

# **Children and Young People Select Committee**

## **Scrutiny Review of Transition from Primary to Secondary**

**March 2015**

Children and Young People Select Committee  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS18 1LD

**Contents**

<b><u>SELECT COMMITTEE - MEMBERSHIP</u></b> .....	4
<b>Foreword</b> .....	5
<b>Original Brief</b> .....	6
<b>1.0 Introduction</b> .....	7
<b>2.0 Background</b> .....	7
<b>3.0 Evidence</b> .....	10
<b>4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations</b> .....	21
<b>Glossary of Terms</b> .....	23

### **Select Committee – Membership**

Councillor Carol Clark (Chair)  
Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Ben Houchen  
Councillor Elliot Kennedy  
Councillor Ross Patterson  
Councillor Mrs Sylvia Walmsley  
Councillor Barbara Inman  
Councillor Ken Lupton  
Councillor Tracey Stott

### **Co-opted Representatives**

Phil Rigby  
R G Lupton  
Norah Moffat  
David Campbell

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Select Committee thank the following contributors to this review:

Diane McConnell – Chief Adviser  
Marianne Mason – Specialist Teacher  
Egglescliffe School  
Junction Farm Primary School  
Our Lady and St Bede RC Academy  
St Cuthbert's RC Voluntary Aided Primary School  
Conyers School  
Wolviston Primary School

Contact Officer:  
Judy Trainer, Electoral and Scrutiny Team Leader  
Tel: 01642 528158  
E-mail: [judith.trainer@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:judith.trainer@stockton.gov.uk)

## Foreword



Councillor Carol Clark  
Chair



Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE  
Vice-Chair

## Original Brief

### **What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?**

A national Ofsted survey report identified that transfer arrangements in over a quarter of the schools visited were weak and that these weaknesses resulted in, amongst other things, students being in groups where teaching did not challenge them.

The overall aim of the review is to ensure that transition arrangements from primary to secondary school are effective enough to ensure that students maintain their academic momentum into Year 7 and therefore make more progress across Key Stage 3 and 4 so that outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4 improve.

### **The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:**

- Do pupils do less well at secondary schools than their predictions on leaving primary school?
- Do pupils make adequate progress on standardised tests in English, Mathematics and reading by the end of their first year in secondary school?
- Does behaviour deteriorate in the early years of secondary school?
- Do schools talk to each other about the information they need to transfer?
- How should primary schools prepare pupils?
- How should secondary schools support pupils in their first year?
- What induction arrangements are in place to ensure pupils are supported emotionally and socially for secondary school?
- How best can we create an environment for dialogue between primary and secondary schools?
- Is there a case for earlier liaison with primary schools (prior to Year 6)?
- What are the benefits of different approaches such as summer school, pupil mentors and fast track schemes?
- What is good practice and where is it in the Borough?

### **Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?**

Schools  
Academies  
Governing Bodies

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The overall aim of the review is to ensure that transition arrangements from primary to secondary school are effective enough to ensure that students maintain their academic momentum into Year 7 and therefore make more progress across Key Stage 3 and 4 so that outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4 improve.

1.2 In order to investigate the issue, Committee Members have undertaken site visits to primary and secondary schools across the Borough to explore the following key lines of enquiry:

- Do pupils do less well at secondary schools than their predictions on leaving primary school?
- Do pupils make adequate progress on standardised tests in English, Mathematics and reading by the end of their first year in secondary school?
- Does behaviour deteriorate in the early years of secondary school?
- Do schools talk to each other about the information they need to transfer?
- How should primary schools prepare pupils?
- How should secondary schools support pupils in their first year?
- What induction arrangements are in place to ensure pupils are supported emotionally and socially for secondary school?
- How best can we create an environment for dialogue between primary and secondary schools?
- Is there a case for earlier liaison with primary schools (prior to Year 6)?
- What are the benefits of different approaches such as summer school, pupil mentors and fast track schemes?
- What is good practice and where is it in the Borough?

1.3 Committee Members have visited the following Stockton schools to speak with staff and pupils:

- Egglecliffe School
- Junction Farm Primary School
- Our Lady and St Bede RC Academy
- St Cuthbert's RC Voluntary Aided Primary School

1.4 Discussion with the full Select Committee also took place with Conyers School and Wolviston Primary School staff and pupils at the Select Committee meeting on 14 January 2015.

