

ASD / Asperger's or High Functioning Autism

The transition from primary to secondary school is a major change in any child's life, and pupils with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in particular may need support at this time. Pupils with an ASD can find new and unfamiliar people, places and situations hard to cope with, so it will help to prepare them for these changes as thoroughly as you can. Some of the common changes are:

- > possibly travelling to a new area, and possibly using school transport for the first time
- > new buildings, new teachers and classmates
- > new and different routines, e.g. lunchtime arrangements.

How YOU can help your child:

Establishing their new routine is an important part of preparing your child for this new phase. There are a number of ways you can start to do this. Attendance at Charter School's Open Days and Induction Days before your child begins in September is helpful as they introduce your child to the new environment. Practise the new route to and from school several times so it becomes familiar and you could use this time to talk about their hopes or worries.

Once they have started at TCS, their initial worries often soon diminish. However, as a parent your support of your child will continue to be vital. Colour-coding subjects can be helpful: you might highlight each subject in a different colour, and use a same coloured sticker on their books so they can begin to organise themselves with increasing independence. Supporting homework by checking homework diaries, encouraging your child to make sure they understand the instructions, and encouraging your son or daughter to start their homework early are all important elements of your continuing help.

Children and young people with autism can display different behaviour at home than at school. This is often due to underlying anxiety that has built up during the school day. They know they are fully accepted at home and are able to release any frustrations they have been feeling at school.

How TCS will help your child:

Before the start of term, the Learning Support Department will be preparing Pupil Profiles and assessing the needs of, and provisions for, each new student to ensure there is sufficient support in place.

We have a team of dedicated Learning Support Assistants whose role is to provide in class support who have been trained in the specific requirements needed by students with ASD. Additionally, during Year 7, we may suggest that your child takes part in various interventions:

- Transition Support Group during Term 1
- A Social and communications Group to help them develop their communication skills, and confidence for adapting to their new environment.
- Designated Person will be assigned to them from the Learning Support Department
- We have a system of 'Time Out' cards allowing the student to leave their lesson and come to the Learning Support department to cool down for a few minutes.