

Frequently Asked Questions

Even in 'normal' times transition from Year 6 can be stressful for both pupils and parents and during this period of uncertainty we are aware from conversations with colleagues in primary schools that many parents are anxious about how we are going to try and make this process as normal as possible for all pupils joining us in September. Obviously, quite a lot of what we say here is subject to change once further guidance is issued by The Welsh Government but we will keep you updated as things become clearer. You can keep up to date with the latest advice from Welsh Government at <https://gov.wales/how-schools-will-work-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

1. Do I need to contact the school?

Please feel free to contact the school whenever you want using transition@willows.cardiff.sch.uk. However, we have your details and a member of staff will make contact with you by the middle of June to discuss how transition is going to work for you and your child. Please keep an eye out for emails and phone calls.

2. Will the 'normal' transition activities happen this year?

Obviously, we are still unsure when Year 6 pupils are going to return to school in Wales so this will become clearer once an announcement is made. We are also aware that if Year 6 get the chance to return to school this year there are a lot of important things that Year 6 teachers will want to do and we would not want to diminish the time at the end of Year 6. We will continue to work closely with Year 6 teachers if pupils return to school.

For parents, it seems unlikely that we will be able to do the traditional evening in the hall so we are proposing that we do that meeting virtually but also run a series of virtual meetings where you will get the chance to ask all the questions that you want to the most senior staff in the school and we will let you know when we have a final date for that meeting.

It is important to remember that transition isn't just a 6 week activity, pupils have been becoming familiar with Willows since Year 4 and transition activities will continue to run throughout Year 7 to make sure that all pupils settle as well as they possibly can.

3. How will my child find their way around school?

This is always a big question that pupils have as Willows is considerably larger than any primary school. All pupils will be given a tour of the school as soon as school starts.

There is a virtual tour of the school on the website which shows the main areas of the school.

Please remember that all pupils struggle with this at the start of term and find their way after a week!

4. How will school know about my child?

We have been talking to primary schools for more than a year about your child, their academic performance, their friendship groups and what they are good at. We will meet virtually with Year 6 teachers. We will collect their reading ages, their National Test results and their Key Stage 2 final levels.

The most important people to talk to are the pupil and yourself, we will schedule a time to meet with you both by phone or by Zoom.

5. What about if my child has Additional Learning Needs?

Pupils with Additional Needs are identified by their primary schools. The Additional Learning Needs Coordinator from both schools will meet to discuss all pupils identified with ALN. The ALNCO from Willows will contact pupils and parents to discuss individual issues. If the pupil has a statement then all paperwork will be passed to Willows and discussed with the parent and the pupil.

6. What about if I can't buy uniform?

We are hopeful that our uniform supplier (YC Sports) will be able to reopen to supply uniform, however if it isn't possible to get uniform don't worry, pupils won't be in trouble if they can't get uniform for the start of term.

7. What will happen on the first day?

Obviously, we will be guided by advice on large meetings but we anticipate that pupils will be met on the playground by senior staff, welfare officers and form teachers. They will be put into form groups and pupils will stay in those groups with their form tutors to make sure that all pupils are happy before they start lessons. This situation will become clearer over the next few months and we will be working over the summer holidays to make sure that the first day goes as smoothly as possible.

8. Will my child be with their friends?

We will take guidance from Year 6 teachers on which pupils work well with each other, when staff meet with parents and pupils we will discuss grouping. Every year there is flexibility grouping and changes are made in the first half term.

9. What will happen if we are still in lockdown?

We really hope that by September we will be free to return to school. If not, work will be accessible through the school website and we will be reviewing how all pupils access work once we have new guidance.

10. How will you keep my child safe?

We have to expect that the return to school will see changes in the way the school is run to be in line with social distancing and the latest government advice. This is a challenge for all schools and we welcome The Welsh Governments cautious approach in not allowing pupils to return until we know it is safe to do so. We will work with Cardiff Council to ensure that all guidelines are adhered to and will keep you updated as the situation becomes clearer.

This is a really difficult time for pupils, parents and teachers, we will be updating information as soon as we get it and we will be in contact soon. If you have any questions please contact us using transition@willows.cardiff.sch.uk