

## SEN and transition

From the moment children are enrolled at Notre Dame, we begin the process of *teaching them what they need to equip them for life*'. Hence, transition from one stage of education to another is an important consideration for us. Transition can often provide a particular set of challenges for children with SEN but handled correctly, it can also be a very positive experience.

The main transition periods for our students are:

1. KS2 to KS3 (Y6 to Y7)
2. KS3 to KS4 (Y8 to Y9)
3. Y11 - Post sixteen
4. KS5 – Post eighteen

The key to success in all four transitions is personalised planning. This means that the student's and his/her parents/carers' views are central to the planning of any transition programme.

### 1. KS2 to KS3.

The transition from primary to secondary school is probably the most challenging (for parents as well as students!). The School's mainstream transition programme has run successfully for many years. It involves visits from members of Notre Dame staff to feeder schools and a full day's transition programme for new students. Children from non-feeder schools are also invited to a preliminary half day programme to meet other students before they attend the full transition day.

However, some children with SEN may need further support and a personalised programme. This might involve a series of individual visits or SEN staff going out to primary schools. Parents are often involved in the process, however, the emphasis is very much on the student making a successful independent start in Y7.

### 2. KS3 to KS4

Although our KS3 curriculum is designed to prepare our children for the next stage of their studies, children with SEN might need additional support as they begin their GCSEs. In particular, guidance is available to help students choose appropriate courses and some students may be invited to join our General Support course. Occasionally, a student with highly specialised needs may be offered an individual curriculum. Children with SEN that might affect their progress at KS4 are closely monitored during their early weeks of their courses and additional help can be put in place where appropriate. As with all year groups, subject teachers are also informed of the specific needs of their students, enabling them to provide the Quality First teaching that meets the needs of all children.

### 3. Y11 –Post sixteen

The transition from Y11 to post sixteen study or training marks a huge milestone for many of our students. We are aware that they may have benefitted from the high levels of care and nurture provided at Notre Dame but, if they are not staying on into our sixth form, they will need careful preparation for the next stage of their journey. Again, personalised planning is the key to success. We have very good working relationships with the local colleges and, should children

wish to consider continuing their education there, we have developed effective strategies of early and additional reconnaissance visits. We also work closely with parents/carers and the relevant parties to improve the life skills needed to progress beyond Notre Dame, such as independent travel.

An increasing number of our children with SEN are choosing to take up A Level courses at Notre Dame. Where this happens, students and their parents are offered help and advice from both the SEN team and the Sixth Form team to select the correct number and type of courses. As with students starting their GCSE courses, children with SEN are closely monitored at A Level and extra support is put in place as appropriate. Students and their parents are heavily involved in this process.

#### 4. KS5 – Post eighteen

It has been wonderful over the years to see numbers of our students with SEN completing A Level courses and moving on to higher education. By this stage, the students are able to decide for themselves the level of support they require from Notre Dame for a successful transition. However, we now have wide experience of helping students with selecting appropriate courses and venues, completing applications and accessing external support. The same support is available for students choosing to go directly into work after A Levels.