



DONATE



In this section



Autistic pupils and transition

Autistic children and young people can find transition very difficult. This could be [changing year groups](#), [moving schools](#) or [going to college or university](#).

Changing year groups

A change in classroom, teacher, teaching/learning support assistant or peer group can make autistic pupils [anxious](#) as it will mean a change to their [routine](#). Here are some things you can do before the end of the school year to help [prepare them for change](#):

- arrange a one to one meeting for them with their new teacher
- plan a time for them to visit their new classroom when there are no other pupils there
- identify a buddy from their new peer group
- make sure that their new teacher has an understanding of their individual needs and any [strategies](#) that are used to support them.

Moving schools

A successful transition from one education setting to another needs good communication between both schools. It's important that education staff:

- are aware of the school's legal responsibilities during the transition process
- personalise the process to meet the needs of pupil they are working with

- plan well in advance, involving the autistic child or young person, the team around them and their parents/carers
- arrange visits to the new education setting so that the pupil can become familiar with the environment and teaching staff
- encourage them to take photographs whilst visiting, they can then have a visual record of their new school and teacher
- organise peer support, eg a friendship group or buddy system.

Read more about what school can do to support autistic pupils [starting or changing school](#).

Going to college or university

The following information has been put together with the help of an experienced lead from a specialist unit within a mainstream school.

Plan, personalise and prepare

- Ensure that careers education and planning programmes form part of the young person's transition plan and appropriately reflect their individual requirements (National Transition Support Team, 2011).
- Help them to choose goals that are realistic and achievable, but don't limit them.
- Support and encourage them to reach their full potential and work hard towards their goals.
- Plan well in advance with the key people involved - the young person, their parents/carers, SENCO, advocate (if necessary), teachers and staff from the new setting, eg teacher, lecturer, support worker, employer.
- Use visual aids, eg videos and photographs of key people and buildings.

- Start travel training early. It may be a long and intense learning process, but one that can be very rewarding as you see autistic pupils become more independent.
- Be aware of the importance of [social skills](#) and social confidence.
- Organise familiarisation visits to the new college or employer. These can be as staggered, eg trip to gate, trip to outside college and then a separate trip to inside.
- Have college staff visit your school to meet specific students.
- Organise peer support, eg a friendship group, buddy system if the young person is moving to the school's 6th form.
- Arrange visits from students/employees who are already at the future college or place of employment.
- Advise that staff at the new education placement or employer have [understanding autism training](#).

Read about how [colleges and universities can help with transition](#).

Further help from our charity

[Transition support service](#)

[Transition](#) information for parents/carers and young people

[Brain in Hand: autism support app](#)

[Student support services](#)

[Autism-friendly apprenticeships](#)

Resources

England

[The Finished at School guide](#)

[Transition Toolkit](#)

[Preparing for adulthood](#)

Northern Ireland

Education Support for Northern Ireland [Transition Service](#)

Scotland

Scottish Autism Supporting [Transition from School to University](#)

Wales

SNAP Cymru [Transition – Leaving school](#)

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Useful links 

Social media 

Quick contact 

Sign up for email updates 

To get email updates from us, update your details and preferences, take part in our communities, and use other services, please sign in or register.

The National Autistic Society

Until everyone understands

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