



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

# Evaluation of Pilots to Improve Primary and Secondary School Transitions

Education



# **EVALUATION OF PILOTS TO IMPROVE PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL TRANSITIONS**

**Ruth Bryan and Morag Treanor/MVA Consultancy**

**With support from Professor Malcolm Hill/The Glasgow Centre for the  
Child & Society**

Scottish Executive Social Research  
2007

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This web only report is accompanied by the Insight no. 36 "Transitions Evaluation", available both on-line and in printed form.

Both documents are published by Information and Analytical Services Division, Scottish Executive Education Department, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ. If you have any enquiries about these reports please contact the Dissemination Officer on 0131-244-0894.

Both reports were published in January 2007.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The authors would like to express their thanks to all who have assisted in the preparation of this report, in particular the staff and pupils of North Lanarkshire, East Ayrshire and Glasgow City who took the time to share their views and experiences with us. We would also like to thank the staff from the Scottish Executive Education Department and the members of the research advisory group for their guidance and feedback over the past two years.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

1. This report presents the findings of an 18-month evaluation of three pilot initiatives financed by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) and implemented in three local authorities: North Lanarkshire, East Ayrshire and Glasgow City.

2. The pilots aimed to improve the transition between primary and secondary school, and were introduced in response to anecdotal and research evidence that suggests there is a dip in pupil attainment at the point of transition. Although the pilots were designed primarily to support teaching and curricular transition (with a particular focus on literacy and/or numeracy), they also recognised the social and pastoral issues involved, and adopted teaching and learning strategies suited to the needs of pupils.

### Overview of the pilots

3. The pilots in North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire began in August 2004. The third pilot, the ENABLE project at Eastbank Academy in Glasgow, had been in operation for two years prior to the other pilots. All three pilots aimed to improve the transition from primary to secondary school; however, each had a different curricular focus, and differing methods were introduced in each area, as summarised below:

Pilot	Subject focus	Pupils targeted	Teaching input
North Lanarkshire	Literacy	All P6-S2 pupils, but particularly those moving from P7 to S1	Specialist Literacy Development Officers contributing to primary and secondary classes
East Ayrshire	Numeracy	All P6-S2 pupils, but particularly those moving from P7 to S1	Additional staffing in primaries and secondaries, enabling an increase in cross-sector liaison and teaching
Glasgow City	Literacy and numeracy	Low achieving, vulnerable pupils in S1 and S2	Separate classes for ENABLE pupils in S1 and S2, with majority input from primary trained teachers

### Aims and objectives of the evaluation

4. The overall aim of the research was to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of the three pilot projects, to assess different approaches to improving transitions between primary and secondary and to suggest where different approaches would be most likely to be successful.

5. The process evaluation focused on implementation and operation, examining the factors that contributed to smooth implementation for each pilot, any obstacles encountered and how they were addressed.

6. The outcome evaluation focused on the specified objectives of each pilot individually, and the outcomes that were common to all three pilots. These were the extent to which the pilots led to improved performance in literacy and numeracy, eased the transition from

primary to secondary school, and increased pupil motivation, self-esteem and confidence of pupils in making the transition to secondary school.

## **Research methods**

7. The research took place between March 2005 and September 2006, and involved two main tasks: qualitative consultation, and quantitative secondary analysis of existing data relating to attainment in literacy and numeracy.

8. At regular intervals over the duration of the pilots, in-depth interviews were conducted with key pilot staff, Head Teachers, promoted staff, and other teaching and non-teaching staff at each of the schools involved. Primary teachers were also interviewed in at least two primary schools per secondary school in the literacy and numeracy pilots. (As ENABLE only operates at Eastbank Academy, no research took place in primary schools in the area).

9. Qualitative consultation was also carried out with pupils. In the literacy and numeracy pilots, three cohorts of pupils were consulted at various stages of the transition from P7 to S2. Focus groups explored the pupils' feelings about and experiences of the transition to S1, and their views about working with key pilot staff. At Eastbank Academy, four pupil cohorts were consulted during the evaluation. Focus groups were conducted with S1, S2 and S3 pupils, to explore their experiences of ENABLE and the transition back into mainstream S3 classes.

10. Quantitative analysis of education authority collated attainment data was used to estimate the impact of the pilots on performance in literacy and numeracy.<sup>1</sup> Additional data were analysed for the ENABLE project, including individual pupil records for all ENABLE pupils, and Standard Grade results for the first ENABLE intake.

## **Implementation of the pilots**

11. In North Lanarkshire, the experience of implementation varied considerably between the three learning partnerships involved.

12. In the first two learning partnerships, the implementation of the literacy pilot went smoothly. The Literacy Development Officers (LDOs) at these schools were previously Assistant Principal Teachers (APTs) of English, and had status and credibility within their departments. For the most part, communication of the aims of the pilot and how it would operate were effective in these schools.

13. Some obstacles to smooth implementation were encountered at one of these schools; for example, a lack of available space meant the LDO had no classroom. There was also some disruption to teaching at the start of the pilot, as there were problems finding a suitable replacement to take over the LDO's class teaching.

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<sup>1</sup> To gather this information, schools commonly draw on on-line National Assessments. These assessments (which have replaced National Tests) are designed as a tool for teachers to confirm judgements about children's levels of attainment, and should form only part of a range of evidence teachers consider to arrive at these judgements. The sample-based Scottish Survey of Achievement is now used to monitor attainment at a national level.

14. In the third learning partnership, there were particular problems in implementing the literacy pilot which led to its termination after one year. These problems centred around dissatisfaction among the English teachers about the appointment of the LDO, highlighting the importance of having credible and experienced staff in place.

15. In East Ayrshire, teachers had substantial doubts about the numeracy pilot. Primary teachers were concerned about working in the secondary sector or having secondary Maths specialists in their class, while secondary teachers were concerned that the primary teachers would think they were there to analyse or criticise their methods. These doubts were eventually overcome through close cross-sector liaison, but they represented a barrier to smooth implementation at the outset of the pilot.

16. Staffing issues also caused some difficulty in East Ayrshire: for example, the long-term illness of a key member of staff in one learning partnership soon after the pilot's inception led to a cessation of visits to the primary schools, slowing down the process of building relationships and gaining trust. This learning partnership had further problems with staffing which affected its operation throughout the two-year pilot.

17. The commitment and involvement of senior management was also important to the implementation process, which went most smoothly when the Head Teacher and Principal Teacher were actively involved in developing the initiative, ensuring that there was consensus from the outset about the aims of the pilot and the methods that would be used to accomplish them.

18. However, teachers across East Ayrshire generally felt that there was insufficient information and ineffective communication at the start of the project: some primary teachers said they did not receive all the necessary information relating to the pilot. Communication was recognised as an area that needed to be improved, and this aspect of the project was successfully developed over the course of the pilot.

19. A key factor in the implementation of the ENABLE project at Eastbank Academy was the careful selection of staff to be involved. Primary specialists were chosen who were skilled in encouraging the least able children. The project also required secondary teachers who would be able to engage with pupils of low ability, and who were interested in adapting their curriculum for the ENABLE classes.

20. No problems were reported in relation to primary teachers working in the secondary setting. Teachers at Eastbank therefore felt that ENABLE is not difficult to implement, as all education authorities have primary teachers available, and most have schools grouped into clusters, allowing resources to be reallocated between schools.

21. Pupils were placed carefully in ENABLE classes, based on information from their primary schools and the results of a range of ability tests. ENABLE pupils had lower ability, a slower pace of learning, and required more focused support. Only pupils who did not have serious behavioural difficulties were chosen. Eastbank experienced some problems obtaining up to date information from primary schools, where National Assessments tend to be used to confirm judgements later in the year. However, teachers generally felt that the selection system worked well, and the right children were placed in the ENABLE classes.



## **Operation of the pilots**

22. In all three local authority areas, the research indicated that the pilots took time to become embedded within each school; changes were made during the course of the projects, as staff learned from their experiences and settled into their new roles.

23. The work of the LDOs in North Lanarkshire also developed differently based on the needs of individual schools. There were no firm guidelines to determine how the pilots should operate: teaching staff emphasised that the pilot was therefore ‘custom built’, and saw the flexibility of the LDO role as one of the most positive aspects of the scheme.

24. The LDOs contributed to their English departments in a variety of ways, including team teaching, extracting pupils from classes, introducing new teaching and learning approaches (such as cooperative learning, reciprocal reading and formative assessment), conducting research and developing teaching resources, implementing personal reading schemes and involvement in National Assessment testing. They also introduced a range of voluntary activities such as book clubs. The LDOs’ work in the primary schools began with observation and ‘fact-finding’, and then developed in the second year of the pilot as they became more involved in class and small group teaching. They specifically focused on topics such as Writer’s Craft and introduced reciprocal reading techniques to primary classes.

25. In East Ayrshire, too, the pilots had the flexibility to develop in response to local needs. Here, there was a greater emphasis on inter-sector working than in North Lanarkshire.

26. Firstly, secondary Maths specialists were involved in primary classes. They said they gained from watching how primary teachers interacted with their pupils, and applied these teaching methods to S1 and S2. They also discovered that there was a discontinuity in the use of Maths language between the primary and secondary schools, and that primary teachers did not always use the most useful methods for teaching certain topics, such as equations and long division. The increased understanding of cross-sector differences led to mutual learning in both school clusters.

27. Secondly, primary teachers were involved in secondary Maths classes. However, this aspect of the pilot differed between the two learning partnerships. In one school, two primary teachers taught in secondary classes on a regular basis over the two years of the pilot, eventually taking full responsibility for their own classes there. In the other school, the focus was more on observation and cooperative teaching. Having two teachers in the class facilitated practical work, and the sharing of teaching methods.

28. Staffing problems affected the operation of the numeracy pilot in both learning partnerships. In one school, this meant that only two primary teachers were able to visit for most of the second year of the pilot. Some teachers also expressed concerns that the role of these primary teachers when visiting secondary classes was not clearly defined. In the other school, there were concerns about the suitability of some appointments, which led to several changes in key project staff throughout the pilot.

29. As well as cross-sector working, a significant aspect of the numeracy pilot was the development of a new Programme of Study for levels D and E Maths in the pilot schools. This aimed to develop consistent practice in Maths teaching, in order to ensure that all pupils would reach S1 having experienced a common curriculum.

30. ENABLE, which established separate classes for the least able and most vulnerable pupils in S1 and S2, used primary trained staff to teach basic literacy and numeracy skills before pupils returned to mainstream classes in S3. There was a more focused and concentrated input for the pupils, both academically and pastorally. ENABLE pupils spent two hours a day with their ENABLE teacher, and other secondary teachers took ENABLE classes for subjects such as Social Studies, PSE, Technical, PE and Science.

31. Efforts were made to ensure that there was no stigma attached to being in an ENABLE class. Teachers felt that this had been successful, citing examples of pupils who they believed were unaware that the classes were based on academic ability. However, it could arguably be more hurtful for children to find this out from their peers than from their teachers, so there are perhaps implications here in terms of the school's communication of what exactly ENABLE is.

32. Some changes were made to the post-ENABLE S3 courses in recognition of the problems encountered by ex-ENABLE pupils accessing mainstream courses. The continued support available to them from their ENABLE teachers was also formalised.

33. Parental involvement was difficult to achieve, but new ways of engaging parents were developed over the course of the project.

### **Impacts of the pilots**

34. All three pilots were reported to have had a positive impact on the schools involved. Importantly, teachers in both sectors in North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire reported that they had learned new teaching techniques as a result of working together.

35. Primary teachers in both of these pilots reported that working with secondary teachers had increased their pupils' motivation. P7 pupils enjoyed working with the secondary staff and said they had learned new skills in Reading and Writing or Maths. Data analysis showed that in North Lanarkshire, P7 Reading attainment improved overall during the pilot, although no consistent pattern of change occurred in Writing attainment. Although teachers in East Ayrshire were able to give examples of specific groups of pupils making 'huge jumps' in Maths attainment, there was no evidence of a measurable overall improvement in Maths attainment among P7 pupils at the primary schools involved. Teachers in both pilot areas suggested that the real impact on pupil attainment was more likely to be seen when P7 pupils made the transition to S1.

36. At the secondary schools in North Lanarkshire, teachers emphasised the positive effects the LDOs had on their English departments, particularly in terms of offering support and training to colleagues, helping to monitor and administer National Assessments, and introducing new teaching and learning methods to English classes in S1 and S2. These changes in how the curriculum was delivered affected outcomes for pupils.

37. Teachers reported an increase in attainment after the introduction of the literacy pilot, and the quantitative evidence broadly supports these comments. In particular, analysis of data for each pupil cohort showed that one cohort improved their Writing attainment compared to North Lanarkshire as a whole over the two years of the pilot, and Reading attainment improved in both cohorts compared to the authority average during the same two

years. Involvement in voluntary activities also encouraged pupils to read more often, and more widely, than they had before.

38. In East Ayrshire, teaching methods in S1 and S2 were influenced by the cross-sector work with primary colleagues, including a focus on more interactive methods and Maths games. These changes, and an increased focus on the use of technology such as Promethean Boards, led to a reported increase in pupil motivation. The numeracy pilot also led to improved pupil/teacher ratios at both secondary schools, with smaller class sizes particularly benefiting the least able pupils.

39. Teachers believed the numeracy pilot had improved pupil attainment, but also stressed that the impact on attainment was likely to be seen in the academic year 2006/07, when the new Programme of Study had been fully implemented and the new S1 intake would have been working on the programme in P7. Quantitative analysis showed that Maths attainment had declined in one school, and improved in S1 (but not in S2) in the other. This was partly attributed to the particular cohort of pupils involved, and the decision to delay testing while the new Programme of Study was implemented. Cohort analysis showed that while one pupil cohort's performance improved compared to the East Ayrshire average over the course of the pilot, the other cohort's Maths attainment declined in relation to the education authority as a whole.

40. Cross-sector work in the literacy and numeracy pilots was reported to have a positive impact on pupils' experiences of transition from primary to secondary school, both socially and academically. In both North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire, pupils felt reassured knowing a teacher at secondary school, and their positive experiences with secondary teachers during P7 had dispelled any fears they had had about the standard and quantity of work in S1.

41. Importantly, the cross-sector transfer of information about pupils improved as a result of the literacy and numeracy pilots. In North Lanarkshire, the LDOs' primary liaison provided information to secondary staff about individual pupils and the P7 curriculum in general. In East Ayrshire, improved cross-sector liaison, and particularly the introduction of the new Programme of Study, led to better transfer of information about pupils, allowing more accurate setting in Maths from the start of S1. This was viewed positively by both pupils and teachers.

42. ENABLE was reported to be very beneficial for pupils at Eastbank Academy, particularly because of the fact that it provided a secure environment for the child. Smaller class sizes, and the level of social and academic support available, had a favourable effect on pupils' experiences of the transition to S1. Pupils were positive about their experiences of ENABLE, liked their teachers and felt able to go to them for help with any aspect of school life.

43. Teachers generally felt that ENABLE pupils coped well with the transition into mainstream S3 classes. Pupil consultation supported this claim: children felt they had been well prepared academically for S3, and were confident that they could maintain close links with their ENABLE teachers.

44. In terms of attainment, many ENABLE pupils had mastered basic literacy and numeracy skills by the end of S2. Furthermore, analysis of Standard Grade performance in

2005/06 showed that ENABLE pupils had done better than a comparable group who sat exams in 2004. Importantly, ENABLE succeeded in keeping pupils engaged in mainstream education, with the drop-out rate by S4 improving markedly for ENABLE pupils compared to comparable pupils in previous year groups. Teachers also observed an increase in the ENABLE pupils' confidence and personal development. Pupils in mainstream S1 and S2 classes also benefited from the introduction of ENABLE and the resulting reduction in class sizes.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

45. The three transitions pilots shared the general aim of improving existing experiences of transition, and attainment at secondary school, following the move from P7 to S1. Consultation evidence suggests that all three pilots were largely successful in meeting this aim, and represented an improvement on the existing transitions arrangements in the schools involved. Although the pilots contributed to some minor modifications to these existing arrangements, it is likely that the majority of the observed changes in the transition experience for pupils were a direct result of the pilots.

46. In terms of the pilot models, each project was designed to meet its aims in quite different ways as regards the curricular focus, the pupils targeted, how staff were deployed and the extent of cross-sector working. Feedback from staff and pupils, supported in some respects by attainment evidence, suggests that each model had positive results and none was more or less successful than the others: staff in each area had developed the projects based on local need, and each model appeared to be largely successful in meeting its particular aims.

47. It therefore appeared it was not so much the precise model that affected the smooth running and success of the projects, but other factors and processes. These included issues relating to staffing, the importance of cross-sector liaison and interchange, effective communication, and the ability of the pilots to be flexible and responsive.

48. Broad lessons for the potential future implementation of similar transitions arrangements are as follows:

- Pilot models
  - It would be helpful to make transition projects with dedicated resources more generally available, with the precise model dependent on local needs. Any of the three pilot models can be successful, provided they are implemented with appropriate staff resources and commitment.
- Staffing
  - Head Teachers and key project staff (e.g. Principal Teachers and literacy/numeracy specialists) should be committed, enthusiastic and have 'vision';
  - Those with responsibility for the pilots (e.g. Principal Teachers) should have control or influence over decisions related to staffing;
  - For projects targeting the least able, most vulnerable pupils, teachers should be chosen carefully based on their skills in encouraging pupils and willingness to adapt their curriculum;

- Having staff in place for the duration of the project is more successful than appointing teachers on short-term contracts, particularly in terms of maintaining cross-sector relationships;
  - Lead literacy/numeracy officers should be experienced, well respected and seen to be knowledgeable and credible;
  - Other staff should be given control over their level of involvement – asking for volunteers will attract those most committed to cross-sector working; and
  - A reliable pool of supply teachers is required, during implementation of the project and throughout its operation, in order to address staffing problems as they occur.
- Cross-sector liaison and interchange
    - Transitions projects can be used to enhance/improve existing transitions arrangements and cross-sector relationships. This can lead to more effective teaching in both sectors, and also provides pupils with some familiarity with secondary work and at least one teacher when they arrive in S1;
    - When secondary teachers are given the lead role in cross-sector liaison they should be sensitive to the feelings, needs and strengths of primary colleagues – it should be an equal partnership;
    - Consultation between primary and secondary staff is required to ensure the correct balance is reached between initial observation and involvement in teaching;
    - A well-specified, purposeful observation period should work both ways, with teachers from each sector observing in the other; this leads to true reciprocity of learning from each others' teaching methods;
    - Organising Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses is a good way of sharing new learning and teaching methods across both sectors;
    - Consultation should be undertaken when organising events for primary and secondary staff (e.g. are colleagues in both sectors able to attend CPD courses at a particular time of year?);
    - For ENABLE-style projects (where work is not conducted within primaries), good working relationships with associated primary schools is important to have in place at the start;
    - A history of collaboration and good working relationships is helpful, but not essential, for the success of cross-sector work; and
    - Initial doubts about cross-sector working can be overcome through effective communication.

- Communication
  - It is important to ensure that the role of the lead officer is clearly defined and well communicated;
  - There should be consensus about the aims and methods of the project, which should also be communicated effectively to all involved, ideally before the project starts;
  - Projects should build in adequate time for discussion and feedback between primary and secondary teachers; and
  - Social events can successfully improve communication.
  
- Flexibility and responsiveness
  - Lead officers should be given flexibility within the guidelines to develop their roles in response to local needs;
  - Where parental involvement is required (in projects such as ENABLE), teachers should be flexible in their approaches to engagement with parents;
  - Projects targeting the least able pupils in S1 and S2 should also be responsive to these pupils' needs (both social and academic) further up the school; and
  - Such projects should also consider the issue of openness about the nature of special classes very carefully: a wish to eliminate stigma, although positive in itself, may have negative implications in terms of a lack of openness and honesty.
  
- What works where
  - A model that targets the most vulnerable, least able pupils is particularly well suited to areas of deprivation, schools with a large proportion of children arriving without sufficiently developed skills, or where pupils present with emotional difficulties; and
  - The models including all pupils making the transition can work in any area, providing the key factors above are taken into consideration.



# CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

1.1 This report presents the findings of an 18-month evaluation of three pilot initiatives financed by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) to improve the curricular transition in literacy and numeracy between primary and secondary school. The pilots were implemented in three local authorities: East Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and Glasgow City.

## Background

1.2 Anecdotal and research evidence suggests that there is a dip in pupil attainment at the point of transition from primary to secondary school, with some children engaging less well with class teaching and school work<sup>2</sup>. Research evidence concurs on the key issues that exist around the transfer to secondary school, such as the lack of curriculum continuity, pedagogical differences and insufficient pastoral care<sup>3</sup>.

1.3 *A Partnership for a Better Scotland (PABS)*<sup>4</sup> commits to increasing the number of teachers in Scotland working across the boundary between primary and secondary schools, and reducing S1 and S2 English and Maths classes to 20. It is hoped that smaller classes at key stages and in key areas will allow teachers to focus more on the individual, improve transitions between sectors, and help improve literacy and numeracy.

1.4 The three pilot schemes evaluated in this report explored how the above policy outcomes could best be achieved using the additional staff resources that were provided as a result of the Partnership Agreement. In recognition of the dip in pupil progress commonly observed in S1, the pilots were designed primarily to support teaching and curricular transition, with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy. However, they also adopted a holistic approach to managing the transition, by recognising the social and pastoral issues involved and adopting teaching and learning strategies suited to the needs of pupils. In so doing, it was hoped that the pilots would have a positive impact on pupils' motivation, self-esteem and confidence in literacy and numeracy through key transitional stages.

## Overview of the pilots

1.5 SEED provided funding to establish the pilots in North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire. These projects began in August 2004, and were initially funded to run for the two academic years 2004/05 and 2005/06. The third pilot, the ENABLE project at Eastbank Academy in Glasgow, had been in operation for two years prior to the other pilots. The SEED funding enabled this existing programme to continue and develop.

1.6 All three pilots aimed to improve the transition from primary to secondary school. However, each had a different curricular focus: one aimed to improve literacy for all pupils, one aimed to improve numeracy for all pupils, and the third aimed to raise the attainment in

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2 Galton et al (2000); Galton et al (1999); Waldon (2000) – cited in Graham and Hill (2003): *Negotiating the transition to secondary school*, Spotlight 89, Glasgow Centre for the Child and Society, University of Glasgow

3 SEED (2004): 'Evaluation of pilots to improve primary to secondary transitions' research specification

4 Scottish Executive (2003): *A Partnership for a Better Scotland: Partnership Agreement*



both literacy and numeracy of the least able, most vulnerable pupils. This section provides a broad overview of each of the three pilots.

### ***The literacy pilot in North Lanarkshire***

1.7 Three secondary schools and their associated primaries, located in a range of socio-economic catchment areas, took part in the literacy pilot in North Lanarkshire. However, the pilot was discontinued in one of these learning partnerships due to staffing difficulties in the first year. The format of the pilot was that a Literacy Development Officer (LDO) was employed in each of the secondary schools. LDOs were encouraged to develop their role to suit their individual schools, but were expected to contribute to English teaching in S1 and S2, and spend time in their schools' associated primaries. These primary visits were to allow teaching methodologies to be shared, and to improve the cross-sector transfer of teaching and learning information of pupils to ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary school.

### ***The numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire***

1.8 Two secondary schools and their associated primaries were involved in the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire. Again, the schools were located in a range of socio-economic areas. An additional primary teacher and secondary Maths teacher were employed in each learning partnership, in order to provide cover for other primary and secondary teachers to teach in each others' sectors, allowing closer cross-sector liaison and sharing of teaching methods. Each partnership developed the pilot to suit its own needs, but also worked together to produce a new Programme of Study for use in all of the schools involved, to ensure continuity between primary and secondary Maths teaching.

### ***The ENABLE project in Glasgow***

1.9 The Eastbank Network for Academic, Behavioural and Learning Education (ENABLE) project at Eastbank Academy, situated in one of the most deprived areas of Glasgow, involved establishing separate classes in S1 and S2 for the least able and most vulnerable pupils. These ENABLE classes, made up of 15 pupils each, were taught literacy and numeracy by a primary specialist employed to work in the secondary school. An adapted curriculum, delivered by secondary teachers, was developed for other subjects. It was hoped that the combination of primary teaching methods, smaller class sizes and working with a reduced number of secondary teachers would ease the transition to secondary school for these pupils, and prepare them for the transition into S3.

### ***Summary of the three pilot models***

1.10 Each of the three pilots had a different focus, and adopted different means for assisting the transition, as outlined in Table 1.1 below:

**Table 1.1: The three transition pilot models**

<b>Pilot</b>	<b>Subject focus</b>	<b>Pupils targeted</b>	<b>Teaching input</b>
North Lanarkshire	Literacy	All P6-S2 pupils, but particularly those moving from P7 to S1	Specialist literacy staff contributing to primary and secondary classes
East Ayrshire	Numeracy	All P6-S2 pupils, but particularly those moving from P7 to S1	Additional staffing in primaries and secondaries, enabling an increase in cross-sector working
Glasgow City	Literacy and numeracy	Low achieving, vulnerable pupils in S1 and S2	Separate ENABLE classes, with specialist input from primary trained teachers

**Aims and objectives of the evaluation**

1.11 The overall aim of the research was to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of the three pilot projects, to assess different approaches to improving transitions between primary and secondary and to suggest where different approaches would be most likely to be successful.

1.12 The process evaluation focused on the implementation and operation of the schemes and the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes involved. The specific objectives of the process evaluation were to:

- explore whether there were any obstacles to the implementation of each pilot and how (or if) these were addressed;
- identify factors that contributed to smooth implementation for each pilot; and
- identify the extent to which there was a consensus among the education authority and school staff about the aims of each pilot and methods adopted.

1.13 The outcome evaluation focused on the specified objectives of each pilot individually, and the outcomes that were common to all three pilots, namely:

- each pilot's impacts on pupil motivation, self-esteem, confidence from S1 to S2 and from primary to secondary;
- the extent to which the pilots have led to improved performance in literacy and numeracy; and
- the extent to which the pilots have eased the transition from primary to secondary school.

1.14 To address these objectives, the research was designed around the following areas:

- consensus on the aims and nature of the pilot;
- implementation of the pilot;
- experiences and views of the transition in general and specific elements of the programme;
- change in literacy and numeracy attainment;
- change in primary-secondary liaison;
- the pilots' impact on pupil self-esteem, motivation and confidence; and
- planned outcomes of the individual pilots.

## Research methods

1.15 The evaluation involved two main research tasks: qualitative consultation with teachers, pupils and education authority representatives involved in the pilots, and quantitative analysis of secondary data relating to attainment in literacy and numeracy.

### *Qualitative consultation*

1.16 In all three local authorities, research began in March 2005. In North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire, the Literacy Development Officers and numeracy specialists (both primary and secondary trained) at each secondary school took part in in-depth interviews, as did Head Teachers, Principal Teachers, other secondary teachers and education authority representatives, in order to investigate how the pilots had been implemented and developed in each area. At Eastbank Academy, the Head Teacher, the Depute Head Teacher (who has responsibility for the structure, resourcing and monitoring of the scheme) and other teachers involved in the ENABLE project were also interviewed at this time.

1.17 For the pilots involving additional literacy and numeracy teachers, research was conducted in the cluster primary schools, beginning in May/June 2005. This comprised in-depth interviews with primary teachers who had worked with the literacy or numeracy specialists. Qualitative research was conducted in at least two primary schools per secondary school. As ENABLE only operates at Eastbank Academy, no research took place in primary schools in the area.

1.18 Consultation with key individuals was conducted at regular intervals throughout the duration of the pilots. Key staff in each project were interviewed approximately four times during the evaluation process, and the research team also maintained ongoing informal contact via email and telephone. Other teaching and non-teaching staff in each sector, including Principal Teachers of English and Mathematics, were also interviewed throughout the research.

1.19 Qualitative consultation was also carried out with pupils in each of the pilot areas. In North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire, three pupil cohorts were involved in the research, as outlined in Table 1.2 below.

**Table 1.2: Pupil cohorts in North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire**

Cohort	Details of pupil cohort	Consultation undertaken
Cohort 1	P7: 2003/04	No consultation – pre-pilot
	S1: 2004/05	Consultation in May/June 2005 to explore experiences of the pilot in S1
	S2: 2005/06	Consultation in September/October 2005 to explore experiences of the pilot, and its effects in S1 and the transition to S2
Cohort 2	P7: 2004/05	Consultation in May 2005 to investigate experiences of working with key pilot staff in P7 and feelings about transition to S1
	S1: 2005/06	Consultation in September/October 2005 to investigate experiences of the pilot and the recent transition to secondary school
	S2: 2006/07	No consultation
Cohort 3	P7: 2005/06	Consultation in May 2006 to explore experiences of working with key pilot staff in P7 and feelings about transition to S1
	S1: 2006/07	Consultation in September 2006 to investigate experiences of the pilot and the recent transition to secondary school
	S2: 2007/08	No consultation – post-pilot

1.20 At Eastbank Academy, pupil consultation included focus groups with S1, S2 and S3 pupils. Four separate cohorts of pupils were involved in the research, as summarised in Table 1.3 below.

**Table 1.3: Pupil cohorts at Eastbank Academy**

Cohort	Details of pupil cohort	Consultation undertaken
Cohort 1	S1: 2003/04	No consultation – pre-evaluation
	S2: 2004/05	Consultation in June 2005 to explore experiences of ENABLE
	S3: 2005/06	Consultation in September 2005 to investigate experiences of the transition into mainstream S3 classes
Cohort 2	S1: 2004/05	No consultation – focus on S2 in June 2005
	S2: 2005/06	Consultation in May 2006 to explore experiences of ENABLE and feelings about the transition into mainstream S3
	S3: 2006/07	Consultation in September 2006 to investigate experiences of the transition into mainstream S3 classes
Cohort 3	S1: 2005/06	Consultation in September 2005, to explore feelings about the recent transition to secondary school, and in May 2006 to find out how pupils felt having settled into ENABLE
	S2: 2006/07	Consultation in September 2006 focusing on experiences of ENABLE and feelings about the transition into mainstream S3
	S3: 2007/08	No consultation – post-evaluation
Cohort 4	S1: 2006/07	Consultation in September 2005, to explore feelings about the recent transition to secondary school
	S2: 2007/08	No consultation – post-evaluation
	S3: 2008/09	No consultation – post-evaluation

1.21 The total number of people consulted in each of the three pilots is presented in the table below<sup>5</sup>.

**Table 1.4: Number of consultees in each pilot**

Consultees	North Lanarkshire	East Ayrshire	Eastbank Academy
Education authority representatives	1	2	1
Head & Depute Head Teachers	8	2	2
Promoted staff/Specialist teachers	6	9	2
Class teachers (including Support for Learning & Librarians)	28	14	5
Pupils	109	120	41
<b>Total number of consultees</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>51</b>

<sup>5</sup> Full details of the consultation programme, including the total number of interviews conducted (taking into account the fact that key staff involved in the pilots were interviewed on several occasions) are presented in Annex 1

## *Quantitative data analysis*

1.22 All three pilots aimed to improve literacy and numeracy. In order to provide a quantitative measure of change in these areas, 5-14 attainment data provided by each education authority were analysed for each of the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06, and from 2000/01 for Eastbank Academy. 5-14 attainment is measured using levels, starting at level A. The average pupil is expected to achieve level D by the end of P7 and level E by the end of S2. To gather this information, schools commonly draw on on-line National Assessments.<sup>6</sup>

1.23 To correspond with their differing subject area foci, Reading and Writing attainment data for North Lanarkshire and Maths attainment data for East Ayrshire were analysed for each of the schools involved in the pilots. Analysis of data was also undertaken on a cohort basis. Table 1.5 below outlines the data available for each of the pupils cohorts described in Table 1.2 above.

**Table 1.5: Attainment data available for each pupil cohort in North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire**

<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Details of cohort</b>	<b>Attainment data available</b>
Cohort 1	<b>P7:</b> 2003/04	Percentage of pupils achieving level D or above by the end of P7
	<b>S1:</b> 2004/05	Percentage of pupils achieving level D or above by the end of S1 Percentage of pupils achieving level E or above by the end of S1
	<b>S2:</b> 2005/06	Percentage of pupils achieving level E or above by the end of S2
Cohort 2	<b>P7:</b> 2004/05	Percentage of pupils achieving level D or above by the end of P7
	<b>S1:</b> 2005/06	Percentage of pupils achieving level D or above by the end of S1 Percentage of pupils achieving level E or above by the end of S1
	<b>S2:</b> 2006/07	No data available – post-pilot
Cohort 3	<b>P7:</b> 2005/06	Percentage of pupils achieving level D or above by the end of P7
	<b>S1:</b> 2006/07	No data available – post-pilot
	<b>S2:</b> 2007/08	No data available – post-pilot

1.24 As the ENABLE project had already been running for two years before the other pilots began, there had already been extensive monitoring, evaluation and review of the progress of the pupils. Additional monitoring information was therefore available for this pilot, as well as S1 and S2 5-14 attainment records. This included individual pupil attainment records for ENABLE pupils, Standard Grade results for the first intake of ENABLE pupils compared to previous potential ENABLE candidates, and attendance records.

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<sup>6</sup> These assessments (which have replaced National Tests) are designed as a tool for teachers to confirm judgements about children's levels of attainment, and should form only part of a range of evidence teachers consider to arrive at these judgements.

## **Structure of this report**

1.25 The focus of this report is to draw out the lessons learned from each pilot with respect to replication and implementation. The potential for future roll-out of the initiatives is also addressed through the process and outcome evaluation, by analysing what works best where, and in what circumstances. To do so, particular attention is paid to the key features that are required for the successful operation of each pilot.

1.26 The following three chapters contain the evaluation findings in relation to each of the three transitions pilots. They cover the implementation, operation and impact of each project, drawing on evidence from both the qualitative and quantitative research elements.

1.27 The final chapter then presents the conclusions of the evaluation by comparing the three pilot projects, highlighting examples of best practice, and drawing out the implications for the potential future roll-out of such initiatives.



## CHAPTER TWO NORTH LANARKSHIRE

### Introduction

2.1 This chapter covers the implementation, operation and impact of the literacy pilot in North Lanarkshire. The literacy pilot was implemented in three learning partnerships<sup>7</sup>; however, staffing difficulties meant that the project was discontinued in one learning partnership during the first year of its operation. Research was conducted on this project up until this point, and the findings relating to its implementation are included in this report. All findings presented relating to the operation and impact of the literacy pilot relate only to the other two learning partnerships.

### Aims of the literacy pilot

2.2 The literacy pilot in North Lanarkshire aimed to increase attainment in English, by:

- reducing pupil/teacher ratios in English in S1 and S2;
- sharing training strategies on a reciprocal basis between secondary schools and their associated primaries;
- targeting liaison activities to teaching and learning in literacy on a team teaching basis; and
- securing continuity of learning and teaching in the transition from P7 to S1.

2.3 A Literacy Development Officer (LDO) was employed in each secondary school, to contribute to English teaching in their department, liaise with their school's associated primaries, and keep secondary colleagues up to date with new teaching strategies, methods and findings from the primary schools. The literacy pilot also funded training for the LDOs, and provided a budget for each LDO to buy resources for their school.

### Local context

2.4 School 1 was located in an area of deprivation. Unemployment in the area meant that pupils were “not especially well motivated” and often lacked parental support: at the secondary school, the Head Teacher explained that “a lot of the kids’ parents are unemployed, they don’t even get up in the morning – the kids have to get themselves to school”.

2.5 The other secondary school (School 2) was situated in a catchment area with a more varied socio-economic composition. One primary was in “a nice area”, another was in a “middle of the road” area, while another was in “one of the most deprived areas” in the locality. The Head Teacher therefore felt that the school was “a true comprehensive”.

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<sup>7</sup> The three learning partnerships are referred to by number throughout this report. These numbers correspond to the number given to each secondary school (i.e. School 1 is the secondary school in Learning Partnership 1, School 2 is the secondary school in Learning Partnership 2 etc). The same numbers are used to identify the schools in the quantitative data analysis



## **Implementation of the literacy pilot**

2.6 North Lanarkshire education authority (NLEA) reported being very keen to be involved in a pilot scheme that would raise attainment in S1 and S2, as this was one of their target areas defined by HM Inspectorate.

2.7 NLEA selected schools to take part in the pilot on the basis of need according to the attainment results of S1 and S2 pupils, targeting schools with a record of below average attainment. NLEA emphasised that the aim of the pilot was not to change the curriculum itself, but to change the delivery of the curriculum through increasing skills in teaching and learning: if the schools chose to adjust the curriculum as an adjunct then they were free to do so. Teaching staff at the schools involved reported that although there was a consensus between the schools and NLEA about these aims, the implementation of the pilot had been left quite flexible.

2.8 Consultation in each of the three learning partnerships revealed that their experiences of implementing the literacy pilot varied considerably.

### ***An example of smooth implementation***

2.9 In Learning Partnership 2, the implementation of the literacy pilot went extremely smoothly. The Literacy Development Officer (LDO) was the former Assistant Principal Teacher (APT) of English in the school, previously responsible for transition in the department. Her colleagues in the English department were satisfied that she had been successful in her application for the post, and responded well both to her and to the pilot.

2.10 Only one teacher at this school expressed doubts about the literacy pilot, arguing that it was insulting to the classroom teachers for the school to employ someone on a promoted salary to do the work that class teachers did already. However, all of the other English teachers were enthusiastic and positive about the pilot.

2.11 This approval and acceptance of the recruited LDO was vital to the smooth and speedy inception of the pilot. Crucial, too was the fact that the education authority communicated its intentions effectively – there were several meetings between education authority representatives and the relevant teachers, the value of which was considerable to all involved.

### ***A positive partnership with some obstacles***

2.12 In Learning Partnership 1, implementation had gone fairly well, mainly because as before, the LDO already had good status and credibility in the school. She was previously APT of English and was recognised as a strong member of the department. This was emphasised as a key factor to the success of the pilot: as one teacher commented, the fact that “she had kudos within the department” meant that the scheme had “more potential to get people on board”. The other teachers were very supportive and enthusiastic; they were glad of her assistance and did not resent her intervention or feel as though she was intruding on their teaching.

2.13 However, some obstacles to smooth implementation were encountered. There were logistical issues due to a lack of accommodation: the LDO did not have her own room, but

was instead based in a corner of the library. The school was at 93% capacity so there were sometimes issues finding sufficient classroom space to accommodate her teaching initiatives.

2.14 When the pilot was first implemented, it was reported that there was some disruption to teaching. As the LDO was not appointed until mid-September, the scheme was not effective from the start of the new term. This meant that she was teaching classes as normal in August, and was then taken out to start her new post as LDO, in spite of the fact that an effective replacement had not been found. The Head Teacher acknowledged that implementation would have been better if a replacement had been at the school from August. However, finding a replacement for the LDO proved to be problematic, as there were not enough supply teachers available: the Head Teacher explained that “we had major problems filling her old post”. The staffing problem continued when the first replacement turned out to be unsuitable for the position. Eventually, when a good supply teacher was recruited, their appointment was temporary and so staffing concerns persisted about how they were going to fill the post again the following year.

2.15 In the opinion of the Head Teacher, therefore, the scheme is “perfect, if there’s an able teacher doing the literacy role and there’s an able teacher to replace them... if you’re adding one FTE to the English department, you can’t lose”. However, he added that having an additional literacy coach “is all well and good, but the nuts and bolts of the curriculum still need covering”.

2.16 Despite the overall enthusiasm and praise for the literacy pilot in this school, some teachers felt that improvements could be made. It was suggested that there should have been more formal communication at the start of the scheme to better inform and prepare staff: one teacher felt that “it may be good at the start to have a little talk or discussion about what’s involved, what to expect”.

2.17 The LDO in this learning partnership also had some problems accessing one of the primary schools, as the P7 teacher was a probationer and found it quite difficult having so many ‘experts’ visiting her class. However, a solution was found by the LDO concentrating on the P6 class rather than the P7 class in this school.

### *A partnership with staffing issues*

2.18 In the third learning partnership, there were particular problems in implementing the literacy pilot, which led to its termination after one year. Although there was initial enthusiasm in the English Department, the English teachers were unhappy with the LDO’s appointment as they did not feel she was sufficiently qualified for the job. Reasons for their dissatisfaction were two-fold: firstly, because she was not an English teacher by training (she was previously involved in Learning Support), and secondly, she was appointed over two experienced English teachers who had also applied for the position. The Principal Teacher of English identified only three or four members of staff out of a total of 14 who were prepared to participate in the literacy pilot. The majority refused to be part of the pilot or have the LDO in their classrooms.

2.19 Due to this tension, the pilot took longer to implement than it did in the other two secondary schools. The LDO was then absent due to illness for eight weeks after Christmas, which had a negative impact on the pilot, particularly in relation to contact with the primaries: they lost time and momentum and timetables had been rearranged to fit in with the

LDO's planned visits. This was a particular problem in this learning partnership, as the secondary school had eight associated primaries. The large number of schools meant that the LDO felt she had not made as big an impact on each school as she would have liked.

2.20 The secondary teaching staff who were involved in the pilot also identified problems in its implementation, reporting that its aims were not explained clearly to them. They believed that some of the resentment could have been avoided if they had "sat down with all 14 staff and agreed what the extra post would do".

2.21 There was also resentment because the LDO post was seen to be "all the fun stuff" without the marking workload that the class teachers had. The fact it was a promoted post also caused discontent among the class teachers, particularly as they felt that they were all experts in literacy and "it's hard to find something she's taught me that I didn't know already".

### ***Summary***

2.22 In conclusion, effective implementation of the literacy pilot depended on a number of issues. The first was the 'credibility factor'; it was vital that staff in the English department respected and trusted the ability and experience of the LDO. Where implementation went most smoothly, the LDOs were already viewed as experienced, senior members of their departments before the pilot. The second issue was 'consensus of the aims'; the role of the LDO ought to be clearly defined and effectively communicated to the rest of the department. The third was 'recruiting a suitable replacement'; taking an experienced and able English teacher off the timetable and not being able to find an effective replacement caused problems. Additional concerns were raised in one school relating to a lack of accommodation, although these were noted to be logistical issues rather than a feature of the literacy pilot itself.

2.23 Due to the problems outlined above, the pilot in Learning Partnership 3 was discontinued. The rest of this chapter therefore focuses only on the other two learning partnerships.

