

# The National Strategies

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## Strengthening transfers and transitions

Partnerships for progress

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# **Strengthening transfers and transitions**

**Partnerships for progress**

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Bacton Community Primary School  
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St Mary's CE Junior School

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### **Salford Local Authority**

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Bridgewater Primary School  
Dukesgate Primary School  
Hilton Lane Primary School  
North Walkden Primary School  
Peel Hall Primary School

St Andrew's Methodist Primary School  
St Paul's CE Primary School, Heathside  
St Paul's Peel CE Primary School  
Wharton Primary School

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# Introduction

The White Paper, *Higher Standards, Better schools for All* (published in 2005), highlights that the transition from one phase to another, and from one school to another can be particularly challenging. Galton et al. (1999)<sup>1</sup> identified the impact of this on motivation and attainment. The study found that transfer to secondary school can result in a dip in motivation and a slowing down of progress with up to 40% of pupils failing to make expected progress during the year immediately following a change of school. In a subsequent review of evidence (2003) it was found that approximately 30% of pupils made no progress in mathematics between Year 6 and Year 7 with the figure jumping to approximately 50% in English and science.

Transfers and transitions have been linked to underachievement, not only in this country, but internationally. In a National Foundation For Educational Research (NFER) survey (QCA 2006), transfers and transitions were identified as leading to a dip in attainment in Germany, Ireland, Italy, Scotland, Spain and Tasmania (Australia) as well as in England.

The National Strategies action research project set out to identify and develop specific actions that address this issue.

## The Strengthening Transfers and Transitions project

Seven LAs selected families of schools to engage in action research to explore what strengthens transfers and transitions. They reflected a broad range of contexts and their projects identified a variety of approaches to accelerating progress across transfer between first to middle and primary to secondary schools.

The projects included methodology for measuring impact and identifying contributory actions. A range of qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed and all projects ensured pupils had a voice in the evaluation.

Two cross-phase Transfers and Transitions Regional Advisers (RAs) and a Senior Adviser (SA) worked in partnership with the schools and LAs to support the action research and facilitate networking. Each term, representatives from the LAs attended network meetings to share progress and discuss initial findings. They also explored how LAs can meet the challenges of the future, sustain improvement and build capacity.

<sup>1</sup> 'The Impact of School Transitions and Transfers on Pupil Progress and Attainment', Galton, Gray and Ruddock, 1999

## Key Messages

The action research projects clearly identified seven key principles that underpin effective transfers and transitions for progress.





- 1. Transfers and transitions are key drivers to raising standards**  
Every transfer between schools or transition between key stages and year groups is a potential barrier to progress. Where transfers and transitions are at their strongest, the social, emotional, curricular and pedagogical aspects of learning are managed in order to enable pupils to remain engaged with, and have control of, their learning.
- 2. Assessment for Learning (AFL) principles underpin progress across transfers and transitions**  
The principles behind effective learning and teaching are the same for transfers and transitions as for other aspects of education. The challenge is to apply them in more complex and disparate conditions.
- 3. Pupils need the confidence, understanding and skills to advance their own progress across transfer or transition**  
Effective transfers and transitions happen inside the minds of pupils. Their ability to engage with and take control of their learning remain critical elements.
- 4. Partnership working is essential for effective transfers and transitions for progress**  
The stronger the partnerships between stakeholders, the greater the potential for progress. The pupils experience one learning journey and only through working together can schools and local authorities establish the conditions for continuous learning.
- 5. Effective partnerships are built on a common vision, shared responsibility and trust**  
High levels of mutual professional esteem are essential. Partners need a clear understanding of the priorities, issues and scope of the work being undertaken. There can be no sense of hierarchy, and all partners are responsible for the progress of the pupil before and after the transfer or transition.
- 6. Partnership working requires mutual understanding through shared experiences and a common language**  
Different approaches to learning and teaching have evolved in the different phases of education. An understanding of these is needed if partners are to provide the right conditions for continued pupil progress. Professional discussions relating to pedagogy, progress, levelling of work, and expectations can contribute to this, as can teachers visiting each other's schools, observing practice and working with the pupils.
- 7. Sustained collaboration requires structures and systems that support formal and ongoing links between partners**  
Structures and systems provide a framework for consistent partnership working that can be evaluated each year. They work best when responsibilities are identified in job descriptions and expectations are agreed by all partners.

