

Supporting Transitions

Max is an autistic pupil at Priestnall Secondary School. His special interest is Pokémon, his favourite character is Pikachu. Max also enjoys watching YouTubers playing gaming videos and wants to create games in the future as a career.



Background

In Year 7, Max said there were lots of changes to adjust to, the main ones being (i) new pupils (ii) the new environment (iii) new class-rooms and to the teachers.

Staff used the framework of the AET Autism Standards to make adjustments for Max who described his school as a very friendly place and said that staff gave advice on how to calm down, rather than criticising you when you had a meltdown. He said, "If staff see I am upset, they will ask me what's wrong and what's making you feel depressed – or say, can I do anything to help you?"



Intervention

Here are some of the key adjustments that staff made for Max to support his transition to Year 7:

-  Max's form tutor visited him at primary school before he started at his new school.
-  Max had visits to his new school before he started.
-  Social Stories were created for him.
-  Max was given a book with photos of key staff before he started.
-  If bullying is reported, staff will always act and use the 5-point scale.



Outcome

-  Max was very familiar with the 5-point scale and felt supported by its use.
-  Students can report bullying anonymously and the student will receive a reply from a member of staff.
-  The school has anti-bullying ambassadors and staff to deal with issues that arise.
-  Max leaves lessons a few minutes before the others in his class to avoid the crowded corridors.
-  Max has had the same form tutor all the way through secondary school.
-  At lunchtime, Max sometimes goes to a quiet room designated for students who need a safe space or he goes to the library or the IT suite.
-  Max is able to go to a quiet room in class time if the class is really noisy.
Max uses headphones in class and has access to the calming App 'Headspace' on his phone.



This is an extract from a case study of Priestnall Secondary School taken from the AET Good Autism Practice Guidance - Case Studies here:
<https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/shop/good-autism-practice-resources/>