### **Operation of the literacy pilot: the role of the Literacy Development Officers**

2.24 There were no firm guidelines to determine how the role of the LDOs should develop, and the posts developed differently based on the needs of individual schools. Teaching staff emphasised that the pilot was 'custom built', and saw the flexibility of the LDO role as one of the most positive aspects of the scheme. The LDOs also reported that their day-to-day work was extremely varied. The following section outlines the initiatives introduced over the two-year pilot in the LDOs' secondary schools and associated primaries.

#### ***Work of the LDOs in the secondary schools***

2.25 The LDOs contributed to classroom teaching in English in both secondary schools by team teaching, providing adaptable lesson plans for class teachers, and extracting groups from the classes. Work in S1 and S2 classes included implementing personal learning plans, and organising and monitoring personal reading schemes such as 'Enjoy Reading In Class' (ERIC) and personal reading awards. Pupils received bronze, silver and gold awards after reading a certain number of books and completing related tasks such as writing reviews, giving a two minute talk or designing a book cover. Progress in these reading schemes was

documented by the LDOs, enabling pupils to continue the scheme from S1 to S2. Teaching staff at both schools emphasised the importance of the LDOs having time to monitor such initiatives, which had been in place previously but “fell by the wayside” because of time pressures on staff.

### *Teaching and learning methods*

2.26 LDOs also contributed to classroom teaching by working with class teachers to introduce new teaching and learning methods such as cooperative learning, after receiving training funded by the pilot. The Head Teacher at School 1 explained that cooperative learning had been “a major focus” of the English department and the LDO had supervised the implementation of this teaching method in the classroom. All S1 classes were organised into ‘base groups’ for use in cooperative learning tasks, where individual group members must complete specific tasks in order to contribute towards the overall activity. These groups were not used all the time, but the class teacher had the flexibility to use them when appropriate. Teachers also explained that the LDO contributed to planning cooperative learning sessions, which required considerable preparation time before the lesson.

2.27 Cooperative learning was also introduced in School 2, although did not appear to be used as widely here. Despite overall enthusiasm for the literacy pilot in this school, the LDO felt that some teachers were “unwilling to try new things... they are used to doing things their own way”. However, this appeared to change over time, with more teachers becoming involved in the second year of the pilot.

2.28 Other teaching and learning methods were introduced by the LDOs such as reciprocal reading, which aims to encourage pupils to become more independent readers. Reciprocal reading is conducted in small groups, with each pupil taking on a different role linked to each of the strategies used (predicting, clarifying, questioning, summarising and visualising). Pupils are encouraged to become more independent by developing this process themselves rather than relying on a teacher to go through it with them. Reciprocal reading was introduced to all S1 classes by the LDO at School 1. As preparing and delivering reciprocal reading with the S1 classes took up “a huge amount of time”, this LDO had less involvement in S2 classes.

2.29 The LDOs also introduced the principles of Assessment is for Learning and formative assessment, which focus on identifying shared learning intentions and feeding these back to pupils. Other ideas such as ‘traffic lighting’, where pupils use a different colour to indicate how confident they are about a given task, allowing teachers to identify children who need extra support, were also introduced. Additionally, the LDO at School 2 was given the responsibility of coordinating Assessment is for Learning across the school and passing on training to teachers in other departments.

### *The work of LDOs within and outwith the classroom*

2.30 The LDOs at both secondary schools worked with groups of children outside of the classroom, extracting ability groups to work on specific skills. Some of these sessions offered additional tuition to the less able pupils, for example ‘Rainbow Reading’, a scheme that involves a 12-week intervention using graded books and audio tapes. As Learning Support focused on pupils at levels A and B, this scheme was targeted at level C

readers. Other sessions targeted groups from a range of ability levels, reflecting the aim of the pilot to raise literacy across the year group as a whole.

2.31 This aspect of work developed differently in the two secondary schools. The LDO at School 1 preferred to concentrate on working within classes, particularly in the second year of the pilot. This was partly because of a lack of space, and the logistical problems of finding the facilities to teach groups separately.

2.32 The LDO at School 2, who had her own classroom, tended to do more work with groups taken out of English classes. In this school, the LDO focused on working with the higher ability groups; for example working at level E and F in S2 on topics such as Writer's Craft and critical essay writing skills. Class teachers in this school, where English classes were not set, commented on the benefits of splitting the classes into ability groups in order to target their teaching more effectively. Pupil/teacher ratios in these classes were also reduced while group work was implemented by the LDO.

#### *Research and resources*

2.33 One element of the literacy pilot mentioned frequently by secondary teachers was the fact that the LDOs had time available to conduct research and develop resources and materials for the rest of the department. One Head Teacher felt that a benefit of the LDO post was that:

*"She has time to look at strategies. The time she can spend on research is invaluable... [she] can do the research and pass on information to the classroom teachers".*

2.34 The LDOs produced a range of materials for pupils, for which they took responsibility for assigning, assessing and providing feedback. This enabled developmental work to be implemented with high ability groups and remedial action to be taken with lower achieving groups. By taking responsibility for their initiation and implementation, the LDO allowed the class teacher to focus on key aspects of the curriculum, certain topics or certain groups.

2.35 Resources were also provided for teachers, such as 'literacy sorters' containing guidance sheets for English teachers. As one teacher at School 2 explained:

*"[The literacy sorters] are jam packed with all kind of goodies with spelling cards, planning sheets, punctuation exercises, grammar exercises, listening feedback, she has all sorts of stuff that you really need".*

2.36 In addition, the literacy pilot provided a budget for resources which the LDOs spent on new technology such as interactive digi-text materials for use on a Smartboard which the pilot also funded. These materials were also used in the primary schools.

2.37 The resources that were obtained by the LDOs were not restricted to use within the English department, but were instead shared among other departments, particularly those that would gain from an increase in literacy attainment. An example of this interdepartmental focus on literacy was the introduction by one LDO of a clear correction code for spelling, grammar and punctuation, which was laminated and displayed in every classroom in School 1. This ensured that there was consistency in marking pupils' work across

departments. The other LDO also gave writing frames to Science, Humanities and Maths departments in School 2 in order to “get language across the curriculum”.

### *National Assessments*

2.38 The LDOs proved to be very valuable to class teachers in the area of National Assessment. Often, class teachers did not feel they had enough time to look at past test results in detail or to test pupils individually away from the class. LDOs assisted by analysing National Assessment results and cross-checking these data with information from class teachers, in order to identify pupils for early testing in S1 and S2. Pupils who had not been tested since P6 were given priority. In order to inform decisions about who should be tested, the LDOs noted the importance of receiving detailed transfer information from primary schools about current levels and dates of previous testing.

2.39 As well as monitoring which pupils should be tested, the LDOs developed materials for different National Assessment levels, to address perceived weaknesses in the way the departments taught specific areas. They also helped pupils to prepare for the tests and class teachers to administer them. Teachers saw this as being crucial, because:

*“I think quite a few of my kids needed that extra time to prepare for it and focus on it before they actually sat the exam, and it just wouldn’t have happened in the classroom because I just don’t have time”.*

2.40 LDOs were also able to help with the marking of National Assessments, which, given the reported strain on the time of the class teacher, was considered a great benefit.

### *Other activities*

2.41 The flexibility of the post also allowed the LDOs to introduce a wide variety of other initiatives, the benefits of which were viewed as being “more than the sum of their parts”. For example, both LDOs had input to inductions for S1 pupils to encourage use of the library, and incorporating cooperative learning in ‘reading for pleasure’ periods in the library. They also ran competitions and voluntary activities such as book clubs and writers’ workshops, organised read-a-thons and activities for World Book Day, and produced displays of pupils’ work in corridors. In School 2, the LDO trained S6 pupils to undertake ‘supportive writing’, involving working with specific pupils within S1 classes. The LDOs also used parents’ evenings as an opportunity to communicate their work to parents and encourage them to promote literacy at home.

### *Training*

2.42 Throughout the pilots, and particularly in the first year, the LDOs attended numerous training courses, on various teaching and learning methods such as cooperative learning, formative assessment, Rainbow Reading, attunement strategies, the Meyers-Briggs personality test and managing behaviour.

2.43 Although one of the roles of the LDO was to pass on training to other staff members, in practice this proved difficult because of time constraints on both the LDOs and their colleagues. The LDOs gave presentations at departmental meetings, and contributed to in-service training days. However, the education authority had reduced the amount of time

allowed for departmental meetings: as one PT explained, “that curtailment has an effect on [LDO’s] ability to cascade the information – because necessarily I’ve got other things ongoing”.

2.44 Despite the lack of time available for LDOs to pass on formal training to colleagues, they did share information informally and class teachers appreciated the “constant feedback about trying new things out”. As the Head Teacher of School 2 explained, the LDO was able to feed back ideas from training courses straight away, in a practical way: “whatever [course] she goes on, it comes out in practice and the way she thinks about things”. Consequently, both LDOs were viewed as a valuable source of information by other English teachers.

2.45 The LDO at School 1 explained that sometimes it was more effective to pass on training through practical example rather than via formal presentations. For instance she introduced the ‘what are we going to learn today’ (WALT) system which involves summarising the intentions of each lesson “so kids know exactly what they’re supposed to be learning”. This LDO used the WALT method while implementing reciprocal reading within English classes, and explained she was “hoping that others notice what techniques I’m using and the penny drops – they will then pick this up in their own teaching. Rather than telling people ‘you should do this’”. However, although teachers were keen to take on board new initiatives and learn from the LDOs, their own workloads sometimes prevented this: one LDO reported that as a result she sometimes felt she was ‘bugging’ the class teachers.

### *Summary*

2.46 In summary, the LDOs contributed to their English departments in a variety of ways. These included team teaching, extracting pupils from classes, introducing new teaching and learning approaches, conducting research and providing teaching resources, implementing personal reading schemes and involvement in National Assessment testing.

### ***Work of the LDOs in the primary schools: year one***

2.47 As the LDOs were secondary teachers, they were less familiar with the details of primary classes and also sensitive to the possibility that there would be resistance to a secondary subject specialist working in the primary sector. As such, the LDOs reported taking more time to build relationships and develop their roles there than in the secondary schools.

2.48 In the first year of the pilot, LDOs found it difficult to organise visits to the primary schools because of the number of training courses they attended. Once these initial problems were overcome, the focus of work in the primaries was observation and ‘fact finding’. The LDOs observed primary teaching methods with a view to developing greater consistency after the transition to S1, built up relationships with the primary teaching staff and got to know the P6 and P7 pupils. Both LDOs focused mainly on P7 classes, although the P6 teacher at one of School 1’s associated primaries was more involved in the literacy pilot due to the P7 teacher being a probationer, as noted previously.

2.49 Both LDOs did some team teaching, acting as ‘an extra pair of hands’ in the primary classes, and one of the LDOs took groups of pupils out of the class to focus on story writing with different ability groups. Primary teachers, who said they have to be a ‘jack of all

trades', emphasised the benefits of having a specialist English teacher in the classroom as a source of advice and information.

2.50 The LDOs also helped primary teachers with marking, so that pupils could get used to the standards and marking procedures of secondary school. This input was greatly appreciated by the primary teachers, who commented that with larger classes, marking is a "huge undertaking".

2.51 In addition to contributing to classes in the primaries, the LDOs provided resources such as level E planners and guidance relating to level E targets, as the experience of P7 teachers was primarily up to level D.

2.52 The exchange of ideas between secondary and primary sectors worked in the other direction, too. Both LDOs highlighted the importance of the first year of primary visits in providing information about primary teaching methods and taking ideas back to the secondaries about how to ease the transition from P7 to S1. As one Principal Teacher of English commented, "it's bound to be different, but there's a lot of things we are actually learning from the primary schools, and often it's good practice".

2.53 One example of this reciprocity of learning in teaching methods is that one LDO noted that writing was taught very differently at secondary school to primary school. In the primary schools, pupils were taught in groups based on ability whereas secondary teachers expected the whole class to be at the same level. This LDO also observed that primary teaching methods were more structured, whereas secondary teachers had more scope to be imaginative and creative. However, from the children's point of view, especially in S1, she felt that the structure was more important in order to provide them with stability. Without this, "some pupils go backwards and their learning suffers".

2.54 Because of the need to understand the varying ability within each class, LDOs took P7 pupils' jotters to the secondary schools so teachers could see the standards achieved. Primary teachers hoped that this would prevent the situation experienced in the past where "they're not challenged, they're re-doing things, marking time for two years".

2.55 Both LDOs also introduced changes to the environment of the secondary school after visiting the primaries. For example, the primaries tended to have lots of colourful displays of children's work in the walls, whereas "the secondaries seem very bare". The primary classrooms also had 'writing walls' with core target sheets on display, so pupils could see their targets while completing writing tasks. The LDOs decorated walls and corridors in order to make the primary and secondary environments more similar, aiming to make the classrooms more familiar and attractive to pupils making the transition.

2.56 LDOs were also able to provide the secondaries with information about specific pupils, feeding into Learning Support systems. Although Learning Support teachers did visit the primaries, they did not have as much contact with the pupils as the LDOs. They therefore highlighted the importance of the LDOs acting as an "early warning system" for pupils coming into S1.



### *Work of the LDOs in the primary schools: year two*

2.57 In the second year of the pilot, having built relationships with the primaries, the LDOs were much more involved in their associated primary schools. Attending fewer training courses also enabled them to commit to regular slots at the primaries. With the exception of two primary schools (one in each learning partnership) experiencing staffing problems, visits were much more regular (between one and two hours in each school per week in most cases) and the LDOs engaged in more class and group teaching.

2.58 As in the first year of the pilot, the LDOs focused on working with P7 classes, although some had composite P6/7 classes and towards the end of the year they also taught P6 classes.

2.59 Both LDOs used a combination of team teaching and extracting groups from the primary classes in the second year of the literacy pilot. They also continued to mark work and give feedback to pupils.

2.60 The LDO from School 2, who did more group work in the secondary school, also spent more time extracting groups from the primary classes, working with different ability groups. In the first term she worked with the lower ability groups in each of the primaries, using interactive digi-text materials for the Smartboard. She then worked with the top ability groups, using level E digi-text material. The LDO provided all the materials for this group work, targeted at the appropriate level. Primary teachers emphasised the skills of the LDO in tailoring work to different ability levels, so that it was “really stimulating for the good writers in the class, and not too difficult for the others – it made them think, but it wasn’t beyond them”.

2.61 Both LDOs worked with the primary pupils on Writer’s Craft, an aspect of National Assessment which involves reading a piece of text and then writing one or two more paragraphs in the same style, using the same setting and characters. Primary teachers appreciated input from the LDOs on this element of the tests: as one LDO explained, “the primaries don’t feel they have the specialism for doing the Writer’s Craft, and they’ve really liked the fact that I’ve come in, because I’m an English teacher”. The LDOs provided the necessary materials, which was new to the primary teachers, and also helped to administer National Assessments in Writing after teaching the Writer’s Craft sessions.

2.62 The LDO who introduced reciprocal reading methods to School 1 also taught reciprocal reading in the primaries, with the class teachers observing and/or team teaching: “so they’re seeing what’s happening and they can then take it on themselves if they want to take it on again next year”. The LDO taught the whole class the principles behind reciprocal reading first, and then the pupils worked in groups. Although one P6/7 teacher commented that it was “quite time consuming to set up” she thought “it was worth it – I will carry it on next year”.

2.63 In Learning Partnership 2, the LDO also passed on teaching methods to the primary teachers, as they observed her teaching the whole class. The LDO noted that this was a two-way process, with both parties learning new teaching methods and ways of reacting to the pupils.

2.64 Additional activities were organised by the LDOs in the primaries such as poetry writing, debating and critical essay writing. They also continued to provide input for National Assessment testing, by giving groups of pupils extra help, administering tests and providing materials to help pupils preparing for testing.

2.65 In Learning Partnership 2, the flexibility of the LDO post also enabled other English teachers from the secondary school to visit the primaries, while the LDO covered their classes. As relationships with the primary teachers developed, the LDO also took the P7 class at one school while the P7 teacher visited the secondary. The LDO stressed that this was only possible after she had built up a level of trust with the primaries:

*“Would that be okay, would that be etiquette, I don’t want to stand on anybody’s toes in the primary. Because sometimes they might be a little bit strange about letting another teacher come in. But the fact that they’re letting me take groups away on my own, means that they know me now and are confident in me”.*

2.66 Despite the LDOs’ concerns about how they were perceived in the primaries, feedback from primary schools in both learning partnerships was very positive, in part reflecting the sensitivity LDOs had shown in order to avoid appearing invasive. Primary teachers believed that the compatible personalities of the LDOs constituted a key factor in the success of the pilot. As one P7 teacher commented, in some cases there might be a danger of personality clashes, but the LDO in his school made it clear from the start that “she didn’t want to stand on my toes”. Nobody reported problems in working cooperatively, nor felt that the LDOs were there to criticise them.

### ***Relationship between the literacy pilot and existing transitions arrangements***

2.67 The literacy pilot did not operate in isolation, but built on existing arrangements for easing the transition from P7 to S1. Significantly, when asked about these existing arrangements and their relationship with the literacy pilot, staff often found it difficult to separate the two, as the LDOs had become closely involved in the other programmes.

2.68 Teachers in Learning Partnership 1 reported that the secondary school already had a “very strong relationship” with its associated primaries. There were regular ‘cluster meetings’ with the primary Head Teachers and Learning Support every six weeks, other subject teachers visited the primaries, parents attended open evenings, and pupils took part in ‘taster day’ visits to the secondary school. These consisted of half a morning per week for five weeks, taking part in practical lessons such as Science and Home Economics.

2.69 In addition, P7 pupils took part in a two-day induction programme, including one full day “where they make their own way there and back, and do a day’s timetable and get to know which register class they are in”. S1 pupils who were interviewed as part of the evaluation reported that attending the induction days had helped them with the transition to secondary school. One boy commented “I think it’s a good idea you actually get a two day induction, just to see what the school’s like”. Another pupil agreed this is a good idea, “instead of just throwing you in”. For the Head Teacher of this school, the literacy pilot built on the existing transition arrangements: it “beefs it up; makes it more specific”.

2.70 In the second school cluster, teachers reported a marked improvement in liaison between the primaries and the secondary in recent years, which was partly due to the pilot

and partly due to other factors, such as a change in staff at School 2. There had been an “all-round, huge effort” from lots of people in this school cluster and teachers felt it was “hard to say who it’s down to”. As the Principal Teacher of English at this school commented, changes in the senior management team and the literacy pilot worked in combination to improve cross-sector liaison:

*“I think that the new management has improved [cross-sector relationships] tremendously... and if you add literacy development on to that then it has really secured the situation... so the timing of the pilot couldn’t have been better, because we were at a low point. We desperately needed the confidence of... our associated primaries”.*

2.71 Transitions arrangements at School 2 consisted of a six-week programme for P6 pupils in which they worked in several subjects (e.g. English, Maths, Science, Home Economics and Technical) to design a ‘healthy sandwich’. There was also a two-day induction programme for P7 pupils in June when they were ‘buddied’ by S6 pupils, and a ‘road show’ where representatives from Maths and English visited all the primaries to talk to parents.

2.72 One example of the close relationship between the literacy pilot and ongoing transitions programmes was the English component of the P6 ‘healthy sandwich’ project, which was run by the LDO at this school. The same LDO also organised lunchtime activities with the book club for the P7s’ induction visit. Children themselves mentioned the LDOs in relation to other transitions activities. For example, when asked what they did during a visit to the secondary school, pupils mentioned the English component of the ‘healthy sandwich’ project, explaining that this was “really quite fun – she sort of helped us, we did alliteration a lot, it was quite good”.

2.73 The LDOs’ contact with the primary schools was also reported as being a key factor in improving the cross-sector relationships in this learning partnership. The PT of English at this school believed that the fact the LDO taught in the primaries was vital, because “the best way to gain respect from other teachers is to be seen to be proficient at the job”. He also said that the pilot ensured that the primaries “feel as though their contribution is important” because they were aware that the English department had changed their teaching methodology “to build on what is done in the primary school”.

### **Impact of the literacy pilot**

2.74 The consultation undertaken over the course of the literacy pilot, together with quantitative analysis of attainment records, explored how the literacy pilot had affected both pupils and teachers in all of the schools involved. The following sections outline the main findings of this aspect of the research.

#### ***Impact of the literacy pilot in the primary schools***

2.75 All primary teachers were positive about the literacy pilot and felt that pupils had benefited from having contact with a secondary English teacher. The combination of personal interest in the children and high status was seen as crucial in appealing to and motivating them.

2.76 Primary teachers reported that having the LDOs in the class had an impact in terms of pupil motivation: “they want to do a really good job, they go and show [LDO] what they’ve done... and they’re more interested in it, because they want to impress her”. The children also “adore the fact they know someone from the high school”.

2.77 Contact with LDOs also helped to combat ‘P7 syndrome’, described as “where children know they’re leaving primary school, and are ready to go, so lose motivation”. Thus the presence of the LDOs also provided some “incentive for them to put in some extra effort” before the transition to secondary school.

2.78 Individual characteristics of the LDOs were viewed as important in the context of motivating the pupils; primary teachers emphasised the LDOs’ “lovely manner” and “positive attitude”, and commented that pupils “could see [LDO] was interested in what they had to say... so they feel that what they’re doing is valuable”.

#### *Impact on attainment in P7*

2.79 Primary teachers generally found it difficult to assess the extent to which contact with the LDOs affected pupils’ attainment in English. This was partly because of the limited time available to the LDOs in each school: one Depute Head explained that as the LDO was only in the school one morning a week, her input was unlikely to have changed attainment dramatically.

2.80 Teachers also felt that it would be hard to pinpoint the effects of the pilot because so many variables affect attainment, for example high rates of absenteeism, exclusions and chaotic home lives. Some teachers also believed that their pupils would have passed National Assessments regardless of the LDOs’ input because they were already high achievers.

2.81 Despite this, some teachers felt that the work of the LDOs had a positive effect on attainment, particularly in Writing. One teacher explained that all her pupils passed their National Assessment in Writing at the end of the LDO’s sessions:

*“At first I thought ‘they’ll never do this’, what [LDO] was asking them to do, but it’s amazing really, they can, and they can surprise you. Particularly with the Writer’s Craft work, because I thought they’d find that **really** difficult”.*

2.82 Another teacher reported that although it was “almost impossible to say if [contact with the LDO] affected the passing of their tests”, she felt that “it certainly enhanced their writing”. Reciprocal reading was also thought to have had a positive impact on children’s reading skills.

2.83 Some teachers felt that the pilot was particularly beneficial for high achievers, because the LDOs had more experience of teaching at the higher levels. This meant that they were better placed to provide appropriate resources and specialist input. As one teacher commented, it was also beneficial for the top ability groups to have contact with someone from the secondary school “to get a bit of polish” and to find out what is expected of them in S1 and S2.

2.84 Teachers reported that the lower ability groups had also benefited from their contact with the LDOs, particularly when small groups were extracted from the classroom. Again,

teachers often reported that these benefits were a result of the personal characteristics of the LDOs:

*“She has a very quiet manner, she gets the best out of the children, and is able to get the best out of even the poorest ones”.*

2.85 Reciprocal reading methods were also viewed as very beneficial to the less able pupils, because it was done in an interactive way in mixed groups, so “you were getting the kids feeding off each other, and the ones that were poorer were getting support there”. Reciprocal reading also provided the less able pupils with new strategies to enable them to “build their own literacy skills”. One P7 teacher argued that:

*“I think probably it's of value to some of the more hesitant ones in Primary 7, because they know that there's a certain pattern, and that's very important... I think it's good to give them a variety of roles. The good ones do it automatically... but the average to the below average benefit from having a peg to hang their hat on”.*

2.86 Consultation with pupils revealed that children, too, were able to identify new skills that they had learned from the LDOs. P7 pupils commented that previously “we didn't know anything about Writer's Craft”, and also believed that they “learned a lot”; for example, “we've learned questioning, clarifying, visualising, predicting”. Pupils also enjoyed reciprocal reading, and reported that it had helped them to work cooperatively:

*“It helped us... work in a group more, it helped us understand how to have your turn and everything like that”.*

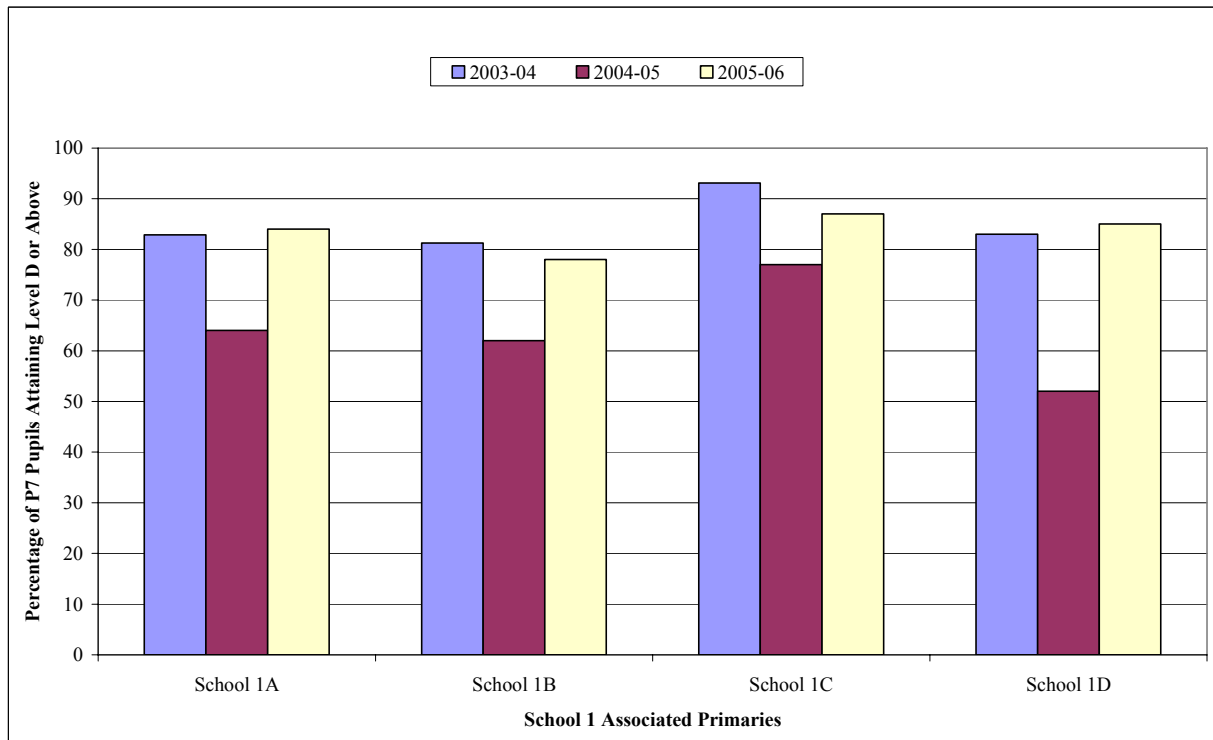
*“It's taught us to cooperate more, basically... It's a cooperating task, to help each other out... If somebody didn't really know their role or something, someone else could help them with it, it helped us build like class cooperation”.*

### *Quantitative evidence*

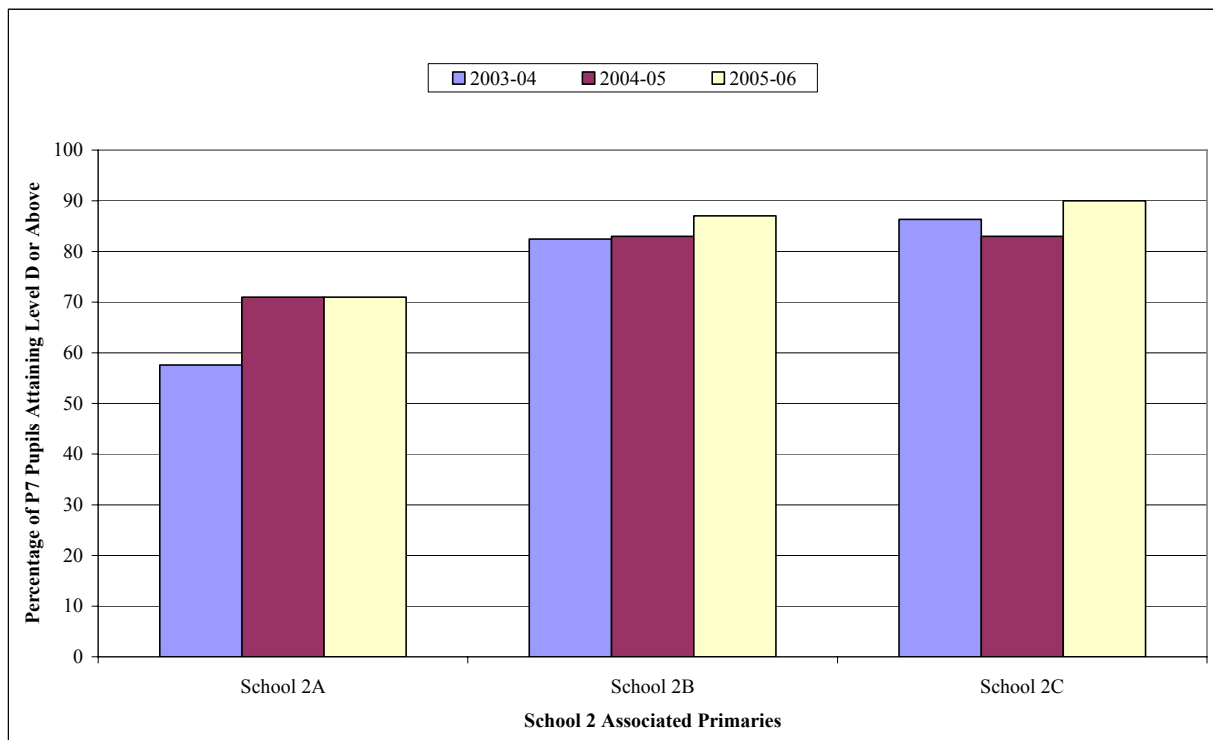
2.87 NLEA provided 5-14 attainment data for Reading and Writing, for each of the secondary schools and all of their associated primaries for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06. Attainment data for the entire education authority was also provided in order to put the findings in context and compare changes in attainment in the pilot schools to changes across North Lanarkshire as a whole.

2.88 Analysis of P7 attainment data indicated that there was no consistent pattern of improvement or decline in attainment results in Writing at the primary schools involved in the literacy pilot. (For completeness, graphs are included in Annex 2 to illustrate P7 Writing attainment). However, there was some improvement in P7 Reading results. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 below present attainment data for P7 pupils at the primaries associated with each of the secondary schools.

**Figure 2.1: P7 Reading attainment at School 1's associated primaries**



**Figure 2.2: P7 Reading attainment at School 2's associated primaries**



2.89 While P7 attainment across North Lanarkshire as a whole rose steadily from 75% in 2003/04 to 76% in 2004/05 and 77% in 2005/06, there was a dip in Reading attainment in 2004/05 at the primaries associated with School 1, followed by an improvement in 2005/06, as shown in Figure 2.1. At all four primary schools, P7 attainment was above the authority average in both 2003/04 and 2005/06.

2.90 Figure 2.2 shows that P7 Reading attainment improved between 2003/04 and 2005/06 at School 2's associated primaries. For example, at school 2A, 71% of P7 pupils had achieved level D or above in both 2004/05 and 2005/06. This was still below the North Lanarkshire average of 77% in 2005/06, but an improvement on their 2003/04 results, when the figure was 58% (compared to an education authority average of 75%). At the other two primaries, attainment increased year on year, to 87% at School 2B and 90% at School 2C in 2005/06.

2.91 It is important to note the limitations of the type of analysis presented above, as it does not take into account the differences between year groups in terms of prior ability. For example, a particular year group could have performed much better than expected in a given year, but their results could still represent a drop in attainment compared to previous year groups. Because of these limitations, data analysis also investigated change over time *within individual pupil cohorts*, comparing each year group's attainment with the local authority average. This analysis, which covers attainment from P7 to S2, is presented later in this chapter, along with data from each of the secondary schools.

#### *Impact on primary teachers*

2.92 A key benefit of the literacy pilot was the opportunity for cross-sector liaison and sharing of teaching methods between primary and secondary teachers. Primary teachers stressed the benefits of having a secondary teacher in the classroom: any extra help is appreciated, but particularly "extra input from a specialist". For example, the LDOs' work on areas such as Writer's Craft was particularly appreciated:

*"What I think is really good about [the pilot] is she's a specialist – I think by P7 some of the skills are specialist skills... I mean I can do it now because I've learned from her, but I didn't know much about the Writer's Craft, that's a new thing... If it hadn't been for [LDO] coming in, I'd still be struggling along with that, if I hadn't seen it in action... I've asked her a lot of things about English I wasn't sure about, and I found that a great help".*

2.93 Primary teachers had also learned from the LDOs' marking of children's work. One Primary 7 teacher noted that the LDO's marking was "more concise, and more formal"; this teacher reported that she would adapt her methods to make them more consistent with secondary assessment methods.

2.94 Some teachers also reported that they would continue to use reciprocal reading methods, as "it teaches reading in a more rounded fashion, it teaches them that the skills are inter-dependent, and everything's not isolated".

2.95 Similarly, contact with primary teachers also provided LDOs with an insight into the way English is taught in the primaries and the standards that pupils achieved. This element

of the pilot is discussed more fully in the sections below considering the impact of the literacy pilot on transitions to secondary school.

### *Summary*

2.96 Primary teachers in both learning partnerships felt that having the LDO in their class taught them new teaching techniques, gave them welcome help with marking written work, increased pupil motivation and helped to combat ‘P7 Syndrome’.

2.97 Some primary schools saw a slight overall improvement in P7 Reading attainment over the course of the literacy pilot, although there was no consistent pattern of improvement or decline in Writing attainment. Teachers generally thought it was unlikely that the literacy pilot had had a significant effect on attainment levels among primary pupils, and emphasised that the real impact on pupil attainment was more likely to be seen when these pupils made the transition to S1.

### ***Impact of the pilot in the secondary schools***

2.98 The literacy pilot had an impact on the way that the English curriculum was delivered in the secondary schools, as well as a range of other effects on teachers. These impacts in turn led to a range of positive outcomes for pupils, which are also described below.

### *Support and training for secondary teachers*

2.99 Teachers frequently reported the benefits of the LDOs having time to conduct research, provide materials, help plan lessons, and monitor and administer National Assessments. The LDOs were “a big support” to their departments, particularly because of their experience as ex-APT in English, which meant they knew “how to make the smallest changes for the biggest effect”. Teachers felt that having an experienced member of staff to share their workloads reduced the stress they experienced and enabled them to introduce initiatives such as cooperative learning that would have been “pie in the sky” otherwise. As one PT commented:

*“I would say that everything [LDO] has introduced, everything that she has done has had a significantly beneficial effect on the whole department, and on the morale of the department, which is an important point because she has at times given individual members of staff support... by taking the class to introduce particular initiatives”.*

2.100 Although LDOs felt that they had not had enough time to pass on training formally to other teachers, their ability to share skills on a more informal basis was cited as a benefit of the literacy pilot: “[LDO] has always brought in fresh ideas all the time, sort of challenging us to try something new”. Training on cooperative learning and Assessment is for Learning were highlighted as areas which had been particularly beneficial to the schools. These ideas were taken on with enthusiasm and influenced teaching methods in English, as explained by the LDO at School 2:

*“I did spend a lot of time with the department doing staff training on Assessment for Learning... and more people now are going away from just putting a mark or a grade*



*at the end of something, and trying to give the positive feedback and the next steps, so that is having a more positive effect”.*

2.101 This LDO also passed on training in Assessment is for Learning to staff teaching other subjects, so these effects of the pilot were not restricted to the English department. The introduction of Assessment is for Learning methods was also seen as a positive development in terms of pupil motivation:

*“If kids understand the criteria, I think they have a much clearer more positive attitude to what they are doing and they are more successful... Assessment for learning tends to emphasise this, making the criteria explicit and reviewing how successful they feel they have been”.*

#### *Administration of National Assessments*

2.102 The literacy pilot had a range of impacts on the operation of National Assessment in the secondary schools and the capacity of staff to learn from results. Firstly, having the LDOs to monitor who should be tested when meant that testing was more targeted and enabled the correct pupils to be tested. Early testing (before Christmas) also took place, which had not happened previously, and there was “a lot of close tracking of previous attainment, and appropriate spurring people on... for the next step”. Given the pressures experienced by classroom teachers, this help in monitoring testing and administering the assessments was particularly beneficial:

*“To teach your class, and keep things going forward **and** do National Assessments and check all your records is actually very difficult – that’s one of the things she’s done to take the weight off the classroom teachers”.*

*“I’m hoping a few of them will get level Fs in the tests that are coming up. If she hadn’t taken them away I would have had to have tested them at level E, and then F, you know – it would have been a drawn out affair”.*

2.103 The LDOs were also able to examine strengths and weaknesses in their departments’ testing so that “the common mistakes [were] sorted out” and information was shared with English teachers about how to prepare pupils for the tests. For example, weaknesses were identified in School 2 in the teaching of listening skills: “listening is clearly an area that has been identified [LDO]... she had been to good practitioners and brought back the best information that they have”.

2.104 As one Head Teacher argued, the LDOs’ work relating to National Assessments has meant that they are “certainly getting more accurate results now... and measuring better the progress of children”.

#### *Delivering the curriculum: class sizes and team teaching*

2.105 The fact that much of the work of the LDOs in the secondary schools was within English classes meant that pupil/teacher ratios were often reduced, in line with one of the aims of the literacy pilot. Teachers noted the importance of having additional help in the form of team teaching: “it is always good to have another teacher... [The pupils] get more attention, and it has provided more focus on particular skills”.

2.106 As the LDO at School 1 commented, when she was team teaching there were two English specialists involved (rather than one English teacher and one Learning Support teacher, for example) which was very beneficial for pupils. Equally, extracting groups of pupils from classes was viewed as an important element of the pilot, as it reduced pupil/teacher ratios and allowed teaching to be targeted more effectively to different ability levels.

2.107 As well as the LDOs contributing to improved pupil/teacher ratios, class sizes in English at School 2 reduced overall during the course of the pilot. This was made possible partly by the English department taking on two probationers when the LDO was appointed, freeing up more time in the timetable overall. While class sizes used to be in the high 20s, the average is now just 21. The S1 intake also dropped at this school, contributing to smaller class sizes from 2006/07.

2.108 At School 1, class sizes were not reduced during the pilot, as no additional staff were employed other than the LDO. Smaller class sizes could have been achieved if the LDO had taken responsibility for teaching English classes herself, but she would then have not been able to focus on targeting attainment and achievement through her other activities. (Staffing changes in the academic year 2006/07 have enabled class sizes to be reduced to below 20, but this was not related to the literacy pilot).

#### *Teaching and learning methods*

2.109 Teachers emphasised the benefits of introducing cooperative learning to English classes, reporting that pupils responded well to this method. Consultation with S1 and S2 pupils confirmed that they enjoyed this cooperative work, and, as one teacher commented, “I have never seen them as motivated”. Cooperative methods were reported to make pupils more independent in their learning:

*“It is a kind of strange thing – I’m not teaching... **They** are doing it. They are taking it on board themselves... instead of coming and asking me... they are sharing information, which I think will really become helpful next year and the year after when they are going on to their higher skill levels”.*

2.110 Cooperative learning was also reported to help develop relationships between pupils. Even in classes which other teachers viewed as ‘difficult’, pupils worked well together in their groups: “they’re not hesitant or reticent about moving into different groups or working with different people, they all seem to be quite happy with that”. Cooperative methods had particular impacts on specific individuals: “we’ve had some quite difficult pupils, one girl in particular is very sullen and dour, and she worked wonderfully in the cooperative learning”.

2.111 In addition, teachers reported that cooperative learning helped with the pace of learning, and that “[the pupils] can get through things quicker”.

2.112 Reciprocal reading was also reported to be successful, and it had “an impact on reading *across* the curriculum... it gives them a strategy they can employ in Science, when they have to read materials, they can apply it in History, Modern Studies, all of those areas”.

### *Initiatives targeting reading*

2.113 Staff in both secondary schools reported that the focus on library inductions, personal reading initiatives, book clubs and additional activities such as trips and competitions had resulted in pupils reading more. They said this was supported by higher rates of borrowing from the school libraries, particularly in junior fiction. Librarians reported that pupils were increasingly using the library in their own time, and that they took “genuine enjoyment in browsing and reading for pleasure” rather than purely researching for a specific task.

2.114 Teaching staff frequently mentioned the ERIC programme and personal reading awards in relation to increasing motivation among pupils. Although reading schemes existed before the literacy pilot, more pupils achieved awards than would have previously, because the LDOs had time to monitor the scheme thoroughly.

2.115 The structure of both schemes was seen as important: pupils were working towards achievable goals, which ensured they did not feel they were reading ‘pointlessly’. These initiatives also required pupils to read a variety of material: as one teacher stated, “they have to read a certain amount of poetry, non-fiction, and it is widening I think their view of reading – I definitely think that has made a big difference”.

2.116 Comments from S1 pupils in both schools supported these arguments. They reported reading “definitely much more” than they did in P7, and that this included a wider range of material:

*“[The LDO] is also making you think that... books are really good, and like there’s loads of different varieties... there’s a big big selection that you never thought about before. So she really like encourages you to read different things, so you won’t get bored of books”.*

2.117 Pupils reported that the reading awards and voluntary activities arranged by the LDOs had increased their interest in reading for pleasure: as one S1 pupil at School 2 explained, the book club made reading fun because the LDO introduced “activities that make you **want** to go”. The activities associated with the reading awards, and the awards themselves, were also important in motivating children to read at School 1: “[reading awards] made you read more because... you want to reach your gold award”.

2.118 When asked how much their increase in reading was due to the input of the LDO, pupils argued:

*“I think it’s got a lot to do with [LDO], because well she used to take us down to the library, and... she encourages us to read, so I think that’s how I’ve become a more fluent reader, and reading loads more books, and I think it’s all down to [LDO]”.*

2.119 Teachers at School 2 reported a particular benefit of the literacy pilot in terms of the number of boys involved in voluntary literacy activities: the book club at this school had more boys than girls by the end of the pilot, “which has been a real surprise as boys are frequently more difficult to engage with reading, especially reading for pleasure”.

2.120 Less able pupils in particular were reported to have benefited from initiatives such as personal reading awards: these pupils increasingly borrowed books from the library of their

own accord, whereas previously “for some of them, reading was just a bad word... the Rainbow Readers especially – the poorer ones, they just saw reading as a chore”. One teacher at School 1 explained that the reading awards had a particular impact on an S2 class with “a lot of children with a lot of problems” who demonstrated an increase in reading skills and desire to read, which the teacher attributed to the awards scheme.