## 2.0 Background

2.1 There is a growing body of research which associates the transition of pupils from one phase to another with underachievement. Galton et al (1999) suggest that two in every five pupils fail to make expected progress in the year after moving to secondary school supporting the hypothesis that there is an academic dip post transition. In 2013, Stockton progression rates for primary pupils were in line with or exceeding national averages. For secondary aged pupils, progression rates were well below national averages.

2.2 Performance of primary schools/academies compared to secondary schools/academies revealed:

- Age related expectations –  
80% pupils at KS2 make age related expectations (CRWM level 4+). 55.3% pupils at KS4 make 5 x A+-C incl English and maths
  - Expected progress  
94% make 2 levels of progress in primary in writing  
65.8% make 3 levels of progress in English at secondary
  - Ofsted outcomes 97% v 33%
- 2.3 Social readiness included:
- Induction arrangements:
  - Visits to school
  - Shared projects
  - Summer schools
- 2.4 Academic readiness included:
- Appropriate skills and knowledge
  - Appropriate information shared to ensure needs are met

## National Research

### ***What Makes a Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School?***

(Evangelou, Taggart, Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons and Siraj-Blactchford 2008)

2.5 This Transition Study, refers back to earlier studies which all present similar findings, suggesting that secondary teachers are underestimating Y7 pupils' academic capabilities and hence this can contribute to the presence of an academic 'dip' during pupils' first year at secondary.

2.6 The study concluded that most of the children in the study had a positive transition experience, but a noticeable minority did not. For children, parents and schools the factors that identify a successful transition could be summarised as social adjustment, institutional adjustment and curriculum interest and continuity. This report highlights a number of influences that shape children's transfer experiences and the likelihood of a successful transfer.

### **The Most Able Students - Ofsted Report June 2013**

2.7 In this report Ofsted concluded that the quality of transition between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 was much too variable in the schools surveyed and arrangements for transfer and transition were weak in over a quarter of the schools visited:

"Teachers in Year 7 were frequently unaware of what the most able students had studied or achieved previously in their primary schools. Time was wasted, either because work was repeated or because it failed to challenge the most able students at an appropriate level. Opportunities were missed to extend and consolidate learning because teachers were unaware of the themes studied in the previous phase of education and the levels that students had reached. Too few schools used the Department for Education's Key to Success website, a resource that has been available for a number of years.

2.8 Effective transition from Year 6 to Year 7 (from primary to secondary) can be challenging, especially where secondary schools admit students from large numbers of primary schools. Transition was most effective when it was simplest. For example, it worked



well when primary schools sent their pupils mainly to one secondary school or where local cluster arrangements between the feeder primaries and secondary school were of long standing.

2.9 In the best examples of effective transition from primary to secondary, schools had ensured that good links were a priority: for example, secondary schools supported the most able students before transfer by providing subject-specialist teaching or providing a range of pre-secondary activities such as workshops, transfer projects or summer schools. Seventy-one of the 76 parents and carers who responded to the question on transition in Ofsted's questionnaire on the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) website either agreed or strongly agreed that the transfer between primaries and the secondary school was handled appropriately.

2.10 Although all the secondary schools visited referred to a range of activities that they had provided for their most able students before they started in Year 7, these activities were, typically, available to all students and not arranged specifically for the most able. In addition, too many school leaders did not know how effective their transition arrangements were in helping their most able students to get off to a flying start in secondary school.

2.11 In over a quarter of the schools surveyed, students did not get off to a good start in Year 7. This was because teachers' expectations of what the most able students could achieve were not high enough. The most able students spoken to during the visits to these schools reported that work in Year 7 was insufficiently demanding and that they did not feel challenged in the majority of their lessons. One Year 7 student said, 'In geography, teachers give you the information and they do not expect students to find out things for themselves.' Another said, 'We're doing circuits and forces in science and I already know that from primary school.'

2.12 Overall, inspectors found serious weaknesses in the transfer arrangements between primary and secondary schools. They did not enable secondary schools to build on the achievements of the most able pupils in Year 6."