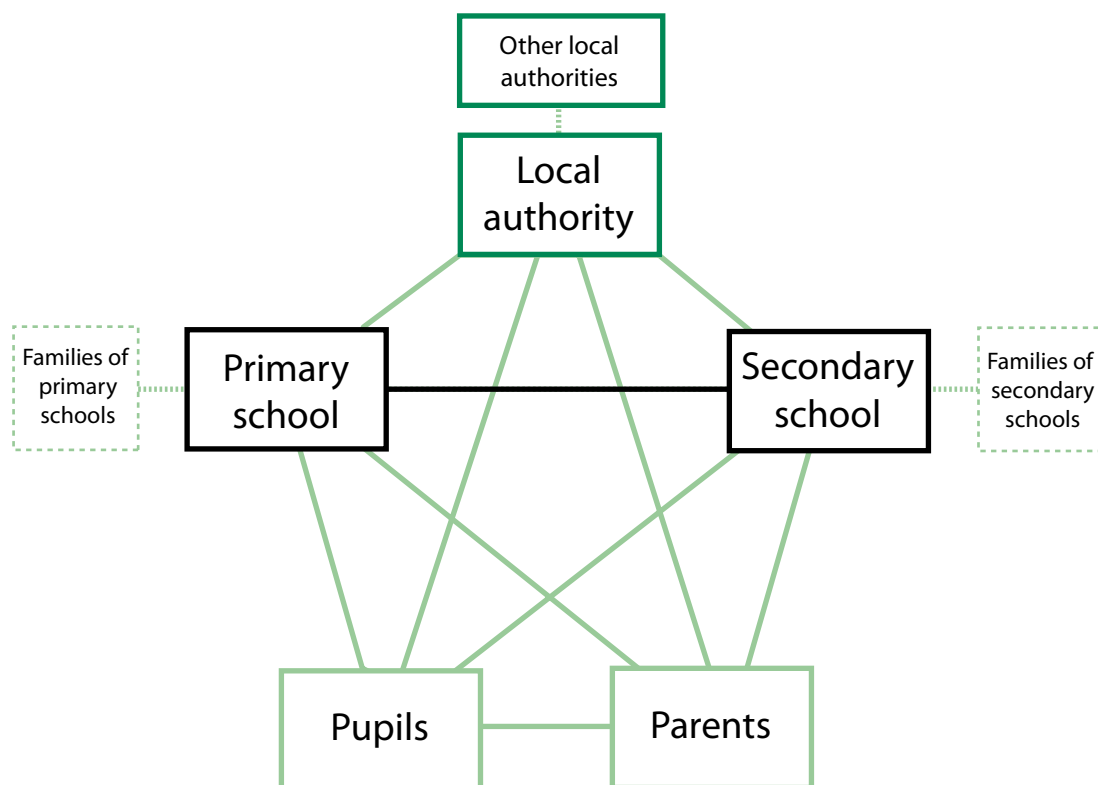
# Partnerships – continuity, consistency and progression

A pupil's best chance of continuing or accelerating their progress after transfer comes through collaboration between their primary and middle/secondary schools. Continuity and progression in curriculum and pedagogy comes through sharing information, reciprocal visits and, in the strongest cases, joint planning and delivery.

This is a challenge even when transfer involves one primary and one secondary school. Most 'families' of schools are more complicated, with a significant number of primary and secondary schools woven into various 'families' of schools. The situation is exacerbated where lines of transfer cross LA boundaries. The broader the range of collaboration, the greater the consistency and the easier it is to establish continuity and progression.

The two most tangible elements of transfer are the pupils and their parents. Their engagement with the process and feedback is essential. Charles Desforges' work<sup>2</sup> has highlighted the impact of parental involvement on pupil attainment. Reinforcing the links between parents and schools and enhancing the ability of a parent to support their child's learning are powerful ways to strengthen transfer.