### *Impact on pupil attainment*

2.121 One of the key aims of the literacy pilot was to raise attainment in English in S1 and S2. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and analysed in order to investigate whether this aim had been achieved over the course of the pilot.

2.122 Teachers were keen to point out that analysis of attainment results may not necessarily be the best indicator of the success of the literacy pilot. For example, the Head Teacher at School 1 explained that attainment had improved quite significantly the year before the implementation of the pilot, so they were “starting from a high base” and any effects of the pilot might therefore not look particularly impressive.

2.123 Teachers also pointed out that even if attainment was shown to improve, it would be difficult to say which factors caused the improvement, as year groups differ: “you’re not working with the same raw material”. They also suggested that the impacts may be longer-term: greater improvements in results might be seen if the pilot was embedded in the school for longer.

2.124 However, evidence from the consultation suggested that the increased focus on literacy did have an effect on attainment. Teachers reported a “significant improvement” in Reading attainment: for example, one teacher noted that in his S1 class there were eight or nine pupils at level F for Reading, while the vast majority were at level E. This represented a “definite improvement” compared to previous years. Writer’s Craft work was also reported to be very successful in improving Writing attainment. As one Principal Teacher noted, “in terms of attainment it has had a significant improvement on the National Assessment results, particularly in Reading”.

2.125 These improvements in attainment were directly attributed to the work of the LDOs, in particular the focus on tracking of attainment and the production of support materials for the tests. Having an additional teacher to prepare pupils for testing was also emphasised as a key factor in increases in attainment: LDOs were able to discuss the criteria for passing each level with pupils, so that “they know what is expected of them”. As one teacher noted:

*“A lot of [pupils] were struggling to meet the high demands of Level E and they have done it – nearly the whole class are now all Level E and that wouldn’t have happened if [LDO] hadn’t had the time and taken them away to focus on it”.*

2.126 Teachers also felt that pupils had not only achieved higher levels than they might have done without the LDOs’ input, but also stressed “would they be so *strongly* at that level?”

2.127 As well as influencing attainment in English, consultees stressed that the pilot also had wider impacts on pupils’ work in other subject areas, as pupils “use their language skills across the curriculum”. As the Principal Teacher at School 2 explained, although he did not view the LDO as “materially different from the English department”, there was still a

difference “because her work does cross over subject areas. For example, providing spelling lists for Science helped pupils to tackle that specific vocabulary”.

2.128 S1 and S2 pupils also recognised that the literacy pilot had an impact on their work in other subjects:

*“I think it has, because there’s some words some of us would never have dreamt of knowing how to say or how to spell... And I think [LDO]’s helped us with that”.*

Learning new words also *“comes in good use in History and Modern Studies”.*

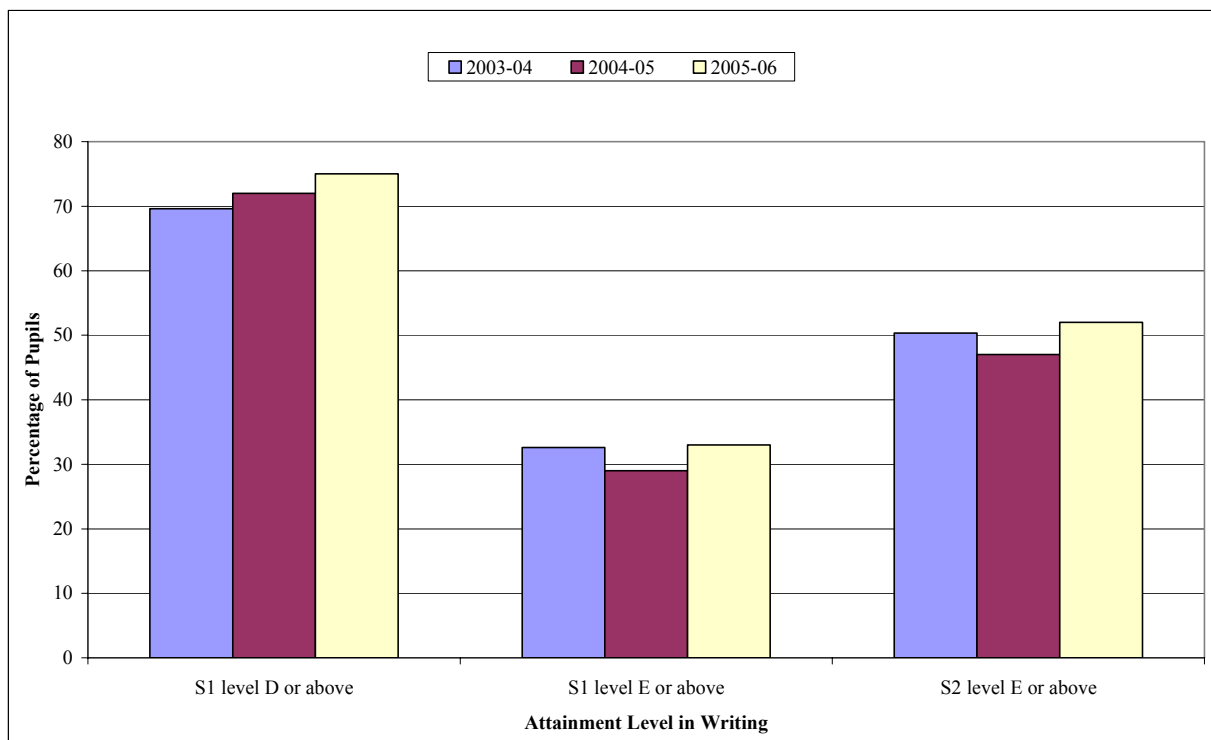
### *Quantitative evidence*

2.129 Analysis of 5-14 attainment data for Reading and Writing for each of the secondary schools involved in the pilot is presented below, using two methods. The first method investigates the change in attainment at each school over time in S1 and S2. However, as this does not take account of differences between year groups in terms of prior ability, this is followed by analysis of attainment for each pupil cohort, compared to the local authority average for the same cohort.

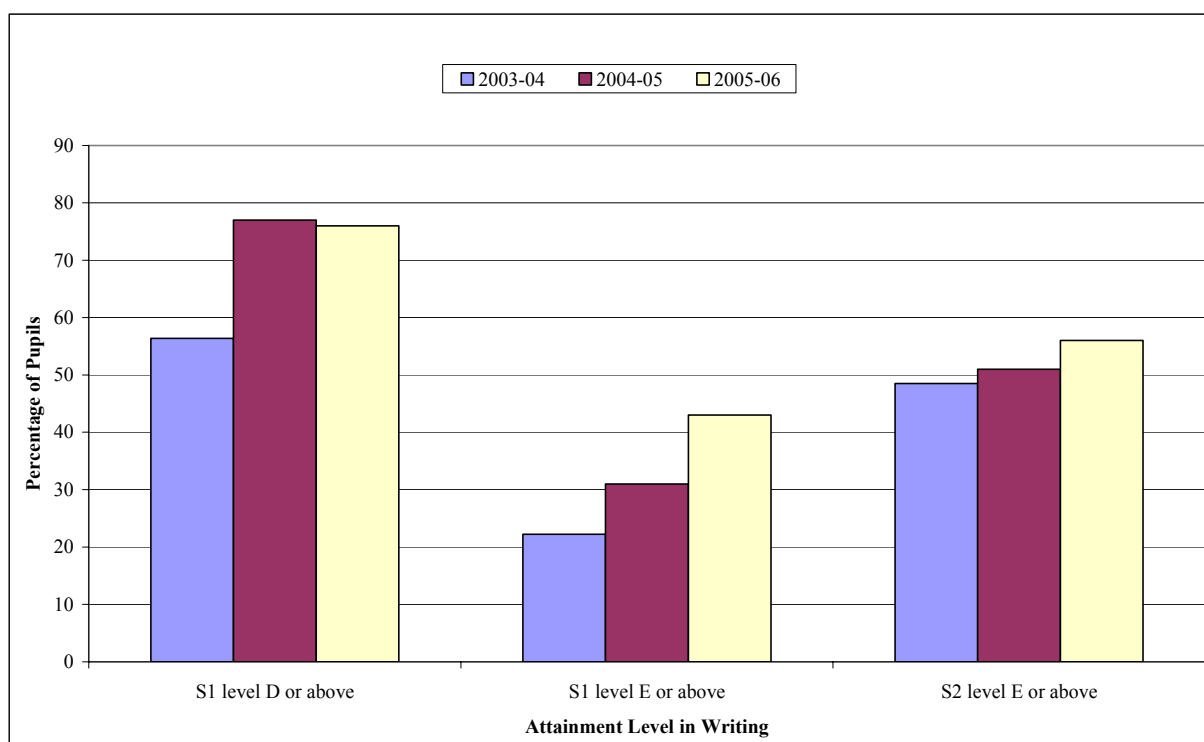
### *Writing attainment*

2.130 Figures 2.3 and 2.4 show attainment in Writing at each of the two secondary schools from 2003/04 to 2005/06.

**Figure 2.3: Writing attainment at School 1**



**Figure 2.4: Writing attainment at School 2**



2.131 As illustrated in Figure 2.3, 70% of S1 pupils at School 1 achieved level D or above in Writing in the academic year 2003/04. This figure showed a steady improvement over the two years of the pilot, rising to 72% in 2004/05 and 75% in 2005/06. However, the percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above did not show an improvement overall; this figure was 33% in 2003/04, fell to 29% in 2004/05 and rose again to 33% in 2005/06. Results for S2 pupils followed a similar pattern: the percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above dropped from 50% in 2003/04 to 47% in 2004/05, but rose again to show an overall increase to 52% in 2005/06.

2.132 At School 2 (see Figure 2.4), the percentage of S1 pupils achieving level D or above in Writing rose over the two years of the pilot, from 56% in 2003/04 to 76% in 2005/06, although it peaked at 77% in 2004/05. This school also experienced an increase in the percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above, from 22% in 2003/04 to 31% in 2004/05 and 43% in 2005/06. Attainment in S2 also improved steadily: in 2003/04, 49% of S2 pupils achieved level E or above, this figure rose to 51% in 2004/05 and then to 56% in 2005/06.

2.133 NLEA also provided information on attainment across the local authority as a whole, in order to put these findings in context. The percentage of pupils in North Lanarkshire who achieved level D or above in Writing by the end of S1 in 2003/04 was 66%; this rose to 70% in 2004/05 and 76% in 2005/06. Attainment at School 1 was therefore above the education authority average in 2003/04 (70% compared to 66%) and was just below the average by 2005/06 (75% compared to 76%). School 2 showed greater improvement, starting below the average in 2003/04 (56% compared to 66%) but meeting the authority average of 76% in 2005/06.

2.134 In 2003/04, the percentage of pupils in North Lanarkshire who achieved level E in Writing by the end of S2 was 47%. This rose to 49% in 2004/05, and 53% in 2005/06. S2

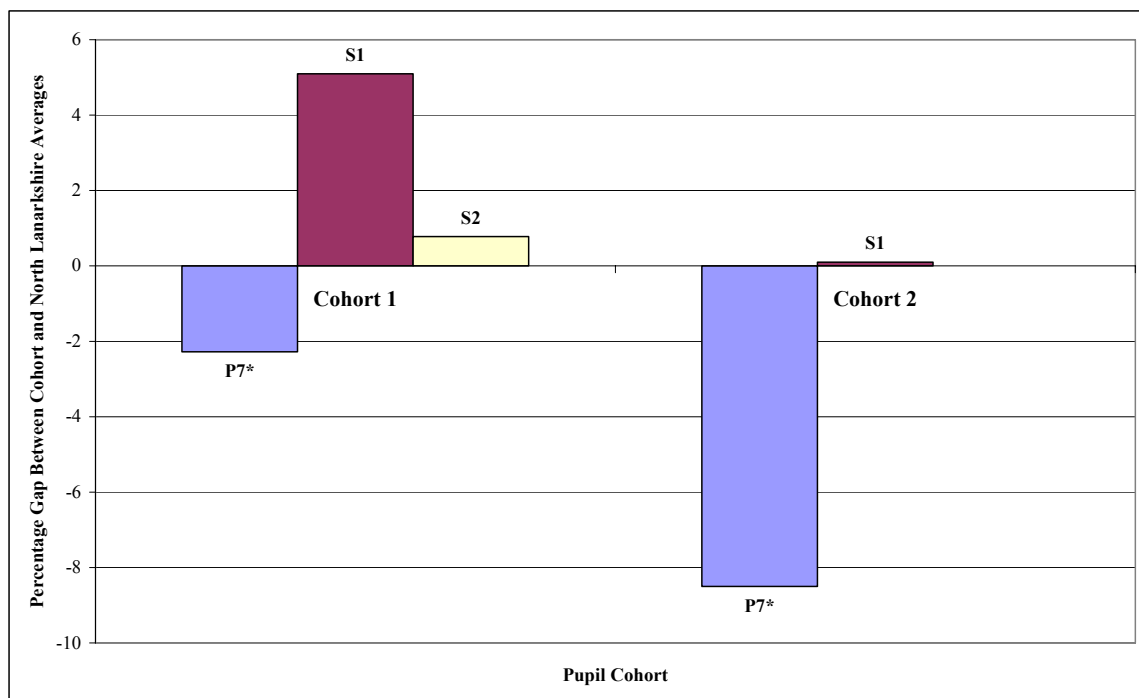
attainment at School 1, therefore, did not improve in line with the rest of the education authority, as the percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above rose from 50% in 2003/04 to 52% in 2005/06. Results for Writing at School 2 remained slightly above the average for the education authority in all three years, rising from 49% in 2003/04 to 56% in 2005/06.

*Writing attainment by pupil cohort*

2.135 As noted previously, there are limitations associated with the analysis presented above, as it is not possible to control for differences in the prior abilities of students in different year groups. Data was therefore also analysed comparing each pupil cohort to the local authority average, to investigate whether each cohort’s performance changed in comparison to the average over time.

2.136 Data for more than one academic year were available for two of the three pupil cohorts involved in the research: Cohort 1 were in S1 and S2 during the pilot, while Cohort 2 were in P7 and S1 during the same two years. The average percentage of pupils across North Lanarkshire achieving the expected levels by the end of each year (level D in P7, level D in S1 and level E in S2) were subtracted from the average percentage of pupils at Schools 1 and 2 achieving the same levels, to provide a measure of each cohort’s performance compared to the authority average. A positive score means the cohort was performing above the authority average, whereas a negative score means they were performing below the average. Figure 2.5 below shows the analysis by pupil cohort for Writing attainment across the two schools involved in the pilot.

**Figure 2.5: Writing attainment by pupil cohort**



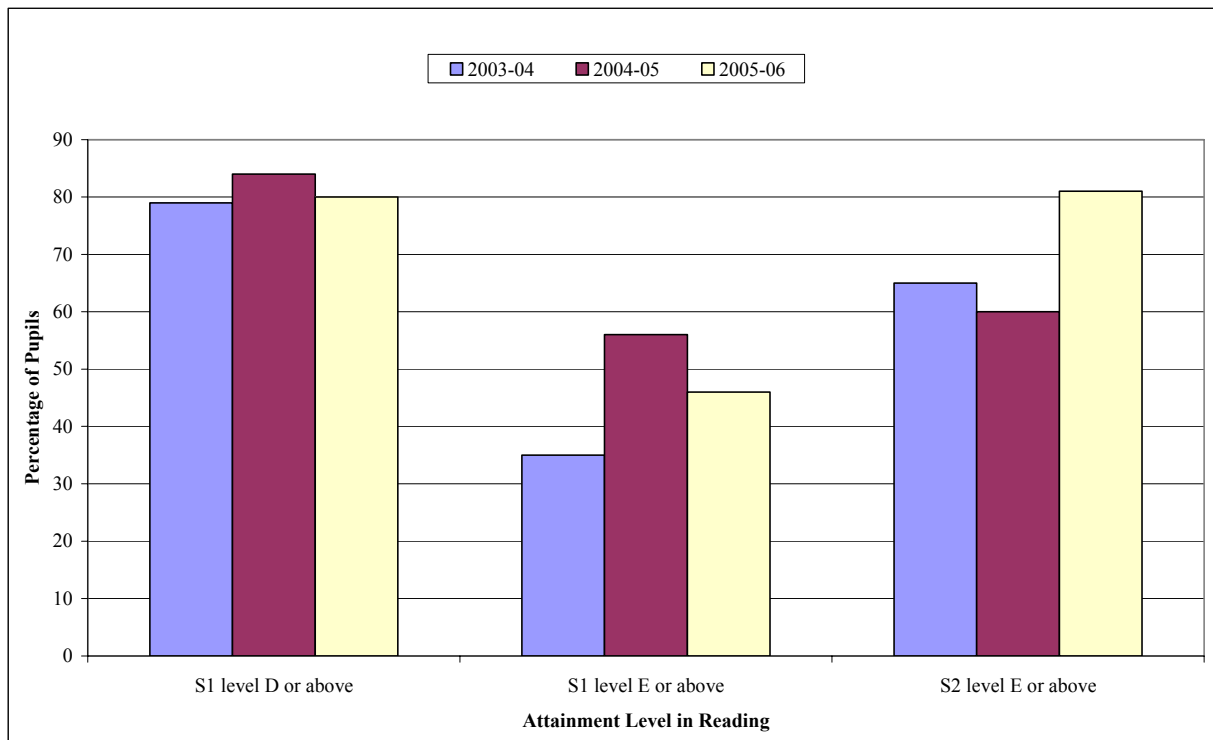
\* In Cohort 1, the pupils were in P7 the year before the pilot started. Cohort 2 pupils were in P7 during the first year of the literacy pilot.

2.137 As can be seen in Figure 2.5 above, Cohort 1 across the pilot schools performed below the education authority average in P7. However, by the end of S1 (the first year of the pilot), they performed five percentage points above the local authority average. Although they were still above the average in S2, the gap between the cohort and the local authority had narrowed to only one percentage point. Cohort 2's attainment improved compared to the local authority average over the two years of the pilot. When these pupils were in P7 (during the first year of the pilot), the cohort was nine percentage points behind the authority average; by the end of S1 (the second year of the pilot), however, this group of pupils had matched the average attainment of pupils across the education authority.

*Reading attainment*

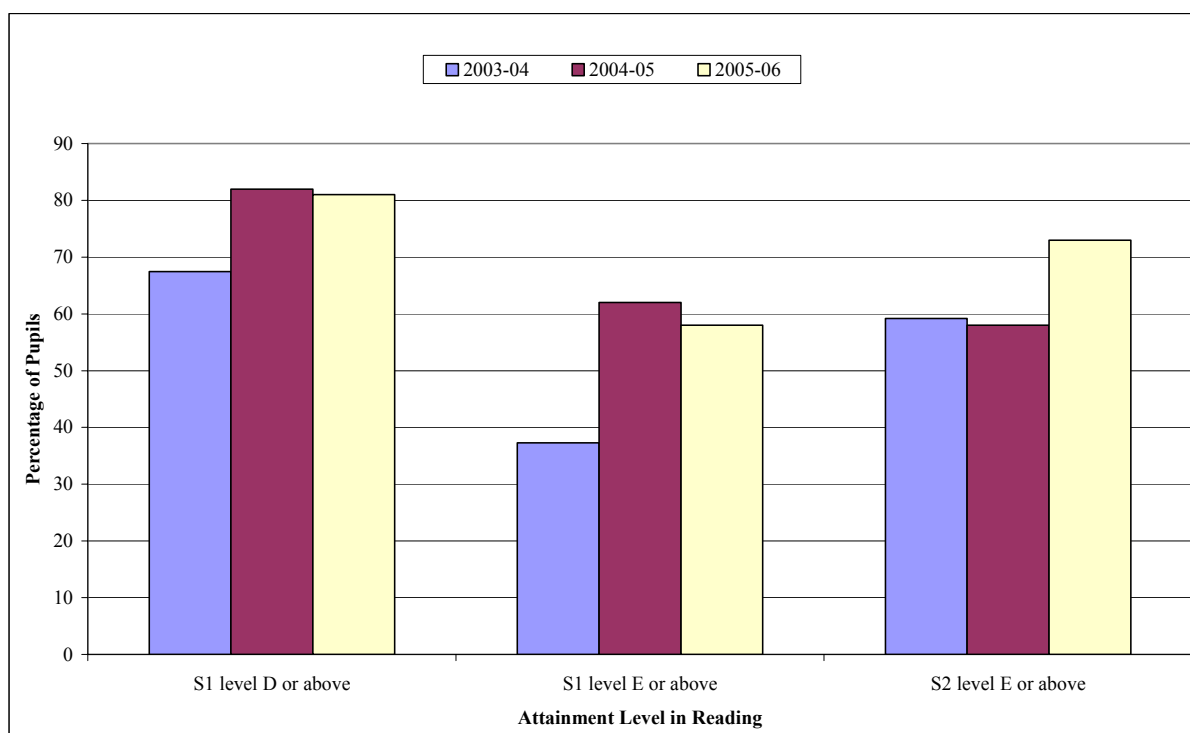
2.138 Figures 2.6 and 2.7 show attainment in Reading at each of the two secondary schools from 2003/04 to 2005/06.

**Figure 2.6: Reading attainment at School 1**





**Figure 2.7: Reading attainment at School 2**



2.139 At School 1 (see Figure 2.6), S1 attainment results for Reading improved overall during the two years of the pilot, although they peaked in 2004/05. In 2003/04, 79% of S1 pupils achieved level D or above at this school. This figure rose to 84% in 2004/05 and then dropped to 80% in 2005/06. Similarly, although the percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above rose from 35% in 2003/04 to 56% in 2004/05, this then dropped to 46% in 2005/06. However, S2 results showed the opposite pattern, with the percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above dropping from 65% in 2003/04 to 60% in 2004/05. This figure then rose considerably, to 81% in 2005/06.

2.140 As Figure 2.7 shows, School 2 also saw overall improvements in Reading attainment across the two year of the pilot. In 2003/04, 67% of S1 pupils achieved level D or above in Reading. This rose to 82% in 2004/05, and remained high (81%) in 2005/06. The percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above rose from 37% in 2003/04 to 62% in 2004/05, although this figure dropped slightly to 58% in 2005/06. Reading attainment in S2 also improved at this school, with the percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above rising from 59% in 2003/04 and 58% in 2004/05 to 73% in 2005/06.

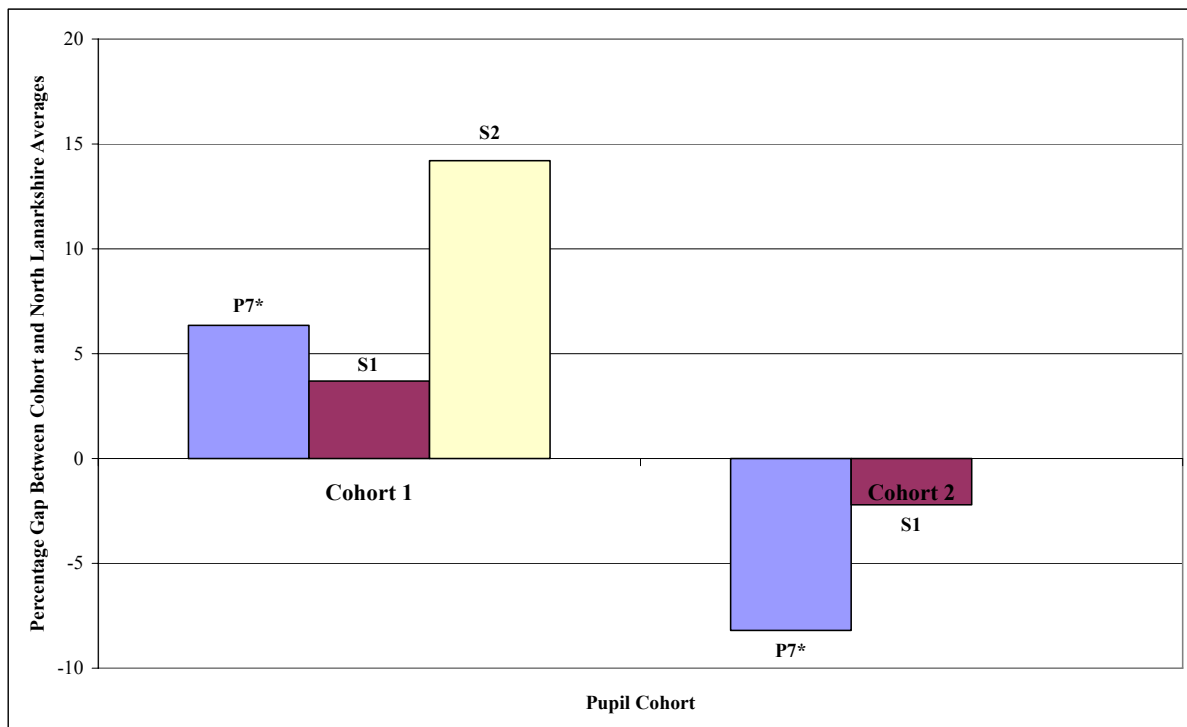
2.141 The percentage of pupils achieving level D in Reading by the end of S1 rose across North Lanarkshire as a whole over the course of the pilot, from 76% in 2003/04 to 83% in 2005/06. School 1 therefore started off with better attainment than the average (79% compared to 76%) in 2003/04, but by 2004/05 was below the authority average (80% compared to 83%). However, the gap between School 2's S1 attainment and attainment across the authority improved over the years of the pilot: in 2003/04 School 2 was nine percentage points below the average but this had reduced to a gap of two percentage points in 2005/06 (81% compared to 83%).

2.142 The percentage of pupils achieving level E in Reading by the end of S2 also rose across North Lanarkshire as a whole over the course of the pilot, from 63% in 2003/04 and 2004/05 to 67% in 2005/06. Both schools involved in the literacy pilot out-performed the education authority average in Reading attainment. School 1 began slightly above the authority average (65% compared to 63%), but improved this difference by 2005/06 (when the school's attainment was 81% compared to the average of 67%). School 2, meanwhile, began below the authority average (59% compared to 63%) but by 2005/06 was achieving above the authority average (73% compared to 67%).

*Reading attainment by pupil cohort*

2.143 As with Writing attainment, analysis was also conducted for two pupil cohorts in order to assess whether each cohort's performance had changed in comparison to the authority average over time.

**Figure 2.8: Reading attainment by pupil cohort**



\* In Cohort 1, the pupils were in P7 the year before the pilot started. Cohort 2 pupils were in P7 during the first year of the literacy pilot.

2.144 As can be seen in Figure 2.8 above, Cohort 1 performed above the education authority average in all three years. During the two years of the pilot (when these pupils were in S1 and S2), their performance improved in comparison with the average: this group were four percentage points above the average in S1, but increased this gap to 14 percentage points in S2. Although Cohort 2 performed below the authority average in both years, there was less of a gap between the two figures in the second year of the pilot. While this year group were eight percentage points behind the average in P7, by S1 (the second year of the pilot), this gap had reduced to two percentage points, showing an improvement in performance compared to North Lanarkshire as a whole.

## *Summary*

2.145 Teachers reported an increase in attainment after the introduction of the literacy pilot, and the quantitative evidence broadly supports these comments. School 1 saw an increase in the percentage of S1 pupils achieving level D or above in Writing over the course of the pilot, although S1 attainment had declined slightly in comparison to the education authority average. The percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above also remained the same overall between 2003/04 and 2005/06. The percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above improved slightly overall, following a dip in 2004/05; however, S2 attainment at School 1 did not improve in line with the rest of North Lanarkshire.

2.146 At School 2, attainment in Writing improved over the course of the pilot: a larger percentage of S1 pupils achieved level D or above in 2004/05 and 2005/06 than in 2003/04, and this represented an improvement from being below the North Lanarkshire average to matching the average percentage in 2005/06. The percentage of S1 and S2 pupils achieving level E or above improved steadily over the two years of the pilot; the S2 figures remained slightly above the average for the education authority in all three years.

2.147 Reading attainment improved at both schools, especially among S2 pupils. Both schools outperformed the education authority average for S2 pupils, which was particularly impressive for School 2 given that it began below the average in 2003/04 and was above it by 2005/06. Results in S1 also improved overall, although they peaked in 2004/05. School 1's performance declined in comparison to the authority average; however, School 2 reduced the gap between the school and the authority by seven percentage points.

2.148 Analysis of individual pupil cohorts revealed that each pupil cohort generally improved their performance in relation to the local authority average over the course of the literacy pilot. One cohort improved their Writing attainment compared to North Lanarkshire as a whole over the two years of the pilot, and Reading attainment improved in both cohorts compared to the authority average during the same two years.

## *Differential responses and effects*

2.149 Consultees were asked whether they felt the literacy pilot had particularly affected certain groups of pupils in S1 and S2, or whether all pupils had benefited equally.

2.150 Interestingly, different teachers held opposing views about whether the low, middle or high ability groups had gained most. Some believed that the highest ability groups had especially benefited. This was particularly so in School 2, where the LDO did more group work: "I think... by extracting groups the top end has been particularly well served", particularly in S2:

*"The more able kids can drift, they can just coast along... and they don't push themselves. I think [the literacy pilot] has given an opportunity to really stretch them a bit, and prepare them more for Standard Grade".*

2.151 The more able pupils moving into S3 therefore coped better because of the focus on level F Reading and Writing in the previous year.

2.152 Other teachers argued that the lowest ability groups benefited most from the pilot. Although the pilot was not aimed at the lowest ability groups, Learning Support teachers stressed that they had benefited nonetheless: “they have developed core skills and techniques, for example how to extract information from texts”. Teachers also felt that receiving extra tuition from the LDO meant that these pupils stood a better chance of passing their National Assessments. Although teachers reported that the Support for Learning departments were “fantastic”, they also felt that having an English specialist was particularly beneficial because the LDO “knows where their weaknesses and strengths are” specifically in relation to the English curriculum.

2.153 Learning Support teachers also felt that the less able pupils responded very positively to the input of the LDOs, reporting a “vast improvement” in motivation and self-esteem among this group of children. One of the LDOs felt that the key factor for the lowest ability groups was the confidence they gained from their involvement in voluntary activities:

*“They come to book club, they come to the writers’ workshop, and their actual reading and writing skills are improving, although they are not very great, but they have the confidence to come to these things and to take part”.*

2.154 The Rainbow Reading scheme was also cited as an important initiative for the poorest readers: the LDO at School 1 explained that for 13 out of the 15 pupils who took part in the second year, reading ages increased by at least a year after the 10-12 week intervention. The remaining two pupils demonstrated no change in reading age, but these were the most challenging pupils: one was dyslexic and the other was “off the scale” in terms of reading ability. As one teacher summarised:

*“They are very poor readers, they need a lot of support – they basically need one-to-one, and they get that with the Rainbow Reading... I don’t have time for that with a class of 30 kids with all different abilities”.*

2.155 There were also teachers who felt that the middle ability groups benefited most from the work of the LDOs: “those who are not Learning Support and not at the top end... who get on with things, could do with support but who don’t get noticed”. The LDO at School 1 believed that these pupils were particularly motivated because they knew that someone now had an overview of their testing and could monitor and target their work.

2.156 In general, children’s socio-economic background was not thought to influence the effects of the literacy pilot. The LDO at School 2 did comment, though, that she felt the confidence-building aspect of some initiatives were important for children from less privileged backgrounds. She gave the example of two girls of low academic ability who were involved in several voluntary activities, who she felt had “gained confidence to do these things... because they felt comfortable knowing I was the one working with them and had worked with them in Primary 7 and all through first year”.

2.157 Some teachers noted a gender difference. One suggested that “it tends to be boys that have more problems with the literacy side of it... there is a tendency for boys to be poorer in that area because it is not so cool for them to be readers and do well”, and the literacy initiatives had made progress in addressing this:

*“I think as far as reading is concerned... the emphasis on reading has stopped boys from just treading water – I think now they have had more of a boost – I don’t think the girls needed so much of a boost... It has benefited both, but probably we are seeing the benefit more [with] boys”.*

### ***Effects of the literacy pilot on primary to secondary transition***

2.158 One of the main aims of the literacy pilot was to ease the transition from P7 to S1 and secure continuity of learning between the primary and secondary sectors. Consultation with both teachers and pupils therefore focused on whether this had been achieved since the implementation of the scheme. In particular, discussions with P7 pupils at various points in the evaluation explored their feelings about going to secondary school, and whether their contact with the LDOs had an impact on their expectations regarding the transition. Pupils were also interviewed in S1 to investigate their experiences of transition and the effects of their work with the LDOs.

#### *Expectations of pre-transition P7 pupils*

2.159 The pupils consulted in P7 were mainly looking forward to going to secondary school. In particular, they were looking forward to the social aspects of a new school such as making new friends, the recreational aspects like sports, and the new, practical subjects they would encounter such as Science and Home Economics.

2.160 Most P7 pupils did have some reservations about the transition. However, these tended to be non-academic: for example, they were scared of getting lost or being bullied. This supports previous Scottish research, which also found that pupils’ main concerns were non-academic, and were associated with the change from being the big children in primary school to the youngest at secondary<sup>8</sup>.

2.161 Although most children did expect the work in S1 to get harder, and expressed concerns about the amount of homework they might get, they were not overly worried about this, because:

*“The teachers will teach us everything we need to know, so we don’t really have anything to worry about. [Teachers] are experts in the different subjects – that’s why you’ve got all different teachers”.*

*“[School work] will get harder, but you’ll get used to it. It’ll be the same level as what we’re actually capable of doing”.*

#### *Social transition*

2.162 Findings from the consultation suggested that the social and pastoral elements of transition to secondary school were most important to P7 pupils. Teachers also recognised the importance of the pilot in terms of the social and emotional element of transition to secondary school, arguing that it was important for the children to be able to “see a face they

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<sup>8</sup> Graham, C. and Hill, M. (2003): *Negotiating the transition to secondary school*, Spotlight 89, Glasgow Centre for the Child and Society, University of Glasgow

recognise when they go to high school”. This was felt to be particularly important in terms of stability: “having contact with someone in P7 who will also be around in S1 is bound to be beneficial”. LDOs also felt that knowing a teacher already when they start S1 would help pupils and “gives them more confidence in an alien environment”.

2.163 Consultation with P7 pupils confirmed that they, too, believed that knowing the LDO would help them in the transition to S1, making comments like “she’s a friendly face – we know who she is and what she’s like”. New S1 pupils also agreed that having known a secondary school teacher when they were in P7 helped them in the move up to secondary school because at first “you don’t know anybody’s name or anything”. They felt it was nice to know someone at the secondary school when they first arrived.

2.164 Teachers in both primary and secondary schools were keen to note the distinction between the literacy pilot and other transitions activities in this regard, as the LDOs had longer-term contact with the pupils and got to know them well. As one LDO said:

*“I think it helped that when the children came up that first week [in S1] I made a point of going round every class and speaking to them, so they had somebody that they knew well. Not just maybe somebody who... popped in for a period or so... or that they had for a period in their [induction] visit, but somebody who knew them well and could put names to faces”.*

*“Now, they’re quite familiar with [LDO], she knows all their names... it’s different when they see an adult they can actually relate to, they’ve had a relationship with them”.*

2.165 The LDO at School 1 also noted that the book club was often used by “the wee misfits and the wee ones that were a wee bit worried about things”. She reported that she had intended this to be the case, and felt that the initiative helped to ease the transition to S1 because the pupils knew her well and felt comfortable with her.

2.166 Primary teachers agreed that contact with the LDOs reduced pupils’ worries about the transition to secondary school: although they will “always be a little bit afraid” because of hearing stories about bullying, “I do think that they are much more confident about going, knowing that they’ve had experience of working with [the LDO]”. This is mainly because:

*“They have an idea that secondary teachers are very different to primary teachers, they’re a bit intimidated – but I think they’ve realised that [LDO] was very approachable, very pleasant with the children, really interested in what they were doing... it’s made them more confident, and less apprehensive about meeting new staff”.*

2.167 As well as knowing a secondary teacher when they arrived in S1, changes made to the physical environment by LDOs influenced the pupils’ experiences of transition. For example, an aspect of the primary method that the LDOs brought into the secondary school was the colourful displays and copies of pupils’ work on the walls. One LDO commented that she hoped this would make the secondary English classroom less frightening and more akin to primary school. The new S1 pupils reported that they liked the displays on the walls: “it’s like it’s all the same stuff on the wall [as at primary] and all that... they’ve still got all the core target things”.

### *Curricular transition/cross-sector transfer of information*

2.168 Secondary staff also reported that a particular strength of the pilot was the strong links that the secondary English departments were able to make with the primary schools, which has made the entire transition process much more coherent from the perspective of secondary teachers. An important aspect of the pilot was the improvement in the transfer of information from primary to secondary schools about pupils moving into S1. As one Principal Teacher explained:

*“[LDO] is scrutinising right away... the profiles of the pupils coming up from the primary, when were they last tested, how soon are they going to need to be tested, she draws all that material together”.*

2.169 LDOs passed on this information to class teachers, so that they had detailed knowledge about the new S1 pupils, not only in terms of what level they had passed, but also regarding areas of particular strength or weakness *within* each level.

2.170 Several primary teachers felt that this was one of the most important impacts of the pilot. Previously, they believed that secondary teachers underestimated S1 pupils and were unaware of the standard they achieved in P7, resulting in children repeating work or “standing still” in S1. With the knowledge LDOs gained at the primaries, however, teachers felt that this element of curricular transition would be improved, as “[LDO] can tell the high school staff the standard they’ve been working at, and the expected level of presentation and content”.

2.171 This was particularly evident in the second year of the pilot, when LDOs had a greater involvement in the primaries. Due to having contact with all P7 pupils, the LDOs built up an in-depth knowledge of their abilities. Primary teachers also highlighted the importance of pupils themselves knowing that someone at the secondary school was aware of their capabilities:

*“[LDO] knows the ones that are very able, so they can be pushed, and the ones at the other end, that are not pretending to misunderstand, they just don't understand - which gives **them** the confidence to say they don't understand – they're aware that she knows they need help. In the past, they just sat like dummies, they said they understood but failed to achieve at all”.*

2.172 Another important effect of the pilot on curricular transition was the increased consistency between primary and secondary teaching methods. Secondary teaching staff reported that the practical information obtained from the primaries by the LDOs had allowed for a more continuous experience:

*“[LDO] got a P7 teacher to bring up samples of the work so that we can model the work that we're going to have to make up on what they're doing in the primaries. That's a bang-on, clear continuation from what they're doing in primary”.*

2.173 Both LDOs introduced teaching methods to the primaries that would be used when they came to secondary school, such as reciprocal reading and cooperative methods. The focus on specialist topics such as Writer’s Craft also prepared pupils for English in S1: “so they know what they’re talking about when they get to high school”. The use of common

correction codes and assessment methods also meant that pupils became “more familiar with how [English] is going to be taught at secondary”.

2.174 Although P7 pupils generally reported more of a concern with the social aspects of going to secondary school rather than the academic transition, some did also comment that working with the LDOs had changed how they felt about going into S1 because “she’s told us like what kind of work to expect when we get up there”. Pupils also felt that they were more aware of what would be expected from them in S1, arguing that “it’s a lot better because it helps us know what she wants done at [secondary school]”. One pupil also commented that “I thought I was going to go up and not know anything, I thought I’d be dead lost”, but having contact with the LDO in P7 reassured her about this aspect of transition.

2.175 In School 2, the link between primary and secondary was maintained directly, by using the same jotters pupils had used in P7 when they started English in S1. This meant that teachers at the secondary school could carry on from the pupils’ last piece of work, so that “the next steps from the primary teacher were meaningful”.

2.176 In summary, the work of the LDOs spanned both the social and academic sides of the transition to S1. Indeed, one of the PTs of English felt that this was one of the most important benefits of the pilot:

*“I feel that the kids are feeling this continuation, they know [LDO] from primary school... which makes the changeover easier for them, and they feel probably for the first time that there is actual progression going on. We pick up something that they have been doing, and they feel more confident and a bit more at home”.*

### ***Effects of the pilot on the transition to S2***

2.177 One of the aims of the transitions pilots was to increase pupils’ confidence during the transition from S1 to S2. Consultation with S1 and S2 pupils therefore addressed their expectations and the realities of going into S2.

2.178 Although they thought it may be hard to learn a new timetable, and the work would be slightly harder, most S1 pupils were “not really bothered” about going into S2. Pupils were generally unconcerned about the academic transition to S2, because they believed that “it isn’t like a big leap forward, it’s not like P7 to first year”. They reported that the gaps were closing with every transition, and “it gets easier every time you move”. Some pupils had also been given S2 work towards the end of S1, so that they could get used to it. As a result, they were not overly concerned about the transition to S2, arguing that the transition to S3 is a bigger step, because they will have exams and they believed the work will be harder.

2.179 At School 2, the pupils thought that working with the LDO had changed how they felt about the S1-S2 transition, and had helped them to achieve in English in S2:

*“Yeah, if some people were nervous... it’ll make you less nervous cos you know that you’ve read a lot and stuff and you’ve done a lot of work”.*

*“Actually I think if we didn’t have her help in first year, we wouldn’t be able to do the work we’re doing in second year, it’d be a lot lot harder, cos she’s helped us go up those steps in English”.*



2.180 Overall, S1 pupils were not generally concerned about the transition to S2. After the transition to S2 they felt that the move had gone well and was “not a big deal”.

### **The ending of the pilot and staff views on the future**

2.181 Funding for the literacy pilot ended in June 2006. NLEA explained that this decision was based purely on funding issues: because of the salary structure of the scheme, it was not sustainable beyond the two-year pilot.

2.182 However, in Learning Partnership 2, aspects of the literacy pilot have continued in 2006/07. The LDO at School 2 has returned to normal class teaching but timetabling and staffing have been carefully organised so that she can spend a third of her time on literacy development. This LDO continues to work within S1 classes, and with the highest ability group in S2. She will also continue to contribute to the administration of National Assessments, including early testing in December. Some of the other activities such as the book club and S6 supportive writing are also being continued, and the LDO is still responsible for monitoring the ERIC reading scheme. Work in the primaries has been much reduced since the end of the pilot, but the LDO is still able to spend one morning a week on primary liaison. She is therefore visiting each primary school in six week blocks.

2.183 In Learning Partnership 1, the literacy pilot discontinued and the LDO took up a new position as Principal Teacher of Support for Learning. Some teaching methods such as cooperative learning and Assessment is for Learning were expected to continue now that the techniques have been introduced in the secondary schools, regardless of the status of the literacy pilot. Rainbow Reading is also likely to continue via the Learning Support teams. Similarly, resources that the LDOs had produced, such as support materials for National Assessments and guidance for teachers, will still be available for use in the secondaries.