### **Ofsted Annual Report 2013/14**

2.13 This report highlights that teaching at Key Stage 3 is failing to build on prior learning:

"Too many secondary schools are not building on the gains pupils make in primary schools. In underperforming secondary schools, not enough is expected of pupils from the first day they arrive in Year 7. The curriculum lacks challenge and too many children repeat what they have already mastered in the latter stages of primary school. In contrast, the most successful secondary schools often work closely with their feeder primaries to ensure that they know how well pupils are achieving before they enter secondary school. Some of these secondary schools display pupils' work from primary school to serve as a reminder to staff of what children are able to achieve."

### **Ofsted Regional Report 2013/14 – North East, Yorkshire and Humber**

2.14 This regional report highlighted:

"The gains made in primary schools, particularly in the North East, are lost in the secondary phase, where students make less progress in English and mathematics than in most other regions. Eight of the region's 27 local authorities are in the bottom 25% nationally. This weakness in learning has a profound effect on the opportunities for progress. It closes, rather

than opens, doors for young people on the cusp of adulthood. Progress in mathematics is weaker than in English and 13 local authorities are in the bottom 25% in the country. Too many students leave school without qualifications to progress into training, employment or further education, thus becoming part of the region's unacceptably high NEET (not in education, employment or training) population."

### **3.0 Evidence**

#### **School Visit Feedback**

##### **Egglescliffe School – 15 October 2014**

3.1 The Chair attended a cluster meeting at Egglescliffe School. The new Head Teacher had invited the Head Teachers from the eight partner primary schools to discuss how there could be greater collaboration between them on transition. The Heads agreed that a needs analysis should be carried out leading to an action plan and implementation from January.

3.2 The main improvements identified were:

- Greater collaboration was needed on all areas of the curriculum. There was good collaboration on sport and music but this good practice could be extended to other subjects
- Secondary staff needed to spend more time in primaries and vice versa
- Greater book scrutiny and comparison was required
- Improved mechanisms to be identified for passing on information generally
- Where more able pupils were exceeding expectations, primaries needed to be introducing elements of the Year 7 curriculum; this could be another area for closer working
- It was accepted that primary pupils need to be in the secondary school more
- There was a need for closer working and handover in relation to SEN pupils well in advance of transition

##### **Collaborative Network – 25 November 2014**

3.3 The collaborative network meeting on 25 November launched of the Key Stage 3 Sprint Trackers with Stockton secondary schools. Seven secondary and three primary schools attended. The sprint tracker focuses on reading, writing and maths and the documents are designed to support colleagues to be able to track the progress of students.

3.4 The secondary versions are designed to follow on from the primary school versions of the documents. Primary schools were also invited to attend the network meeting as some primary schools might wish to use the secondary version for their brightest pupils who are working beyond primary level.

##### **Junction Farm Primary School – 27 November 2014**

3.5 Councillors met with the Head, the Chair of Governors and two year 6 pupils. The Head Teacher highlighted the following ways that she felt transition from primary to secondary could be improved:

- The introduction of one transition day across the Borough which would be easier to manage, in particular, for secondary schools with multiple partner primary schools

- Secondary staff should visit partner primary schools. This could perhaps be accommodated after year 11 pupils leave. They should also see the standard of work of year 6 pupils to ensure that they start secondary school at the correct level and are stretched
- A cross curricular transition project to accompany children when they move. The introduction of one project across the Borough would be preferable
- There needed to be better mechanisms to share information about children and family circumstances, in particular about SEN children
- Families also needed to feel welcomed and have ease of contact with the secondary school

3.6 Suggestions from Year 6 pupils were as follows:

- *Transition day*
- *Shown around school*
- *Map (so we don't get lost)*
- *Teachers come to our school*
- *We go and see how they learn*
- *Brief introductions for new subjects*
- *Plan how to get there (bus etc.)*
- *Meet other students who will be in our year*
- *Included in activities such as sport*
- *Work from secondary to try at home*
- *Given buddies our age and an older child to look after us*
- *Meet form class often to get to know them*
- *Small groups meet teachers who will teach us (English, maths etc.)*
- *Have a day where we use our rota*
- *Teachers look at our books to see what level we are at*
- *We look at their books to see what work we do*
- *Pick one lesson to get taught some skills on*
- *Do secondary afterschool clubs*
- *Get shown videos about that school*
- *Try school dinners*

### **Our Lady and St Bede RC Secondary Academy – 10 December 2014**

3.7 Councillors met with the Head Teacher, the CEO of Carmel Trust, Deputy Head, Head of KS3, School Chaplain and pastoral lead. The school received intake from around 20 primary schools.

