



## **South Dartmoor 2020 Transition Additional Measures**

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## Introduction

We are in a situation where this is our first experience of supporting primary to secondary transitions during a global pandemic and lockdown. Although this is unprecedented with no exemplars to inform our practice, we do already know the importance and value for a child of a positive, well supported transition to secondary school. For a number of years now, we have worked together alongside our primary schools listening carefully to parents, carers and Yr6 pupils, making effective links with key staff in our school systems valuing each child and family for their bespoke situation and needs. I have been in regular contact with primary schools and discussions of pupils and families who may require an enhanced transition and further support upon arrival at South Dartmoor are taking place.

Currently there is ongoing speculation about return dates to school. This is a dynamic situation with the specific details changing rapidly in response to government advice and direction. WEST has confirmed that there will be no physical year six transition time at South Dartmoor to try and stop the spread of infection. As a result, I am working with year six teachers, looking at further ways to support the move this term and beyond. This year the transition period between primary and secondary is likely to be longer than usual with communication between myself, parents, schools and other supportive agencies throughout terms 1 and 2. Please see below for information outlining current and ongoing plans for your child's transition to South Dartmoor.

### Pre September provision:

- Communication with primary school staff to ensure key information is shared widely.
- Relevant secondary school staff (Transition Coordinator, Head of Year, SENCo and tutors) making links and speaking to identified Yr6 parents/carers and pupils ahead of transition. Communication can be through - post, emails, phone calls and video links.
- Yr6 pupils will receive a task/quiz as an introduction to their interests and needs. 'All About Me'.
- Video tour/presentation of their school with key information in (important areas/locations with key staff). This will be made available on the college website, on social media and sent to new parents/carers via email links.
- Useful information and resources to be sent to the Year 6 pupils and parents/carers ahead of time that establishes support, relationships and connection. Eg. Map / times of the day / key staff.

### September and beyond:

- We aim to pick up additional support more directly in September [assuming by then this will be possible].
- To run coffee mornings and group support for parents within the secondary school setting to offer support, advice and trouble shoot.
- To provide an early opportunity to meet with Yr7 tutors and teaching staff and then pick up any concerns about their students that have arisen during the first term.

## Parents and Carers

There are things that parents and carers can start to do at home with their children which will help them to adjust to the upcoming move and subsequently settle in quickly.

Professor Julian Elliot (Educational Psychologist) recommends the following:

- Build children's confidence. Settling into secondary school is all about self-esteem. Children with high self-esteem are more likely to gather a wide circle of friends. They can confidently say "no" to anything with which they don't feel comfortable. So tell them how great they are. When did you last pay them a compliment? They don't have to have done anything special to deserve one; a compliment on how well they look after a pet, or that they are kind or thoughtful, goes a long way. Do this daily and watch their confidence develop.
- Listen to children's fears. Your child is possibly anxious and also afraid their concerns will appear trivial. For instance, if they become lost in the maze of corridors, what should they do? They could make their way to the school office – they should have a map – or find a pupil or teacher to direct them. What they shouldn't do is hide in the toilets until the lesson is over. Talk through the options with them. Do this for every concern they may have so that they know you take it seriously.
- Remind your child that being a good friend, especially to shy and quiet children, is one way to make friends. Be encouraging if they want.
- Show that you feel positive about their school and "talk it up" even if it was not your first choice or you lost an admissions appeal. If you have high expectations, these will be sensed by your child.
- Have a trial run of the route, especially if they walk or cycle. If they miss a school bus home you need to talk through what they will do, especially if you are working and can't pick them up straight away. [If and when possible]
- Get up earlier during the last week of the holidays so that early starts for school aren't a shock to the system.
- Stick to the uniform code. Your child will feel more comfortable from day one.
- Make sure they have emergency money for Scoffers [small change].
- Encourage them to join lunchtime or after-school clubs. They are a great way to make friends. If after half a term they really don't enjoy it, they can drop it.
- Give your child a few weeks to settle in. Rachel Lewis [Transition Coordinator] and the form tutor will be your initial contact in any situation.
- Stay in touch, please ask your child's current teachers any questions you may have surrounding transition and or email Rachel Lewis [transition@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk](mailto:transition@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk) and or [rjlewis@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk](mailto:rjlewis@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk)

Transition Resources for Schools, Y6 Children and their Parents/Carers

Secondary Transition Tips for parents/carers:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/aug/31/secondary-school-tipsparents>

Top tips for parents & carers for Yr6-7 Parents re; secondary transition

<https://youngminds.org.uk/starting-a-conversation-with-your-child/top-tips-foryou-and-your-child/>

Useful poster to send/give to Yr6 parents/carers <https://youngminds.org.uk/media/1710/top-ten-tips-poster.pdf>

Public Health England - Transition to secondary school lesson plan pack. Pupils explore the transition to secondary school and identify strategies to deal with change

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/resources/transition-tosecondary-school-lesson-plan-pack>

Identifying factors that predict successful and difficult transitions to secondary school

[https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/11/STARS\\_report.pdf](https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/11/STARS_report.pdf)

Resource for Yr6-7 Pupils <https://youngminds.org.uk/resources/school-resources/find-your-feettransitioning-to-secondary-school/>

Useful SEND resource for schools, parents, carers and pupils with additional needs about moving to secondary school <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/learning-disabilities/our-work/employmenteducation/moving-on-to-secondary-school>

NB – not all activities recommended below will be possible due to lock down, but could be adapted for some remote use.

E.g. Tips for SEN Pupils (with visuals) <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/moving-on-top-tips-forpupils.pdf>

E.g. For Parents & Cares with a child with SEND

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/moving-secondary-school17042013-d2146.pdf>