2.184 While some elements of the programme will continue even after the end of the pilot, without someone to organise them they are unlikely to be as successful. For example, one PT commented that “the personal reading programme will continue, but I don’t think it will be able to be as monitored as thoroughly as it was in the past”.

2.185 Time pressures due to class teachers’ workloads and marking commitments were expected to make most initiatives unfeasible. As one English teacher at School 1 concluded during 2005/06:

*“The sad thing is, when this is brought to an end this year the vacuum is going to be twice as big because you have actually had somebody to do these things and focus on the things that make a difference”.*

*“I don’t know why they made it a short term thing - it is a full time job, it definitely is, and I think the need is there for it... I just don’t understand why they have actually got something that is starting to work and then they pull it away - it just doesn’t make sense”.*

### **Conclusion**

2.186 This chapter has outlined the implementation process, operation and impacts of the literacy pilot in North Lanarkshire. Most importantly, effective implementation of the pilot depended on the LDO being an experienced and trusted member of staff. Effective

communication of the aims of the pilot and the role of the lead officers was also crucial to its success.

2.187 Once the pilot was established, the LDOs contributed to the secondary English departments in a variety of ways, including team teaching, extracting pupils from classes, introducing new teaching and learning approaches, conducting research and providing teaching resources, implementing personal reading schemes and involvement in National Assessment testing. Their work in the primary schools began with observation and then developed in year two as they became more involved in class and small group teaching. They specifically focused on topics such as Writer's Craft and introducing reciprocal reading.

2.188 Secondary colleagues emphasised the positive impacts the LDOs had on their English departments, particularly in terms of offering support and training to colleagues, helping to monitor and administer National Assessments, and introducing new teaching and learning methods to English classes in S1 and S2.

2.189 These changes in how the curriculum was delivered affected outcomes for pupils. Teachers reported an increase in attainment after the introduction of the literacy pilot, and some of the quantitative evidence supports these comments. In particular, analysis of data for each pupil cohort showed that one cohort improved their Writing attainment compared to North Lanarkshire as a whole over the two years of the pilot, and Reading attainment improved in both cohorts compared to the authority average during the same two years. Involvement in voluntary activities encouraged pupils to read more often, and more widely, than they had before.

2.190 Primary teachers also noted the positive impacts of the literacy pilot. They reported that they learned new teaching techniques from the LDOs, who gave their primary colleagues welcome help with marking written work, increased pupil motivation and helped to combat 'P7 Syndrome'.

2.191 The work of the LDOs also had a positive effect on pupils' experiences of transition from primary to secondary school, both socially and academically. Pupils felt reassured knowing a teacher at secondary school, and their worries about school work were assuaged by completing work to an S1 standard when they were in P7. Importantly, the cross-sector transfer of information about pupils improved as a result of the LDOs' primary liaison, with secondary staff gaining knowledge about individual pupils and the P7 curriculum in general.



## CHAPTER THREE EAST AYRSHIRE

### Introduction

3.1 This chapter covers the implementation, operation and impact of the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire. The numeracy pilot was funded by the Future Learning and Teaching (FLaT) Programme<sup>9</sup>, and was referred to in the two learning partnerships<sup>10</sup> as the FLaT project.

### Aims of the numeracy pilot

3.2 The aims of the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire were to:

- ensure there was a clear emphasis on curricular liaison to complement existing good work in the primary and secondary sectors;
- provide support and challenge for pupils in P6-S2, and in particular to sustain the challenge from P7 to S1;
- provide a planned progressive continuous experience for pupils as they move from primary to secondary schools, via Programmes of Study;
- ensure consistency of practice in the assessment of pupils' attainment in order to encourage the effective use of assessment information in secondary schools;
- undertake formative assessment in all schools; and
- reduce pupil/teacher ratios in S1 and S2.

3.3 The format of the numeracy pilot was that a primary teacher and a secondary Maths teacher were employed by the learning partnership to teach in each other's sector. They also provided cover for other primary and secondary teachers, to allow them the opportunity of working in the opposite sector. This meant that primary teachers were working in the secondary classes, and secondary teachers were working in the primary schools.

3.4 To obtain the different perspectives of the pilot, interviews were held with primary teachers with a secondary Maths teacher visiting their class, primary teachers working in the secondary classes, secondary teachers visiting the primary schools and secondary Maths teachers with a primary teacher in their class.

### Local context and background to the numeracy pilot

3.5 The idea for the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire arose from a discussion among education officers in East Ayrshire education authority (EAEA). They had a desire to improve primary to secondary transition with a focus on numeracy, and had already conducted some prior work in the two learning partnerships that were involved.

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<sup>9</sup> The Future Learning and Teaching Programme was established to support and encourage innovative pilot projects that challenge the current concepts of schools and explore new ways of learning and teaching that haven't been tried in a Scottish context before ([www.flatprojects.org.uk](http://www.flatprojects.org.uk))

<sup>10</sup> The two learning partnerships are referred to by number throughout this report. These numbers correspond to the number given to each secondary school (i.e. School 1 is the secondary school in Learning Partnership 1, School 2 is the secondary school in Learning Partnership 2). The same numbers are used to identify the schools in the quantitative data analysis

3.6 The two learning partnerships were also chosen because of their contrasting size, geography and socio-demographic characteristics. School 1 was the authority's smallest school, located in a rural, ex-mining area of relative deprivation. School 2 was one of the largest in East Ayrshire, in an urban environment. Teachers at this school reported that pupils came from a range of social backgrounds, from the very advantaged to the very disadvantaged.

3.7 As the individual situation and circumstances were different, EAEA gave the two schools the autonomy to tailor the pilot to their local needs.

### **Implementation of the numeracy pilot**

3.8 Consultation in the two learning partnerships revealed that the participating schools had similar experiences at the outset of the pilot, but that individual circumstances affected its implementation and development in the two schools. The following sections consider the issues faced during the implementation of the numeracy pilot, and the factors that were necessary for its successful implementation.

#### ***Staff resistance***

3.9 Initially there were doubts about the pilot amongst the teaching staff involved. There was general trepidation about sharing practice with other professionals: primary teachers expressed concerns about working in the secondary sector or having secondary Maths specialists in their class, while secondary teachers were concerned that the primary teachers would think they were there to analyse or criticise their methods. According to an education authority representative, there were general doubts about whether the idea could work or whether it was another "grand idea that someone at HQ had dreamed up". These concerns reflected teachers' sensitivities about exposing their own work to scrutiny and a view that the initiative was an outside imposition.

3.10 Primary teachers expressed more reservations than their secondary counterparts did about participating in the numeracy pilot. They believed that as they were not Maths specialists, they would be criticised by the secondary teachers. Some primary teachers reported that they did not feel comfortable with teaching all aspects of the Maths curriculum so did not want a Maths specialist in their class.

3.11 In Learning Partnership 1, no primary teachers at all were prepared to participate in the pilot, so specific teachers had to be chosen, approached and persuaded to take part. This meant that the secondary school in question had "a real uphill struggle" to gain acceptance and muster enthusiasm in the primary schools. One primary teacher who reluctantly agreed to participate said that she did have "grave reservations" and was "not enthusiastic at the start". However, the same teacher also reported that her doubts proved to be unfounded, as the pilot has "worked really well... the support has been super".

3.12 The issue of inter-sector suspicion could only be overcome by relationship building, which each learning partnership approached in an appropriate manner, with enthusiasm and success. This is discussed more fully under 'operation of the pilots' below.

### ***Quality and availability of additional staff***

3.13 After the initial reluctance of some teachers to be involved in the pilot, the next potential obstacle came in the form of staffing issues. One of the education authority representatives said that there were “no doubts about extra staff being put in place, HQ promised they would get the extra staff and the Head Teachers were proactive about getting the extra staff early on. Teachers were reassured then”. In practice, however, the two partnerships’ experiences differed.

3.14 In Learning Partnership 2, implementation went fairly smoothly because, in the education authority representative’s view, they had quality staff in place quickly; EAEA representatives reported that good appointments were made in both primary and secondary specialist positions. The issue of quality staff is very important, as one education authority representative explained:

*“Personalities make such a difference, especially when you’re working in a relatively sensitive area, like cross-sectors... Trying not to stand on toes and just building relationships”.*

3.15 In Learning Partnership 1, as well as the difficulty in encouraging the participation of the primary teachers, there were other unforeseeable problems with staffing. Very shortly after the inception of the pilot, the secondary Maths teacher employed to take the lead transition role was absent ill from work for nearly five months. The resulting cessation of visits to the primary schools (by both this member of staff and the other teachers for whom she had provided cover) meant that the work that had been started to gain trust, build relationships, and teach cooperatively with the primary teachers stopped.

3.16 This issue was resolved when the member of staff returned in March 2005 and visits to the primary schools were re-instated. However, teachers emphasised that a lot of the initial groundwork had to be repeated, which slowed their progress in working with the primary sector. A further complication then arose when the same secondary Maths teacher found a position in a different school from the 2005/06 session. The Principal Teacher of Maths, who had overall responsibility for the pilot in this school, expressed doubts about the education authority’s ability to find a suitable replacement. The implications of this for the development of the pilot are discussed more fully in later sections relating to its operation.

3.17 Other staffing issues occurred in this learning partnership in the form of providing teacher cover in one of the primary schools, meaning that the primary teacher had to stop coming to the secondary school temporarily during the first year of the pilot. The issue of teacher cover and the lack of a reliable pool of supply teachers also had a less serious, but inhibiting factor generally, on the pilot, with instances of visits being cancelled or postponed.

### ***Commitment and involvement of senior management***

3.18 An important aspect to successful implementation was the input and involvement of the Head Teachers in both the primary and secondary schools. In Learning Partnership 2, the pilot was implemented smoothly and was able to progress more quickly than the pilot in the other learning partnership. The Head Teacher of this learning partnership was described as being “very supportive” and “knowledgeable and forward thinking”. He had a newly qualified teacher (NQT) the year before the numeracy pilot began, and kept her on knowing

that she would be ideal for the pilot. He was also very flexible in timetabling and gave the pilot great energy and thought.

3.19 Another crucial factor appears to have been the extent of involvement of front-line managers (such as the Depute Heads and Principal Teachers of Maths) in developing the pilot. In Learning Partnership 2, the teacher responsible for the pilot had been part of the meetings and discussions with the education authority regarding the aims and methods of the project. He was instrumental in its design and execution and communicated this effectively to everyone involved. There was, therefore, consensus from the outset about the aims of the pilot and the methods used to accomplish them, which led to a successful implementation.

3.20 In Learning Partnership 1, by contrast, the Principal Teacher responsible for the pilot was not party to the first meeting held to discuss its aims and methods, and although others attended in her place it seemed that there was a certain level of confusion about some aspects of the pilot's methods, such as the exact role of the primary teachers working in the secondary classes in this school.

### ***Communication***

3.21 As well as the importance of the approach and actions taken by the Head Teacher, another key area that could have facilitated the implementation of the numeracy pilot was communication. Teachers across the authority felt that there could have been better communication at the start of the project about the aims of the pilot and how it would be implemented.

3.22 As noted above, not all the primary teachers were keen to take part at the beginning, possibly because they did not have enough information about it: there were examples of primary schools not communicating the aims and methods of the pilot to all staff effectively. As one secondary teacher involved in the project explained, "we had to really work at it and speak to the primary staff member, explain what was happening".

3.23 The secondary Maths specialists themselves did not have a clear idea about their roles when visiting the primaries. One commented that she "went out not really knowing what I was meant to be doing".

3.24 There were sometimes communication problems even after the project had been established. As one teacher in Learning Partnership 2 stated:

*"One of the only issues is communication. We've been very aware of communication and tried to communicate to absolutely everyone, but it still breaks down because there's so many people involved in the project, it's a nightmare trying to make sure everybody knows everything that's going on".*

3.25 However, teachers reported that most of these problems had been 'ironed out' over the course of the pilot. This was partly as a result of directing communication regarding the pilot to 'Maths coordinators' at each school. Having a direct point of contact who was responsible for distributing information meant that "the lines of communication are more effective". Communication between Head Teachers and the teachers employed by the FLAT project seemed to be successful. Regular meetings were also held for staff involved in the pilot, in order to discuss progress, share good practice and build cross-sector relationships.

## ***Timetabling***

3.26 The final issue that proved to be an obstacle to the smooth implementation of the pilot was timetabling. The primary schools felt that their timetables were full to the point of rigidity so were not keen to change them to allow for the joint work, while the secondary schools felt that their own timetables were “already complicated enough”. One education authority representative commented that:

*“One of the secondary Deputy Heads was totally amazed at how difficult it was for her to timetable staff from the secondary to the primary. She knew all the timetabling issues in the secondary, but she just thought she’d be able to phone up and say “can so and so come this day”, but the response was “well actually we’re going swimming that day” etc. It’s been a real eye opener – a huge benefit, just an awareness of what’s going on in primaries... [The secondary staff] thought they were the only ones with the timetabling issues”.*

## ***Summary***

3.27 In summary, factors adversely affecting the successful implementation of the pilot were cross-sector uncertainty, staffing issues including lack of supply cover, and timetabling problems. Factors that were important for a successful implementation were a supportive and involved Head Teacher, consensus and communication of the aims and methods, involvement of the front-line manager in developing the pilot, and building strong working relationships across the sectors.

## **Operation of the numeracy pilot**

### ***Overview of the numeracy pilot***

3.28 East Ayrshire education authority encouraged the numeracy pilot to develop independently, according to the individual schools’ requirements. The way the pilot operated therefore differed between the two learning partnerships.

3.29 The format of the pilot was similar in both learning partnerships, with each area employing an additional primary teacher and an additional secondary Maths specialist. The secondary Maths teachers taught S1 and S2 classes, visited associated primaries, and released other secondary teachers to visit the primary schools. The additional primary teachers provided cover to allow other primary staff to visit the secondary schools. However, the way these primary teachers were utilised in the secondary schools was different in the two learning partnerships, with one focusing on gradually taking responsibility for S1 and S2 classes and the other focusing on observation and team teaching rather than taking control of whole class teaching. Further details are provided in the following sections.

### ***Work of the secondary Maths specialists in the primary schools***

#### ***Initial period of observation***

3.30 The secondary staff began their work in the primaries with a period of observation, in order to familiarise themselves with how Maths was taught and develop ideas about what



form their own involvement should take. They had the opportunity to observe classes from the infant classes through to the senior end of the school. During this stage, some primary class teachers reported feeling uncertain about the observation and its purpose. The reservations expressed about the observation were probably affected by the fact that not all primary Head Teachers communicated the aims, purpose or format of the pilot sufficiently to the primary class teachers.

3.31 One primary teacher reported that the pilot was slow to get off the ground in the beginning: she did not feel “100% clear on why [the secondary Maths teacher] was there or who she was going to work with or who would decide who she would work with”. Another primary teacher agreed that “the observation period lasted too long”. Like their primary colleagues, secondary teachers were sometimes unsure about their role and purpose during this period:

*“At the beginning, nobody knew how it was going to work – the first couple of months... we were basically just observing and putting our heads together thinking ‘how is this going to work?’”*

*“Because from the very beginning they said it was our project, we had to make it our project. So the first couple of months it was hard going. Some schools I settled in quicker than other schools, because they’d seen straight away where I could be used”.*

3.32 The secondary teachers also reported that the reactions and reception they received from primary teachers differed between schools:

*“Some were really enthusiastic about the project... Other schools didn’t really know much about what was expected, you know, and they were a bit wary and maybe thought we were there to check up at the beginning, but within a couple of weeks they realised that we were all in the same boat, and I was wary about it as well”.*

3.33 Teachers in both learning partnerships emphasised the benefits of this initial contact in building cross-sector relationships. Secondary teachers were also very aware that they had to be careful in their attitude towards the primary teachers, noting that “we’re not down there to say ‘you should be teaching that this way’”. They recognised that building a good working relationship was essential so that both teachers could feel comfortable offering each other advice. Each of the secondary schools in the learning partnerships employed a sensitive approach to the primary schools which was rewarded with good working relationships. As one secondary teacher said:

*“I think once you realise that we all want the same thing, everybody’s in the same boat and everybody wants the best for the children, that’s when barriers start breaking down and you start working together”.*

#### *Involvement in primary teaching*

3.34 Suspicion of secondary staff on the part of the primary teachers dissipated as they got to know each other better. Once clear tasks had been agreed, working relationships improved and some secondary teachers also seemed to overcome the initial difficulties by engaging with the class more quickly. As one primary teacher reported, “thankfully, they weren’t just observing”, but began to contribute to class teaching.

3.35 Once secondary Maths specialists began teaching in the primaries, they had input to both P6 and P7 classes. However, the focus was on P7, particularly in Learning Partnership 1, where staffing problems were experienced due to the illness of the secondary Maths teacher. When full staffing was available, a secondary teacher visited most primaries two or three times per week.

3.36 The type of input offered by the secondary teachers varied by school, depending on the primary teachers' preferences. In several schools, the primary and secondary teacher engaged in cooperative teaching: for example, the P7 teacher introduced a topic and then both teachers worked with groups of pupils within the class. Some primary teachers also requested that the secondary teacher introduced particular Maths topics.

3.37 Most of the secondary teachers were involved in extracting ability groups from primary classes. As primary teachers often had classes with several ability groups, they appreciated having another teacher to focus on one group. This was often the highest ability group, allowing the secondary teacher to "push them on a bit" through a specific topic. Primary teachers stressed the benefits of having a secondary specialist available for the most able pupils, reporting that this "worked really well – it's the focus of attention [the pupils] need".

3.38 Some secondary teachers also worked with the lowest ability groups. One Maths specialist had worked with level A and B pupils, and explained:

*"That was a shock to my system, because we don't get many children of that ability [at the secondary schools]. So I really had to look into the resources that the primary was using, that was really good, it was an eye opener".*

3.39 Working with ability groups meant that secondary teachers were working with a different number of pupils in each school. For example, one teacher explained that "in one school I'm only teaching five kids, whereas in another school I'm teaching the bulk of the class, I've got the level D which is 17 [pupils]".

3.40 In some primaries, the secondary Maths specialist was more involved in whole class teaching rather than team teaching. Some primary teachers felt that it was better to have one teacher focusing on specific topics: "that way the pupils are not getting two conflicting sets of practice or ideas". In some cases, teachers felt it was important that the secondary teacher worked with all the pupils in the class so that they knew them all when they went into S1.

3.41 The way work was planned also varied between schools, with some primary teachers preferring to allocate a specific block of work to the secondary Maths specialist and "leaving [them] to it" and others preferring more flexibility in what the secondary teachers were involved with each week.

#### *Development of work in the primaries in year two*

3.42 The involvement of secondary Maths teachers in the primary schools changed in both learning partnerships in the second year of the numeracy pilot, for different reasons.

3.43 In Learning Partnership 2, the method of operation of the pilot was altered slightly in year two. The secondary Maths teacher who had done most of the primary work in the first year of the pilot ceased to be the main secondary specialist involved and went back into the

secondary school to ensure an effective transition for the new S1 pupils. As this teacher explained, “I need to be back in secondary, because the whole point is that the children I’ve seen in Primary 7, I’m going to see them in first year”.

3.44 As this teacher changed focus back to the secondary school, another Maths specialist became the main secondary Maths teacher for the pilot working with the primary schools. Again, however, other secondary teachers were also involved in working with P6 and P7 classes. Using a combination of team teaching, extracting ability groups and whole class instruction, the main secondary Maths specialist explained that he focused on interactive Maths and using ICT in his teaching methods. The topics he focused on included problem solving and mental Maths. He also noted the importance of showing the P7 pupils what to expect in S1, the kinds of targets they would be set and how secondary teachers approach certain topics.

3.45 In Learning Partnership 1, staffing difficulties affected the primary visits negatively. As noted previously, the secondary Maths specialist at this school left the post after the first year of the numeracy pilot. The Principal Teacher of Maths explained that she had no involvement in choosing a replacement, and the person who was appointed was a permanent supply teacher whose specialism was Physics rather than Maths. The PT had concerns about the staffing decisions made by EAEA, and had made these known.

3.46 The staffing problems at this school had an impact on the relationships with its associated primaries. The PT felt they had worked hard to build up relationships with teachers in the primaries and that this work was undermined by sending a staff member who was not a Maths specialist and had not had any choice about being involved in the FLAT project. In addition, the other two secondary Maths specialists involved in the first year of the pilot could no longer teach in the primaries because of staffing and timetabling issues.

3.47 In January 2006, the staffing in this learning partnership changed again, and another teacher took on the role of secondary Maths specialist with responsibility for much of the primary liaison. This teacher was a Maths teacher and was therefore seen to be better suited to the post. He was employed by the FLAT project on a six month contract, from January to June 2006, during which time he visited four of the five associated primaries once a week as well as teaching in the secondary school. Having a trained Maths teacher in this post also allowed the other secondary Maths specialists to go back into the primaries, so that some primaries had two visits a week.

3.48 A further issue affecting the primary visits in both learning partnerships was the difficulty in finding time for discussion between primary and secondary staff. This was partly because of the tight timescales of the secondary teachers, who had to go back to the secondary school as soon as they had finished their session in the primary school. This did not allow the feedback that the primary teachers felt was necessary. Secondary teachers also felt that it would have been beneficial to have more time to meet so that staff in both sectors could discuss the project and plan work.

#### *Cross-sector differences*

3.49 The numeracy pilot highlighted a discontinuity between the primary and secondary sectors, namely the inconsistency of Maths language between the two sectors. All the secondary teachers, in both learning partnerships, noted that the primary teachers were using

language they would not, or not using language that they would, to describe Maths problems. As one teacher noted:

*“We have found that the primary teach something, but the language has been a bit different so the kids don’t recognise it. Now we know this, we can build on what the primary have taught, for instance with co-ordinates. From the start we talk about the x-axis, y-axis and origin, and the children haven’t been taught this in primary. Now we can say ‘this is what you’ve been doing in primary and this is where we’re going to take this forward’... or ‘this bit is new, you really need to listen’. If you are aware of what has gone before, you can build on it”.*

3.50 Discovering this prompted secondary Maths teachers to “use more Maths language in the primary”. They reported that small linguistic differences can be very important: pupils “can become disengaged at just little things”. For example, naming angles is done differently when pupils move into S1 and the confusion this causes “lowers self-esteem – it seems minor but it’s a big thing”.

3.51 A further example of a cross-sector difference in Maths, observed during the pilot, was the difference in methods used in the primary schools to teach certain topics. It was reported that some primary teachers did not know how the pupils’ Maths would be built upon in the secondary school, and were therefore not using the best methods for teaching certain topics. For example, introducing the principles needed to solve more complicated equations when teaching simpler equations in P7 can help pupils when they get to secondary school. Because primary teachers were not necessarily doing this, this had resulted in secondary teachers being puzzled by their new influx of S1s and their use of negative numbers, division and equations. As one teacher noted, this is to be expected because:

*“Obviously lots of primary teachers aren’t specialists in Maths, because you’ve got to be wide in everything being a primary teacher. And there will be certain areas that you will particularly like and be better at teaching”.*

3.52 Secondary staff also highlighted the importance of their work in the primaries as it offered them the opportunity to observe primary teaching methods, which they felt were more appropriate for young children and could be successfully directed at S1 and S2. Most secondary teachers reported that they applied a more “primary style” of teaching to their own teaching at the secondary schools after their primary visits. They explained that primary schools use a more interactive style of teaching, with a lot of group work, hands-on practical work, and the use of games and software. One teacher commented:

*“It’s very interactive, that was a big thing I noticed, more so than in the secondary... We actually issued a leaflet sharing practice which was really good, because there are huge differences there – so hopefully we can learn something from that”.*

3.53 Indeed, secondary teachers reported introducing more interactive methods to Maths classes in S1 and S2 after observing primary teaching. Primary teachers also taught more mental arithmetic which secondary teachers began to incorporate into their lessons.

3.54 Other teaching and learning methods were introduced by some secondary teachers as a result of observing primary methods: for example, one Maths specialist explained that she had introduced ‘traffic lighting’ whereby pupils display a coloured disc to indicate how

confident they are with the work they are doing. This “allows the pupils to convey to the teacher how they’re getting on, without making a huge statement to the rest of the class”.

3.55 The same teacher also introduced a ‘star pupil’ system to her secondary classes, where the teacher selects, or the class votes for, a star pupil each week. The system is not necessarily used to reward the most able children, but those who are helpful to others, complete homework, or ask questions to clarify their understanding.

### *Summary*

3.56 Secondary Maths specialists and primary teachers had a positive experience of working together in the primary sector, despite initial uncertainty on both sides about how the pilot would work, and insufficient communication about the pilot, which deepened pre-existing uncertainty and suspicion amongst primary teachers. However, good cross-sector relationships were built, and secondary teachers gained from watching how the primary teachers interacted with their pupils and applied these teaching methods to S1 and S2. They also discovered that there was a discontinuity in Maths language between the primary and secondary schools; increased understanding of cross-sector differences led to mutual learning.

3.57 The less positive aspects of the pilot were timetabling issues and having insufficient time to discuss the lesson or pupils. Staffing problems, although sometimes unavoidable, had an effect on primary liaison activities.

### *Work of the primary teachers in the secondary schools*

3.58 The way that the primary teachers operated in the secondary schools differed between the two learning partnerships, and are therefore discussed individually in the following sections.

#### *Learning Partnership 1*

3.59 In Learning Partnership 1, two primary teachers worked part time in their primary and part time in the secondary. These two teachers were the only primary teachers involved in the numeracy pilot, and their input was sustained throughout the two years of its operation.

3.60 These primary teachers began by team teaching in S1 classes, often introducing a topic that the pupils had covered in P7 before the secondary Maths teacher developed the concept further. There was then a “natural progression” as the primary teachers gained confidence teaching S1, and the secondary teachers gradually withdrew from the classes. The primary teachers took over whole-class teaching, although the secondary teachers were still involved in the class and took part in some team teaching after this point.

3.61 Teachers in both sectors were keen to point out that team teaching worked very successfully, with both parties feeling comfortable that they could ‘chip in’ during each other’s lessons. As one primary teacher explained, “it doesn’t bother me having someone in the room and butting in – I don’t feel threatened”. She believed that a less mature or experienced teacher might have felt they were being judged.

3.62 Teachers reported a variety of benefits of having two teachers in the classroom. For example, it was much easier to do practical work (such as measuring things around the school building) with two people to supervise it. Primary and secondary teachers both enjoyed observing each other's teaching methods and sharing resources. The primary teachers became more comfortable teaching topics that they were previously unsure of, while secondary teachers introduced more practical work as a result of observing primary teaching methods.

3.63 The primary and secondary teachers also had time set aside to plan lessons together and to discuss individual children. This joint working allowed changes to be made to the way the curriculum was delivered. For example, the original level D plan at this school was found to be "over taxing": the primary teacher's knowledge of P7 pupils was useful in adjusting the programme to be more appropriate to their ability level, because she could see that "for some topics, the starting point was too far on for pupils who had just passed level C". Greater continuity was therefore achieved through team teaching between primary and secondary teachers.

3.64 Homework arrangements were also changed as a result of this joint working. For example, in P7 pupils got Maths homework every night: the idea was "little and often". One primary teacher explained that in S1 they were being given homework for the following week, but that this was less successful as they often forgot to hand it in. The homework strategy was changed so that it was set daily, to become "a constant thing".

3.65 As previously noted, staffing problems during the first year of the pilot meant that one of the primary teachers was unable to teach in the secondary as often as had been planned, which caused difficulties for the pupils involved: "they didn't know who their teacher was". However, once these staffing difficulties were resolved she was able to resume her visits.

3.66 In the second year of the pilot, the primary teachers were able to take responsibility for their classes right from the start of the year, as they were the same teachers involved in the first year. Both of these primary teachers taught at the secondary school every morning, taking an S1 Maths class each. This arrangement was slightly different to the first year of the pilot, when the two teachers were "in and out all the time". This was felt to be an improvement, as they had more contact with each other and with the secondary staff. However, having both teachers in the secondary school each morning meant that it was not possible for them to fit any S2 classes into their timetable.

### *Learning Partnership 2*

3.67 In Learning Partnership 2, the pilot was structured to allow a greater number of primary teachers to visit the secondary school, but with less concentrated input to class teaching. Having one additional primary teacher available in the school cluster allowed primary teachers to visit the secondary school and observe S1 and S2 classes. In the first year, four primary teachers took part in day-long visits to the secondary school. This was changed to two or three periods at a time in the second year of the pilot in order to accommodate timetabling issues which were encountered in the first year. Primary teachers also worked on a six-week rotation in order to visit different classes, rather than being in the same class for the whole year as they were in the first year of the pilot.

3.68 The focus of these visits was on observing how levels D and E were taught in S1 and S2 and assisting the secondary teachers, rather than teaching the whole class. Some primary teachers were more involved in team teaching than others, depending on their individual preferences and confidence in teaching the higher levels. Involvement in teaching tended to focus on introducing more interactive teaching methods, and playing Maths games to consolidate pupils' learning.

3.69 Some primary teachers also extracted groups from Maths classes, for example to work with the lower ability groups. However, other teachers preferred not to do this as they believed that pupils sometimes felt they were being singled out for being 'thick'. These primary teachers were instead available to provide extra help within the class to those pupils who needed more support. One teacher also explained that the idea was to share teaching methods and this would not be possible if the primary and secondary teachers were teaching separate groups.

3.70 The pilot primary teacher most involved in the secondary school did more class teaching in S1 and S2, often taking groups of pupils and also contributing to whole class teaching. In the second year of the pilot she was also involved in teaching the lowest ability group of S1 pupils, team teaching with the secondary teacher and with additional input from Support for Learning. There were only seven pupils in this class, ranging in ability from pre-level A to level C. The input of the primary specialist was particularly appreciated in this context, as the secondary trained Maths teachers did not feel able to cater for pupils at this ability level. The primary teacher wrote the syllabus for this class.

3.71 Staffing and timetabling issues also affected the involvement of primary teachers in this learning partnership in the second year of the pilot. In the first year, an education authority representative reported that the pilot was generating more interest as it developed, and noted that "as the year's gone on, more and more people have got interested in coming up to the secondary". However, in the second year of the pilot, fewer primary teachers were able to participate in secondary classes. Only two primary teachers (from one primary school) were involved in the secondary school for most of the second year, because of staff shortages limiting the number of staff who could be released from primary teaching. Although these problems meant primary teachers were unable to commit to regular visits, around seven primary teachers were able to take part in a one-day visit to observe S1 to S5 Maths classes.

3.72 Interestingly, primary teachers in Learning Partnership 1 expressed a wish to observe in the secondary, as had been offered to primary teachers in this school cluster. One teacher explained that she was keen to discover "whether they use interactive mental activities that we use in primary school, because to be quite honest, the last contact I had with secondary school was when I was a pupil and I just remember chalk and talk". She also wanted the opportunity to learn how to teach certain topics, such as long division, from a Maths specialist:

*"We have asked at one of our meetings to go and watch a secondary teacher working, so that we can actually go and see in practice what they do, because to be fair, they are only working with a group and you're busy teaching the rest of the class. There's not a great deal of time at the end to do a lot of talking. In theory, at the beginning, you could see that all these were good ideas. Putting them into practice, I'm afraid has been a wee bit more difficult".*

### *Problems encountered/negative aspects of the numeracy pilot*

3.73 Teachers involved in the numeracy pilot in both learning partnerships identified certain difficulties associated with its operation. As previously noted, both primary and secondary staff felt that there was not enough time for discussion about individual pupils and forward planning.

3.74 Doubts were also expressed in Learning Partnership 2 about the way the pilot was structured. One secondary Maths teacher felt that having a primary teacher observing in his classes had not benefited the pupils particularly. However, he admitted that the reason the primary teacher was not more involved in teaching the class was probably “down to me, because I am giving my class away for an hour when I actually have a Programme of Study that I have to work through at a certain level”. Another secondary teacher in this learning partnership felt it would be beneficial to define the role of primary teachers involved in secondary classes more clearly.

3.75 Clearly, staffing issues also had an impact on the operation of the pilot in both learning partnerships. While problems such as staff illness were “nobody’s fault”, teachers nevertheless felt that momentum had been lost in the primaries.

3.76 One aspect of staffing which teachers felt could be improved was the way decisions were made about which teachers were involved in primary liaison. In Learning Partnership 2, a secondary teacher reported that he did not get a choice about his involvement in the project, and “was just told” he would be visiting one of the associated primaries. While he believed that the project was a good idea and would be beneficial for pupils, he did not feel comfortable working with younger children and felt that “to get the best out of the project, only teachers who enjoy the experience should be involved”. In this learning partnership the idea had been for as many secondary teachers to visit the primary schools as possible, so that they could “capture as many youngsters coming in [to S1] who can look at somebody and say ‘I know you’”. However, it seems this did not reflect the wishes of all secondary Maths teachers.

3.77 Staff involved in the pilot also identified negative aspects of the pilot in terms of their experience of ‘losing touch’ with their colleagues because of working in the opposite sector. For example, one primary teacher who worked in School 1 every morning explained that this meant she was unable to attend staff meetings at her primary school. As Principal Teacher at the primary, she felt she was not participating in the management of the school as much as she should have been.

3.78 Secondary teachers reported similar experiences: for example, one Maths teacher at School 2, who took main responsibility for primary liaison in the first year of the pilot, was happy to reduce the amount of time in the primaries in the second year, because:

*“Last year I felt a bit alienated from the department, because I was only in four times a week, and at the end of the day this is my job in the secondary... People talk about things and you think ‘when did that happen’ because you’re not in the secondary as much”.*

Having to travel between schools also meant that staff had to miss coffee breaks and felt they were “missing out on the social aspect of being a member of the department”.



## *Summary*

3.79 The work of primary teachers in the secondary schools differed between the two learning partnerships. However, teachers in both school clusters emphasised the benefits of having two teachers in the class, particularly in terms of conducting practical work, and primary and secondary teachers again noted the value of observing and learning from each other's teaching methods. Staffing problems affected the numeracy pilot negatively in both learning partnerships, and some teachers also felt that the role of primary teachers visiting the secondary was not clearly defined.

### ***The new Programme of Study***

3.80 As well as cross-sector observation and teaching, a significant aspect of the numeracy pilot was the development of a new Programme of Study for levels D and E Maths in the pilot schools. The new Programme of Study was a substantial piece of work that aimed to develop consistent practice in Maths teaching, which involved an audit of resources and reviews of homework guidelines and teaching methodology.

3.81 There was close communication between the two learning partnerships throughout the pilot, and primary and secondary staff in both partnerships contributed to the Programme of Study. The programme for each level (D and E) was based on ten units of study, each containing seven learning outcomes relating to the national guidelines for 5-14 Maths.

3.82 The Programme of Study substituted previously used planners with one based on the Edinburgh education authority model. A decision was made to base the programme on the Edinburgh planners as they contained "lots of ICT and end of unit assessments". In addition, one PT explained that "the good thing about the Edinburgh planners, which ours are based on, is it's not the minimum – they've given them a bit of breadth. It's re-visiting the numeracy strands all the way through".

3.83 One Principal Teacher stressed that the new planners represented "a common course, not common resources" – in other words, schools could use their existing resources to follow the same course, in order to ensure that all pupils would reach S1 having experienced a common curriculum. Pilot funding also allowed schools to buy new resources. For example, Learning Partnership 2 provided primary schools with textbooks so that the material they taught matched more closely what was being used in the secondary school. Both secondary schools reported using the pilot funding to buy more software such as Promethean Boards (which allow interactive teaching of Maths). The pilot also funded the purchase of equipment for practical activities, after teachers observed the successes of practical work in the primaries.

3.84 Cross-sector inconsistencies in the use of Maths language identified during classroom observation were important in determining the content of the Programme of Study. Teachers highlighted the importance of including a vocabulary section that clearly states "this is the language that you should be using for this topic".

3.85 Homework and assessment guidelines were also developed as part of the Programme of Study, to ensure common approaches between schools and between sectors. Teachers interviewed at the start of the project emphasised that the Programme of Study aimed to improve the transfer of information about where a pupil is within a given level:

*“Now, we don’t know where they are in [primary school 1] compared to where they are in [primary school 2]. So you can’t take them and move them on, you have to start at the beginning again. What we’re hoping to do is improve the arrangements so there will be a profile that is passed on [from primary to secondary schools] which should mean that if someone is at D3 and someone else at D5, you can start around D3 and consolidate and revise”.*

3.86 Consistency of practice in assessment of attainment was introduced through the new Programme of Study, which provided assessments with every unit in the programme. By the end of the pilot, all schools were therefore using the same methods to assess pupils’ progress within each unit and level.

3.87 The pilot also aimed to encourage the use of formative assessment. This led to a focus on Assessment is for Learning in both learning partnerships, with many teachers undertaking EAEA-provided training. Aspects of Assessment is for Learning, such as sharing learning intentions, traffic lighting, and peer and self-assessment were introduced by most teachers, and there are plans to update the Programme of Study with child-friendly versions of the learning intentions for each unit, to enable self-assessment.

3.88 The development of the Programme also included support and training for teaching staff in the learning partnerships, to ensure it was implemented smoothly. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions were provided, allowing teachers who had been identified as having a particular skill in an aspect of teaching to share this with other teachers involved in the pilot. For example, one PT of Maths ran CPD sessions on the level E course content, so that primary teachers gained knowledge about how certain topics (such as solving equations) were taught at secondary school.

3.89 However, the timing of the sessions was not convenient for many of the primary teachers, who suggested they should take place from November onwards, “when you’re settled and got yourself organised”, rather than in June:

*“I can understand them having it in June because they want us to come back in August and be up and running. But we might forget it all over the summer holidays. If I go on a course, I like to get back to school and try what I’ve learned. So in June I wouldn’t say it’s a good time”.*

3.90 Teachers emphasised that the Programme of Study was a work in progress and was constantly updated during the course of the pilot, incorporating feedback from teachers in order to further develop the guidance.

#### *Contribution to other subject areas*

3.91 Teachers involved in the pilot were also involved in joint working with other subject areas. For example, teachers funded by the pilot in School 1 engaged in cross-curricular work between the Maths department and the Science, Geography and ICT departments. This included the development of a ‘Reasoning and Problem Solving’ booklet which were used in Science and other social subjects. The Science department at School 2 had also used the numeracy pilot as a blueprint for a similar programme involving primary visits where secondary teachers delivered some of the primary Science curriculum.

### ***Relationship between the numeracy pilot and existing transitions arrangements***

3.92 The relationship between the numeracy pilot and other transitions arrangements differed between the two learning partnerships. In Learning Partnership 2, the numeracy programme did not affect other transitions arrangements, which stayed unchanged during the pilot. They included a three-day induction visit for P7 pupils, visits to primary schools by secondary school staff, parents' evenings, and review meetings between support staff and primary teachers regarding individual children. In Learning Partnership 1, however, the pilot influenced the P7 transition programme. In this school, P7 pupils had been attending the secondary school for one morning a week throughout the year for several years previously. As a result of the pilot, the Maths department introduced a Maths lesson into these weekly visits. The PT explained that these sessions were organised in broad sets (based on knowledge gained through cross-sector working) so that teaching could be directed at the right level.

3.93 Because of the liaison between primary and secondary teachers that took place as part of the pilot, the Maths sessions during the P7 transitions visits could also be targeted at certain areas: as one secondary teacher explained, "we've said to the primary teachers we'll teach particular topics they'd like us to teach". This included a focus on using the Promethean Boards to teach angles and measurement: the technology "lends itself to teaching angle work" and this is an area that P7 pupils found difficult.

### **Impact of the numeracy pilot**

3.94 The numeracy pilot had a range of effects on how Maths was taught in both learning partnerships, which consequently had an impact on pupil outcomes. The following sections outline the impacts of the pilot in the primary and secondary schools involved, and then discusses the impact in terms of the primary-secondary transition and the transition from S1 to S2.

### ***Cross-sector relationships***

3.95 Primary and secondary teachers in both learning partnerships commented that cross-sector relationships had improved as a result of the numeracy pilot. Despite initial scepticism, and what an education authority representative described as "a trust issue that's been there forever", it was reported that "perceptions have changed on both sides". Primary teachers said that they would not hesitate to go to their secondary counterparts for help or to share resources with them, while secondary teachers would "not think twice about phoning a primary teacher and asking for advice about pupils".

3.96 For several respondents, the development of relationships between primary and secondary staff was seen as the most crucial element of the numeracy pilot. One of the teachers employed by the pilot, interviewed towards the end of the first year of its operation, felt that:

*"The best thing about the project so far has got to be building the relationship with the primary teachers, it's got to be, because we're going to have an idea of each individual child's learning ability when they come up, because I can talk to the teachers".*

3.97 Several cross-sector working groups were set up to develop different aspects of the pilot, and social events organised for FLaT staff were also reported to be successful and contributed to the feeling that “it’s a community, rather than individual units and individual schools”. As one FLaT-funded teacher noted, the enthusiasm of individuals played an important part in making the pilot a success:

*“The enthusiasm that everybody’s got – I’m amazed by how many people are meeting after school to develop Programmes of Study and things like that... I think that speaks volumes really. Secondary, primary, everybody’s mucking into that”.*

3.98 Although cross-sector relationships improved as a result of the pilot, teachers also emphasised the impact that staffing difficulties had caused. Teachers in both sectors stressed the importance of having the correct personnel in place in order to make the numeracy pilot successful. Primary teachers frequently mentioned the staffing problems that schools had experienced, and felt that, in some cases, the wrong staff had occupied the specialist Maths posts. As one primary teacher stressed:

*“Having the right people involved in the project is essential... It has to be someone that works well with the pupils and with the teachers involved”.*

### ***Impact of the numeracy pilot in the primary schools***

#### *Impact of cross-sector activities on primary teachers*

3.99 For those primary teachers who observed secondary Maths classes, the pilot had allowed them to learn how Maths is taught in S1 and S2, which affected their own teaching of Maths in P6 or P7, as they could “see where it’s leading to”. In particular, primary teachers gained an understanding of how Maths language is used in secondary classes, and began to use the same language with pupils in primary school. This consistency of language use was also encouraged by the introduction of the new Programme of Study.

3.100 Primary teachers who had had a secondary Maths specialist working in their classes stressed the benefits of having another teacher in the classroom, particularly for those with large class sizes in P6 and P7. However, the Maths specialists were seen as more than just an ‘extra pair of hands’, with teachers emphasising that “it’s good to have someone who knows what they’re doing”. One primary teacher commented that she had become more willing to try out new things, because she knew she had the support of an expert Maths teacher.