3.8 Key features of the transition programme for OLSB were:

- Open Evenings – Sept/ Oct
- Transition mentors visit partner primary schools (December/ January after SATS)
- Informal introductory visit by KS3 Learning Co-ordinator to feeder schools (March/ April)
- Youth Mission Team – A day of Reflection, Diocesan Youth Village – day of bonding and learning about the Catholic faith (June)
- Parents Evening (June - transition week)
- Non Feeder transition day (June - transition week)
- Taster Days x2 (June - transition week)
- Summer School for pupil premium pupils (July/ August)

- Year 7 questionnaire
- End of Year 7: A Day of Reflection (June/July)

### 3.9 Discussion highlighted:

- Peer Mentors were appointed following application and were trained; they supported Year 7 intake during the first term but this could be extended if necessary
- The off-site diocesan bonding day was felt to be very beneficial
- SATs were felt to be a good indication of ability. However, it was felt that there would be benefit in secondary staff having the opportunity to look at primary work
- The need for some degree of consistency with numerous feeder schools and more structured liaison was recognised as was the desire for more commonality across the curriculum, assessment and tracking
- One Borough-wide transition day was strongly supported – this would need to be after school appeals have concluded
- A transition project would be beneficial but more challenging to introduce
- Staff felt it would be difficult to staff transition work earlier than year 6
- Maintaining Year 7 pupils' aspirations throughout the year was recognised as a challenge
- Children has said that they were most worried about getting lost and about being bullied on the move to secondary

3.10 Councillors also had the opportunity to meet with four year 7 pupils. Pupils felt that the standard of work following the move to secondary was about right; they felt it was challenging and not “too easy”. They also suggested the following improvements:

- More taster days
- More information/ lessons from primary teachers before the taster days and discussion following the taster days
- More information about school rules and the different terminology
- Taster days should be in academic groups and not just in the form groups
- More closer monitoring of year 7 pupils as they settle in and to promote good behaviour

### **Visit to Thornaby Academy (TA) - 7 January 2015**

3.11 Members met with the Principal and Deputy Principal. The Academy had a comprehensive timetable for transition which included:

#### *Spring term Year 5*

For the entire year group curriculum events were held at the Academy: STEM, Create Discover and BETA to support curriculum experience and allow primary colleagues time with Year 6.

The Head felt that the work with Year 5 was also beneficially to promoting positive perceptions of the school.

#### *Art Projects*

Primary Schools are offered a range of art projects for Years 5 and 6. Recent projects include WW1 Commemorative display, ceramics and collage. It was noted that the arts projects were particularly useful as primaries tended not to have the same facilities as secondary schools.

#### *Performance Project: Autumn Term Year 6*

A collaborative project for all primary schools and Academy to develop performance.

#### *Thornaby Academy Production*

Primary age students invited to participate in the Academy annual production: 2015 "Joseph".

#### *Open Evening/mornings*

Year 6/7 Progress leader makes introductory visits to all primary schools from July Y5 to inform students of her role and upcoming events for information. Open Evening early October and open mornings. Open Door policy and open invitation for visits on websites. New prospectus designed for 2014/15 with image focus and website updated regularly for policy and information. Transition section on the website. Social media: Facebook and Twitter for parent information, "CallParents" messaging service for updates.

#### *Sporting Ambassadors*

TA students support PE and sport events at primary schools and at the Academy. Including Stockton primary sports events. Again many partner primary schools also access sports facilities at the Academy in other years.

#### *Student Leaders Assemblies*

TA Student leaders visit primary schools to discuss the Academy experience and promote events such as Winter Wonderland and TAs Field Day. Development work will ensure that primary schools will be more involved in both community events in 2015/16

#### *Data Transfer and Student Information*

Year 6/7 Progress Leader carries out several visits to all primary schools from January to July to establish links with Year 6 teachers and SENCOs. TA SENCO supports the transition of students identified with SEND. Deputy Principal meets with Primary Head Teachers/SLT to transfer Child Protection files and data.

#### *Transition Week*

July 4/5 days of transition activities for all students allocated the Academy for September. Includes outdoor education visit to Teesside University and Academy curriculum experiences. Parents Evening to introduce key staff, policies and uniform and a celebration event at the end of the week.