## Important lines of collaboration<sup>3</sup>



<sup>2</sup> 'The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievements and adjustment: a literature review', Professor Charles Desforges with Alberto Abouchaar, 2003

<sup>3</sup> Primary and secondary schools are used here by way of example. The lines of collaboration are equally relevant for other points of transfer, e.g. first to middle schools.

# Individual research projects

The variety of foci taken by the families of schools provided the Strengthening Transfers and Transitions project with a range of approaches to examine and assess. This report's key messages and conclusions are founded on analysis of each project identifying patterns and characteristics that lead to success.

## **Partnership A**

Using pupil-tracking data and supplementary pupil-level information to accelerate progress – focus: mathematics

## **Partnership B**

Developing continuity of pedagogy with an emphasis on skills progression to increase pupil enthusiasm and accelerate progress – focus: science

## **Partnership C**

Developing students to be professional learners able to take greater responsibility for their learning – focus: mathematics

## **Partnership D**

Aligning Improving Schools' Performance (ISP) and Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) practices, supporting vulnerable learners and developing collaboration through local authority strategic planning – focus: English

## **Partnership E**

Developing a shared understanding of effective teaching and learning, and strengthening the use of assessment information including pupil tracking and AfL

## **Partnership F**

Developing more effective continuity of curriculum, teaching and learning styles – foci: mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) and literacy

## **Partnership G**

Developing a common language through AfL to impact on the transfer of pedagogy to in turn facilitate uniformity across the partner schools

## **Partnership H**

Developing a shared understanding between partner primaries and the secondary school to increase understanding of pedagogy and curriculum continuity and progression, to meet the learning needs of all pupils

## Suffolk

Suffolk LA was awarded Beacon status for transition in 2002. The status is granted where an LA has demonstrated a clear vision, excellent services and a willingness to innovate. It undertook a thorough review of transfer practice in the county in 2001. The motivation for participating in the Strengthening Transfers and Transitions project was to gain a greater understanding of why 'good practice' leads to effective transfer with some families of schools but has little impact on others. What underlying factors turn 'good practice' into 'effective practice'?

The project was led by an adviser who was involved in the authority's previous Beacon work and has extensive national experience in the field of transfers and transitions through her involvement with the Gatsby Foundation and the Association of School and College Leaders.

Half the cohort in Key Stage 2 (KS2) in Suffolk is educated within a three-tier system with children transferring from first to middle schools at the end of Year 4. This point of transfer was the focus of their work.

Two families of schools were involved: middle schools and their partner first schools. They each undertook their own specific action research as a vehicle for addressing the LA's research question,

### **Which generic principles underpin effective and sustainable transfer and transition throughout the learning journey?**

Feedback was compiled through pupil interviews and questionnaires pre- and post-transfer, staff questionnaires and parent questionnaires. The LA organised termly network conferences for the nine schools. Each conference included focused workshops, providing structures for professional dialogue, analysis of pupil and parent voice, and reflection on what generic principles underpin effective practice. Each conference built on the previous, leading to a series of conclusions. At the core is the conclusion that effective transfer is built on effective partnership, which is founded on a common vision, shared responsibility and trust.

## Suffolk – Partnership A

### Background

The middle school has five main partner primary schools. All the headteachers in the family of schools have taken up post in the last five years and work with a sense of shared commitment to all the children in their schools. Their high levels of mutual professional esteem have led to effective collaboration. The headteachers meet twice a term to plan and they regularly sit on each other's interviewing panels for important appointments. The middle school doesn't test pupils on entry; good communication and trust provide quality information regarding pupils' needs and potential for progress.

Their action research focused on how pupil tracking could be used to plan for pupil progress at the point of transfer.

