

# Stepping Stones

Stepping Stones is a Southchurch High School programme supporting transition.

## **Breakfast Peer Mentoring**

We know that Year 7 can be an unsettling time for most Year 7 students. We also know that young people frequently benefit from working with others. The Stepping Stones programme makes the most of our greatest asset for our older students, in order to support our younger students. Stepping Stones mentors receive two days training so that they can be an effective support to Year 7.

Two mornings a week, our Year 10 mentors attend school early in order to meet with our Year 7 students in an informal breakfast setting. All Year 7 students are invited to attend (we typically have 30+ volunteer Year 10 mentors, so we have the capacity to work with a large number of students).

Each Year 7 student who attends is assigned a mentor with whom they can discuss their transition to secondary school, any issues they are having and also life in general. Conversations every morning vary for example some students are having heated discussions about 'last night's' football, some students are helping each other with home learning and some mentors take their mentees to the library to show them how to access our Reading Programme, Accelerated Reader. Breakfast mentoring is supported by members of staff in case issues arise which need immediate action.

When we survey students who attend, they say that they appreciate the opportunity to make friends with their peers, the academic support they receive, the relationships that they develop with each other (many students make friends at Stepping Stones morning mentoring) and also enjoy the free breakfast!

## **Stepping Stones Study Club**

Many Year 7 students are very keen to study outside lessons and so we have set up the Stepping Stones Study Club to support this group of students. Attendance is voluntary and Year 7 students are supported by enthusiastic Year 10 mentors.

## **Stepping Stones Taught Programme**

Whilst our Year 10 mentors are fantastic, the Year 7 team recognises that some Year 7 students need a little more support than can be offered by a Year 10 student.

Over the last year, we have developed the Stepping Stones intervention for these students. Working in collaboration with the Head of Year 7, Student Support and the Learning Mentor for Year 7, we identify groups of students who need extra support. This support is provided via a 3-6 week support programme which usually runs for one hour a week. Each intervention is different and works with a different group of students who have similar needs.

This work is bespoke to each year group, however, we have offered:

- Support for students who find organising themselves challenging
- Support for students who have low self-esteem or who lack confidence in the classroom
- Support for students experiencing friendship issues
- Support for students who struggle to respond appropriately to adults and other students