#### *Summer School*

Open to all pupils. One/two weeks of activities focusing on sport, literacy and mathematics to support students entitled to pupil premium funding.

#### *Outdoor Education Residential*

September: Year 7 complete 2 day outdoor education camping and water sports to develop friendships, team work and enterprise skills.

#### *Baseline assessments*

All Year 7 complete subject assessments in week 1 and 2 to establish starting points – particularly in non-core subjects. A dip in attainment tended to be experienced from the SATs results and pupil targets are then set to close the gap. Typically a 4c would drop to a 3 and a 5c would drop to a 4. Most but not all pupils will close the gap by the following January.

The school operated three pathways depending on ability as well as a Gifted and Talented Programme.

### *September Target Setting Day*

Parents meet Year 7 tutor to discuss settling in and academic targets/ expectations.

### *January – Year 7*

Progress report to parents and consultation evening in January.

3.12 In terms of the pupil profile, the Academy had 75% pupil premium pupils, 20% SEN pupils, six LAC students and the Academy was experiencing an increase in the number of pupils with a Child Protection Plan. All pupils receive a blazer and tie when starting in Year 7.

3.13 Members met with five pupils to discuss transition. Pupils provided the following feedback:

Reason why they chose the school:

- Friends/ family had/ were already attending
- Wanted a fresh start (one child had experienced bullying)
- Proximity to home

Worries on changing school:

- That they would not fit in/make friends
- That older pupils would pick on them

What transition activity did they enjoy the most?:

- Cross country
- Canoeing
- Fun activities in the ice breaking session
- All of the other students were friendly and explained what they would be doing

Did they have to work harder at secondary or was it about the same standard of work as primary?

- Year 6 was “stricter” – primary teachers wanted them to do their best in the SATs and pushed them. After SATs were over, they felt that the pressure was removed and they concentrated on enjoyable activities rather than focusing on work
- Staff at primary didn’t tend to talk to them about the move
- All the pupils Members spoke with appeared to have gained confidence/belief in their own abilities since moving to the Academy
- They enjoyed the wider range of subjects and that they were treated as more “grown up”

What could be improved?

- It was suggested that incoming pupils could be shown around by pupils who had attended the same primary school

### **St Cuthbert’s RC Primary School – 23 January 2015**

3.14 Councillors met with the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. The school had 190 children on the school roll with around 13% of pupils from a GRT (Gypsy Roma Traveller) background. The vast majority of pupils transferred to OLSB RC Academy. The Head summarised transition arrangements as follows:

- October – Parent’s Night at OLSB
- Head of Year 7 visits primary schools
- Two taster days at OLSB – children make their own way there

- One day at the Youth Village
- Parents evening following allocation of places
- SEN – children are offered other transition days and they are accompanied by primary school staff; this can continue into Year 7.

3.15 In respect of the GRT children, the following was highlighted:

- The primary school had worked hard with the community (especially the mums) to encourage the children to transfer to secondary
- Most GRT families did not apply for free school meals
- Last year, five children had moved up to OLSB and all children were still at OLSB
- A lot of work had been carried out with the mums including a literacy programme
- Most GRT children remained with the school for the duration of their primary education but the challenge was encouraging them to transfer to secondary
- Some GRT children begin to lose interest from Years 4/5 and it was therefore important to find a way of keeping them interested and raising their aspirations. Earlier involvement with the secondary school might be a way of doing this
- GRT families need a lot of support on transfer to secondary and it was hoped that this situation would improve with the new Head.

3.16 The Head Teacher felt that transition could also be improved by:

- More feedback on how children were doing post transfer. For example, primary teachers might visit several weeks into the term to assess whether the children were still working at their best and fulfilling their potential. Primary teachers would also benefit by taking away additional information / understanding back into the primary school environment
- By hearing how the primary children had performed in their GCSEs
- In the past joint transition projects had been carried out. The primary school were supportive of doing this again in the future and felt that a Borough wide transition project was also a good idea
- The Head also suggested that secondary literacy / maths teachers might visit primary schools perhaps once a week in the lead up to transfer to encourage closer working and prepare for transition
- The Head supported a Borough wide transition week/ transition days
- Cluster meeting took place between primaries – it was felt that it would be beneficial for the secondary head to be invited to attend these also
- A joint moderation day had recently been held with secondary school and it was felt that more activity of this kind was needed
- The Head referred to the various activities and joint working which had taken place as part of Education Action Zones in the past. She felt that beneficial activities of this kind were needed but recognised that it needed someone to drive and co-ordinate the programme of work.