3.101 Primary teachers particularly appreciated having an additional teacher in the class as this made it much easier to facilitate group work and also reduced their own workload. For example, while the secondary Maths specialist took the top ability group, the primary class teacher could focus on the lower ability group, so that all pupils received more attention.

#### *Impact of the numeracy pilot on primary pupils*

3.102 Primary teachers reported that pupils responded well to the secondary Maths teachers, and noted positive impacts on pupils’ motivation and interest in Maths. Respondents felt that the pupils were keen to impress secondary teachers and tried harder when they were in the class. As one teacher commented:

*“The children have really taken quickly to the secondary Maths teacher and they respond well to him. He’s very easy to get on with”.*

3.103 Knowing that the Maths specialist could be their teacher in S1, the pupils “lifted their game a wee bit” to impress him:

*“I think the children enjoy seeing someone from [the secondary school] coming in. He’s very pleasant; he gets on well with the children and will help them when they actually go to [the secondary school]”.*

3.104 Perhaps unsurprisingly, this was perceived as being more important for P7 pupils than those working with the Maths teachers in P6.

3.105 Besides enhancing motivation, working with a Maths specialist was said to help pupils feel important and boosted their confidence. The children that were left with the primary class teacher also received more attention due to the smaller sizes of the groups. One teacher felt that:

*“It can only be of benefit. I enjoy having him in the class. It doesn’t interfere with what I’m doing. We work away and the other group works away... I think it’s great”.*

3.106 In one of the primary schools associated with School 2, the pupils who worked with the secondary specialist became a distinct group who “come in the classroom, get their head down and work”, which was seen to be a particular success as there had been some behavioural problems with the class. The class teacher said “their confidence has increased” and “they feel that they are good at Maths now and want to get on”.

3.107 One aspect of the pilot which was cited as important in increasing children’s motivation in Maths classes was the introduction of new technology by the secondary Maths specialists. Secondary teachers felt that the use of ICT gave pupils “good variety”, and primary teachers appreciated having access to specialist tools such as the Promethean Boards. Pupils enjoyed working with the Promethean Boards and primary teachers reported that the visualisation it allowed was very important in terms of motivation: “it is active Maths as opposed to sitting with a textbook in front of them... Pupils can get a picture in their head of what they are doing, which often a textbook cannot do”.

#### *Pupils’ views*

3.108 Consultation with P7 pupils also suggested that the numeracy pilot had had a positive effect. All pupils in the primary schools, without exception, reported having a very positive experience of working with the secondary Maths specialist associated with the pilot.

3.109 Although reasons for this varied, pupils generally said that they learned more about Maths, more quickly, with the Maths specialists. For example, in one of the primary schools in Learning Partnership 2, the P7 pupils thought the Maths specialist was “fabulous” and “a great teacher”. They said that she explained things well and constantly checked understanding so that it took less time for them to understand the work than it did with the class teacher. She worked with a group of 12 children and so was able to provide pupils with more individual attention. These pupils were all at the same level, so the teacher did not have to accommodate different needs or differentiate her delivery.

### *Impact on attainment in the primary schools*

3.110 Primary teachers noted that the input of a secondary Maths specialist had positive impacts on their pupils' work in Maths.

3.111 The ability to split the class into groups was frequently mentioned in this context. For example, one primary teacher in Learning Partnership 1 emphasised the benefits of being able to divide the class and give different groups more attention. Previously, she had tried to do long division with her bottom group and "they were all crying... I stopped it; it was like banging my head against a brick wall". She was able "go right back to level C", doing times tables etc, and could cover this properly with them because the secondary specialist was taking the top group. She then went back to long division and the pupils found it much easier the second time around. The same teacher noted positive effects of the pilot on her top group, who passed their level D test much earlier than expected. Having the secondary specialist working with them meant "we can really push them, challenge them".

3.112 Several teachers reported a measurable improvement in attainment in Maths, explaining that, in many cases, pupils had passed National Assessment levels that the teachers did not expect they would. While some teachers stated that there had been "a huge jump" in what children were achieving in Maths, they were unsure to what extent this could be attributed to the numeracy pilot, as many factors influenced attainment. However, others were more confident that improvements in attainment were due to the input of the secondary teachers. Some primary teachers also commented that they were testing level D much earlier in the year than they would normally, and attributed this to having the extra input of the secondary teacher.

### *Quantitative evidence*

3.113 Quantitative analysis was undertaken in order to assess whether this anecdotal evidence was supported by the attainment data for the primary schools involved in the numeracy pilot. Data analysis focused on the percentage of P7 pupils who had achieved level D or above at each school. In contrast to teachers' claims, this analysis found no evidence of a consistent improvement or decline in attainment at the primary schools. In particular, it should be noted that the small numbers of pupils in some P7 classes made it difficult to draw firm conclusions from the data. (For completeness, graphs are included in Annex 3 to illustrate P7 attainment).

### *Summary*

3.114 Teachers reported that the numeracy pilot led to an increase in primary pupil's interest and motivation in Maths. Pupils' comments support this argument: the children enjoyed working with the secondary Maths teachers and felt that they had learned a lot during their time together. Although some teachers were able to give examples of specific groups of pupils showing improvements in Maths attainment, there was no evidence of a measurable overall improvement in Maths attainment among P7 pupils at the primary schools involved.

### ***Impact of the pilot in the secondary schools***

3.115 This section first considers the impact that the numeracy pilot had on the way Maths was taught in the secondary schools, including changes in pupil/teacher ratios and teaching methods, and then examines the resulting outcomes for pupils in terms of motivation and attainment.

#### *Pupil/teacher ratios*

3.116 In line with the aims of the numeracy pilot, there was an improvement in pupil/teacher ratios in both secondary schools. This improvement was a direct consequence of the numeracy pilot, as FLaT funding provided the additional staff needed to reduce class sizes.

3.117 The average class size for Maths in S1 and S2 was 20 in both secondary schools by the end of the two-year pilot. Teachers emphasised that the aim was to achieve a pupil/teacher ratio of 20/1, not 20 pupils in each class. This had allowed the formation of some smaller classes, while others had more than 20 pupils. For example, at School 2 the lowest ability group in 2005/06 consisted of seven pupils.

3.118 Their teacher explained that, for the least able children, the individual attention they received in a smaller class enabled them to achieve much more than they would in a class of 20. Before the numeracy pilot, these pupils would have been in larger classes with pupils of all abilities, and “their needs would never have been met”.

3.119 Smaller class sizes also made classes “more manageable in terms of discipline” and had a positive impact in terms of the pupils’ pace of learning. Teachers also reported building better relationships with pupils because the reduction in class sizes had enabled them to get to know the children better.

#### *Teaching methods*

3.120 As well as affecting class sizes, the pilot had an effect on the way Maths was taught in the secondaries. As noted previously, secondary teachers who visited the primaries or who had primary teachers working in their secondary classes reported an increased awareness of primary teaching methods, and noted that this had an impact on their own teaching in S1 and S2. Teachers reported that the introduction of more interactive teaching methods and mental Maths made the transition to S1 easier for pupils by ensuring greater cross-sector continuity.

3.121 Pupils interviewed after the transition to secondary school were positive about their experience of Maths in S1, focusing on the teachers’ use of games and interactive activities, which, they said, makes learning fun. In addition, mental arithmetic games had helped them become much quicker at doing mental calculations:

*“It’s good. They bring in lots of different games and it makes you kinda want to come to Maths kinda thing, because they’ve games where you can run about the classroom, but you’re still learning and I think that’s fun, because you can’t really run about in [secondary school]”.*

*“I’m a lot quicker, say at sums or something... We do arithmetic games and it gets you a lot faster at it, and helps you a lot”.*

3.122 As previously noted, having two teachers in the class enabled more interactive and group work to be undertaken. There was consensus among pupils in both secondary schools that it was good having two teachers, because if two people in the class needed help they could both be seen quickly by a different teacher. Pupils saw this as the main benefit of having primary teachers cooperatively teaching in the secondary Maths classes.

#### *Impact of the pilot on pupil motivation*

3.123 Teachers reported that the pilot had a range of effects on the pupils at both secondary schools, with the impact on motivation being particularly evident. One primary teacher working in an S1 class in School 1 noted that four or five of the pupils were disengaged at the start of the year: “they weren’t there to learn, they were there to disrupt”. However, she believed that having the focused input of two teachers in the class had helped to improve these pupils’ motivation, and, in general, the majority of the pupils were well motivated in Maths lessons.

3.124 Pupils were not necessarily aware of how the pilot operated or which Maths teachers were or were not part of the pilot. For example, some pupils at School 2 reported that they had two teachers in their S1 Maths classes but believed they were both secondary teachers, rather than a secondary teacher and a visiting primary teacher. However, whether they were aware of the pilot or not, having the added input of the teachers in the pilot had increased confidence and motivation in S1 Maths for these pupils. Pupils said they liked having the primary teacher in their Maths class, and stressed the fun element of learning with them.

3.125 The increased use of interactive and mental Maths in S1 was also reported to improve pupils’ motivation. One secondary teacher believed that even though Maths teachers previously “liked to think they were making Maths fun”, the introduction of interactive methods demonstrated that this had not necessarily been the case. This teacher reported that “the pupils really do love it [interactive Maths]”.

3.126 The use of technology was also frequently mentioned in this context. Teachers reported that “the kids love working with the new ICT equipment”; for example, “the Promethean Board has made a huge difference to their motivation”. Comments from children supported this claim; S1 pupils were enthusiastic about using technology in the secondary school, and reported that equipment such as Smartboards and 100 square boards made Maths much clearer.

3.127 For the pupils in the lowest ability group at School 2, teachers reported that being able to work at a level they could cope with had definitely improved their confidence and motivation: the most significant change was that they enjoyed coming to Maths and it was no longer considered “a jail sentence”.

#### *Summary*

3.128 The pilot improved pupil/teacher ratios at both secondary schools, with smaller class sizes particularly benefiting the least able pupils. Teaching methods in S1 and S2 were influenced by the cross-sector work with primary colleagues, including a focus on more



interactive methods and Maths games. These changes, and an increased focus on the use of technology such as Promethean Boards, led to a reported increase in pupil motivation.

#### *Impact on attainment in the secondary schools*

3.129 Pupils interviewed in S1 in both schools believed that their knowledge and ability in Maths had improved since the transition to secondary school. Teacher consultations also suggested that the numeracy pilot had a positive impact on pupil attainment. For example, one secondary teacher who was involved in team teaching with a primary specialist in an S1 class at School 1 noted that the pupils “have improved more than they would have” had the pilot not been in place. This teacher attributed their improved performance to the fact that they had two teachers to help them, and the variety of approaches that were employed by these teachers. Although this interview took place before the class took their level D test, she was confident that many of them would pass level D – something she was not sure they would have achieved without the numeracy pilot.

3.130 As one PT of Maths commented during the second year of the pilot’s operation:

*“Normally, kids come in at level C – that’s poorer than they should have done. So it’s quite difficult normally for these children to achieve at level D, but this year about half the class did – that’s a huge thing as far as we’re concerned”.*

3.131 This teacher believed that the improvement was due to how well the primary and secondary teachers worked together within classes:

*“[The primary teacher] would start things, [the secondary teacher] would take it on, so you had both perspectives – you had that connection between the primary and secondary”.*

3.132 Teachers at School 2 also noted that pupils were sitting their National Assessment tests earlier than usual, particular those pupils of higher ability.

3.133 Teachers consulted as part of the evaluation believed that the reported improvements in attainment were a direct result of the numeracy pilot. For example, towards the end of the two years of the project, teachers reported that there were pupils passing level E Maths half way through S1. This was attributed to the implementation of the new Programme of Study in the learning partnership, which aimed to ensure that all primary pupils completed a certain number of level D units by the end of P7. The secondary teachers, who were working with the same Programme of Study, could then clearly see what stage the pupils were at, and the pupils were able to move straight on to the final units of the level. This consistency was perceived to be one of the key aspects of the pilot, as before the Programme of Study was in place the new S1 pupils “spent a lot of time consolidating what they had learned in P7, rather than getting on with completing more units”.

#### *Long-term effects on attainment*

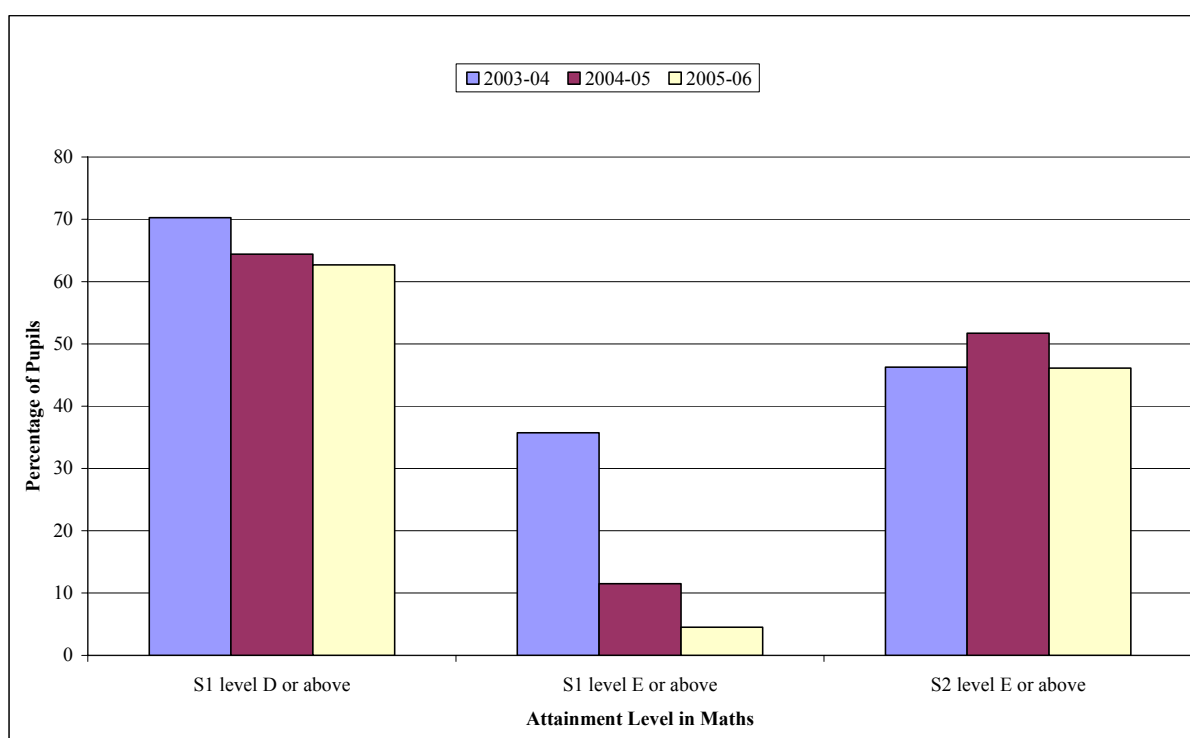
3.134 Although teachers felt that the new Programme of Study had a positive effect on attainment results, they also emphasised that because it had only been introduced during the pilot, and was still being revised and updated, it would have an even greater effect on attainment in the academic year 2006/07 and beyond.

3.135 For example, the PT of Maths at School 1 explained that although normally they would have “pushed the pupils through level E having just passed level D at the end of P7”, during the introduction of the new planners they were “going at a slower pace”. This was because they noticed that there were “gaps in the learning at level E... so we thought ‘let’s do this sensibly’”.

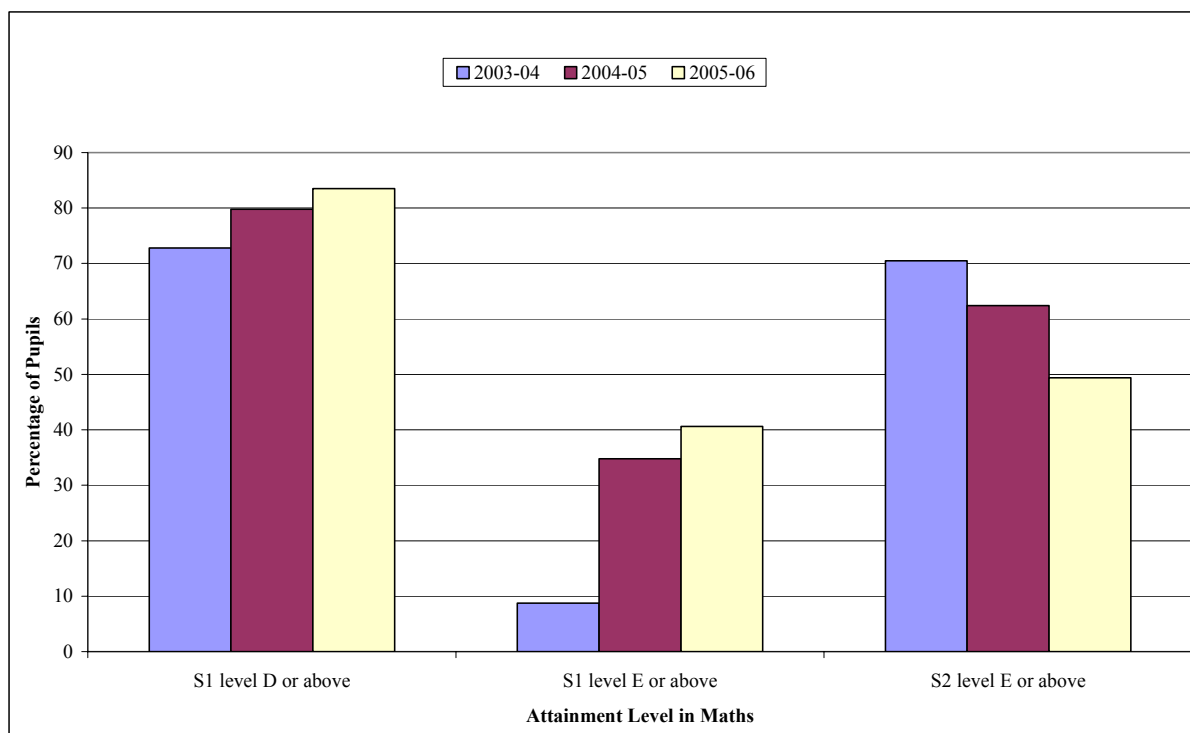
*Quantitative evidence*

3.136 Figures 3.1 and 3.2 below show attainment in Maths between 2003/04 and 2005/06 at each of the two secondary schools involved in the numeracy pilot.

**Figure 3.1: Maths attainment at School 1**



**Figure 3.2: Maths attainment at School 2**



3.137 As can be seen in Figure 3.1, attainment in Maths in S1 dropped at School 1 over the course of the pilot. In 2003/04, 70% of S1 pupils achieved level D or above; this fell to 64% in 2004/05 and 63% in 2005/06. The average for East Ayrshire at this time was 78%. The percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above fell from 36% in 2003/04 to 12% in 2004/05 and only 5% in 2005/06. This compared to East Ayrshire averages of 30% in 2003/04, 32% in 2004/05 and 34% in 2005/06.

3.138 However, teachers at School 1 reported that the year group who were in S1 in 2003/04 were a particularly able year group, so later S1 classes appeared to achieve much less in comparison. In addition, a decision was taken not to test S1 pupils in June 2005/06, but to wait until December 2006 (i.e. when pupils were in S2 rather than at the end of S1) in order to ensure that they had covered the course in enough depth. This was a conscious decision to “improve the Mathematics experience and avoiding just training pupils to pass an exam”. This means that although the performance of S1 pupils at this school in 2005/06 appears to be poorer than in previous years, the data were in fact largely based on P7 attainment, because administering National Assessments was delayed for this year group.

3.139 S2 attainment results at School 1 were slightly better, with 46% achieving level E or above in 2003/04, a rise to 52% in 2004/05 and then a drop back to 46% in 2005/06. However, these figures were still below the East Ayrshire average for level E attainment in S2, which have remained between 60% and 62% over the last three years.

3.140 Figure 3.2 shows Maths attainment at School 2. Attainment in S1 improved at this school over the two years of the pilot. In 2003/04, 73% of S1 pupils achieved level D or above, and this increased to 80% in 2004/05 and 84% in 2005/06, compared to an average of 78% in the authority as a whole.

3.141 The percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above also saw an increase at this school, rising from 9% in 2003/04 to 35% in 2004/05 and then 41% in 2005/06. This represents an increase from well under the East Ayrshire average (which was 30% in 2003/04) to above the average for the authority in 2005/06 (41% at School 2 compared to an average of 34%).

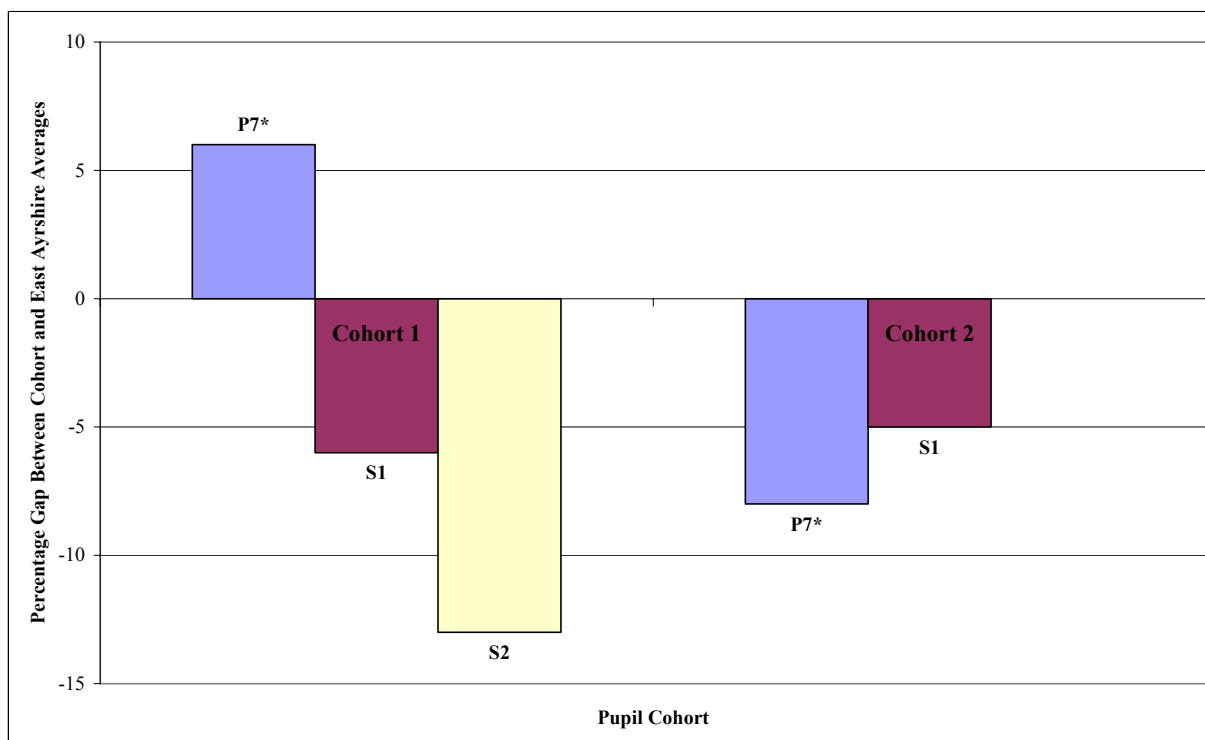
3.142 However, the percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above dropped from 70% in 2003/04 to 62% in 2004/05 and then 49% in 2005/06. In this case, School 2 started above the East Ayrshire average (70% compared to 62%) but dropped to below the average by 2005/06 (49% compared to 61%). Teachers at this school explained that this was primarily due to the particular cohort of S2 pupils at the time, who performed less well than other year groups.

#### *Maths attainment by pupil cohort*

3.143 It is important to note the limitations of the type of analysis presented above, as it does not take into account the differences between year groups in terms of prior ability. For example, a particular year group could have performed much better than expected in a given year, but their results could still represent a drop in attainment compared to previous year groups. As noted above, teachers felt that this was the case with some of the year groups involved in the numeracy pilot. Data analysis therefore investigated change over time *within individual pupil cohorts*, comparing each year group's attainment with the local authority average.

3.144 Data for more than one academic year were available for two of the three pupil cohorts involved in the research: Cohort 1 were in S1 and S2 during the pilot, while Cohort 2 were in P7 and S1 during the same two years. The average percentage of pupils across East Ayrshire achieving the expected levels by the end of each year (level D in P7, level D in S1 and level E in S2) were subtracted from the average percentage of pupils at Schools 1 and 2 achieving the same levels, to provide a measure of each cohort's performance compared to the authority average. A positive score means the cohort was performing above the authority average, whereas a negative score means they were performing below the average. Figure 3.3 below shows the analysis by pupil cohort for Maths attainment across the two schools involved in the pilot.

**Figure 3.3: Maths attainment by pupil cohort**



\* In Cohort 1, the pupils were in P7 the year before the pilot started. Cohort 2 pupils were in P7 during the first year of the numeracy pilot.

3.145 As can be seen in Figure 3.3 above, pupils in Cohort 1 across the two schools were performing above the East Ayrshire average in the year before the pilot began. However, when these pupils were in S1 (the first year of the pilot) they were performing below the authority average, and by the end of S2 the gap had increased still further. Cohort 2, in contrast, improved in comparison to the education authority average during the course of the pilot: in P7 (year one of the pilot) they were eight percentage points behind the average, but by the end of S1 (year two of the pilot) this gap had reduced to five percentage points.

### *Summary*

3.146 Teachers believed the pilot had improved pupil attainment, but also stressed that the effects of the pilots may take longer than the first 18 months of the projects' operation to present themselves. They felt that the impact on attainment was likely to be seen in the academic year 2006/07, when the new Programme of Study had been fully implemented and the new S1 intake would have been working on the programme from P7.

3.147 Quantitative analysis showed that Maths attainment had declined in School 1, although teachers explained that this was due to a combination of factors such as the high ability of previous year groups and the decision to delay administering National Assessments until December 2006 as a result of introducing the new Programme of Study. At School 2, Maths attainment had improved in S1 but not in S2, although again teachers reported that this was because of the prior ability of a particular S2 year group.

3.148 It should also be noted that, in both sectors, interpretation of data is difficult because school cohorts vary each year in their prior ability and therefore in their range of attainments. Analysis of results by pupil cohort was therefore conducted, showing that while one pupil

cohort's performance improved compared to the East Ayrshire average over the course of the pilot, the other cohort's Maths attainment declined in relation to the education authority as a whole.

### *Differential responses and effects*

3.149 Consultees were asked whether they felt the numeracy pilot had affected certain groups of pupils, or whether all pupils had benefited equally. The majority of respondents found it difficult to estimate whether the numeracy pilot had had a greater impact on different demographic groups, arguing that all types of pupil had responded well to the project. However, some teachers believed that the pilot had benefited certain groups of pupils more than others.

3.150 Some teachers were of the opinion that the pilot had particularly benefited the least able pupils, in both primary and secondary classes. For example, one P7 teacher felt that having the secondary Maths specialist to work with the top ability group had allowed her to focus on the less able pupils, in order to “build their knowledge and motivation before they get to S1”. In S1 and S2, some teachers felt that the least able pupils benefited most from the increased individual attention they were receiving as a result of smaller class sizes.

3.151 One teacher reported that the bottom Maths group at School 2, which consisted of fewer than ten pupils, had particularly benefited from working with the pilot primary teacher: “they are actually enjoying coming to Maths because they know they will be doing work that they can cope with”.

3.152 For other teachers, it was the most able pupils who had particularly benefited from the numeracy pilot. Having extra help from a Maths specialist in primary classes gave these pupils a focus and increased their motivation in Maths lessons.

3.153 Some teachers also felt that the higher ability pupils in S1 and S2 were “now able to be pushed forward a lot quicker”. This was attributed to the improved transfer of information between the primary and secondary sectors, meaning that pupils could move forward straight away, rather than spending time consolidating previous work.

3.154 These differences in opinion relating to ability groups did not appear to be the result of any difference between the schools in terms of targeting certain ability groups. Rather, individual teachers had different perceptions of the impacts of the pilot, perhaps because of which classes they taught or how much contact they had with different groups of pupils.

3.155 Some consultees reported a differential effect for boys and girls. One teacher argued that while “girls are girls and tend to be more studious anyway”, and reacted well to both interactive and non-interactive teaching methods, boys responded better to the new technology that had been introduced, such as the Promethean Boards. Boys were also reported to respond well to the new ‘hands on’ methods that secondary teachers had introduced as a result of observing primary teachers.

### *Effects of the numeracy pilot on primary to secondary transition*

3.156 One of the main aims of the numeracy pilot was to ease the transition from P7 to S1 and secure continuity of learning between the primary and secondary sectors. Consultation

with both teachers and pupils therefore focused on whether this had been achieved since the implementation of the scheme. Qualitative research conducted with pupils explored their expectations and subsequent experience of the transition, and whether their contact with a secondary Maths specialist affected the move into S1.

#### *Expectations of pre-transition P7 pupils*

3.157 Consultation with P7 pupils in May/June in both 2005 and 2006 explored their feelings about going to secondary school. These pupils were looking forward to moving up to secondary school, and were particularly keen to experience practical subjects such as Technical and Science. They also expected to make new friends at secondary school.

3.158 Most P7 pupils did have some concerns about the transition into S1. However, these mainly related to the non-academic aspects of transition, particularly focusing on getting bullied or not being able to find their way around their new school. They generally believed they would cope with the academic work in S1. Like the evidence from North Lanarkshire, these findings also support previous research that found that pupils' main concerns were non-academic<sup>11</sup>.

#### *Social transition*

3.159 Findings from the consultation suggested that the social and pastoral elements of transition to secondary school were most important to P7 pupils. Teachers, too, emphasised the importance of this aspect of the transition, arguing that having contact with a secondary teacher while in P7 would benefit pupils when they moved into S1:

*“They’ll know you... it will be less scary when they come here, they’ll take to it quicker, feel more comfortable in your presence”.*

3.160 Primary teachers believed that being able to see a ‘friendly face’ at secondary school would make the pupils “far more settled, far more quickly”, and “they should not experience that initial uncomfortable feeling and anxiety”.

3.161 Teachers who had pupils in their secondary classes who they had worked with at primary school believed that this had benefited the children, as they had already established a relationship. Secondary teachers reported that even those pupils who were not in their classes in S1 “always say ‘hello’ if I pass them”.

3.162 Consultation with pupils supported these arguments: most P7 pupils reported knowing quite a few teachers at their local secondary school and said that this would make the transition easier for them. Since working with the secondary Maths teachers at primary school, pupils felt they had a point of contact with the secondary school, and that the teachers there had an interest in them. They liked working with the Maths specialist, because “it’s good because you’re going to know him once you go to [secondary school]”.

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<sup>11</sup> Graham, C. and Hill, M. (2003): *Negotiating the transition to secondary school*, Spotlight 89, Glasgow Centre for the Child and Society, University of Glasgow

3.163 However, some S1 pupils pointed out that they were not taught Maths by the teacher who had visited them in P7, which they felt would have been beneficial. As one pupil noted:

*“I thought they should have given us the teacher we got in P7, then we would have got to know them better”.*

#### *Curricular transition/cross-sector transfer of information*

3.164 Because secondary staff had developed a better understanding of the Maths taught in primary schools, primary teachers were now confident that “the pupils will be taken from where they are when they go up” instead of “treading water” in S1. Because of the pilot, there will be “no closure after P7 and opening in S1 – it’s a continuum”.

3.165 The newly developed Programme of Study was important in this context, as it ensured that pupils would “pick up where they left off” when they started S1, rather than covering old ground. As one P6 teacher noted, the new planners were a “huge benefit” as they unified the curriculum across the different schools, so that “everyone knows that everyone else is doing the same thing”. An important element of this improvement in continuity between sectors was the focus on using the same Maths language in P7 and S1. Teachers reported that this has had a positive impact on pupils going into S1.

3.166 The numeracy pilot also led to improved cross-sector transfer of information about individual pupils. For example, one primary teacher noted that she writes a ‘transition report’ for each child, outlining their strengths and weakness etc. As staff at the secondary school had now worked with these pupils, she could make these reports more specific, and the secondary teachers were also more aware of the individual needs of the pupils having met them in P7.

3.167 Maths specialists who had worked with primary pupils were also able to pass on information to their colleagues about individuals’ needs. Pupils themselves recognised this; S1 pupils commented that working with the Maths specialist in P7 was beneficial because:

*“The teachers that came into our primary school know what you’re like and know what you can do, and so they can tell [secondary teacher] and give you a bit more help”.*

3.168 As well as personal knowledge passed on by teachers, the new Programme of Study meant that the secondary schools were aware of exactly which unit and level pupils had passed at primary school.

3.169 As a result of this improved transfer of information from primary to secondary schools, secondary teachers reported that they were better able to allocate pupils to set classes in Maths. Whereas setting was “hard to justify” in the past because of the limited amount of information available about pupils, one PT explained that the pilot had allowed pupils to be set in Maths from the start of S1. Teachers believed that this has had a positive impact on all pupils, who could work at an appropriate pace with others of similar ability.

3.170 Pupils who were interviewed in S1 supported this argument, reporting that Maths was better at secondary school than at primary, because they were in classes with children of the same ability as them. Pupils liked this, saying that those who needed more help were in



classes with other people of the same level, which they thought created less stigma and more directed teaching:

*“You’re no having tae wait for folk to catch up”.*

*“Because we’re split up, it means that the teacher’s not talking to everybody and she’s not having to go through three different sets of work for all the people at different stages”.*

*“In the ability classes as well, you wouldn’t get made fun of because of what you can or can’t do, because everyone is the same”.*

3.171 Another benefit of the pilot was that P7 pupils had an idea of what the work would be like in Maths in S1, having worked with the Maths specialists at primary school. Teachers believed that knowing what would be expected of them in S1, in terms of the workload, pace of work and the different discipline procedures, made children less anxious about the transition.

3.172 Consultation with pupils confirmed that this was indeed the case. P7 pupils reported that having a Maths specialist in their class made them feel more confident about going up to the secondary school. For example, one group reported that the Maths teacher had given them a secondary Maths booklet to work on with rows of fractions on it, giving them an insight into the layout and content of comparable secondary work. It had the added benefit of making the P7 pupils feel they were doing work aimed at secondary pupils, which boosted their confidence in their ability to cope and dispelled their fears about Maths in secondary school.

3.173 This Maths specialist also built on the work the pupils were already doing, giving them more information, developing their Maths language lexicon and generally taking their Maths a stage further:

*“He teaches you about certain things but he lets you know more about them”.*

*“When we were doing angles, he introduced us to the points of an angle, the vertexes, so we know more about that”.*

3.174 P7 pupils felt that this prepared them well for Maths in S1. Pupils interviewed in S1 agreed, reporting that visits from the secondary staff when they were in P7 had helped them as they knew what to expect when they came to the secondary school:

*“I think the Maths up here would’ve been harder [without the P7 visits], because they let us know what kind of type of Maths we’d be having to do”.*

*“Because we got taught new work and how to do new sums and stuff, it prepared us for what [secondary school] would be like”.*

3.175 S1 pupils also reported that it had helped them that the secondary teacher had used the same textbooks that would be used in S1 when he worked with them in P7.

3.176 These pupils also reported that they were also now more confident in approaching teachers when they did not understand something. They said that working with the secondary

Maths teachers in P7 “makes you more confident” and reported that “because you know the teachers, it’s better, you feel more comfortable”.

### *Summary*

2.177 The numeracy pilot had a positive effect on pupils’ experience of transition to secondary school, both socially and academically. Pupils were glad to know somebody at the secondary school, and their positive experiences with these teachers in P7 had dispelled their fears about Maths in S1 and polished up their Maths in preparation for secondary school. Improved cross-sector liaison led to better transfer of information about pupils, allowing more accurate setting from the start of S1. This was viewed positively by both pupils and teachers.

### ***Transition to S2***

3.178 As well as improving the transition from P7 to S1, the pilot also aimed to increase pupils’ confidence during the move from S1 to S2. Pupil consultation therefore included focus groups with S1 pupils before the transition, and then with S2 pupils after the transition.

3.179 In general, S1 pupils were not concerned about moving into S2. They believed the work would be “harder, but not a lot harder”. They also recognised that standards “go up a lot – things get harder quicker” as you move up the school.

3.180 Pupils reported that having an actual Maths teacher (sometimes with support from primary teachers) had made them “more confident”, “better at Maths” and keener on the subject. They were therefore looking forward to Maths in S2. However, most pupils interviewed in S2 were unsure whether having the input of primary teachers in S1 had helped them going into S2, as it was “always the Maths teacher that did the actual teaching”. Despite this, some pupils argued that the primary teacher was “always on hand to help when you’re stuck” which had improved their Maths.

### *Summary*

3.181 The numeracy pilot did not seem to have a particular impact on pupils’ experiences of the transition from S1 to S2, although this was perhaps because they were settled into secondary school by this time and did not see the change as being as great as the P7-S1 transition.

### **The future of the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire**

3.182 The numeracy pilot has been extended beyond the original two years, with funding currently secured until June 2007. This section briefly outlines plans for the third year of the pilot.

3.183 In Learning Partnership 1, changes mostly reflect factors unrelated to assessment of the pilot; i.e. issues such as staffing have made alterations necessary. A new member of staff has been appointed to conduct the primary visits this year, and no other secondary teachers are currently visiting the primaries. Whereas previously every primary was visited every week, this year they are being visited in blocks, focusing purely on P7 classes.

3.184 Only one of the two primary teachers who were involved in the pilot in this partnership is currently working in the secondary school, because of staffing problems at the second teacher's primary school. This teacher hopes to be able to resume her work in the secondary school after Christmas. However, the secondary staff have encouraged two more primary teachers to get involved in the scheme: one will begin visits to S1 classes shortly, and the other hopes to visit later in the year.

3.185 This learning partnership has also chosen to prioritise those pupils who are "just missing a level" to try to ensure they achieve as highly as possible in Maths.

3.186 In Learning Partnership 2, changes appear to be a result of monitoring and assessment of the pilot's operation. There are currently six secondary teachers visiting primary schools, rather than one teacher having the main responsibility for primary liaison. This school is also rotating which primaries are visited, in six-weekly blocks. This has allowed the teachers to meet more pupils, and the pupils to meet more teachers (in response to the fact that S1 pupils were not necessarily being taught by the secondary teacher who visited them in P7). Primary teachers continue to visit the secondary school to take part in Maths classes.

3.187 Work will continue across both learning partnerships during 2006/07 on the Programme of Study. While the level D and level E programmes are now considered to be "a polished resource" after feedback and revision during the past two years, work is now beginning on the level C programme. Tracking and monitoring of pupil attainment is another focus of the numeracy pilot this year: a spreadsheet system is being developed to enable close tracking of attainment within each unit/level of the Programme of Study. This spreadsheet will incorporate elements of Assessment for Learning such as traffic lighting, and will also be able to be used in other subjects areas. The system will be used to decide when to test pupils, track late developers in order to challenge them at the right time, or target Learning Support to under-achievers.

3.188 Finally, FLaT funding is also being used this year to introduce Promethean technology into all primary schools.

## **Conclusion**

3.189 This chapter has outlined the implementation process, operation and impacts of the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire. The obstacles to smooth implementation that were encountered were cross-sector uncertainty, staffing issues including lack of supply cover, and timetabling problems. For successful implementation, it was important to have a supportive and involved Head Teacher, consensus and communication of the aims and methods, involvement of the front-line manager in developing the pilot, and the development of strong working relationships across the sectors.

3.190 Teachers in both sectors reported positive experiences of working together in the primary classes. Secondary Maths teachers gained from watching how primary teachers interacted with their pupils, and applied these teaching methods to S1 and S2. They also discovered that there was a discontinuity in the use of Maths language between primary and secondary schools, and that primary teachers did not always use the most useful methods for teaching topics that would be built upon in secondary Maths, such as equations and long division. The increased understanding of cross-sector differences led to mutual learning in both school clusters.

3.191 The less positive aspects of work in the primary schools were timetabling issues and having insufficient time to discuss the lessons or pupils. Staffing problems, although sometimes unavoidable, also had an effect on primary liaison activities. Primary teachers felt that, in some cases, the wrong staff had occupied the specialist Maths posts, and that those with responsibility for the pilots should have had greater control over staffing decisions.

3.192 The work of primary teachers in the secondary schools differed between the two learning partnerships. In School 1, two primary teachers taught in secondary classes on a regular basis over the two years of the pilot, eventually taking full responsibility for their own classes there. In School 2, the focus was more on observation and cooperative teaching. Teachers emphasised the benefits of having two teachers in the class, particularly in terms of conducting practical work, and primary and secondary teachers again noted the value of observing and learning from each other's teaching methods.

3.193 Staffing problems caused difficulties in School 2, where only two primary teachers were able to visit for most of the second year of the pilot. Some teachers also expressed concerns that the role of these primary teachers visiting the secondary was not clearly defined.

3.194 The pilot had a range of positive impacts. Primary teachers reported that together, pilot staff were able to support and challenge pupils, which they believed led to an increase in pupil's interest and motivation in Maths. Pupils' comments support these arguments: the children enjoyed working with the secondary Maths teachers and felt that they had learned a lot during their time together. Although teachers were able to give examples of specific groups of pupils making "huge jumps" in Maths attainment, there was no evidence of a measurable overall improvement in Maths attainment among P7 pupils at the primary schools involved.

3.195 The pilot improved pupil/teacher ratios at both secondary schools, with smaller class sizes particularly benefiting the least able pupils. Teaching methods in S1 and S2 were influenced by the cross-sector work with primary colleagues, including a focus on more interactive methods and Maths games. These changes, and an increased focus on the use of technology such as Promethean Boards, led to a reported increase in pupil motivation.

3.196 Teachers believed the pilot had improved pupil attainment, but also stressed that the impact on attainment was likely to be seen in the academic year 2006/07, when the new Programme of Study had been fully implemented and the new S1 intake would have been working on the programme in P7. Quantitative analysis showed that Maths attainment had declined in School 1, and improved in S1 (but not in S2) in School 2. However, teachers explained that there were several reasons for this decline, such as the prior ability of individual year groups and decisions to test at a later date as a result of introducing the new Programme of Study. Cohort analysis showed that while one pupil cohort's performance improved compared to the East Ayrshire average over the course of the pilot, the other cohort's Maths attainment declined in relation to the education authority as a whole.

