

20th April, 2020

Dear Parent

It is so very strange to be writing to you about Transition in these unprecedented times and how the Transition journey to Shaftesbury School is going to have to adapt and look different this year. Typically, I would be starting to go into primary schools, meeting lots of excited and curious Year 6s and having in depth discussions with their teachers. I find myself however just hoping that you are all safe and healthy.

Transition to secondary school is one of the biggest and most significant changes in a child's life, which is why at Shaftesbury School we place the utmost importance on getting it right to ensure all of our new Year 7 students are happy, motivated and primed to be 'the best that they can be'. This year's Transition journey is going to be different to any other, with COVID-19, social distancing and school closures. Whilst it is still uncertain when schools will re-open and what, if any, Shaftesbury Transition events can go ahead as planned, what is certain is that we still want to offer the best, most meaningful Transition that we can in these circumstances. To this end, please see below for the working plan for Transition 2020:

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR:

- Welcome letters and a Student Information Form have been posted home to families
- Primary Schools have received Transfer forms for the children coming to Shaftesbury school
- Year 6 staff have started to send back these completed Transfer Forms to Shaftesbury
- Transition email which is checked daily
- Research into the best ways that year 6's can be supported with the transition has been conducted
- An action plan has been created to be able to remotely support Year 6 students during Transition

THE ACTION PLAN:

The working plan is to collate all transfer forms with information on our new year 7s that Year 6 teachers are currently filling out and, where possible, I will hold discussions via phone with year 6 staff. This information will be used by myself to create bespoke tutor groups for September.

In addition, the teacher assessment data that Year 6 teachers give to us will play a large part in helping us structure the makeup of our class groupings for September.

We completely appreciate how unsettling this must be for Year 6 students, possibly not going back to their primary school, saying a temporary goodbye to friends and all the preparation they have done for their SATS which will now not happen. As a result, we are aiming to put together a 'Remote Transition Package' for Year 6 students that will help support the students.

Our aims will be:

- To increase awareness and develop the core Shaftesbury Values
- To give a friendly and warm welcome to Shaftesbury School
- To promote positive mental wellbeing in these unique times
- To support students with typical 'worries' about starting secondary school

The following action points are what we aim to deliver to all Year 6s during Transition:

1. The information that would have been shared on Tuesday 5th May will be shared via an information booklet and your son/daughter will be informed of the house they will be joining
2. Uniform can still be ordered online by using the following website: <https://pmgschoolwear.co.uk/school/shaftesburyschool>
3. To provide engaging and challenging Transition Summer Learning Projects. These activities will be designed to keep the brain active but to also prepare students for Year 7 learning.
4. A reading list of engaging books to keep the imagination rolling during the summer term and to help prepare students for Year 7 learning.
5. A package of Wellbeing activities to help promote positive mental health and relaxation

If we're not back in school for the final half term we will also aim to deliver:

1. Virtual 360° tour of key areas in the school
2. Video of people involved in your son/daughter's transition which we hope will include their tutor but cannot guarantee at this time
3. Video of students' experiences at Shaftesbury school
4. A podcast from the head boy and girl about their journey through school
5. Booklet on the school from the child's perspective which will include a map
6. A year 8 Buddy will be allocated to each student
7. A letter explaining what will happen for year 7 on their first day in September.

All of the above will be available as documents via the following ways:

- Downloadable from the Shaftesbury School Website – under Admissions -Year 7 September admission - Transition to Secondary School

- They will be emailed to all Year 6 parents, using the contact details we have been provided with. During this time, you're likely to receive more correspondence via email and so please could you check your email on a semi-regular basis.
- If possible, documents will be posted to Year 6 Parents. We expect the Remote Transition Package to be available for Year 6 after May half term. More information will follow with exact dates and timings. You will be able to email your child's work for us to showcase on our website, to celebrate what the students are doing. The email address for this will be communicated at the same time the work is sent out.

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU:

- Please fill out your data collection sheets if you haven't already. This is so we have all the relevant information on your child so we can input it onto our school systems ready for September and ensure that we have catered for all their needs.
- There are a small number of parents whom we haven't got an email address for (provided by the Local Authority based on information you gave when applying for Shaftesbury). If you think this might be you, please get in touch via the email address below. We will be using these email addresses to send out the Transition Project
- Ask your child if they have any questions about moving to Shaftesbury – what might they be worried about? What are they curious about? What would they like to know? These questions will help form a Q and A leaflet if the questions have not already been covered in the information booklet. Please email any questions to the transition email.

In the meantime, if you have any more immediate queries please contact us by emailing transition@shaftesburyschool.co.uk in the first instance.

Whilst this may not be the Transition process we fully intended to deliver this year, we will do our utmost to make it as engaging and successful as possible for our young people. Please take care everybody and look after yourselves and your family. Let's do this together.

Yours Sincerely,



Mrs Coombs
Assistant Head in charge of Transition