3.17 Councillors also had the opportunity to talk with four Year 6 pupils about their feelings on moving to OLSB. There were mixed feelings about the move. Whilst looking forward to the move, the children were worried about:

- Being bullied (including being bullied because of their culture)
- Dinner arrangements
- Strict teachers
- Leaving school at the end of the day when there are older “rowdy” children around

- Forgetting to pack something and getting into trouble
- Having the money to buy all the things that are needed – uniform, equipment etc.

### **Committee Discussion with Conyers School and Wolviston Primary**

#### **Wolviston Primary:**

3.18 Members heard that the majority of children from Wolviston Primary School attended Northfield Secondary School. The Head Teacher informed Members that Wolviston had a very good relationship with Northfield and transition work had been carried out over the past 24 months between the two schools. Cluster meetings took place with teachers and children from both schools in order to discuss any information which needs to be transferred.

3.19 It was highlighted that over the past 12 months, Literacy and Numeracy Teachers from Northfield visited Wolviston Primary to sit in on lessons in order to gain more of an understanding of the capabilities of the children.

3.20 When the children were asked what worried them the most about moving to their secondary school, the children highlighted bullying, getting lost, mixing with older pupils, being unfamiliar with teachers and moving to a much larger environment. The pupils made the following suggestions for improving transfer to secondary:

- Ensuring that sign posts were located around the school grounds to avoid getting lost and to help find your lessons easier.
- Introducing the opportunity for children to get to know their future teachers before the transition.

#### **Conyers School:**

3.21 A wide range of transition activities included:

- Year 5 and 6 activities including a year 5 transition day and year 6 sporting competitions
- Year manager oversees Y6 transition
- SEN - Detailed exchange of information
- Every subject completes a Sparking the Gap project. This begins in year 6 and pupils finish the work over the summer. A prize giving to which parents are invited to marks the end of the six week induction.
- Summer school taster sessions
- Induction day and family fun evening
- Induction afternoon for smaller schools
- All Year 6 pupils watch Conyers School production at The Arc
- Wide range of sporting events for primaries hosted at Conyers
- Year 11's sports leader runs festivals for primaries
- Primary pupils met Year 8 and 9 pupils at the induction day and were shown around the school by them

3.22 Pupils commented that the Sparking the Gap project:

- Helped them to see the different types of work and subjects they would be doing at secondary school
- Encouraged pupils to put more effort into their work

3.23 Pupils commented on the difference in work between primary and secondary:



- Challenging but not unattainable
- Completing work which they never heard about but receiving a lot of help
- Good to be learning new subjects
- There is a lot of homework but teachers help out at lunchtimes and homework clubs. It is a challenge, but once the homework is complete you feel good about it

3.24 Pupils commented about what they were worried about/found difficult:

- Being bullied by older pupils
- Getting lost - Sixth formers took them to lessons to begin with and this was helpful
- Lunchtime was a shock, you have to be really quick and it was confusing knowing where to go

### **Stockton – Work in Progress**

3.25 The Committee were advised that progress of work to support transition included:

- Preparing pupils socially and emotionally (familiarisation with staff and schools, shared projects, summer schools)
- Ensuring sufficient transfer of information (agreed pro-formas prior to transfer)
- Ensuring individual needs are met (liaison regarding specific intervention programmes and pathways)
- Sharing coverage of curriculum (Sprint Tracker)
- Academic progress tracking (Points score calculator)

### **Transition Pilot**

3.26 In order to identify current challenges to effective transition, particularly for vulnerable pupils, within Stockton-On-Tees, one large secondary school and related partner primary schools were chosen as a pilot and interviews with Primary head teachers and SenCos from one cluster were carried out.

3.27 Direct work took place with pupils identified as being potentially transition-vulnerable. Direct work was undertaken with all identified pupils from three primary schools.

3.28 The Specialist Teacher met all identified children within these schools and delivered two sessions with a focus on:

- Meta cognitive approaches to learning.
- Reading a secondary school timetable
- The timings of the school day.
- Role play with scenarios set in secondary schools.
- Learning styles.
- Completion of the pupil questionnaire.
- Completion of the 'All about Me' worksheet.

