# Ups and Downs Southwest

Ups and Downs Southwest

The Old School

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[www.upsanddowns.net](http://www.upsanddowns.net)

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**Down Syndrome support organisation**

 Providing support, advice and information to Parents

 Carers and Professionals across the Southwest

 Reg. Charity No 1116381

 **Patron: Dr Andrew Tandy** MRCP MPCGP FRCPH

Find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UpsandDownsSouthwest](http://www.facebook.com/UpsandDownsSouthwest)

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 **List of questions that parents could ask when visiting a secondary school for the first time**

* Do you have any experience successfully including students who have additional needs and may require full time support?
* As I understand it my child will have enough funding for fulltime support. How would this support be used?
* What kind of relationship does the school have with the child’s current junior school?
* How flexible would the school be about their staff visiting the child’s current junior school to see how the child is supported, and the current school staff visiting their school.
* If your child is coming from a ‘feeder school’ to this secondary – are the school flexible about looking to ensure that the child with DS has some familiar peers in their tutor group/main class to provide peer support.
* How many support staff would be involved with your child in a typical school day. (Having one member of support staff all day at secondary is not best practice – but then neither is having 6 or 7!!)
* If your child requires/still uses sign - Do any staff have experience of sign/makaton.
* Do the school have existing staff that would be suitable for the role of support or would they be looking to recruit from outside.
* (Walk around the school). How secure is the site for your child – most secondary schools are NOT secure sites – so will the school ensure that your child is properly supervised at all times?
* (Walk around the school). How visual is the information and resources around the school. Talk about visual timetables and other types of visual support – for example a school with a one-way system can put up arrows on the walls – some schools assign a colour to key subjects – science books may have yellow stickers on, science is coloured yellow on the child’s timetable – a large yellow sign or square is stuck to the doors of the science rooms/labs etc,
* How do the school honestly feel about including a child with Down Syndrome and what does that mean to them. Explain what it means to you.
* Would the school like to access training and information beforehand from Ups and Downs Southwest? Are they aware that they can have an electronic copy (CD) of the entire and full Transition Pack for schools for only £5!! – We can also put them in touch with other secondary schools who have successfully included students with DS.

These questions and information are designed to support your general enquiries and provide parents/families with a few ideas. It is also important that you look at your child’s individual needs and requirements and add to these examples given and/or amend as necessary.

Feel free to give us a call if we can be of any further help.

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