3.197 The numeracy pilot also had a positive effect on pupils' experience of transition to secondary school, both socially and academically. Pupils were glad to know somebody at the secondary school, and their positive experiences with these teachers in P7 had dispelled their fears about Maths in S1 and polished up their Maths in preparation for secondary school.

Improved cross-sector liaison, and particularly the introduction of the new Programme of Study, led to better transfer of information about pupils, allowing more accurate setting from the start of S1. This was viewed positively by both pupils and teachers.

## **CHAPTER FOUR    ENABLE AT EASTBANK ACADEMY**

### **Introduction**

4.1 This chapter covers the implementation, operation and impact of the Eastbank Network for Academic, Behavioural and Learning Education (ENABLE) project at Eastbank Academy in Glasgow. The ENABLE project was initially funded by Glasgow education authority and Eastbank Academy, and began in August 2002. Information relating to its implementation was therefore gathered retrospectively.

### **Aims of ENABLE**

4.2 The aims of ENABLE were to:

- improve the transition to secondary school for pupils at all levels, but particularly those at risk;
- ensure that by the end of S2 most ENABLE pupils will have attained a level of basic skills which will allow them to access the S3/S4 curriculum effectively;
- allow cross-fertilisation of methodologies and integrated working by introducing some cooperative teaching in the literacy/numeracy elements with English and Mathematics teachers;
- reduce class sizes in English and Mathematics; and
- be able to deliver a more appropriate and challenging curriculum to the remaining S1 and S2 classes, by narrowing the ability range.

### **Background**

4.3 In 1999, Eastbank Academy became a New Learning Community. It created a Child and Family Support Team with responsibility for the age group pre-5 to 18.

4.4 The schools in the Eastbank Academy cluster reside in some of Scotland's most materially deprived wards<sup>12</sup>. As such, Eastbank Academy experiences a high number of vulnerable pupils arriving in S1 with low educational achievement. Teachers reported that it was common for Eastbank Academy pupils in S1 to display a range of Reading/Comprehension ages from 7 years, 6 months to 15 years within a single class, and wider ranges have been known. Many of the pupils also have mild learning difficulties. The range of abilities and the individual pace of learning of these pupils led to additional consolidation requirements in S1.

4.5 Teachers at Eastbank explained that the least able, most vulnerable pupils were often held back by poor emotional development, and that they needed a lot of emotional support. The transition from primary to secondary school was regarded as a particular issue for these pupils, because of the number of different teachers that pupils in S1 had to get to know. Teachers also had difficulties getting to know the pupils and their individual needs when they taught a large number of S1 pupils.

4.6 It was recognised by staff at Eastbank that some of the pupils coming into S1 were struggling because of a lack of basic skills. As one teacher explained, there was a perceived

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<sup>12</sup> Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2006)

need “for children to have their needs met in secondary school”. He argued that their needs were met “in a holistic way” in primary schools, but that in secondary school “we’re losing them by the end of second year” because their needs were not met and they therefore failed to engage in education by the end of S2.

4.7 As a result of such concerns, key figures in the Learning Community discussed other ways of supporting these children. They decided to group them by ability and vulnerability and to create a tailor-made programme for their education in the first two years of secondary school. The resulting programme was Eastbank Network for Academic, Behavioural and Learning Education (ENABLE), which is one aspect of a whole school initiative called ‘Raising Achievement through Social Inclusion’.

### **The principles of ENABLE**

4.8 The principal aspect of the ENABLE project was the idea of establishing separate classes in S1 and S2 that would be taught literacy and numeracy by a primary specialist, giving the pupils two years to develop their basic skills before returning to mainstream classes in S3.

4.9 The project began in August 2002, when 30 pupils were selected and split into two classes, grouped by ability and vulnerability. It was hoped that having class sizes of only 15, and therefore more individual attention for each pupil, would benefit the pupils moving into S1. These pupils spent two hours with their base teacher every day (a primary teacher, referred to in this report as the ENABLE teachers). The rest of the day, they had one teacher for Social Studies (History/Geography/Modern Studies), a PSE slot, Technical, PE and Science. Where other S1 pupils had up to 15 teachers, the ENABLE pupils were taught by eight or nine. Pupils in ENABLE classes were therefore still integrated into the secondary school, but it was hoped that the transition from primary school would be smoother because they had fewer teachers than other S1 pupils.

4.10 Whereas the other pilot projects used secondary teachers to contribute to teaching in P7, ENABLE was based on the idea that pupils in the secondary environment would benefit from being taught by a primary teacher. As a network support teacher explained, “the routines and rules and methods are the same [as primary] – you’re only changing one thing, the environment”. He believed that this should lead to a smoother transition from primary to secondary school.

4.11 This model has been employed since 2002, although the number of ENABLE classes has since increased to three classes of 15 pupils in each year group instead of two. SEED funding from 2004/05 enabled the expansion of the programme.

### **Implementation of the ENABLE project**

4.12 The Depute Head at Eastbank Academy has responsibility for the structure, resourcing, monitoring, review and internal evaluation of the ENABLE project. In the first year of the project, secondary teachers were hand picked by the Depute Head and other senior staff to be involved in the scheme. They chose teachers they believed would be interested in adapting their curriculum by teaching other subjects: for example, a History teacher also taught Geography and Modern Studies to the ENABLE pupils.

4.13 When appointing the primary specialists (the ENABLE teachers), the senior staff at Eastbank looked for teachers with “skills in encouraging children” and “getting results from the lowest achieving pupils”. It was important to have a primary specialist to take the ENABLE classes, because “it would be hard for a secondary person, just because of the lower ability of the class... primary teachers are more capable of dealing with the lower end”. It was felt that a well trained primary teacher had a better picture of the development of the child, whereas secondary teachers tended to focus only on teaching their subjects.

### *Selection criteria*

4.14 The Head Teacher stressed the importance of placing children very carefully. A lot of information about individuals is used to place them in ENABLE classes, and the school also undertakes constant monitoring. Selection criteria for ENABLE are:

- Lower ability;
- Slower paced learners;
- Requiring greater consolidation;
- Requiring more focused support; and
- Not known to have serious behavioural difficulties.

Selection methods are:

- National Assessment Results in Mathematics, Reading and Writing;
- Suffolk Reading Scale results;
- Graded Mathematical and Arithmetic results;
- Information from Primary 7 teachers;
- Information from Eastbank Learning Community’s Child Support Team;
- Discussion with parents; and
- Collaboration between the S1 Coordinator and the Depute Head Teacher.

4.15 Staff emphasised that the reasons pupils have not achieved a basic level of skills in primary school are many and varied. In many cases, it may be that pupils are placed in ENABLE because they have “missed chunks of their education” due to illness or a history of non-attendance.

4.16 From the selection criteria and methods outlined above, it is clear that primary liaison is an important part of ENABLE selection. However, the Depute Head reported that there have been some problems getting the necessary information in time from the primaries, as they tend to administer National Assessments as late as possible. There have therefore been examples of pupils being placed in ENABLE on the basis of out of date information. For example, if a child misses a test because of absence, their records might suggest they are at level B when in fact they are capable of doing work to a level D standard.

4.17 The teachers involved in the project generally felt that the selection system works well, and the right children are placed in the ENABLE classes. Very few children have been moved once they have been placed in the ENABLE class, and when changes like these have



been made, the reasons tended to be behavioural rather than educational. For example, a few pupils have been transferred out of ENABLE because they were too disruptive. Some pupils have also been moved from mainstream classes into ENABLE, if it was judged that they were not coping with being in a mainstream class.

### ***Integration of primary teachers into the secondary school***

4.18 Two of the three ENABLE class teachers were interviewed about the implementation of ENABLE, as staffing difficulties relating to the third position meant that a permanent appointment was not made until the academic year 2005/06.

4.19 These primary teachers employed to teach numeracy and literacy in the ENABLE classes reported that working in the secondary sector had not posed any problems for them. One of the ENABLE teachers had previous experience of working in the secondary environment so was not concerned about this, and although the other initially found the prospect “daunting, because of the size of the children”, she reported that her fears were unfounded. Both ENABLE teachers had found the secondary staff “very welcoming and accommodating” and felt that the staff base was small, lively and friendly.

4.20 Secondary teachers also expressed the view that there had been no problems with the primary teachers integrating into the school. They were not seen as ‘primary teachers’ or any different to anyone else, partly because there is a wide range of staff at the school (for example primary teachers, secondary teachers, support workers, and development workers) so there is no discrimination or problem with staff working together.

### ***Resourcing***

4.21 The ENABLE teachers reported that there had been no problems accessing the resources they needed to teach the ENABLE classes. The only thing that had held them back were ICT issues: one ENABLE teacher explained that there was a delay in getting her classroom networked in order to use Successmaker software. However, this was seen as a minor problem rather than a major obstacle to the implementation of ENABLE.

### ***Staffing issues***

4.22 As the ENABLE project developed, some staffing issues emerged. As noted above, in the first year the school was able to choose the secondary teachers very carefully, focusing on teachers with specialist skills in encouraging the least able children and a willingness to adapt their curriculum. As the project grew, it was necessary to increase the involvement of other secondary teachers in the school, which the Depute Head explained was not ideal as “not everybody is suited to this type of teaching”. She explained that:

*“We do our very best to use the teachers who are more skilled, or more experienced with that type of child. To be honest, there are teachers who are not best suited to that particular job... who get reasonable results with the top end of the children, but they’ve got less patience or less inclination to differentiate their work for the less able”.*

4.23 However, by 2005 most of the teachers in the school were involved in ENABLE. Although Maths and English teachers tend not to teach ENABLE pupils until S3 (as the

ENABLE teachers take the literacy and numeracy classes in S1 and S2), the Depute Head explained that the “vast majority” of other subject teachers will have taught an ENABLE class, even though she recognised that “some of them are less well disposed towards some of the children”.

4.24 Despite this, one secondary teacher involved in the project expressed the view that, for the secondary teachers, “maybe a year or two off [ENABLE] here and there wouldn’t be a bad thing, but I think it’s good to spread this across the staff, across the teachers in the school so that everyone gets a chance to get involved”.

4.25 There were additional staffing difficulties associated with keeping a consistent third primary trained ENABLE teacher. There was initially a delay in appointing a third primary teacher because the guarantee of funding came late, so that most suitable primary teachers had already taken up employment. A new primary teacher was appointed for ENABLE and took up her post in August 2005. This position is financially guaranteed to 2007.

### ***Summary***

4.26 In summary, the ENABLE programme required specifically chosen secondary teachers, skilled in working with the less able children and prepared to adapt their curriculum. It also required primary trained teachers skilled in encouraging the least able pupils. The pupils were equally carefully chosen, with specific criteria, a key one being that the pupil does not have extreme behavioural problems. The ENABLE teachers had no problems integrating into the secondary school. As the ENABLE programme grew in the school, staffing issues began to emerge.

4.27 As a teacher at Eastbank reported, ENABLE is “not difficult to implement”, because all education authorities have primary teachers available, and most have schools grouped into clusters, allowing resources to be reallocated between schools.

### **Operation of ENABLE**

4.28 From 2003 onwards, there have been three S1 and three S2 ENABLE classes, with around 15 pupils in each. As the normal intake is around 270 pupils, ENABLE classes currently account for just under 20 per cent of the intake in each year.

4.29 ENABLE involves a more focused and concentrated input for the pupils, both academically and pastorally. The following sections outline the current operation of ENABLE, and the way that the programme has developed since its inception in 2002.

### ***The academic programme***

#### *Input from ENABLE teachers*

4.30 ENABLE pupils spend two hours a day with their ENABLE teacher, focusing on numeracy and literacy. One ENABLE teacher explained that she takes the ENABLE pupils “back to basics”, moving the secondary programme of work for Maths and English back two or three stages, so that they have new material but are not too challenged. She follows the secondary Maths and English curriculum, ensuring that pupils work in parallel with their peers (for example, by using the same textbooks as the other S1 and S2 classes), but breaks

down the programme of work so that three terms of planned work are covered over four terms.

4.31 ENABLE teachers have also used their experience in the primary sector to adapt the forward plans of the Maths and English teachers at Eastbank Academy, to make them more suitable for pupils at lower ability levels by using primary methodology. One ENABLE teacher explained that this involves a lot of “chalk and talk” rather than using textbooks. She also gives the ENABLE classes “a lot more thinking and listening skills... [and] a lot of discussion”.

4.32 As well as using their primary training in ENABLE classes, ENABLE teachers have been involved in teaching mainstream classes in S1 and S2, doing cooperative teaching and developing work for various departments in order to make the material more suitable for children of varying ability levels. One ENABLE teacher has also been involved in Learning Support, teaching Word Articulation Spelling and Pronunciation (WASP) and ‘Toe by Toe’ reading (a multi-sensory reading scheme).

#### *Input from other teachers*

4.33 Other secondary teachers take ENABLE classes for subjects such as Social Studies, PSE, Technical, PE and Science. For example, the ‘Social Studies’ teacher spends three periods a week with each ENABLE class, teaching History in the first term, Geography in the second term and Modern Studies in the third. She takes the classes on her own (rather than teaching cooperatively with the ENABLE teachers), although she also has input from a behavioural support assistant once or twice a week.

4.34 As with Maths and English, ENABLE pupils follow the same syllabus for other subjects as the mainstream S1 and S2 classes, but at a slower pace. The teachers “check they are dove tailing” with the mainstream curriculum in order to make the transition into S3 as easy as possible.

4.35 Some other Maths and English teachers have been involved in team teaching with ENABLE teachers, although this happened less frequently from the academic year 2005/06 because of timetabling issues. The secondary teachers who have taught within the ENABLE classes expressed surprise at the low levels the pupils were at (sometimes levels A and B). This, ENABLE teachers felt, was because secondary teachers have never been taught how to teach at this level, as all pupils are generally expected to be at level C or above when they come to secondary school. Before the introduction of ENABLE, pupils who were not at this level would have been taken away by Support for Learning. Many ENABLE pupils also receive input from Support for Learning, both within the class and on an individual basis.

4.36 In the academic year 2005/06, an additional programme focusing on balance and coordination exercises was introduced for a group of S1 and S2 pupils at Eastbank, after a local primary school reported that the programme had a positive impact on pupils’ learning. Between 20 and 25 S1/S2 pupils are currently taking part in this scheme: it is not designed specifically for ENABLE pupils, but the majority of the children involved are from ENABLE classes. The scheme has reportedly improved pupils’ balance, hand-eye coordination, keyboard skills, handwriting and drawing.

### ***The social and pastoral aspect of ENABLE***

4.37 Attention to the social and pastoral elements of transition was more prominent in feedback from consultees about the ENABLE scheme than it was in the other two pilots. ENABLE teachers noted that at the beginning of S1, ENABLE pupils tend to differ from other S1 pupils both emotionally and in terms of maturity. Teachers reported that many of the pupils are very insecure and afraid when they come into S1; they are scared of the size of the school, and they lack confidence and self-reliance. As a result of the differing needs of ENABLE pupils, there is a more focused and concentrated emphasis on pastoral care within the programme.

4.38 Staff at Eastbank reported that having primary trained ENABLE teachers was an important part of this focus on social and pastoral care, as it provides the ENABLE pupils with the continued experience of a more holistic and supportive primary-style approach. However, it appears that the personal characteristics and attitudes of individual teachers are also important in this context, as well as their primary training. The ENABLE teachers emphasised that they have always made a special effort to support the ENABLE pupils socially and emotionally as well as academically; for example one ENABLE teacher explained that she has always made it clear to pupils that “I am here to help you, not to judge you”. Pupil comments also suggest that ENABLE teachers have successfully encouraged their pupils to see them as a source of social and emotional support (this is discussed more fully later in this chapter).

### ***Parental involvement***

4.39 When P7 pupils are selected for ENABLE, their parents are invited for an evening meeting to explain the project, and parents have the opportunity to say if they do not want their child to be included in ENABLE. Teachers reported that most parents are relieved to know that their children will be in an ENABLE class because they are aware that their children have difficulties that need attention. A few would prefer their children to go to a special school because they see it as a more nurturing and gentle environment, but the majority are happy with the school’s decision. However, it was noted that some parents have refused permission for their child to join an ENABLE class because they felt that there would be a stigma associated with it. As will be discussed later, this appears to have been less of a problem than these parents feared.

4.40 After the initial contact, there is little parental involvement in ENABLE. There are lines of communication through Guidance teachers and parents’ meetings, but only 20-30% of ENABLE parents attend such evenings. The Depute Head at Eastbank commented how important it is for pupils to have interested parents: where there is a lack of parental interest, she feels that the school is “always trying to compensate for that”.

4.41 One ENABLE teacher explained that she has found it difficult to engage parents in involvement, as attendance at parents’ evenings is very poor. However, she explained that she had a much better response from parents when she started inviting them to spend an afternoon in their child’s class so they could see them work and talk to the teachers. This was often appreciated by parents who work shifts and are therefore unable to attend events in the evening. This ENABLE teacher also reported that parents know that if they want to come in to speak to the teachers at any time, they can contact the Depute to arrange this.

### ***Tackling the potential stigma associated with ENABLE***

4.42 As noted above, parents sometimes believe that there is stigma associated with being separated from the majority of pupils in an ENABLE class. Teachers at Eastbank confirmed that this was a potential problem: as the Depute Head noted, “you always worry about the stigma” with an initiative that targets the least able pupils.

4.43 However, teachers involved in the ENABLE programme explained that they had consciously worked quite hard to ensure that ENABLE pupils did not feel that they were in the class because they were ‘thick’. As one ENABLE teacher explained, “they come with the idea that they’re there because they’re stupid – I won’t accept this attitude”. Instead, he emphasised that there could be a variety of reasons why pupils might need help, for example if they have missed a lot of school, or have undiagnosed dyslexia etc. ENABLE teachers explain to their pupils that they will be doing the same curriculum as everyone else, and “they accept this”.

4.44 As a result of this effort on the part of ENABLE and other teachers, they believed that the majority of the pupils are “quite happy to be there”. No respondents thought that children felt stigmatised because they were in ENABLE; indeed, many teachers cited examples of children who they believed were unaware that the classes were based on academic ability. However, it could arguably be more hurtful for children to find this out from their peers than from their teachers: failing to correct pupils’ erroneous assumptions about class allocations could perhaps be seen as negative in these cases. There are perhaps implications here in terms of the school’s communication to pupils about what exactly ENABLE is.

4.45 Even where pupils were aware that they had been identified as a specific group, teachers believed that “it doesn’t bother many of them”. In fact, teachers reported that these children had the attitude that “‘it’s for our benefit – something that is going to help us’ rather than ‘we’re getting put in here to get kept out of the way, brushed under the carpet’”.

4.46 Pupils in mainstream classes are aware of the ENABLE programme, but teachers reported that “there are no labels”. As Eastbank is a New Learning Community school in one building, there are many other initiatives in place and several organisations working within the school. A wide range of staff are based in the school, including an Active Schools Coordinator, a Sport Development Officer, a Youth Development Officer, and staff working in Network Support, Learning Support and Behaviour Support. Because of this range of initiatives and posts, the pupils at Eastbank “don’t find it odd that some children do things differently”. As one teacher noted, “it’s a large inner city school, with 1300 children and 100 staff – classes of 15 moving about are not really noticed”. Classes are also named so that the ENABLE classes cannot easily be identified (e.g. 1F, 1G and 1K), although using neutral class names does not guarantee that the basis of class allocations will not become apparent to students.

4.47 ENABLE pupils still have non-ENABLE friends from their primary schools, and also mix socially outwith their ENABLE classes, so teachers did not feel that there were any negative aspects for the ENABLE pupils of being in the classes. The perceptions of ENABLE pupils themselves are explored in greater detail in later sections of this chapter.

### *Moving out of ENABLE*

4.48 ENABLE only covers S1 and S2, after which time pupils move back into mainstream classes. At the outset of the project, attention was focused on enabling the low achieving pupils to cope with the S3 and S4 academic curriculum.

4.49 In the academic year 2004/05, the first ENABLE pupils moved back into mainstream S3 classes. At this point, teachers recognised that some pupils experienced problems with the academic, social and pastoral transition. In S2, the pupils had had a very intense, focused method of teaching and in S3 this additional support was greatly reduced, meaning that moving from ENABLE to mainstream S3 classes could be a difficult experience. As one teacher noted, some pupils experience problems towards the end of S2 because “they realise they’re moving into the bigger school” and this worries them. However, this teacher reported that “once they’re there [in S3], they’re fine”.

4.50 There is still some differentiation between ENABLE pupils and other S3 pupils, if this is deemed appropriate based on ability levels. For example, some S3 courses for ex-ENABLE pupils include classes on ‘life skills’ and confidence, and subjects such as Maths are taught in a more practical way (such as travelling into town on the bus, working out how much change they should get in shops etc), rather than through mainstream lessons.

#### *Academic aspects of the transition to S3*

4.51 Although ENABLE pupils follow the same syllabus in S1 and S2 as the mainstream classes in order to make the transition to S3 as easy as possible, consultation with staff at Eastbank revealed that difficulties have been encountered because “academically, there’s a need to find suitable courses for them”. Some changes have therefore been made as the ENABLE programme has developed, in an attempt to make the transition to S3 smoother.

4.52 Some of the changes relate to the curriculum pupils follow in S3. The Depute Head explained that when the first ENABLE pupils went into S3, it became apparent that the Science curriculum was too difficult for them. From 2005/06 (when the second ENABLE intake went into S3), the curriculum was changed so that instead of doing separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses, ENABLE pupils did a single Access course in Science. It should be noted that this was an issue for other children in the mainstream classes as well, so, as one teacher noted, it is “unfair to blame this on ENABLE. It would happen anywhere and SQA are looking at this issue”. However, the Depute Head reported that this change in curriculum had helped to make the transition easier for the ex-ENABLE pupils.

4.53 In other subject areas, curricular changes were not necessary. For example, ENABLE pupils seemed to cope much better working through Foundation Courses in subjects such as History, Geography and Modern Studies.

#### *Social aspects of the transition to S3*

4.54 Some teachers expressed concerns that they have raised the expectations of the pupils in S1 and S2 because of the heavy input of ENABLE: they reported that “the children then miss the very focused approach when they go into the mainstream classes in S3”. Because of such concerns, staffing changes have also been made as the scheme has developed.

4.55 The primary trained ENABLE teachers are now more closely linked with other departments, and using pupil support assistants to take Toe by Toe reading lessons with ENABLE pupils has provided extra time for the ENABLE class teachers to support ex-ENABLE pupils within mainstream S3 classes. Although ENABLE teachers always offered informal support to ex-ENABLE pupils, these timetabling changes have formalised this support, and have also allowed teachers in other subjects to observe the ENABLE teachers working within their classes. Importantly, the informal support is still in place: ENABLE teachers encourage pupils to maintain contact with them when they move out of the programme, so that there is still an element of social and emotional support available to them. This is discussed more fully later in this chapter.

4.56 There is also close liaison between ENABLE teachers and Learning Support staff, in order to provide information about individual pupils as they move into mainstream classes. Extra support is still available to ex-ENABLE pupils who still lack basic skills: for example, some pupils still need Toe by Toe reading lessons every day.

### **Impacts of ENABLE**

4.57 The following sections outline the findings of the evaluation in relation to the impacts of ENABLE, including its effects on the pupils' experience of transition to secondary school, how ENABLE prepares pupils for S3, and the project's effects on attainment for both ENABLE and mainstream classes at Eastbank Academy.

#### ***Impact on the transition from primary to secondary school***

4.58 One of the aims of ENABLE was to ease the transition from P7 to S1 for the most vulnerable children. Teachers at Eastbank believed that the project has led to a smoother transition for these pupils, because of the smaller class sizes, having to get to know fewer secondary teachers, and the sustained input of primary teachers using the more holistic approach that pupils are used to in primary school.

4.59 ENABLE pupils experience the same transitions programme as other S1 pupils. For example, there are 'transitions days' where they visit the secondary school, Eastbank teachers visit the primaries, there are parents' evenings for all pupils, and additional meetings for the parents of potential ENABLE pupils. However, according to the Depute Head at Eastbank, the differences between ENABLE and mainstream classes mean that ENABLE pupils have a "hugely different experience of transition" compared to what they would have experienced if they had gone into a mainstream S1 class, because of the smaller class sizes, the different focus on the teaching of numeracy and literacy, and the social support available to them.

4.60 In addition, the continuity provided by the cluster support team (which works with pupils in primary school and continues to work with them at Eastbank) was reported to contribute to a smooth transition for the most vulnerable children.

#### ***ENABLE pupils' experiences of transition to secondary school***

4.61 As all research on ENABLE was conducted at Eastbank Academy, P7 pupils in the school's associated primaries were not interviewed. However, interviews were conducted with S1 pupils at several points throughout the evaluation to investigate how they had felt before the transition to secondary school and how they perceived ENABLE.

### *Expectations of the transition*

4.62 The ENABLE pupils interviewed said that they had liked being in primary school, although they said “the teachers didn’t help as much” as they did at Eastbank. The majority were worried and nervous about coming into S1, because of “meeting new people and teachers”, and because they were “coming to a different place with different people”. They had been looking forward to having lots of different classes, not being in the same class all the time, and meeting new friends.

4.63 Most of the pupils said that the concerns they had had about secondary school related to social rather than academic issues: the most frequently mentioned worry was that they would be bullied. However, as ENABLE is targeted at the least able pupils, it is perhaps not surprising that these children also reported having been worried about the school work in S1, thinking that it would be “scary” and “very hard”.

### *Experience of ENABLE pupils in S1 and S2*

4.64 Having made the transition from primary to secondary school, pupils made the following comparisons between the two:

*“The work’s better, you get more help than you did [at primary]”*

*“There are more things to do”*

*“It’s better here because [the ENABLE teacher] helps as much as she can”*

*“She won’t give you something you cannae do” but “works you up to your standard”*

There are smaller classes so they “get better help”

*“You get treated like an adult in S1”*

4.65 Although ENABLE pupils have fewer teachers than other S1 pupils, they reported having “millions of teachers” at secondary school, suggesting that the decision to reduce the actual number of teachers they encounter was perhaps the right one.

### *Pupils’ understanding of ENABLE*

4.66 As previously noted, consultation with teachers suggested that there was no stigma attached to being in ENABLE. Interviews with pupils investigated whether this was indeed the case.

4.67 Some children were not aware of the term ‘ENABLE’ or that they were in a different kind of class to other S1 pupils. For example, when one group of four S1 pupils was asked what it was like being in the ENABLE class, one boy asked “what’s ENABLE?” Three of the group were not aware they were in the ENABLE class, but one girl explained that it “gives you extra help”. Pupils who were not aware of ENABLE identified their ENABLE teacher as their “reggie teacher”. Such responses suggest that the school has been successful in ensuring that pupils did not feel singled out or specially treated. However, this appeared to be at the expense of openness about the ENABLE system, which could be argued to be detrimental in the long run (for example, in the case of disclosure by pupils who *do* know about ENABLE).



4.68 In another group of pupils, one girl explained that she had known about ENABLE before starting S1, as her parents were sent a letter explaining which classes she would be in at Eastbank Academy. She was initially “a wee bit upset” about being placed in ENABLE, as she thought that other pupils would “slag her off”. However, her cousin who was already at the school reassured her that ENABLE was not seen as a “low class” but was just there “for extra support”, after which she was not concerned about being in the ENABLE class.

4.69 Other pupils, mostly those interviewed after they had been at Eastbank Academy for a longer period of time, were more aware of the scheme. These pupils seemed happy with the situation, because of the rationale given to them by their ENABLE teacher that ENABLE was “no different from other classes –it’s the same work but you just get Maths and English five times a week instead of three”.

#### *Pupils’ views of the academic work in ENABLE*

4.70 Although pupils had been concerned about the academic work before starting in S1, most reported that it had actually turned out to be manageable. Most attributed this to the teaching styles used by their ENABLE teachers: for example, pupils explained that their ENABLE teacher “doesn’t shout” at them, and “explains things better [than other teachers]”.

4.71 One pupil explained that “[the work] is harder, there’s lots to do – but if you ask the teachers, they do help you, and tell you what you’re doing wrong – I didn’t get that in primary”. Pupils liked the fact that their teachers “try and make [the work] as easy as they can – they don’t give us hard work we’re stuck on for ages”. Instead, they start with easier work and “then move up to harder work if we can do it”. Pupils felt that their ENABLE teachers were more helpful than other teachers because:

*“[Other teachers] don’t explain as much – they just give you work and then you’ve to do it... [ENABLE teacher] explains it first, and if you’re stuck you can go to her – others say they’re busy”.*

4.72 Although some children still reported having difficulties with certain subjects, such as percentages and fractions in Maths, they generally felt they were coping well with their academic work. One S1 pupil commented that she liked Maths much more than she did at primary school: she did not like it at all before coming to Eastbank but she enjoys it now “because I’m in the ENABLE class and I get extra help for it now”. Pupils also recognised that smaller class sizes were important: one pupil explained that “Maths is easier now [in S1], cos classes are smaller and we get more of it”.

4.73 A small number of S1 pupils complained that in fact their school work was too easy, and said they felt they were treated as though they were still in primary school. Although they all agreed that they like their teachers and the work they do with their ENABLE teacher is fun, they felt that some teachers think they are ‘stupid’. These pupils would like to take on some more challenging school work and to be “treated like first years” rather than P7 pupils. However, it should be noted that this was a minority view, with most pupils reporting that the work they did was about the right standard.

## *Social support*

4.74 Teachers involved in ENABLE felt that an important aspect of the scheme was that, because classes were smaller, they were able to build up better relationships and a greater knowledge of each child due to all the individual attention they get and the extended amount of time they spend together. It was reported that this made the children feel much more secure. Indeed, some teachers believed that this security was the most crucial element of the ENABLE programme, because “some [children] have specific difficulties – providing a secure environment is often the most important thing for them” (for example, if they struggle with routine). One teacher also believed that the social element of ENABLE was important because having Guidance teachers was not sufficient for ENABLE pupils, who often “don’t have the confidence and maturity to come to them and say ‘I have a problem’”.

4.75 Consultation with ENABLE pupils supported the argument that the social aspect of ENABLE was very important to them. S1 pupils reported liking most of their teachers, describing them as “really nice and helpful”. All pupils said they would be able to go to their ENABLE teachers for help with any aspect of school life:

*“[ENABLE teacher] said if you are worried about your work and don’t know what to do, just bring it in and ask her – it doesn’t matter what subject it is. She even said if you are getting bullied or something, she would sort it out for you”.*

4.76 Some pupils felt that they could go to their ENABLE teacher “because we can tell her a lot of stuff” that they do not feel they could tell other teachers. They reported that “you can talk to her” and that they felt “she likes us”. One group even reported that “[the ENABLE teacher] is like our Mammy”.

4.77 Pupils attributed their good relationships with teachers to spending lots of their time with them. They also said that the amount of time they spent with their ENABLE teachers allowed them to “learn more”.

4.78 Despite the focus on pastoral care, staff explained that there have been occasions when pupils have reacted badly to ENABLE, developing behavioural problems when they are first challenged to think. These pupils are used to low expectations of them at primary school, whereas in ENABLE they are encouraged to work, and to think, and the teacher will make them complete this process. ENABLE teachers explained that they will wait for an answer instead of choosing someone else and moving on. However, teachers noted that the vast majority of pupils respond to ENABLE in a positive way.

## *Summary*

4.79 ENABLE pupils seemed to have made the transition to S1 with relatively little difficulty, and were positive about their experiences of ENABLE. Teachers and pupils alike reported that the social element of the programme was particularly important in ensuring a smooth transition, as well as the academic aspect of ENABLE.

## ***Impact on the transition from ENABLE to mainstream classes in S3***

4.80 One of the aims of ENABLE was to ensure that pupils had the basic skills by the end of S2 to enable them to access the mainstream curriculum in S3 and S4. As previously noted,

the S3 curriculum was adapted for the post-ENABLE pupils from August 2005 onwards, and measures were also devised to give them an increased level of personal support than would be usual in S3, because of problems identified in relation to both the academic and social aspects of the transition into mainstream classes.

4.81 The following section outlines the views of both pupils and teachers about the impact ENABLE has had on the transition into S3. All the post-ENABLE pupils interviewed as part of the evaluation had experienced the revised S3 programme, and their experiences therefore pertain to this method.

#### *Expectations of the transition into mainstream S3*

4.82 Most ENABLE pupils interviewed in S2 had mixed feelings about going into S3. Some were very nervous; they were worried that the work would be harder, they would be getting more homework, and they would have to do exams. One boy explained that he was “getting butterflies” in his stomach just thinking about the school work in third year. Another pupil commented that she “didn’t want to think about it”.

4.83 Pupils were also upset about the prospect of not having their ENABLE teacher any more. They were worried that their new teachers “might not explain things like [ENABLE teacher]”, and were nervous about the new teachers they would get because they “don’t know what they will be like”. This indicates a dependence on the ENABLE teacher allied to concerns about the sudden change.

4.84 Some pupils explained that they were not looking forward to third year because they would be split up from the friends they made in their ENABLE class, and one commented that she was scared because they will be “going into classes with new people”. Some pupils were also worried about the fact the classes would be bigger in S3.

4.85 However, other pupils felt more positive about the transition to S3 and were looking forward to having new teachers and mixing with other pupils. Most pupils thought that they would cope with the school work in S3 because they had been given third year work already “to see if we can handle it, that we’re ok”. This had “made sure we’re not struggling in third year”. As one pupil explained, “[ENABLE teacher] is good, we’ll be ready for third year... it will give us a better chance to pass our exams”.

4.86 One girl, whose brother had also been in ENABLE and was about to go into S4, argued that “they should still keep it [ENABLE]” because her brother is “doing really well now”. She felt that ENABLE is “good because in third year, you’ll be able to do it [the school work]”. Other pupils agreed that being in an ENABLE class had helped prepare them for S3, with one pupil stating, “I don’t think I would have coped in a non-ENABLE class”.

4.87 Although the pupils were upset about not having their ENABLE teacher any more, they explained that they would still feel able to go and talk to her sometimes. She told them that they can go and visit her if they need help, and they intended to take her up on this offer.

#### *Experiences of S3*

4.88 In retrospect, the S3 ex-ENABLE pupils were very enthusiastic and positive about their experiences in the ENABLE class and their ENABLE teachers. The teachers were

described as “smashing” and the pupils explained that they treated everyone fairly and “gave them chances”. The pupils felt that the ENABLE programme had helped them academically and most felt that they were able to cope with the school work in S3 as a consequence.

4.89 The majority of the pupils interviewed were pleased to be back in a mainstream class despite their positive experiences of ENABLE. When one pupil said that he wished he had been in the mainstream all along, so that he would have known all his classmates since S1 and could have tried the mainstream S1 and S2 curriculum (“so that if the work was harder, at least I could try to do it”), a girl responded “but do you not think you’re better now?” (having been in ENABLE) and he agreed, saying that he was now better prepared to follow the S3 curriculum.

4.90 One or two pupils reported that they preferred being in ENABLE, and wished they were still in the programme. This was because of the lack of individual attention available in S3; as one pupil explained, “now that we don’t do ENABLE, you can see the difference – classes are bigger. We used to get more one-on-one time in ENABLE”.

4.91 This view that the ENABLE programme prepared the pupils for integration with the S3 mainstream curriculum was unanimous. They believed that they would have found it more difficult to cope if they had been in mainstream classes all along:

*“I think I’d have found it harder, because you wouldn’t know what to do because your brain cannae keep up with it all”.*

*“If I had gone into a normal class in first year, I might not have learned anything”.*

*“I’m prepared for it really... The ENABLE programme gets you ready for going into third year”.*

4.92 When asked about school work and homework in S3, none of the pupils reported any great problems. One girl lacked confidence and said she felt “shy” at having to read out loud in class in case she was not as good as everyone else. Others’ confidence had been greatly boosted by an exam they had in class. They said that “even in a class with everyone else”, they have had tests and “did just as good as everybody else”. This seemed to surprise and please these pupils enormously.

#### *Continuation of support from ENABLE teachers*

4.93 Consultation with teachers highlighted the importance of sustained support for pupils in S3, because of both social and academic issues. For example, they may have difficulties mixing with other pupils, and may also find that the work is more challenging. As one ENABLE teacher noted, “[if] there is too much to read, too quickly, they throw up their hands, and think they can’t do it”.

4.94 However, their ENABLE teachers still have contact with them and are able to support pupils in these situations, because of the close relationships they have built up in S1 and S2: they “can get them back on task” and report that pupils “know they can ask you if they’re not sure”. This was seen as one of the most successful elements of the project, because the pupils know they can come to the ENABLE teachers for help if they need it.

4.95 This argument was supported by comments from S3 pupils, who reported that they still had informal contact with their ENABLE teachers and said that if they had any problems in S3, be they social or academic, they would go to these teachers. One boy said that “[the ENABLE teacher] comes to see me... he comes in and talks to me, and makes sure I’m alright”. One girl said:

*“The great thing about [the ENABLE teacher] is, she tells you like in third year and fourth year, any year you’re in, if you have any problems with any teacher or that, you can go back to her”.*

4.96 All pupils were glad that they still had this link to the ENABLE teachers. They were pleased that they still had access to support, in both a pastoral and an academic sense. Some pupils said that if they needed academic support, it was to the ENABLE teachers that they would go.

### *Summary*

4.97 Although teachers recognised that there are sometimes difficulties associated with the transition into mainstream S3 classes, generally they reported that the pupils have coped well with the transition and have more confidence than they would have done without the ENABLE project. Feedback from teachers also suggested that ex-ENABLE pupils were generally coping well with their fourth year courses. While it was reported that “yes, [the pupils] have their problems and they have their moments” and “things do go wrong, there are issues with S3 and S4”, the general feeling was that “on the whole it’s been much better [than before ENABLE]”.

4.98 Evidence from pupil consultation demonstrated that although S2 pupils were apprehensive at the thought of not having their ENABLE teacher any more, they did believe that they had been well prepared academically for S3. After the transition to S3, pupils were glad to be part of the mainstream and had made new friends. They also maintained close links with their ENABLE teachers.

### ***Impact on attainment of ENABLE pupils***

#### *Attainment of ENABLE pupils in S1 and S2*

4.99 Qualitative data from consultation with staff at Eastbank suggested that being in an ENABLE class had a positive impact on pupils’ attainment, although teachers also recognised that they should be realistic about what the pupils can achieve. As the Depute Head explained:

*“For a lot of ENABLE children, [level] E is an exceptionally good result, D is a good result... At the beginning, [the Head Teacher] had an ambition to get all the pupils to level E, but it’s unrealistic – level E is quite sophisticated and these children, no matter what you would do, have plateaued below level E. They just will have”.*

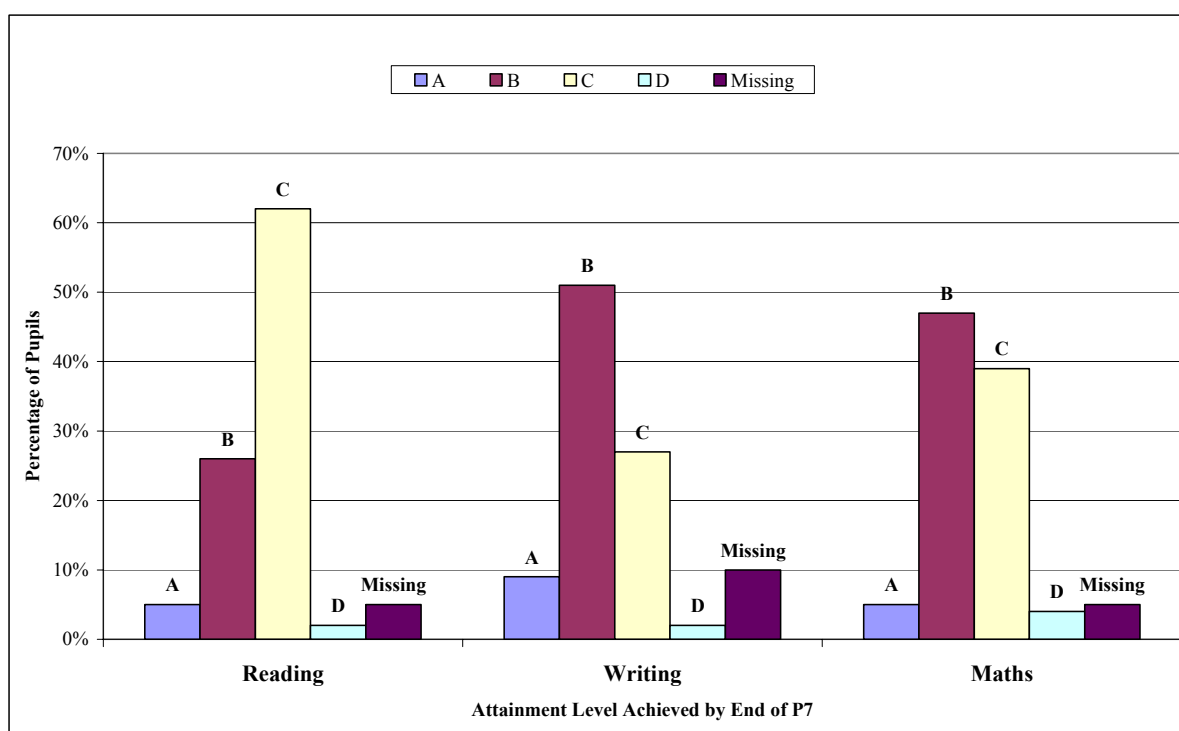
4.100 Despite this, teachers reported that the ENABLE pupils’ attainment had improved; for example, the S1 and S2 Coordinator believed that their attainment in English had improved more than it would have done if they had been in a mainstream English class. In his opinion,

“the whole process allows them to be able to access the same sort of curricula as... the rest of the school”.

4.101 ENABLE pupils have been tested more routinely than other classes, to ensure their progress is thoroughly monitored. Data were provided by Eastbank Academy for each intake of ENABLE, detailing their attainment levels for Reading, Writing and Maths at three stages: when they arrived in S1 (based on information provided by primary schools), by the end of S1, and by the end of S2.

4.102 The total number of pupils who entered ENABLE classes in the first three years of the project (and therefore whose results at the end of S2 were available) was 121. Figure 4.1 below presents the analysis of data received by Eastbank Academy about these pupils from their primary schools<sup>13</sup>, indicating the percentage of pupils who had achieved each level by the end of P7.