3.29 The RAG rated forms were developed in consultation with SenCos from both phases, and Y6 teachers. The forms are designed as a single point of reference to ensure clear, comprehensive information and data is shared effectively with secondary schools.

3.30 The pilot of the forms suggests that it is important for all schools to have a clear and common understanding of the transition categories and that CAFs should be used as appropriate at an early stage where schools have concerns about pupil welfare.

3.31 The Proposal seeks to:

- Ensure that all children have high quality transition experiences, which will enhance their performance and well-being as learners
- Develop a borough-wide transition strategy, which all children parents/carers, schools and other agencies understand and can access
- Provide a common framework for all support agencies and services to coordinate and integrate their work with and for schools
- Ensure that all parents/carers participate in transition programmes for their children.

3.32 The transition planning process should consider the following:

- Key members of staff
- Individual pupils' needs
- Strategies employed
- Arrangements and adjustments
- Children and parent/carer views
- Primary and secondary school actions

3.33 The transition proposal aims to embrace the existing good practice within the Borough. The strategy seeks to have a single process for all pupils rather than two or more separate arrangements for pupils with differing needs.

3.34 Universal Transition: Universal Transition encompasses all Y6 pupils across the borough. The standard of the universal transition should enable all mainstream pupils to move across the phases feeling supported and ready to learn within their new environment. The universal transition is a solid platform from which pupils embark on the next phase of their learning. The RAG rated transition programme provides a more focussed approach to what is a comprehensive and research based programme.

3.35 Transition Red This level of support focuses on children with 'severe, complex and persistent' levels of vulnerability. This level of vulnerability might include children who may be recently bereaved, or suffering from any type of loss. Children who exhibit extreme behaviour or poor attendance may also come into this category. The child does not need to be on the SEN register for learning. The transition of this group of learners is challenging due to the requirement for good collaborative planning, integrated support, communication across different agencies and organisations and the preparation of secondary school staff in making appropriate provision (possibly incorporating briefings / training). The SenCo or the relevant professional (e.g. Teacher with responsibility for LAC / PP other vulnerable pupils) would normally be the designated contact and would co-ordinate, monitor and cascade information to relevant staff.

3.36 Transition Amber: This level of support focuses on children with 'moderate' levels of vulnerability. In some circumstances children may be highly sensitive to change and may exhibit their distress across a range of behaviours at the point of transition. The child does not need to be on the SEN register for learning. This level will require additional planning, liaison and transition support opportunities, perhaps in the form of extra visits and or transition group sessions. The SenCo or the relevant professional (e.g. teacher with

responsibility for LAC, PP or other vulnerable pupils) would normally be the designated contact and would coordinate, monitor and cascade information to other relevant staff.

3.37 Transition Light Green: this level of support focuses on children with 'mild' levels of vulnerability at transfer, for example, a young person is known to become anxious in a social situation or where there has been a recent upset within the family but the child seems to be coping in the primary school. The child does not need to be on the SEN register for learning. This level of transition support requires increased vigilance within existing whole school arrangements. Concerns about these pupils would generally be raised by the Y6 teacher to the Secondary Transition Manager or Head of Year during the normal transition visits. The Transition Manager / Head of year would then co-ordinate, monitor and cascade information to relevant staff.

3.38 Positive outcomes would indicate potential now for borough-wide roll out.

3.39 The proposed timeline for transition was as follows:

**Year 5 Autumn/ Spring Term:**

**All pupils are categorised into transition groups for secondary school. These may change but process allows for early identification**

**Transition red pupils identified.  
Initial contact with parents/carers and outside agencies  
Initial contact with possible secondary school  
Initiate planning for transition**

**Year 5 Summer Term:**

**Parent/carers and pupil questionnaires sent out**

**Transition plans for Transition Amber and Transition Light Green pupils are discussed and agreed between primary and secondary school**

**Final Transition arrangements agreed**

Post SATs visits to secondary school  
Commence bridging activities  
Shared moderation  
Data information transfer by identified staff from primary  
school to secondary school

#### Year 6 Summer Term:

Pupils monitored through school assessment and tracking  
Questionnaires to parents/carers and pupils  
Pupil Voice  
Y6 Teachers check-up call  
Y7 parents evening  
Transition evaluation early December Results shared with  
primary colleagues