### Outcomes

- Accelerated progress in mathematics
- Increased continuity of curriculum and of teaching and learning
- Increased consistency of assessment and curricular target-setting between schools
- Reduced pupil anxiety before and after transfer
- Reduced parental / carer anxiety before and after transfer

### Contributory actions

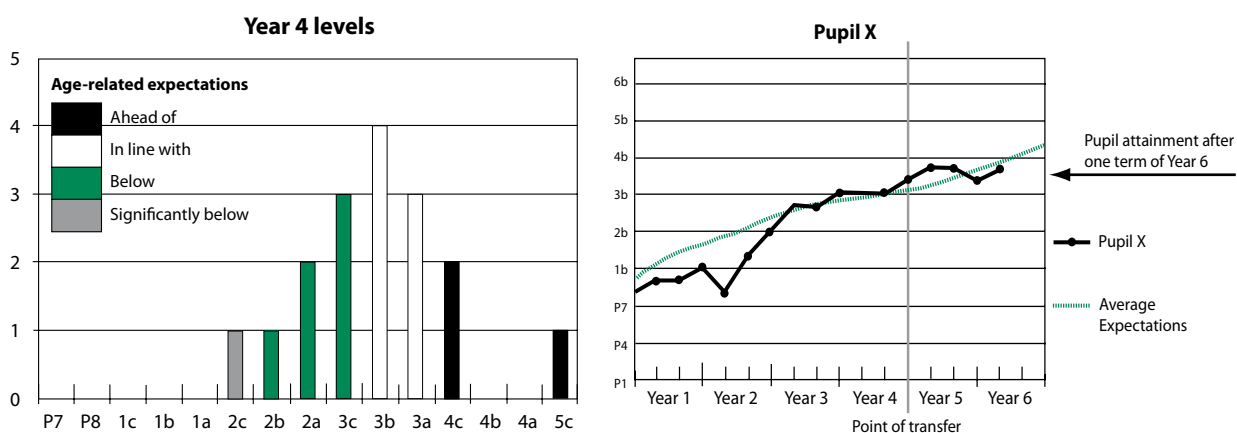
At the heart of the project is a common system for plotting the progress of pupils.

A close working relationship between Year 4 and Year 5 teachers is at the root of its effectiveness. Teachers from all schools were involved before and during the design process, and the result was a system that is easy to use, simple to read and contributes directly to planning.

The elements that make the system so easy to use for planning are as follows.

- data are entered termly to inform early response;
- each child's progress is monitored in relation to age-related expectations. These are broken down to take into account expected progress each term;
- Foundation Stage profile points feed into Year 1 tracking enabling very early identification of underachievement;
- each child's termly trajectory is plotted from Year 1, allowing teachers to see where they have made the most progress and where it has slowed;
- each class's attainment in relation to age-related expectation is plotted to identify successful practice.

A series of simple tables and charts, with colour coding and filtering, makes interpretation of the data quick and easy.



The tracking system is aligned with a complementary target-setting package that ensures continuity of curricular target setting between schools. Its design has also been informed by teacher feedback which aimed at establishing consistency, identifying appropriately challenging targets that build on prior learning, and facilitating pupil involvement in setting expectations.

The family of schools understands that numerical data are only part of the information needed to provide the best conditions for learning. Systems have been developed to inform how to provide those conditions for every child.

Personal and pedagogical information is used to ensure planning in Year 5 provides the best possible start for new pupils; anxieties are kept to a minimum and learning begins from day one.

The Head of Mathematics at the middle school has developed significant links with each partner primary, teaching Year 4 children and working with Year 4 teachers to develop common approaches to teaching mathematics. This has extended to joint planning and preparation for the revised primary framework.

A booklet outlining calculation methods is distributed to parents of children in all the schools. This reinforces the consistent pedagogy within the family of schools and supports parents' involvement with their child's learning.

To supplement attainment data and information acquired during meetings between Year 4 and Year 5 teachers, a common 'Cohort transfer handbook' has been designed. All schools have agreed what should be included, ensuring that it is seen as efficient and valuable. It covers medical, social, personal, academic and curricular aspects of the child's circumstances, abilities and experiences.

Year 4 visits to the middle school occur throughout the year. Three key events focus on mathematics, science and PE, but a regular programme of contact encourages pupils to see the transfer as the next step in their learning journey rather than a new one.


The primary schools arrange a joint educational visit. The pupils mix freely and have the opportunity to start forming relationships with children transferring to the middle school from other primary schools.