**Figure 4.1: Pupil attainment at the start of ENABLE**

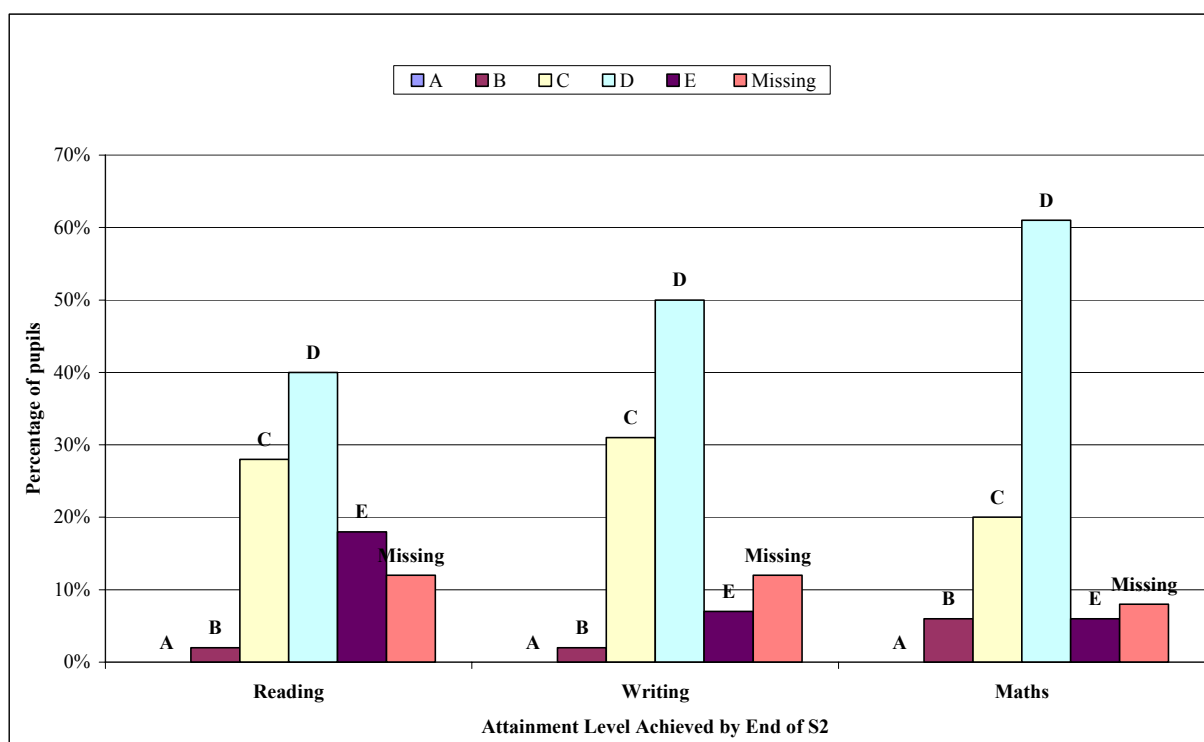


4.103 As can be seen in Figure 4.1 above, most pupils entering ENABLE classes had achieved level B or C in each of the areas measured. Attainment was particularly low in Writing: 9% of pupils had only achieved level A, and a further 51% had only achieved level B by the time they started S1.

4.104 Data for the same 121 pupils at the end of two years in ENABLE is presented in Figure 4.2 below.

<sup>13</sup> It is possible that there are some inaccuracies in the data provided by primaries; for example, there is no information about the dates of last testing for these pupils. However, this is the best information available on the attainment levels of pupils entering ENABLE.

**Figure 4.2: Pupil attainment at the end of ENABLE**



4.105 Figure 4.2 illustrates attainment at the end of S2 for all ENABLE pupils in the first three years of the project<sup>14</sup>.

4.106 Reading attainment had improved considerably during S1 and S2: while only 2% of ENABLE pupils were at the expected level (level D) at the end of P7, 18% had achieved the expected level (level E) by the end of S2. A further 40% had achieved level D by the end of S2. Fifty per cent of ENABLE pupils achieved level D Writing by the end of S2, and a further 7% had achieved level E. In Maths, 61% of pupils had achieved level D and 6% had achieved level E by the end of S2.

4.107 In addition, the attainment records include information on pupils who teachers judged to be capable of passing a certain level and had covered all the work competently at that level, but failed the test. Teachers explained that this may be because children panic when they know they are being tested. Taking teachers' judgements of pupils' abilities into account, this would increase the percentages of pupils capable of achieving level E to be 21% in Reading, 13% in Writing and 17% in Maths.

4.108 The percentages of pupils who were still at level C or below at the end of S2 for Reading, Writing and Maths were 30%, 33% and 26% respectively. However, considering that the equivalent percentages were 93%, 87% and 91% at the start of S1, it can be argued that ENABLE had a significant impact on the attainment of these pupils.

<sup>14</sup> Where data is 'missing', this indicates that pupils have either left the school, were no longer in the same class, or were absent at the time of testing

### *Key factors affecting attainment*

4.109 One ENABLE teacher believed that the key to improving the pupils' attainment was "the fact that we are working at the children's level, as opposed to giving them work that they cannot cope with". She explained that if a pupil says they cannot do a particular piece of work, she will take the time to ask them to explain why they are struggling. She reported that "a lot of the time, they actually can do the work, and when they realise that, it's a great sense of achievement for them".

4.110 Another key feature of ENABLE identified in this context was the slower pace of learning, and the fact that smaller class sizes made children feel more at ease asking questions.

### *Post-ENABLE attainment*

4.111 Teachers who had contact with ex-ENABLE pupils further up the school also believed that they were achieving more than they would have done if they had been placed in a mainstream class in S1 and S2. For example, one Geography teacher, interviewed towards the end of the academic year 2005/06, commented that some of his fourth year classes were working to general or credit level, and two ex-ENABLE pupils within those classes were sitting the credit exam, which he would not have expected. As there were no exam results for these pupils at the time of this interview, the teacher stated that "attainment remains to be seen", but his feeling was that they will do better as a result of being in ENABLE. From his point of view, "attainment is getting there".

### *Standard Grade results*

4.112 Analysis of Standard Grade results also demonstrates that ex-ENABLE pupils have achieved more than they might have been expected to if they had been in mainstream classes throughout secondary school.

4.113 As part of the Depute Head's monitoring of the project, previous results were collected for a group of 39 pupils who entered S1 in 2000, and who she judged would have been placed in ENABLE had it been in existence at that time. These pupils sat their Standard Grades in 2004.

4.114 Of the 39 pupils, 13 had left Eastbank Academy by 2004. Most of these pupils had dropped out of mainstream education before the beginning of S4, although a few remained on the school roll. A further five pupils were still on the school roll at the start of S4, but became disengaged from school before the end of S4 and therefore did not attend any exams. Of the remaining 21 pupils, 15 achieved 4 or above (classed as a general pass) in Standard Grade English, and two achieved a pass in Maths.

4.115 In 2005/06, the first ENABLE pupils sat their Standard Grades. Of the original 31 ENABLE pupils, two had left the school before the end of S2. All of the remaining 29 sat Standard Grade English, and 17 achieved a 4 or above. Twenty pupils sat Standard Grade Maths, and five achieved 4 or above. The remaining nine ex-ENABLE pupils took an alternative course (Access 3) in Maths.



4.116 Comparing these sets of results demonstrates that while 38% of potential ENABLE candidates passed Standard Grade English in 2004, this figure had increased to 59% for the first ENABLE pupils. Just over 5% of potential ENABLE pupils passed Standard Grade Maths in 2004, whereas just over 17% of the first ENABLE intake achieved a pass in Maths.

4.117 Importantly, the drop-out rate was markedly different for the ENABLE pupils: while only 21 of the 39 pupils in the comparison group were still at school to sit their Standard Grades in 2004, all but three of the ENABLE pupils were still engaged in mainstream education in 2006. Two had moved schools, meaning only one of the ENABLE pupils had dropped out of mainstream education by the end of S4. This pupil was instead engaged in a Right Track programme (daily provision in Glasgow aimed at pupils who have stopped attending school).

### *Summary*

4.118 The Depute Head at Eastbank Academy argued that “everything we’ve done test-wise... to do with the academic progress, their learning, in their national tests, show much more significant improvement than we would’ve had [without ENABLE]”. Although some of the ENABLE pupils’ attainment was still below average, analysis of 5-14 attainment results indicate that many of them had achieved level D or E by the end of S2. Performance at Standard Grade had also improved, compared to an equivalent group of pupils who sat exams in 2004.

4.119 Senior staff at Eastbank reported that ENABLE had succeeded in improving children’s basic skills. As the Depute Head argued, “I think we’ve probably got them as high as we could get them under mainstream secondary school education”. However, she also noted that:

*“There is now a level of expectation from the child and from the parent of a certain level of input, which we’re finding it difficult to sustain because we’ve got so many resources put into them in first and second year. So you’re solving one problem and creating another”.*

### ***Impact on attendance/engagement with school***

4.120 ENABLE does not only focus on academic attainment. As one teacher commented, “success is relative... [and is] defined in a different way by these kids”. Thus, even if attainment did not improve among ENABLE pupils, the social and pastoral element of the scheme could still be viewed as being successful, for example if it has helped them remain within the education system rather than dropping out.

4.121 Teachers at Eastbank reported that one of the most important effects of ENABLE was an improvement in attendance among pupils, and an improved attitude towards school in general: “children who would’ve given up very quickly are still engaged at the end of second year”.

4.122 As noted above, the Depute Head analysed the profiles of previous pupils who would have been in the ENABLE programme had it been running when they were in S1, and a large number (18 of the 39 pupils) had dropped out of the system by S3 or S4. The first intake of ENABLE pupils, however, were all still at school in S3 (excluding two pupils who moved

schools), prompting one ENABLE teacher to comment “it’s worked – we haven’t lost any of them, they’re all still here in third year”. One pupil subsequently left school during S4, but the Depute Head believed that one of the main successes of the ENABLE programme was that the pupils had “somehow got the message that their attendance matters”.

4.123 For many ENABLE pupils, this continued engagement with school was the main impact of the scheme. As one ENABLE teacher argued, there will always be some pupils who need one-to-one help when they leave ENABLE classes. He cited the example of one ex-ENABLE pupil who was in S4, commenting that “she is never going to achieve, because [the ability] is just not there – but at least she’s still here [at school]”.

4.124 While in previous years many pupils simply dropped out of the system, data provided by Eastbank Academy show that the average attendance (the percentage of possible sessions attended) for S2 ENABLE pupils in 2005/06 was 80%. The average for the year group as a whole was 86%. Although ENABLE attendance was slightly lower than the whole-year average, this was still viewed as a positive step forward by staff at Eastbank, who stressed that although attendance could be better among ENABLE pupils, there are numerous factors influencing attendance and the school “cannot address everything”.

### ***Social development, self-esteem and motivation***

4.125 Teachers reported that as well as improving attendance and increasing the pupils’ basic skills, ENABLE has increased their confidence and contributed to their personal development. Staff gave the example of a pupil who was an elective mute; she had so little confidence that her primary teachers told the staff at Eastbank that they would never even persuade her to speak. However, “she has really come out of her shell” in ENABLE, which her teachers think is due to being in a small class of similar ability.

4.126 Teachers reported that the “social and caring side” of ENABLE plays an important part in motivating pupils. As one ENABLE teacher noted, family life for many ENABLE pupils is “not 100%” so “they need some form of structure at school and we are that structure... We encourage them to motivate themselves in order to give them a feeling of self-worth”.

4.127 This argument was supported by other teachers who commented that the bond between the ENABLE teachers and their pupils is “extremely strong”. One teacher felt that “[ENABLE pupils] are vulnerable, and it’s nice for them to know that they’ve got someone they can go to without fear”.

4.128 One of the ENABLE teachers commented that the project has been better than he could have imagined. He gave the example of working with two boys on ‘Toe by Toe’ reading, and said “it takes me back to what teaching ought to be”. As he has seen their “confidence come along leaps and bounds” (not just in reading, but inter-personally as well), he explained that “I leave them feeling buoyed up”.

4.129 Although parents are sometimes worried about the potential stigma associated with ENABLE, a network support teacher at Eastbank explained that rather than feeling stigmatised by being put in an ENABLE class, a lot of pupils find it reassuring and it actually improves their confidence. He explained that the ENABLE pupils have “always been in the bottom group – they very rarely move through groups throughout primary”. This means that

“they’ve always been in a wee group of two or three – now, they realise there’s 15 other people who have difficulty as well”. It “increases their confidence, boosts their self-esteem” when they realise that they have the same problems getting through life. Without ENABLE, this teacher believed that “many of them would have become victims”. Instead, they had a “group identity”, and “it’s a safety in numbers thing”.

### ***Impact on non-ENABLE S1 and S2 classes***

4.130 As well as benefiting the least able pupils, the ENABLE programme aimed to improve the attainment of all S1 and S2 pupils, by reducing class sizes and narrowing the ability range in the mainstream classes, allowing teachers to deliver a more appropriate and challenging curriculum to these pupils.

#### *Class sizes*

4.131 Class sizes for Maths and English in S1 and S2 have been reduced since the introduction of ENABLE. Before 2002, average class sizes were 30 (ENABLE classes were half the norm at the time). Class sizes have since been reduced to an average of 22, and the Scottish Executive has ensured sufficient staffing to reduce English and Maths class sizes to 20 from August 2007.

4.132 Senior staff at Eastbank explained that they had wanted some flexibility within the Scottish Executive guidelines so that the *average* class size would be below 20, rather than stipulating that *all* classes must be below 20. This approach has allowed certain classes to be much smaller, i.e. the ENABLE classes, which are made up of 15 pupils on average. ENABLE pupils have therefore benefited from much smaller class sizes, while other pupils may be in classes of more than 20.

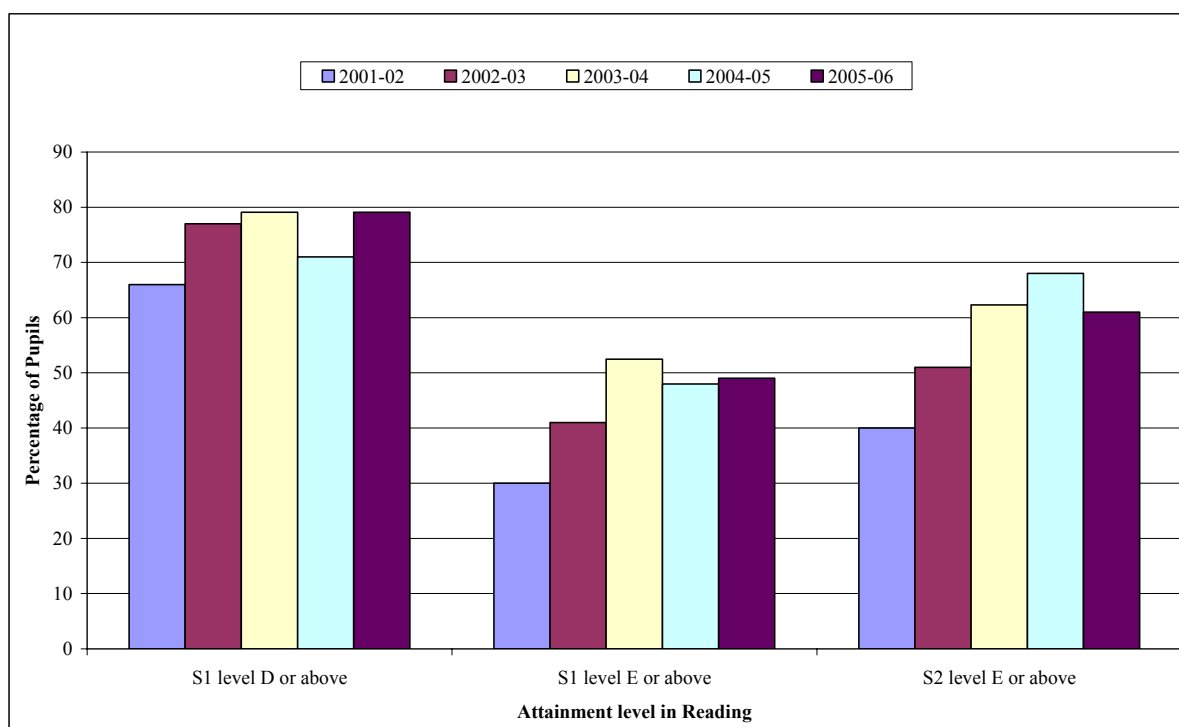
4.133 The reduction in class sizes was partly a result of the creation of separate ENABLE classes, although additional teaching staff have also been employed in English and Maths in order to tackle the issue of pupil/teacher ratios in these subject areas.

#### *Attainment of non-ENABLE S1 and S2 pupils*

4.134 Although not all S1 and S2 pupils are now in smaller classes, teachers reported that ENABLE has nonetheless had positive effects on the non-ENABLE pupils: “there are advantages for other classrooms too – the teachers can progress at a faster rate” because “they’re not trying to hurry or push or drag them [less able pupils] along”. Teachers therefore believed this would help to raise attainment across the whole school, arguing that “everyone’s getting a better start to S1 and S2”.

4.135 S1 and S2 attainment data were analysed from 2001/02 (the year before ENABLE was implemented) and are presented in Figures 4.3 to 4.5 below.

**Figure 4.3: Reading attainment at Eastbank Academy**



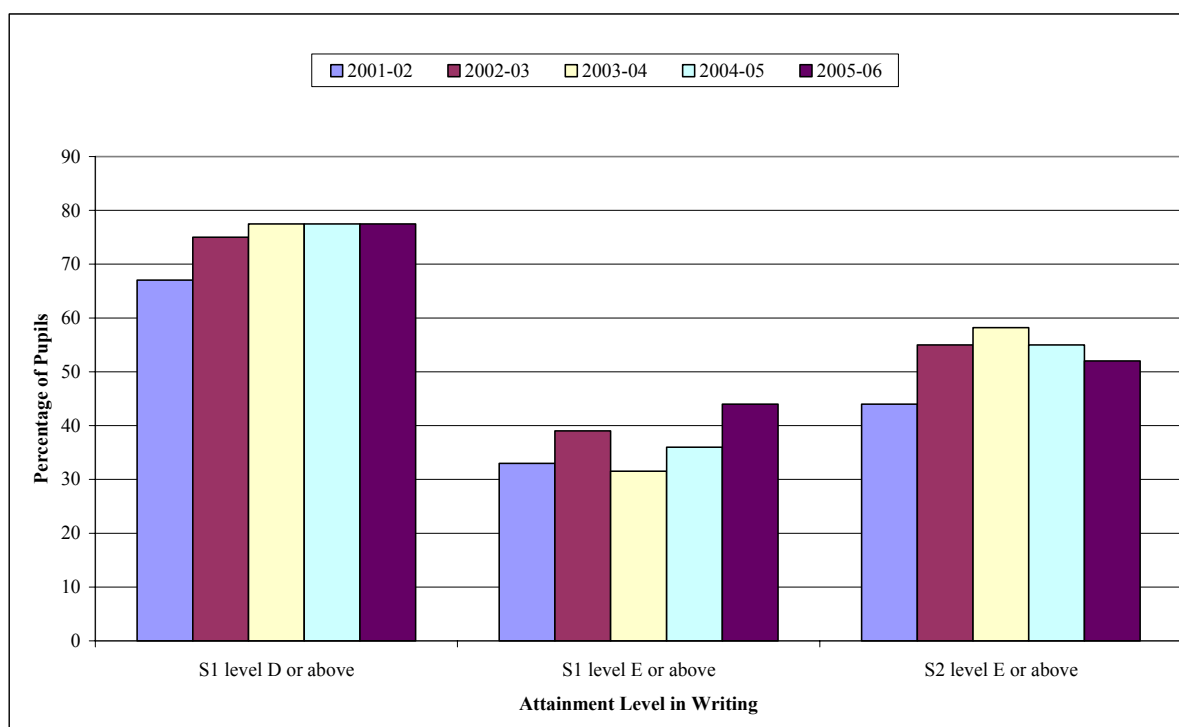
4.136 Although S1 Reading attainment at Eastbank peaked in 2003/04, it improved overall during the course of the ENABLE project. In 2001/02, 66% of S1 pupils achieved level D or above in Reading and 30% achieved level E or above. This had increased to 79% and 49% by 2005/06.

4.137 The percentage of S1 pupils achieving level D or above at Eastbank was exactly the same as the Glasgow average in 2001/02, but by 2005/06 the Eastbank average was ten percentage points above the Glasgow average (79% compared to 69%). The percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above rose slightly across Glasgow as a whole (from 28% in 2001/02 to 31% in 2005/06); meanwhile, attainment at Eastbank increased from 30% to 49%.

4.138 A similar pattern was observed for the percentage of S1 pupils achieving level E or above: the Eastbank Academy average was two percentage points above the Glasgow average in 2001/02, but had risen to 18 percentage points above the average in 2005/06.

4.139 S2 Reading attainment also improved, from 40% achieving level E in 2001/02 to 61% in 2005/06. This represented an increase from nine percentage points below the Glasgow average in 2001/02 to five percentage points above the average in 2005/06.

**Figure 4.4: Writing attainment at Eastbank Academy**

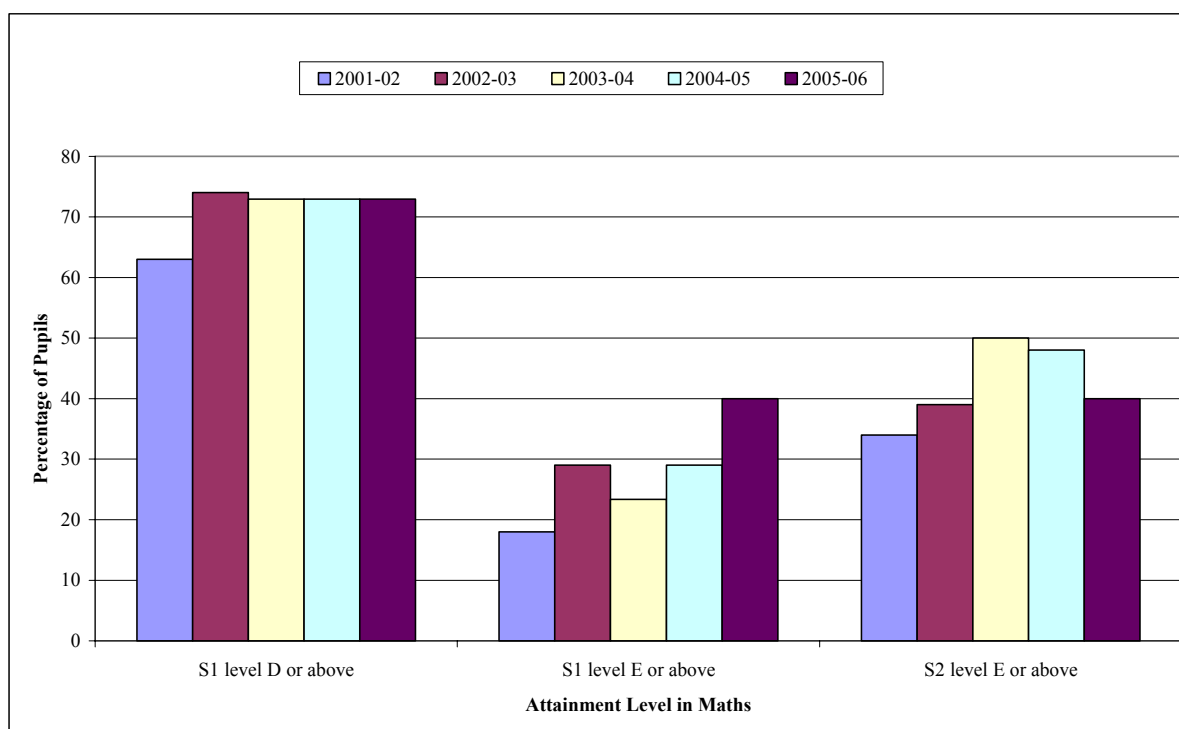


4.140 S1 Writing attainment also improved over the last five years. In 2001/02, 67% of S1 pupils achieved level D or above; this had increased to 77% by 2003/04 and then remained stable until 2005/06. The Glasgow average rose from 55% to 59% in the same time period.

4.141 The percentage of S1 pupils at Eastbank achieving level E or above also rose, from 33% in 2001/02 to 44% in 2005/06. These figures were well above the Glasgow average during all five years, which remained relatively stable around 17%.

4.142 Writing attainment in S2 also improved over the course of the ENABLE project, although it peaked in 2003/04. Overall, the percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above rose from 44% (one percentage point above the Glasgow average) in 2001/02 to 52% (five percentage points above the average) in 2005/06.

**Figure 4.5: Maths attainment at Eastbank**



4.143 In Maths, S1 attainment rose between 2001/02 and 2005/06, with 63% of S1 pupils achieving level D or above in 2001/02 and 73% achieving the same level in 2005/06. These results were very close to the Glasgow average, which rose from 64% to 72% over the same time period.

4.144 The percentage of Eastbank pupils achieving level E or above also increased, from 18% (two percentage points above the Glasgow average) in 2001/02 to 40% (14% above the average) in 2005/06.

4.145 S2 achievement also improved, with the percentage of S2 pupils achieving level E or above in Maths from 34% in 2001/02 to 40% in 2005/06, although it peaked at 50% in 2003/04. However, attainment at Eastbank did not improve in line with the results across Glasgow: in 2001/02 Eastbank was eight percentage points behind the average, whereas in 2005/06 this had increased to 16 percentage points.

### *Summary*

4.146 ENABLE was reported to have a positive impact on pupil attainment, with many ENABLE pupils mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills by the end of S2. Performance at Standard Grade also improved, compared to an equivalent group of pupils who sat exams in 2004. Importantly, the programme was successful in improving attendance and engagement with mainstream education: many pupils who would have dropped out of the school system were still attending school in S3 and S4. Teachers also reported observing an increase in the pupils' confidence and a positive impact on their personal development.

4.147 Although many factors influence whole-school attainment results, such as the reduction in class sizes (which was partly due to ENABLE and partly due to the receipt of

increased funding to employ additional staff), teachers believed that the narrowing of the ability range facilitated by the introduction of ENABLE had also had a positive impact on the mainstream S1 and S2 classes, with attainment in S1 and S2 improving over the last five years.

### ***Impact on teachers***

4.148 The ENABLE project also had an effect on the teachers involved. One teacher said that her “teaching methods have been turned upside down” as a result of her involvement in the ENABLE classes. Analysis of the pupils’ cognitive ability testing found that their learning styles were directly opposed to her preferred teaching style: they were more suited to activity-based learning. She therefore tried to change her teaching style to suit their learning needs.

4.149 ENABLE also affected secondary teachers who teach the mainstream classes: as one teacher commented, “having ENABLE means [the other teachers] can move on with their other classes”, whereas previously they would have had to have dealt with the ENABLE children as well as the mainstream pupils.

4.150 ENABLE teachers have also worked within mainstream classes in a variety of subjects, in order to support teachers and pupils, allowing primary and secondary teachers to share teaching strategies and methods. This cross-sector working was reported to have had a positive impact on both parties, with each teacher picking up ideas and methods from the other.

### ***Possible improvements to ENABLE***

4.151 Staff consulted at Eastbank Academy were generally very positive about the project, and few could think of possible improvements. Those who did put forward suggestions for improvements tended to focus on communication between teachers: for example, one ENABLE teacher felt that there could be “a wee bit more coordination between the three sets of classes”. This teacher reported that it is very beneficial to share good practice between ENABLE teachers, and that this could happen more. Other staff involved in the project agreed that time constraints meant that it was sometimes difficult to organise meetings and they experienced problems when “trying to get everyone together at the same time”.

4.152 Another suggestion was to reduce class sizes still further. One teacher felt that because they are dealing with “so many kids with so many problems”, 15 in a class “sounds great” but these are “children who can’t read, and can’t write – they are very, very demanding because their skills are so poor”. However, the same teacher recognised that “resources are so stretched” that smaller class sizes were very unlikely to be implemented.

4.153 One teacher also expressed some concerns about pastoral issues for the ENABLE pupils. This teacher felt that these issues are “better dealt with by one person, [who is] more sympathetic to that kind of person [ENABLE pupils]”. He suggested that having a primary specialist formally providing this pastoral care all the way through the school would be an improvement to ENABLE, rather than relying on informal pastoral support after S2.

## **The future of ENABLE**

4.154 Funding for three ENABLE teachers is secured until 2007, but the Depute Head explained that the senior management team at Eastbank hope the positions will be a permanent aspect of the school. She also commented that there is definitely a need to have three ENABLE teachers, as “there are always enough children who need the level of support that ENABLE provides”.

4.155 From the academic year 2006/07, ENABLE continues to operate as described in this chapter. Minor changes are planned for the future, including a new focus on providing more vocational and practical courses for ex-ENABLE pupils. Although the idea was for ENABLE pupils to improve their basic skills in English and Maths in order to allow them to access other areas of the curriculum, senior staff at Eastbank explained that “that’s all well and good, but it’s still very focused on the academic side... there are still lots of children jumping through the wrong hoops”. These pupils may well be achieving more than they would have done without ENABLE, but “we’re still asking them to work hard at things they’re not necessarily ever going to be good at”. As a result, the school is hoping to provide more appropriate courses in more practical subjects, or different types of accreditation, for these pupils in the future.

4.156 The success of ENABLE has also led to the introduction of ‘enhanced’ classes at the top end of the ability range. Similar tests have been used to allocate the 80 most able pupils into four enhanced classes. This move towards streaming (rather than putting pupils in different sets for different subject areas) can be seen as a result of the perceived success of having separate ENABLE classes. The remaining ‘standard’ pupils are still set for English and Maths, but remain in non-streamed classes for other subjects.

## **Conclusion**

4.157 This chapter has addressed the implementation, operation and impacts of the ENABLE programme at Eastbank Academy.

4.158 In terms of implementation, the research found that ENABLE required specifically chosen secondary teachers, skilled in working with the less able children and prepared to adapt their curriculum. It also required primary trained teachers skilled in encouraging the least able pupils. Pupils were equally carefully chosen to take part in the programme.

4.159 ENABLE was based on the idea of establishing separate classes in S1 and S2 that would be taught literacy and numeracy by a primary specialist, giving the pupils two years to develop their basic skills before returning to mainstream classes in S3. ENABLE thus involves a more focused and concentrated input for the pupils, both academically and pastorally. ENABLE pupils spend two hours a day with their ENABLE teacher, focusing on numeracy and literacy. Other secondary teachers take ENABLE classes for subjects such as Social Studies, PSE, Technical, PE and Science.

4.160 As the programme has developed, some minor staffing issues emerged; however, these did not cause major problems to the operation of the project. Some changes were made to the post-ENABLE S3 courses, for example in Science, in recognition of the problems encountered by ex-ENABLE pupils accessing mainstream courses. Parental involvement has



been difficult to achieve, but new ways of engaging parents have been developed over the course of the project.

4.161 ENABLE was reported to have a range of positive outcomes for pupils at Eastbank Academy, particularly because of the fact that it provides a secure environment for the child. Smaller class sizes, and the level of social and academic support available, had a positive impact on pupils' experiences of the transition to S1. Pupils were positive about their experiences of ENABLE, liked their teachers and felt able to go to them for help with any aspect of school life.

4.162 Generally, teachers felt that pupils coped well with the transition into mainstream S3 classes. Pupil consultation supported this claim: children felt they had been well prepared academically for S3, and were confident that they could maintain close links with their ENABLE teachers.

4.163 ENABLE was also reported to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Many ENABLE pupils had mastered basic literacy and numeracy skills by the end of S2, and analysis of Standard Grade performance showed that ENABLE pupils had done better than a comparable group who sat exams in 2004. ENABLE succeeded in keeping pupils engaged in mainstream education, and teachers also reported observing an increase in the pupils' confidence and a positive impact on their personal development. Non-ENABLE pupils also benefited from the introduction of the project and the resulting reduction in class sizes.

## CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Introduction

5.1 This chapter draws conclusions from all three transitions pilots, including cross-case comparisons of the aims, methods and outcomes of each project. Consideration of the key factors contributing to the success (or otherwise) of the pilots also allows broad recommendations to be made regarding the potential future roll-out of such initiatives.

### Cross-case comparison

#### *Aims of the pilots and how these were addressed*

5.2 The three pilots had very similar aims. Firstly, all the projects focused on supporting the curricular transition to S1, with a particular focus on literacy and/or numeracy. The literacy pilot in North Lanarkshire and the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire aimed to secure continuity of learning and teaching for all pupils from primary to secondary school, by means of special inputs in both sectors. East Ayrshire formalised this via the development of a new Programme of Study.

5.3 The ENABLE project, in contrast, was confined to the secondary school and focused less on curricular continuity. It also targeted the most vulnerable and least able only. ENABLE pupils were often taken ‘back to basics’ in order to establish basic literacy and numeracy skills in S1 and S2, rather than focusing on picking up where they had finished in P7. The element of continuity that was viewed as most important in this pilot was the introduction of primary trained ENABLE teachers, so that the pupils were taught using methods they were used to. While schools in all three local authority areas recognised the social and pastoral issues involved in the transition from primary to secondary school, this was most keenly noted with ENABLE, where teachers focused heavily on adopting teaching and learning strategies to suit the needs of the least able and most vulnerable pupils.

5.4 Secondly, all three pilots wished to improve cross-sector liaison. In North Lanarkshire, the secondary-based Literacy Development Officers (LDOs) were responsible for liaison with their associated primary schools, developing working relationships, sharing teaching methodologies with the primary staff and working with pupils. They also brought back information about primary teaching methods to their secondary schools.

5.5 In East Ayrshire, the aims of the pilot noted that there was already ‘existing good work’ in both primary and secondary sectors, but highlighted the need for a ‘clear emphasis on curricular liaison’ between the two. In contrast to North Lanarkshire, where the LDOs were responsible for cross-sector liaison, the numeracy pilot utilised funding to deploy a larger number of primary and secondary staff in each others’ sectors. While this developed differently in the two learning partnerships involved in the numeracy pilot, staff in each school reported that it had worked well and cross-sector relationships had improved immensely.

5.6 Although the ENABLE project did not involve specific work within Eastbank Academy’s associated primary schools, there were elements of cross-sector liaison. Information was gathered from P7 pupils within both the primary and secondary settings before the transition to S1, and the secondary school relied heavily on information from the

primaries in order to place pupils in ENABLE classes. One of the aims of ENABLE was also to allow ‘cross-fertilisation of methodologies and integrated working’, which was achieved by introducing some cooperative teaching between primary trained ENABLE teachers and other secondary school staff.

5.7 Thirdly, all pilots included an aim to reduce pupil/teacher ratios in S1 and S2 in the relevant subject areas. This was achieved through a combination of pilot funding and other staff changes within schools. Only staff in East Ayrshire attributed the reduction in class sizes solely to the transitions pilot.

5.8 Some aims were specific to individual pilots. For example, the numeracy pilot in East Ayrshire included aims relating to ensuring consistency of practice in the assessment of attainment, and a focus on formative assessment. Although North Lanarkshire’s aims did not mention assessment, the LDOs did undertake training in formative assessment and introduced it to their departments as part of the pilot nonetheless. They also monitored, administered and marked National Assessments within their schools.

5.9 Similarly, the pilot in North Lanarkshire included an aim to encourage teaching literacy on a team teaching basis. While this was not mentioned in the aims of the numeracy pilot, the cross-sector working described above often involved team teaching.

5.10 Finally, one of Eastbank Academy’s aims was necessarily specific to ENABLE. As it was the only pilot focusing on a specific group of the least able pupils, one of its aims was to deliver a more appropriate and challenging curriculum to the remaining S1 and S2 classes by narrowing the ability range of these classes.

### ***Methods of the pilots***

5.11 As noted in Chapter One, each pilot used a slightly different model in terms of the subject area focus, which pupils were targeted and the type of teaching input. However, there were also a number of similarities between all three pilots in relation to the methods employed. The following section provides a cross-case comparison of the ways the three pilot projects were put into practice, and also includes feedback from consultees about the structures and methods used.

### ***Pupils involved***

5.12 The literacy and numeracy pilots aimed to include all pupils from P6 to S2, with a particular focus on pupils moving from P7 to S1. Although some elements of these projects did target specific ability groups, the pilots were not targeted at low achievers, and key staff were clear from the start that they were ‘not Learning Support’. ENABLE, in contrast, was targeted specifically at the least able and most vulnerable pupils. This created the potential for stigma to be associated with ENABLE, and teachers reported being particularly careful to address this as an issue. They appear to have been successful: no pupils reported feeling stigmatised by being part of ENABLE, and indeed not all pupils were aware that they were part of an ability-based class. However, this has implications in terms of openness and honesty, and could have a negative impact on the longer-term; for example, in the case of disclosure by pupils who *do* know about ENABLE. There are perhaps implications here in terms of the school’s communication to pupils about what exactly ENABLE is.

### *Parental involvement*

5.13 Parental involvement differed between ENABLE and the other two pilots. Parental permission is required for children to be placed in an ENABLE class, so parents are invited to meetings once their child has been selected. Parents were encouraged to maintain communication with the school, though parents' evenings and Guidance teacher meetings, although Eastbank have had difficulty engaging parents and there is typically low attendance at parents' evenings. Encouraging parents to visit their child's class during the day has elicited a better response.

5.14 In contrast, the literacy and numeracy pilots entailed very little parental involvement, although the LDOs in North Lanarkshire did encourage parents to help their children with literacy, for example by producing homework booklets which required input from parents, and using parents' evenings as an opportunity to communicate their work.

### *Involvement of secondary teachers in primary schools*

5.15 As noted previously, the ENABLE project did not involve working in the primary schools. The involvement of secondary staff in their associated primaries was relatively similar in North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire, with secondary specialists (either the LDOs or the secondary Maths teachers) visiting primary classes on a regular basis to work with pupils and teachers.

5.16 In both of these pilots, primary visits began with a period of observation, which led to more direct contact with pupils as working relationships developed. Once teachers became involved in the primary classes, their activities were fairly similar in both the literacy and numeracy pilots. Secondary teachers worked either within the whole class by team teaching or supporting the primary teacher, or worked with specific ability groups or on specific topics. In both pilots, secondary teachers made a point of making pupils aware of the standard of work to expect in S1.

5.17 Key staff in both the literacy and numeracy pilots reported that the work of secondary staff in the primary sector was important in terms of sharing teaching methodology, with each side learning from the other. Primary teachers appreciated the input of a specialist teacher in English or Maths, and secondary staff also learned new, interactive teaching methods from the primary staff which informed their teaching in S1 and S2. In East Ayrshire, the increased interaction between primary and secondary teachers revealed inconsistency in the use of Mathematical language, which led to improved guidelines (as part of the new Programme of Study) to ensure continuity between P7 and S1.

5.18 In both pilots, secondary teachers were aware of the danger that their presence might be resented if they presented themselves as critical experts, and so took particular care to value the primary teachers as colleagues and equals. This sensitivity was appreciated by primary teachers.

### *Involvement of primary teachers in secondary schools*

5.19 A key principle of ENABLE was that pupils would benefit from being taught by primary teachers in the secondary setting. This pilot therefore made the greatest use of primary staff in the secondary school. The ENABLE teachers were primary trained teachers

working full time at Eastbank, providing focused academic and social support for ENABLE pupils. They worked with ENABLE classes for two hours every day, focusing on developing the pupils' numeracy and literacy skills. They also engaged in cooperative teaching with other secondary Maths and English teachers.

5.20 The numeracy pilot adopted a reciprocal approach with primary teachers working in the secondary schools as well as Maths specialists visiting the primaries. Here, primary teachers were involved in observation and team teaching, although their involvement differed between the two learning partnerships, with primary teachers in one partnership gradually taking responsibility for their own secondary Maths classes.

5.21 Having primary teachers working in secondary Maths classes aimed to introduce some primary methods (such as interactive Maths games) to the secondary classes, and allowed the primary teachers to take more specific Maths knowledge back to their primaries. Teachers reported the benefits of having two teachers in the class in terms of their ability to run practical activities and provide pupils with more individual attention. Primary teachers' knowledge of P7 pupils' abilities also meant work could be targeted to an appropriate level in S1.

5.22 At the other end of the scale, the literacy pilot focused entirely on the work of the secondary-based LDOs and no primary teachers taught secondary classes.

#### *Learning and teaching methods*

5.23 Teachers in all three pilots introduced new learning and teaching methods. LDOs in the literacy pilot introduced methods such as cooperative learning, reciprocal reading and formative assessment, which were all reported to be of benefit to pupils and teachers. Cross-sector observation in East Ayrshire, which aimed to assess what each sector could learn from the other and to encourage the adoption of new practices as a result, led to the introduction of more interactive methods in the secondary Maths classes, and the secondary teachers introduced more ICT-based teaching in the primaries. There was also a focus on formative assessment in the numeracy pilot. In ENABLE, teaching methods were based on a holistic, primary-style approach which emphasised social and pastoral care as well as delivering the academic curriculum.

5.24 Although these changes in teaching methods were key aspects of the transitions pilots, it is worth noting that the literacy pilot also included a range of voluntary activities that were not part of the English curriculum but which contributed positively to pupils' perceptions of literacy. These included book clubs, personal reading award schemes and organising World Book Day activities. Voluntary activities were less prominent in the other two pilot projects.

#### *Resources and technology*

5.25 All three pilots, to some extent, introduced new resources and technology. In East Ayrshire, there was a significant focus on the development of the new Programme of Study, which involved an audit of resources, and reviews of homework guidelines and teaching methodology. The resulting planners provided a resource for ensuring consistency of practice in Maths teaching in all schools. The pilot also funded the provision of new ICT equipment, such as Promethean Boards, and equipment for practical activities.

5.26 In North Lanarkshire, the LDOs had time allocated to conduct research and develop a range of teaching resources and materials for both pupils and teachers, for example on writing, spelling, punctuation, grammar etc. The literacy pilot funded new technology in the form of Smartboards and interactive digi-texts for use in both the primary and secondary schools. LDOs also provided resources and guidelines for primary teachers on teaching specific 5-14 levels in English.

5.27 ENABLE had less of a focus on innovative teaching aids, but ENABLE teachers did develop resources for their own use based on the forward plans of secondary staff at Eastbank. They also adapted materials for other departments to make the work more suitable for children of varying ability levels.

### *Support and training for teachers*

5.28 Each pilot included an element of staff training, although this took varying forms in each area. In North Lanarkshire, the literacy pilot focused heavily on training the LDOs. They attended a range of courses, particularly in the first year, and said that they found these interesting and useful. However, they found it difficult to find the time to pass on this training to colleagues, although they did deliver some training via departmental meetings. Nevertheless, English teachers reported that the LDOs were an extremely useful source of information and advice on literacy, and felt that they had succeeded in passing on their knowledge in a more informal, practical way.