#### Curriculum and Tracking Tools

3.40 The School Improvement Strategy stated:

“Every secondary teacher teaching Year 7 will have access to high quality information on pupils’ KS2 performance including, Teaching Assessment and SAT scores, curriculum content of KS2 schemes of work in both core and foundation subjects, evidence of the quality of the writing produced by these pupils across a range of genre”

3.41 Levels were no longer used for assessment in primary schools apart from Year 2 and Year 6 for this year only and a new curriculum was in place. Ofsted is assessing how well:

- leaders use formative and summative assessment to ensure that pupils, teachers and parents know if pupils are achieving the expected standard or if they need to catch up.
- assessment information, including test results, is used by leaders and governors to improve teaching and the curriculum.

There was therefore a need for a common understanding of attainment.

3.42 The **Primary Sprint Tracker** had been devised to plot new curriculum against chronological age group expectations for each pupil. This then measures attainment against ‘emerging’ and ‘expected’. The Sprint Tracker was launched with schools Autumn 2013 and widely adopted across Stockton Primary schools.

3.43 The **Key Stage 3 Tracker** was developed for primary schools looking to stretch those pupils who may be working beyond the KS2 curriculum and for secondary schools to be able

to build Year 7 curriculum from pupils' current knowledge and skills. Progression was tracked from Year 1 through to Year 9 in reading, writing and mathematics.

3.44 The **Point Score Calculator** was devised to support the measuring of progress of individuals and groups using a simple excel sheet that plots progress and would fit with the DfE proposed performance descriptors (under consultation).

#### **4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

4.1 School visits highlighted examples of best practice including:

- using Credit Unions to support parents in affording getting their children ready for secondary school
- one way systems for facilitating movement in corridors
- eye level signing to enable students to find their way around and colour coordination of different areas
- purchasing uniform and kit ready for all students
- choosing a piece of writing from Year 6 to be fixed in every Year 7 book as a marker of the standard to progress from
- mentoring programmes with secondary students and Year 6 students in order to prepare students for secondary school and support them with a 'buddy'
- Use of sporting ambassadors and student leader in transition work
- Joint events between primary and secondary
- Summer schools

4.2 Although many examples of best practice existed, the Committee found that there was a variation in the transition arrangements across schools in the Borough and more consistency was needed in respect of transfer arrangements and a common understanding of attainment.

4.3 Members identified that there should be:

- Greater collaboration between primary and secondary schools:
  - Through cluster meetings and collaborative networks
  - Joint moderation work
  - Subject collaboration
  - Staff spending more time in primaries and vice versa
- A consistent approach to tracking attainment
- A Borough Wide transition week and transition project

#### **Recommended**

1. That secondary and primary colleagues pay due cognisance to each other's expertise through sharing practice and planning, classroom visits and collaborative training:
2. That all schools/ Academies be encouraged to sign up to a Transition Guarantee to seek to ensure:
  - every secondary school to attend at least one moderation of primary work in the summer term

- Cross phase items are considered at least three times at Collaborative Network meetings per year
  - all schools to use the Sprint Tracker to record pupil attainment and coverage of the curriculum in maths, reading, writing and Science and this to be passed to schools at point of transition
  - all schools to adhere to the 'Moving Forward' transition package of protocols and pro-formas
  - a consistent approach to scoring attainment to be agreed
  - all primary schools to be informed of the KS4 outcomes for their pupils
  - agreed dates for a Borough wide transition week
  - the implementation of a transition project for all pupils.
3. That implementation of the Transition Guarantee is overseen through the existing challenge, monitoring and support structures of the Local Authority; challenge to schools and academies for the extent of their implementation of the Transition Guarantee be through the School Improvement Framework (as a trigger in the Challenge and Support Criteria); monitoring will occur using the School Improvement Adviser programme; support will be offered through the Campus Stockton Teaching Alliance.

## Glossary

KS	Key Stage
CRWM	Combined reading, writing and maths
NACE	National Association for Able Children in Education
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
STEM	Science, technology, Engineering and Maths
SAT	Standard Attainment Test
LAC	Looked after Children
GRT	Gypsy Roma Traveller
RAG	Red, Amber, Green
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
PP	Pupil Premium