



16 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

The unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19 has, unfortunately, rendered the majority of traditional transition practices almost impossible, so we have adapted our approach in order to ensure the safest and smoothest step up to secondary school for your children.

The guiding principles behind our plans have been derived from the government guidance on reopening primary schools. The most pertinent section of the document states that,

“Though visits to secondary schools for induction will not take place this year, some secondary schools may have capacity to undertake remote induction briefings or other types of sessions for pupils, for example to meet form tutors, heads of year, or other key staff, or have a tour of the school virtually.”

I know that you and your child may well will be anxious about the transition to secondary school, so I wanted to highlight what we have already put in place and make you aware of our provisional plans for this half-term.

March onwards

- We have been gathering data from primary schools and parents using online platforms. This has enabled us to successfully group the students into appropriate colleges and tutor groups. You will be informed of these before the Virtual Transition Days.
- The ‘Starting Secondary School’ page on our website provides live information relating to transition, and links to relevant documents such as our transition newsletter ‘Ed Lines’. This page can be found here: www.king-ed.suffolk.sch.uk/menu/starting-secondary-school/
- We have created a narrated PowerPoint which gives you lots of information about transition. It too can be found on the Starting Secondary School page of our website.
- Our 2020 Transition Pack has been included with this letter. This is based on usual non-COVID circumstances. The pack tells you everything we think you currently need to know about King Edward VI School.
- We have created a private Facebook group for Year 6 parents and carers. This has fostered a real community spirit and given us an opportunity to share videos introducing key members of our staff. It has also allowed members to share pictures, and stories about their child’s experiences.

Work and activities for your child

- We have set Year 6 pupils the challenge to write a letter to their future Year 11 selves. Thank you to everyone who has already engaged with this. The letters have been absolutely fantastic. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading them and writing back. Please keep sending them in to me (transition@king-ed.suffolk.sch.uk).
- We have provided a suggested Summer Reading List, as approved by our Librarian and our English Department. Details of both these activities can be found here: www.king-ed.suffolk.sch.uk/menu/starting-secondary-school/.

- Our education partner, The PiXL Club, has put together some excellent transition resources. These links can also be found on the 'Starting Secondary School' page of our website. We would be delighted if you could encourage your son/daughter to engage with the interactive lessons and email us examples of their work to transition@king-ed.suffolk.sch.uk. We may, with your permission, share examples of work to our Year 7 September 2020 Facebook group.

Furthermore, we are in the process of putting together a subject-based resource pack for Year 7 pupils which we are calling **The 'Elevate' Initiative**. This is, in part, in response to the government guidance which makes it clear that academic readiness for secondary school should be the key focus for Year 6 pupils over the coming weeks. The pack will provide pupils with further optional home learning tasks, lists of key subject terminology/content/context, links to websites and details of the topics we cover in our Year 7 curriculum. We will share this with you in due course.

Transition Events

As the government guidance states, "*visits to secondary schools for induction will not take place this year*" and so we are in the process of planning Virtual Transition Events instead.

1. Virtual Transition Days

These days are intended to simulate the key aspects of a traditional transition for your child. The days will be streamed live, recorded* and added to our website for any parents who could not attend or who suffered technology issues. For those without internet access we aim to produce a DVD of the recorded events.

These will take place on Monday 20 and Tuesday 21 July 2020. Although the exact content is yet to be finalised, the following are examples of planned sessions:

- Headteacher's welcome
- School tour
- Q&A sessions with key staff and students
- Taster lessons
- 'A day in the life' at King Edward VI School

* Only our staff and current students will appear in the live streams and recorded footage.

2. Virtual Transition Evening

Since we were unable to hold the traditional Transition Evenings (because they fell during the height of the nationwide lockdown) we are now hoping to stage a Virtual Transition Evening instead for you and your child. In many ways this has the potential to provide even more information than the traditional approach. The intention is that the evening will be streamed live, recorded and added to the website for anyone who could not attend. Again, we aim to produce a DVD of the recorded events for those who do not have internet access.

3. Virtual Parents' Evening

We are also in the process of determining the feasibility of staging a Year 6 Virtual Parents' Evening. This would be an opportunity for parents/carers and pupils to have a virtual 'face-to-face' meeting with their Head of College and/or Tutor.

Physical visits to the school

We have been open to the children of key workers and vulnerable students since March. On 15 June 2020 we opened to Year 10 students. In accordance with government guidance the school site will only be open to these students at this stage. This means that it is highly unlikely that we will hold group visits, tours or transition events in school prior to September. We are hoping to hold an Induction Day in school at the start of the new academic year, but this too will only be conducted if it is permitted by the government.

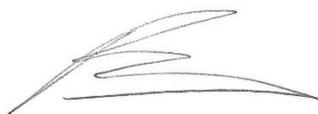
The only exception to this lack of a physical visit to the school prior to the new school year may be for students with an Education, Health and Care Plan, and those we deem to be vulnerable. The plans for this are in their infancy and will be dependent on the latest government guidance and our school's risk assessment. We will contact the parents/carers of these pupils in due course to discuss our plans.

Contact

I apologise for writing such a protracted letter, but I wanted to reassure you that we have been doing, and will continue to do, everything in our power to ensure a smooth and successful transition to secondary school for your child. As always, please stay in contact, keep posting online, share your child's work and do not hesitate to ask any questions via transition@king-ed.suffolk.sch.uk or our Facebook group.

Yours faithfully,

Rob Herbert



Assistant Headteacher
Transition and Key Stage 3