5.29 The numeracy pilot included cross-sector CPD courses for primary and secondary staff to share ideas and pass on knowledge about teaching certain areas of the Maths curriculum. However, primary teachers in particular reported that there were problems relating to the timing of these courses; they would have preferred to have them at a different time in the school year.

5.30 ENABLE did not include a specific training element, although ENABLE and non-ENABLE teachers both learned from each other through observation, cooperative teaching and discussion. Indeed, in all three pilots, the majority of training was informal, with both primary and secondary teachers benefiting from cross-sector activities, observation and joint working.

### *Development over time*

5.31 The research indicated that the pilots took time to become embedded within each school. Part of this process involved changes being made during the course of the projects, as staff learned from their experiences and settled into their new roles. The literacy pilot appeared to experience the least change, however, with more changes being introduced in the other two projects.

5.32 Work in the primary schools changed in both the literacy and numeracy pilots over time, as the secondary staff built relationships with the primary teachers. Initial observation and 'fact-finding' work developed into active participation in primary classes.

5.33 However, there was more change in the actual structure of the primary visits in East Ayrshire, where substantial changes were made in Learning Partnership 2. Here, staffing changed so that a different member of staff did most of the primary liaison, allowing

the original Maths specialist to return to the secondary school to work with the pupils she had met in P7. Further changes have been introduced in the third year of the pilot in this learning partnership, with six teachers now sharing responsibility for working in the primaries, visiting each school in rotation in order to work with a greater number of pupils. Changes were also made in Learning Partnership 1 during the second year of the pilot, but these were the result of staffing problems, not a conscious effort to amend the format of the primary visits.

5.34 In North Lanarkshire secondary schools, the work of the LDOs in year two built on their work in year one, but was not substantially different. In East Ayrshire, however, more amendments were made to the work in the secondary schools in the second year. In Learning Partnership 1, the primary teachers working in secondary classes took full responsibility for their classes, meaning there was one rather than two teachers in the classroom. In Learning Partnership 2, the work of primary teachers in the secondary school was altered so that they came for shorter visits, and rotated which class they visited every six weeks.

5.35 As ENABLE was established earlier than the other projects (in 2002), it has had more time to develop and respond to any perceived needs for change in its operation. From 2003 onwards, the level of pupil need led to an increase in the number of ENABLE classes from two to three per year group. This consequently created staffing issues, with a third ENABLE teacher required and a greater number of other Eastbank Academy staff becoming involved in the project.

5.36 The ENABLE curriculum has not changed greatly over the course of the project, although additional balance and coordination exercises were introduced from 2005/06. (While not officially part of the ENABLE programme, most of the pupils involved are from ENABLE classes).

5.37 Changes have been made further up the school, after staff recognised the need to adapt the third year curriculum to make it more accessible for ex-ENABLE pupils. Other adjustments were made, allowing ENABLE teachers the time to offer formal support to ex-ENABLE pupils within mainstream S3 classes. Plans are in place to alter this still further, with an increased focus on vocational and practical courses for the least academically able pupils.

#### *Relationship to other transitions activities*

5.38 It was important for the evaluation to consider any changes in existing transitions arrangements in each area, as it would be difficult to attribute any observed improvements in the transition process to the pilots if other arrangements had altered significantly over the same time period.

5.39 Transitions arrangements were broadly similar in all three areas, with pupils visiting the secondary schools for open evenings and induction days, and teachers visiting the primary schools to talk to pupils and parents. In some learning partnerships, pupils visited the secondary schools more frequently; for example one morning a week during P7, or a block of six weekly visits in P6.

5.40 The arrangements had not altered significantly at Eastbank Academy over the course of the pilots, whereas in one of the two learning partnerships in each of the other two pilots some changes were reported. In School 2 in North Lanarkshire, relationships with the

associated primaries had improved significantly during the course of the pilot due to changes in the senior management team. A conscious effort was made to improve relationships in this area, and primary teachers reported that there had been an “all-round, huge effort” from lots of people in this school cluster, making it difficult to assess which factors were most important in the improvement of cross-sector relationships. However, it is important to note that the LDO in this school had been involved in much of this cross-sector liaison, and she also introduced a literacy element to other transitions activities. The Principal Teacher of English at this school therefore judged that the literacy pilot and changes in the senior management team had worked in combination to improve cross-sector liaison, and it was difficult to separate the two.

5.41 In East Ayrshire, the pilot contributed to changes in existing transitions arrangements in Learning Partnerships 1. P7 pupils visited this school once a week to take part in a number of lessons; because of the focus on numeracy, the teachers involved in the pilot suggested that one of these lessons should be Maths. In this case, the transitions arrangements altered slightly, but this was a result of the pilot itself.

5.42 Thus there were not major modifications in existing general transition arrangements, except that in two learning partnerships alterations occurred that were at least partly due to the pilot programmes. It is therefore unlikely that any observed changes in pupils’ experience of transition resulted from changes in the other transitions arrangements occurring independently of the pilots.

### ***Outcomes of the pilots for pupils***

#### *Academic attainment*

5.43 Evidence from the qualitative consultation suggested that all three pilots had a positive impact on pupil attainment. Quantitative data analysis, however, did not support these comments in all instances.

5.44 In North Lanarkshire, staff in the secondary schools reported that the literacy pilot had improved attainment among S1 and S2 pupils, particularly because of the LDOs’ ability to concentrate on monitoring and administering National Assessments, their work with specific groups of pupils and their contribution to introducing new learning and teaching methods in their departments. It was suggested that this had wider impacts on pupils’ work in other subjects, as they used their literacy skills in many different subject areas.

5.45 Analysis of attainment data indicated that there were improvements in Writing attainment over the course of the pilot. School 1 saw an increase in the percentage of S1 pupils achieving level D or above in Writing over the course of the pilot, although S1 attainment had declined slightly in comparison to the education authority average. Although S2 attainment also improved slightly, this was not in line with the improvement across North Lanarkshire as a whole. School 2 performed better in comparison with the education authority average: Writing attainment improved in both S1 and S2, and changes in S1 attainment represented an improvement from below the authority average to matching the average in 2005/06.

4.46 Reading attainment improved at both schools, especially among S2 pupils. Both schools outperformed the education authority average for S2 pupils, which was particularly



impressive for School 2 given that it began below the average in 2003/04 and was above it by 2005/06. Results in S1 also improved overall, although they peaked in 2004/05. School 1's performance declined in comparison to the authority average; however, School 2 reduced the gap between the school and the authority by seven percentage points.

4.47 Analysis of individual pupil cohorts revealed that both pupil cohorts generally improved their performance in relation to the local authority average over the course of the literacy pilot. One cohort improved their Writing attainment compared to North Lanarkshire as a whole over the two years of the pilot, and Reading attainment improved in both cohorts compared to the authority average during the same two years.

5.48 In the primary schools, teachers believed that working with the LDOs had improved pupils' reading and writing skills, although most teachers thought that the limited time the LDOs had spent with the children meant it would be difficult to attribute any changes in test results directly to the pilot. Pupils in both sectors were able to identify new skills they had learned with the LDOs, and felt that their English had improved since working with them. Data analysis revealed that P7 Reading attainment improved overall during the pilot, although no consistent pattern of change occurred in Writing attainment. Teachers suggested that the real impact on pupil attainment was more likely to be seen when these pupils made the transition to S1.

5.49 Teachers involved in the numeracy pilot also reported an improvement in pupil attainment, which they attributed to the improved cross-sector working and sharing of teaching methodologies, particularly the agreement to use the same Maths terminology. Teachers in both primary and secondary sectors reported that pupils were passing National Assessments at a higher level than usual, and assessments were being administered earlier than in previous years. Primary and secondary pupils alike recognised the specialist skills of the secondary Maths teachers, and believed their Maths skills had improved as a result of working with them in P7 and S1.

5.50 However, analysis of attainment data in East Ayrshire suggested there was less of an impact on attainment than teachers estimated. Analysis of P7 Maths attainment found no evidence of a consistent improvement or decline in attainment at the primary schools, although the small number of pupils in some P7 classes made it difficult to draw firm conclusions from the data. Maths attainment at School 1 showed a decline over the course of the pilot, and while S1 results improved at School 2, S2 attainment worsened during the numeracy pilot.

5.51 Teachers explained that there were several reasons for this decline, including the prior ability of individual year groups. Cohort analysis was therefore conducted, and showed that while one pupil cohort's performance improved compared to the East Ayrshire average over the course of the pilot, the other cohort's Maths attainment declined in relation to the education authority as a whole.

5.52 Teachers also stressed that the effects of the numeracy pilot may also take longer than the first 18 months of the projects' operation to present themselves, and the impact on attainment was likely to be seen in the academic year 2006/07, when the new Programme of Study had been fully implemented and the new S1 intake would have been working on the programme in P7.

5.53 Staff at Eastbank Academy explained that the ENABLE pupils' attainment had benefited as a result of their intensive literacy and numeracy lessons with primary teachers. Teachers reported that the pupils were much better prepared for S3 than they would have been without ENABLE, and pupil comments supported this.

5.54 Analysis of ENABLE pupils' attainment records supports the qualitative findings that the project had a positive impact on their academic achievement. Attainment was very low for the 121 pupils who entered ENABLE during its first three years of operation, particularly in Writing. However, attainment data for the same 121 pupils by the time they left ENABLE indicate that they had improved significantly in Reading, Writing and Maths. Furthermore, analysis of Standard Grade performance in 2005/06 showed that ENABLE pupils had done better than a comparable group who sat exams in 2004. Pupils in mainstream S1 and S2 classes also benefited from the introduction of ENABLE and the resulting reduction in class sizes.

#### *Motivation/self-esteem*

5.55 All three pilots appeared to have positive outcomes for pupils in terms of their motivation. In the literacy and numeracy pilots, the work of secondary teachers in the primary schools was reported to increase pupil motivation: children enjoyed being given S1 standard work, were impressed by the teachers' status and worked hard to impress them.

5.56 In the secondary schools, too, teachers reported an improvement in motivation among pupils. In North Lanarkshire, cooperative learning was said to motivate pupils, and the personal reading award schemes and other voluntary activities also contributed to an increase in pupils' desire to read for pleasure. In East Ayrshire, pupils were motivated by the increased use of technology such as the Promethean Boards, and the interactive methods employed in secondary classes. At School 2 in particular, the least able pupils were reported to be much more motivated as a result of being in a smaller class and having a curriculum tailored to their ability level.

5.57 The ENABLE programme had an extremely positive effect on pupil motivation, as evidenced by the pupils' continued engagement with school and improved attendance. Importantly, ENABLE succeeded in keeping pupils engaged in mainstream education, with the drop-out rate by S4 improving markedly for ENABLE pupils compared to comparable pupils in previous year groups.

5.58 Teachers also observed an increase in pupils' confidence and personal development, and an improvement in self-esteem among pupils. Teachers emphasised the importance of ENABLE in communicating the message that pupils were not 'thick' or in some way unusual: rather, children were reassured when they realised they were in a class with other pupils facing similar difficulties. The social and pastoral support offered by ENABLE teachers was reported to be crucial in raising self-esteem.

#### *Pupils' experience of transition*

5.59 Consultation with pupils throughout the evaluation supported previous research findings, in that their main concerns about the transition to secondary school centred on the social aspects (such as making friends and being bullied), rather than the academic aspect of moving into S1. However, ENABLE pupils in particular did mention some worries about

coping with school work at secondary school, both in terms of the amount and the higher standard. Discussion with pupils suggested that all three pilots had been successful in their aim of easing the transition from P7 to S1.

5.60 In North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire, P7 pupils said that they were less nervous about the move to S1 since working with teachers involved in the pilots, because they would know someone at the secondary school, and they were more confident that they knew the sort of work they would be doing and what would be expected of them. Once in S1, they agreed that knowing a secondary teacher in P7 had helped them in the transition, both in terms of knowing a ‘friendly face’ and in being better prepared for the work in S1 because of the new skills they had learned in English or Maths.

5.61 ENABLE pupils reported settling in well to S1, and had not experienced any particular problems during the transition to secondary school, despite their earlier concerns. They responded very positively to ENABLE, saying that their teachers were helpful, interested and explained things well. They also felt very comfortable with the ENABLE teachers, to such an extent that they still sought them out for advice or support even after they had made the transition out of ENABLE into mainstream S3 classes.

#### *Information sharing*

5.62 The pilots had other positive outcomes for pupils’ transitions to secondary school that the children themselves were unaware of, particularly in the improved transfer of information about individual pupils and their abilities from primary to secondary teachers. This was particularly successful in the literacy and numeracy pilots, and was formalised in East Ayrshire via the new Programme of Study. Primary teachers in both of these pilots had confidence that the pupils would no longer be ‘marking time’ or repeating work when they moved into S1, because the secondary school had better information about the primary curriculum and the pupils’ strengths and weaknesses.

5.63 Perhaps unsurprisingly, this aspect of the transition was most problematic in ENABLE, as the project had no direct involvement with the primaries. Here, some difficulties had been experienced receiving up to date information about pupils in order to place them correctly in ENABLE classes.

#### **Implications for future roll-out**

5.64 The research evidence has indicated that the three pilots shared the general aim of improving adjustment and attainment at secondary school following the transition from primary. They did so in quite different ways as regards the curricular focus, the pupils targeted, how staff were deployed and the extent of cross-sector working.

5.65 Feedback from staff and pupils, supported in some respects by attainment evidence in two instances, suggests that each model had positive results and none was more or less successful than the others: staff in each area had developed the projects based on local need, and each model appeared to be largely successful in meeting its particular aims. Hence, it appeared it was not so much the precise model that affected smooth running and success of the projects, but other factors and processes.

## *Staffing*

5.66 As was highlighted negatively by the project that was discontinued in North Lanarkshire, the most important ingredient of success was to have staff offering additional input who had both specific expertise and sensitivity in their approach to working with colleagues. Teachers in all three local authority areas stressed the importance of having the right staff in place, and the research highlighted examples where staffing had caused considerable problems in the smooth running of the pilots. As it was essential that any additional teachers gained the trust of existing staff, one PT argued that “making appropriate appointments is vital”. It was also helpful if teaching staff had contributed to the plans for the project, though it appeared that initial resistance to a more top-down project could be overcome if the staff providing extra input were tactful and seen to have the skills that were needed.

5.67 Having enthusiastic and committed Head Teachers in the primary and secondary schools involved was said to be important, particularly at the start of the pilots. Having good supply teachers in place at the beginning of the project is also important, especially when schools are taking an experienced teacher off the timetable to take the role of numeracy/literacy officer. A general lack of supply teachers also caused difficulties throughout the pilot in East Ayrshire.

5.68 Teachers appointed as lead literacy or numeracy officers should be experienced, well respected and seen to be knowledgeable and credible. Where this was not the case, at one of the learning partnerships in North Lanarkshire, the head of the department struggled to find other English teachers willing to work with the LDO, and the pilot was eventually discontinued. The experience and skills of the specialist teachers are important because of the complexities of these roles. An essential part of the LDO role is the ability to work well with colleagues in order to share their knowledge, skills and training; where there is resistance among staff, this will be difficult to achieve.

5.69 In the literacy pilot, where the LDOs were mainly based in the secondary schools, staff felt it was important that a secondary trained teacher was appointed to the role. While they agreed there were benefits of primary teachers contributing to S1 and S2 teaching, they felt that a secondary English teacher would be better able to fulfil the LDO post as they are aware of the demands of Standard Grade and how S2 work would be taken forward further up the school.

5.70 It was also beneficial for the specialist staff in the literacy and numeracy pilots to be appointed from within the school, as this gave them immediate knowledge of the strengths of their departments, instant credibility, an existing relationship with pupils and an insight into the management structure of the school. All of this local knowledge meant staff were well placed to identify what changes were needed in order to take the pilot forward.

5.71 Significant staffing difficulties were experienced at one of the schools in East Ayrshire throughout the pilot, first due to illness and then problems appointing an appropriate replacement for a member of staff who left the school. Consultation at this school suggested that allowing the Principal Teacher (who had day-to-day responsibility for running the pilot) more control over staffing decisions might have led to more appropriate appointments being made.

5.72 At the same school, the short-term contracts of some project staff meant that relationships with primary schools had to be re-established part way through the project. Teachers in this learning partnership therefore felt that it was important to have staffing in place from the start of the project: “if it’s a two-year project, then advertise for staff for two years rather than chop and change staff throughout”.

5.73 Staffing was also perceived to be important to the successful running of the ENABLE project. The individual qualities of the primary trained ENABLE teachers and the secondary teachers chosen to work in the ENABLE classes were highlighted as being key to the successful implementation of the scheme, as staff needed to be able to tailor their teaching styles to the needs of the least able pupils. ENABLE could not have been successful without the cooperation of willing teachers, making staffing decisions crucial in this instance. Once it was well established, it was relatively easy for the project to involve more staff, with no particular problems being reported.

### ***Leadership and commitment of staff***

5.74 One aspect of staffing which consultees mentioned frequently was the commitment of the individuals involved in the transitions pilots.

5.75 As noted earlier, the presence of a committed, enthusiastic and supportive Head Teacher was viewed as key to the success of the pilots. For example, teachers at Eastbank Academy, while being fully supportive of the ENABLE project, stressed that the senior management teams of schools introducing a similar scheme would need to have “the same vision as those who headed it up here” in order for it to work. Without this, there would be a danger of ENABLE being seen as just a “dumping ground for poor kids”.

5.76 In East Ayrshire, too, teachers emphasised that staff in both primary and secondary sectors were happy to commit time and effort to the pilot, for example by working on the new Programme of Study outside working hours. The commitment of the LDOs in the literacy pilot was also viewed as important, with primary colleagues remarking that they had taken on additional workloads (such as marking primary pupils’ work and administering National Assessments) with enthusiasm.

5.77 The transitions pilots had involved a lot of time and effort, particularly in the early stages of their development. Teachers therefore concluded that “if [staff involved in the project] were less than committed, it wouldn’t work”. As the pilots were relatively new during the evaluation, it is not possible to determine whether the continuation of such initiatives would suffer once the initial enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated during the first two years diminishes. Teachers may well become disenchanted with putting in extra work voluntarily as time goes on; however, up to this point the commitment established during the last two years is still very much in evidence.

5.78 Offering teachers the choice of whether to be involved in the pilot is also important to consider. Some teachers in Learning Partnership 2 in East Ayrshire felt that they had not had any control over their level of involvement. Staffing decisions appeared to be most successful when teachers volunteered to be involved, as this attracted those with a genuine interest in, and commitment to, cross-sector working.

### ***Sensitivity in cross-sector working***

5.79 Related to this is the issue of employing a sensitive approach to cross-sector working. There were numerous examples of good practice across all four learning partnerships involved in the literacy and numeracy pilots, with secondary schools being careful to communicate to their primary colleagues that they were not being criticised by ‘experts’. Secondary specialists shared their knowledge in a sensitive way, and made it clear that they were also there to learn from the primary teachers. After some initial apprehension, the relationships that developed between the primary and secondary schools were cooperative and collaborative in nature.

5.80 The experience of both of the pilots which involved work in the primary sector indicates that the development of cross-sector relationships can be successful even where there is pre-existing suspicion or uncertainty among staff. Although there were some doubts expressed in the early stages of the numeracy pilot, and staff had to be persuaded to take part, teachers soon became much more positive about the benefits of working together, and later reported this to be the best aspect of the pilot. In North Lanarkshire, one of the secondary schools had not had particularly strong links with its associated primaries in the recent past, but teachers reported that the work of the LDO contributed to an improvement in this situation.

5.81 One of the Principal Teachers of Maths in East Ayrshire emphasised the importance of taking enough time to build relationships, observe teaching in the primaries and consult with primary teachers before secondary staff became fully involved in the primary classes. This meant that their contribution was made on careful assessment of needs and gaps. However, feedback from some primary teachers suggested that the initial observation period in the numeracy pilot was too long. Neither the primary nor the secondary teachers knew what to expect or the specific purpose of the observation at this stage; if clear guidelines had been set down, a clear explanation of the observation’s purpose had been given, and a definite period of time assigned to observation, there would have been less suspicion on the part of the primary teachers. It is clearly important for the right balance to be struck between observing classes and building relationships, and becoming more fully involved in class teaching. Close consultation with the primary teachers is crucial in achieving this balance.

5.82 At Eastbank Academy, there is a long history of collaborative working: the school is at the centre of a New Learning Community and has a long-standing relationship with a range of other agencies. This helped to make the introduction of the primary trained ENABLE teachers go smoothly, and no consultees reported any problem in this regard. However, although this history of collaborative working had a positive impact on the project’s implementation at Eastbank, the experience of schools in the other two pilots indicates that this is by no means necessary for the success of such initiatives.

### ***Effective communication and clearly defined roles***

5.83 Effective communication was vital to the success of the transitions pilots, as evidenced by experiences in all three education authorities.

5.84 Where the literacy pilot was most successful, the aims had been effectively communicated to teaching staff, and the role of the LDO had been clearly defined. In the learning partnership where the pilot was least successful, teachers felt that the LDO’s role

had not been explained to them, and that some of the resentment surrounding the staffing decisions at this school could have been resolved if communication about the aims and methods of the pilot had been more effective.

5.85 In East Ayrshire, communication was also highlighted as being very important to the success of the numeracy pilot. Some of the initial doubts among primary staff were attributed to poor communication within their schools, and teachers felt that there might have been more support for the idea if the aims and processes involved in the pilot had been explained more fully at the start.

5.86 Key staff were aware of the need for better communication, and made improvements as time went on; for example by communicating via Maths coordinators at each school. Organising social events for project staff was also reported to aid communication within the numeracy pilot. However, some respondents still felt that there was not enough time for feedback between primary and secondary teachers about individual pupils and for forward planning: building in more time for discussion to any replication of the pilot would therefore seem sensible.

5.87 Communication within the scheme itself was less of an issue for ENABLE, as the project only operated at one school. However, since ENABLE did not involve primary schools, difficulties in receiving up to date pupil information from them at the transition to S1 continued to occur, by contrast with the two projects that operated across both sectors.

### ***Flexibility and responding to local need***

5.88 Although there were guidelines about how the pilots should operate, staff in all three local authority areas were encouraged to develop the projects to suit the needs of the individual schools and the local area.

5.89 The ability to develop their own roles meant that the literacy and numeracy specialists could tailor the projects to the needs of pupils and teachers. In North Lanarkshire, this meant the LDOs could spend time on literacy initiatives that other staff could not: as one PT stated, “you wouldn’t have time to lift your head up and think about these things if you didn’t have a Literacy Development Officer”.

5.90 Another example of a project responding to local need was the ENABLE teachers’ recognition that parents were often unable to attend evening meetings, and instead encouraging them to visit their children’s class during the school day.

5.91 The flexibility of the pilots also meant that they were able to develop over time, as has already been described. Having the time to develop, and also the time to become embedded within a learning partnership, was thought to be important – developing cross-sector relationships took time, and new resources such as Programmes of Study required constant revision during the pilot. Respondents also stressed that giving the pilots longer to become firmly established within schools should ensure that the impacts are seen in the long term.

### ***What works where?***

5.92 The research specification for the evaluation stated that the research should consider ‘what works where’, in order to inform the future development of transitions pilots. While teachers at Eastbank argued that ENABLE suits schools in a certain type of area, the research findings from North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire suggest that projects like the literacy and numeracy pilots can in fact work anywhere.

5.93 The Head Teacher of Eastbank Academy reported that the ENABLE model suits a school with a significant proportion of children whose academic skills are not sufficiently developed to access traditional or mainstream methods of delivering the curriculum. Schools with pupils who present with emotional difficulties are also likely to benefit from an ENABLE-style programme. Staff at Eastbank believe that areas where social and economic deprivation is high, such as Eastbank itself, would benefit most from the ENABLE programme, because of its focus on engaging children with school and offering social as well as academic support.

5.94 The learning partnerships involved in the literacy and numeracy pilots were located in a range of environments (for example a mixture of urban and rural, deprived and non-deprived areas). Teachers reported that any school could benefit from the roll-out of these initiatives, which are not specific to any type of school or area. The consultation findings also suggested that the pilots benefited most pupils, as had been intended: the lack of any real differentiation in responses to the pilots also indicates that they are applicable in any type of school and with any type of pupil.

### **Recommendations**

5.95 The research findings indicate that the three transitions pilots were generally successful in meeting their aims. Lessons can also be learned about the future replication of such initiatives by examining the key features that contributed to their success. Considering the factors described above, the following broad recommendations can be made:

- Pilot models
  - It would be helpful to make transition projects with dedicated resources more generally available, with the precise model dependent on local needs. Any of the three pilot models can be successful, provided they are implemented with appropriate staff resources and commitment.
- Staffing
  - Head Teachers and key project staff (e.g. Principal Teachers and literacy/numeracy specialists) should be committed, enthusiastic and have ‘vision’;
  - Those with responsibility for the pilots (e.g. Principal Teachers) should have control or influence over decisions related to staffing;
  - For projects targeting the least able, most vulnerable pupils, teachers should be chosen carefully based on their skills in encouraging pupils and willingness to adapt their curriculum;



- Having staff in place for the duration of the project is more successful than appointing teachers on short-term contracts, particularly in terms of maintaining cross-sector relationships;
  - Lead literacy/numeracy officers should be experienced, well respected and seen to be knowledgeable and credible;
  - Other staff should be given control over their level of involvement – asking for volunteers will attract those most committed to cross-sector working; and
  - A reliable pool of supply teachers is required, during implementation of the project and throughout its operation, in order to address staffing problems as they occur.
- Cross-sector liaison and interchange
    - Transitions projects can be used to enhance/improve existing transitions arrangements and cross-sector relationships. This can lead to more effective teaching in both sectors, and also provides pupils with some familiarity with secondary work and at least one teacher when they arrive in S1;
    - When secondary teachers are given the lead role in cross-sector liaison they should be sensitive to the feelings, needs and strengths of primary colleagues – it should be an equal partnership;
    - Consultation between primary and secondary staff is required to ensure the correct balance is reached between initial observation and involvement in teaching;
    - A well-specified, purposeful observation period should work both ways, with teachers from each sector observing in the other; this leads to true reciprocity of learning from each others' teaching methods;
    - Organising Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses is a good way of sharing new learning and teaching methods across both sectors;
    - Consultation should be undertaken when organising events for primary and secondary staff (e.g. are colleagues in both sectors able to attend CPD courses at a particular time of year?);
    - For ENABLE-style projects (where work is not conducted within primaries), good working relationships with associated primary schools is important to have in place at the start;
    - A history of collaboration and good working relationships is helpful, but not essential, for the success of cross-sector work; and
    - Initial doubts about cross-sector working can be overcome through effective communication.

- Communication
  - It is important to ensure that the role of the lead officer is clearly defined and well communicated;
  - There should be consensus about the aims and methods of the project, which should also be communicated effectively to all involved, ideally before the project starts;
  - Projects should build in adequate time for discussion and feedback between primary and secondary teachers; and
  - Social events can successfully improve communication.
- Flexibility and responsiveness
  - Lead officers should be given flexibility within the guidelines to develop their roles in response to local needs;
  - Where parental involvement is required (in projects such as ENABLE), teachers should be flexible in their approaches to engagement with parents;
  - Projects targeting the least able pupils in S1 and S2 should also be responsive to these pupils' needs (both social and academic) further up the school; and
  - Such projects should also consider the issue of openness about the nature of special classes very carefully: a wish to eliminate stigma, although positive in itself, may have negative implications in terms of a lack of openness and honesty.
- What works where
  - A model that targets the most vulnerable, least able pupils is particularly well suited to areas of deprivation, schools with a large proportion of children arriving without sufficiently developed skills, or where pupils present with emotional difficulties; and
  - The models including all pupils making the transition can work in any area, providing the key factors above are taken into consideration.



## ANNEX 1 DETAILS OF CONSULTATION PROGRAMME<sup>15</sup>

### Consultations undertaken in North Lanarkshire<sup>16</sup>

#### March – June 2005

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
	1						1
<b>Secondary School 1</b>		1	1	1	6	6	15
School 1A					1	5	6
School 1B					1		1
<b>Secondary School 2</b>		1	1	1	4	8	15
School 2A		2			2		4
School 2B		1	2		2	3	8
<b>Secondary School 3</b>		1	1	3	4	7	16
School 3A					1	5	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>72</b>

#### August – November 2005

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
	1						1
<b>Secondary School 1</b>				1		17	18
<b>Secondary School 2</b>				1		16	17
<b>Secondary School 3</b>				1		15	16
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>52</b>

#### March – June 2006

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
<b>Secondary School 1</b>			1	1	2		4
School 1A					2	8	10
School 1B					1		1
School 1D					1	6	7
<b>Secondary School 2</b>			1	1	2		4
School 2C					1	5	6
School 2B		2				6	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>40</b>

#### September 2006

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
	1						1
<b>Secondary School 1</b>				1		6	7
<b>Secondary School 2</b>				1		9	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>

<sup>15</sup> Information presented here relates to the number of consultations, not the number of people consulted (as many consultees were interviewed on several occasions throughout the evaluation)

<sup>16</sup> Primary schools are named as they appear in the quantitative data analysis – see Annex 2

## Consultations undertaken in East Ayrshire<sup>17</sup>

### March – June 2005

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
<b>Secondary School 1</b>	1	0	2		2	7	12
School 1E					1		1
School 1B					1	5	6
<b>Secondary School 2</b>	1	2		2	2	5	12
School 2A					1	7	8
School 2E					1	5	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>45</b>

### August – November 2005

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
<b>Secondary School 1</b>			1		1	18	20
<b>Secondary School 2</b>				1	4	24	29
School 2C					2		2
School 2B					1		1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>52</b>

### March – June 2006

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
<b>Secondary School 1</b>			1	3	1		5
School 1E					1	12	13
School 1B					1	10	11
<b>Secondary School 2</b>			3	2	2		7
School 2A					1	12	13
School 2E					2	12	14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>63</b>

### September 2006

	LEA	HT/DHT	Principal Teacher	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Totals
<b>Secondary School 1</b>				1		8	9
<b>Secondary School 2</b>		1		1		7	9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>

<sup>17</sup> Primary schools are named as they appear in the quantitative data analysis – see Annex 3

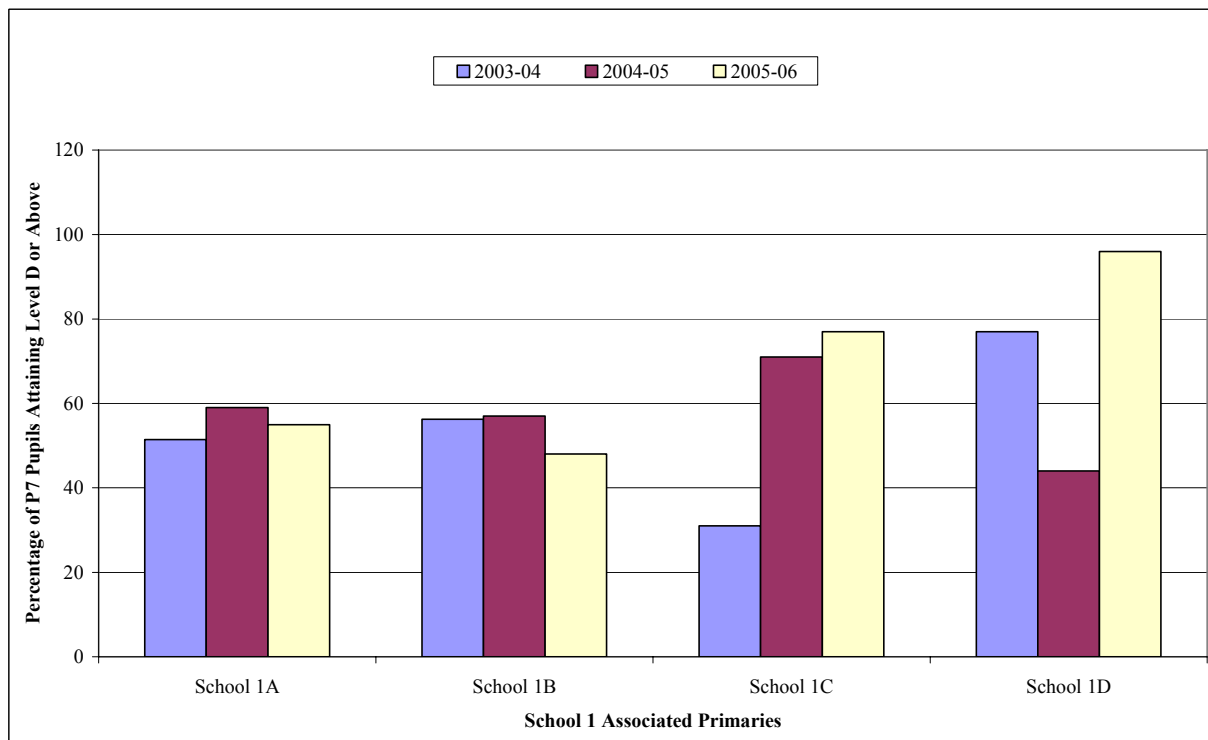
## Consultations undertaken at Eastbank Academy

	LEA	HT/DHT	Specialist Teacher	Class Teacher	Pupils	Learning Support	Totals
March - June 2005	1	2	4	2	6	1	16
August - November 2005		1			12		13
March - June 2006		2	4	2	16		24
September 2006		1			13		14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>67</b>

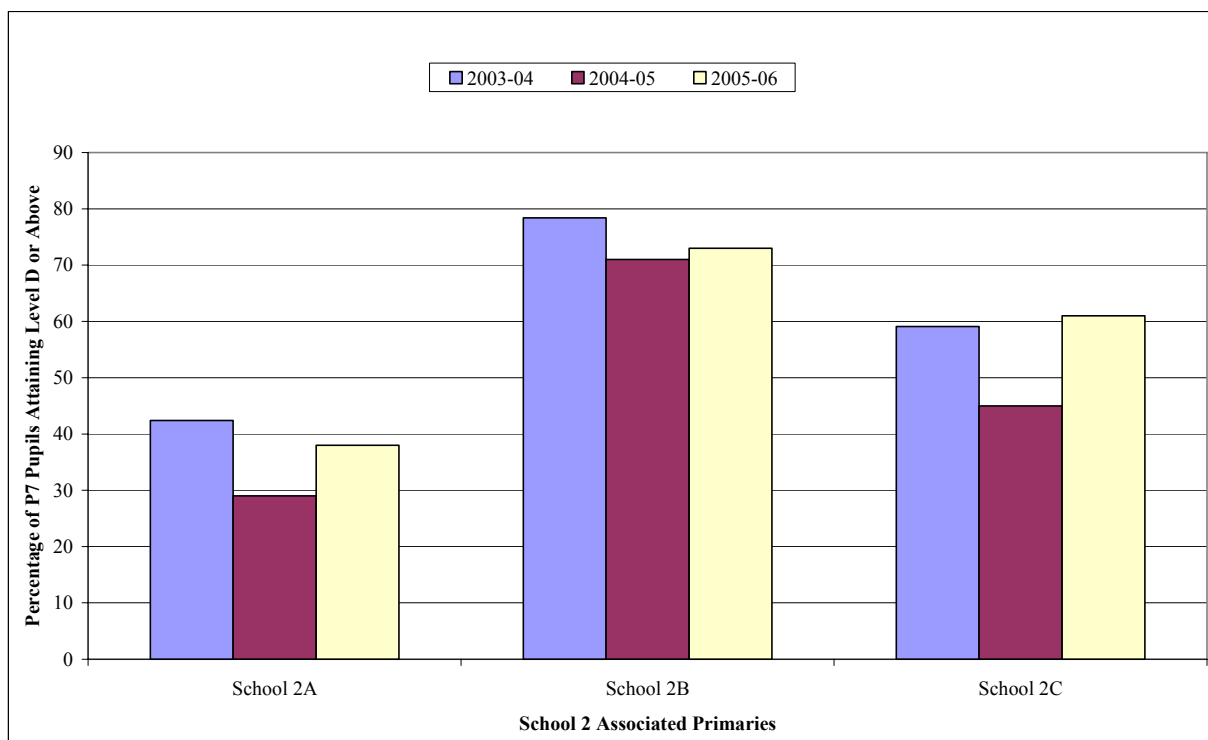


## ANNEX 2 P7 WRITING ATTAINMENT

### P7 Writing attainment – School 1 associated primaries



### P7 Writing attainment – School 2 associated primaries

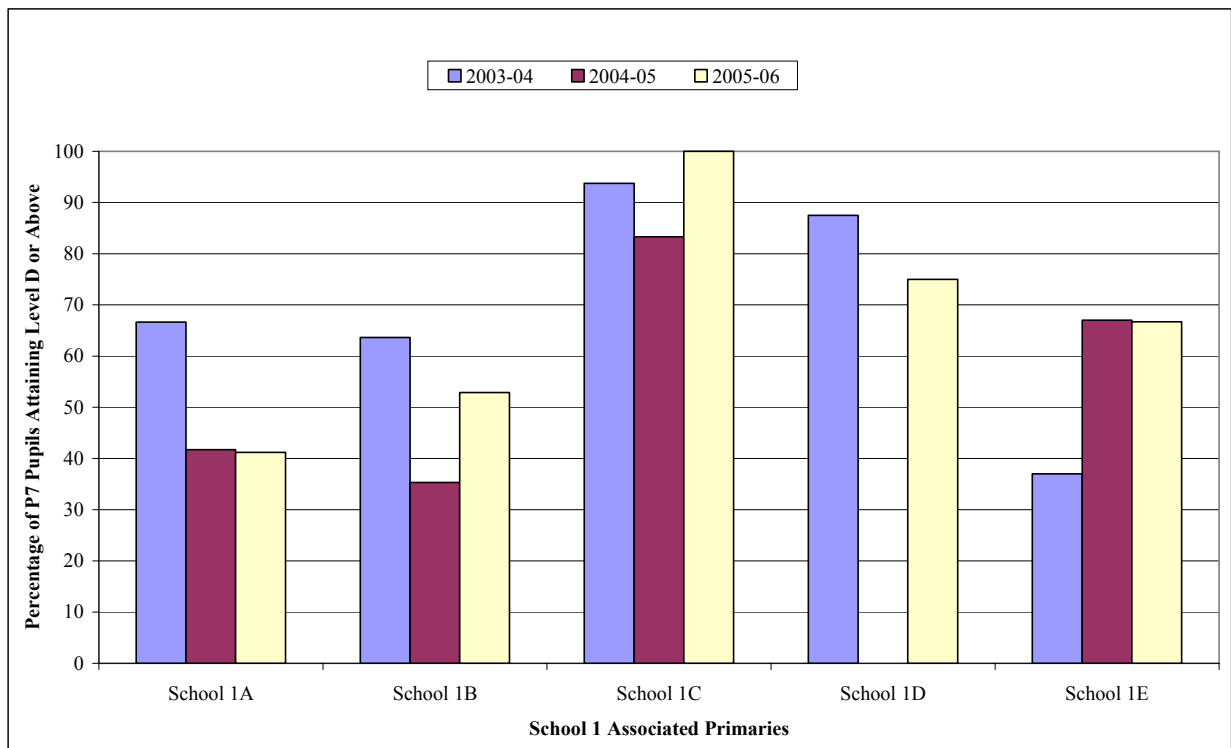




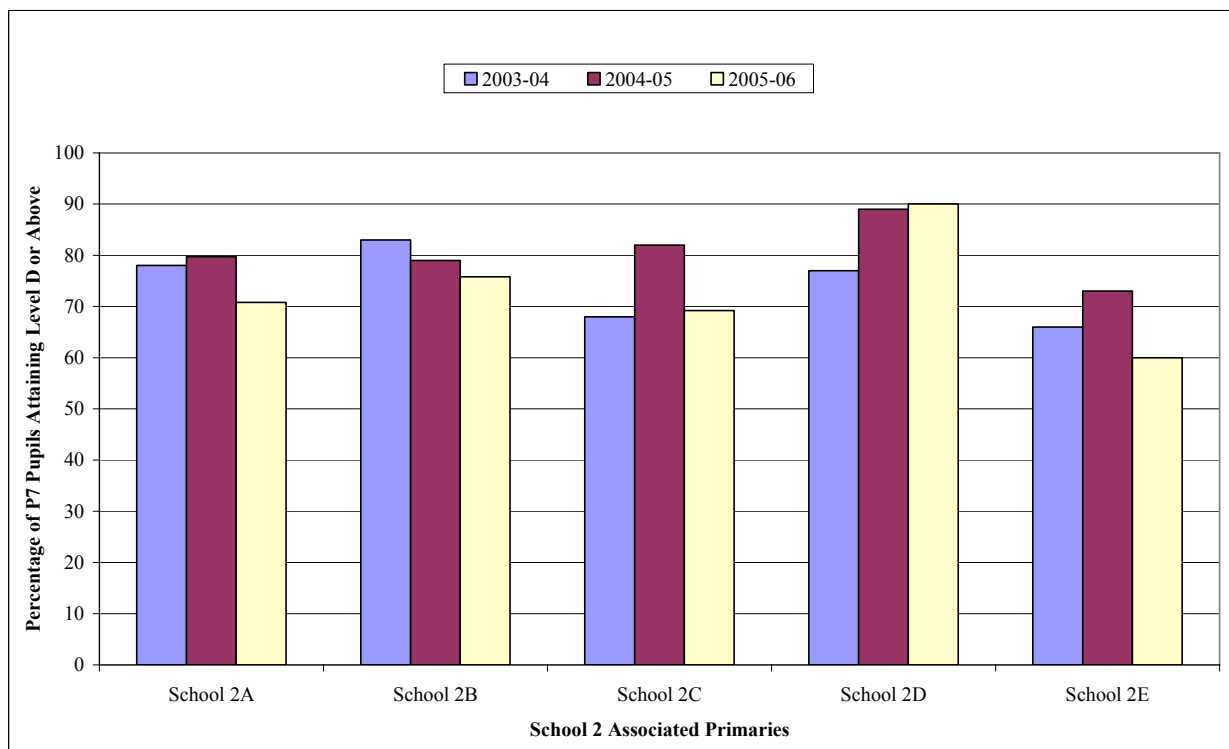


## ANNEX 3 P7 MATHS ATTAINMENT

### P7 Maths attainment – School 1 associated primaries



### P7 Maths attainment – School 2 associated primaries



ISSN 0950 2254  
ISBN 978 0 7559 6420 8  
web only publication

[www.scotland.gov.uk/socialresearch](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/socialresearch)

Astron B49988 01-07

