highschool/index.php>

Transition Summary

- 1. Identify key stakeholders
- 2. Develop Transition Plan
- 3. Implement Transition Plan and strategies
- 4. Review Transition Plan and strategies

Resources for Transition

- The Essential Guide to Successful Secondary School by Anna Tullemans and Sue Larkey
- Transition to High School – Including Strategies for Vulnerable Students
 - <http://www.family-advocacy.com/help/Transition%20to%20High%20School%20including%20strategies%20for%20vulnerable%20students.pdf>
- Positive Partnerships
 - <http://www.autismtraining.com.au/>
- NSW DEC
 - <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/highschool/transitions/index.php>
 - <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/highschool/index.php>