A buddy system and peer mentoring system operate to ensure that pupils feel they have someone to turn to from the first day of the autumn term.

Children who may be vulnerable at transfer are given added support. Learning support assistants travel between schools in the summer term to work alongside pupils, additional pupils visits are arranged, and a programme to build self-esteem and self-efficacy all contribute to their preparation for the move.

### Evidence

Using the National Strategies' Self-evaluation diagnostic toolkit, the following progress has been made between January and October 2007.

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
<b>Use of data and information</b>				

In 2005, 66% of pupils showed a dip in attainment in mathematics between the end of Year 4 and autumn half-term in Year 5. In 2006 this reduced to 41% and in 2007 reduced further to 36%.

The number of children experiencing some form of anxiety reduced from 72% (previous cohort) to 63% (evaluation from pupil survey).

This was the first time in the headteacher of the middle school's memory that there were no phone calls on the first day of term from concerned parents.

*"Things are great at school. I don't even need my memory book any more. I keep it under my pillow. School is great." (Year 5 pupil who was worried about forgetting things and getting lost)*

### Where next?

- The pupil-tracking system is being developed to support the identification of curricular targets for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6.
- The cohort handbook will be used to inform planning from Year 3.
- Year 8 peer mentors have been provided for Year 4 pupils to support them prior to transfer. In future these will be Year 6 pupils in response to feedback from Year 4 pupils.
- The transfer plan for vulnerable pupils will be enhanced. Middle school Teaching Assistants will have a significant role prior to transfer, with visits to the primary schools to work with pupils and establish relationships.
- A cover supervisor will be shared within the family of schools. This is cost-efficient, provides a familiar face for pupils as they move, and will be someone with their finger on the pulse of similarities and differences in teaching and learning between schools.

## Suffolk – Partnership B

### Background

The middle school has two main partner primary schools. One, with a significant proportion of children from deprived socio-economic backgrounds, operates a County Specialist Support Centre for children with moderate learning difficulties (MLD). The majority of Year 4 pupils from both schools transfer to the middle school. Established systems to support transfer existed prior to the action research, with a focus on its social aspects. These included a number of opportunities for Year 4 pupils to visit the middle school.

The family of schools wanted to explore how a greater understanding of each school's approaches to learning and an emphasis on developing pupil skills could impact on progress. Collaborative planning was at the heart of the project, which focused on learning in science.

### Outcomes

- Accelerated progress in science
- Accelerated progression in pupils' development of science-related skills
- Increased pupil enthusiasm for science
- Increased continuity of curriculum and of teaching and learning
- Increased levels of professional understanding
- Shared confidence in teacher assessments across all schools
- Strengthened AfL practices

### Contributory actions

Middle and primary school teachers jointly reviewed the KS2 curriculum to ensure continuity and progression.

Joint training for all three schools in AfL was instituted, with a focus on increasing the self-assessment skills of the children.

A review was undertaken of systems for data tracking and transfer between schools, and improvements implemented.

Teachers from all three schools jointly planned and delivered a transition unit exploring animal habitats. The pupils from the primary schools were merged into their future Year 5 classes and taught together. Teachers from all the schools were involved in the lessons, each developing a greater understanding of how the others approached teaching and learning.

The teachers in Year 5 were able to build on these lessons as soon as the children arrived in September. They had already worked with the children and discussed individual needs with their Year 4 teachers.

The teachers jointly agreed and targeted particular skills that the pupils could improve. These were assessed at the end of the unit.

The number of teacher visits to partner schools to meet the children, and of liaison meetings between teachers, was increased.

Work was moderated across schools to increase consistency and develop a shared understanding of standards.

A common language of assessment was agreed by all schools to facilitate continuity of AfL across transfer.



### Evidence

Using the National Strategies' Self-evaluation diagnostic toolkit, the following progress has been made between January and October 2007\*

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
<b>Use of data and information</b>			→	
<b>Continuity of curriculum, teaching and learning</b>		→		
<b>School ethos and climate for learning</b>			→	

\*These judgements are based solely on the work within the science curriculum (the focus of the action research).

The end-of-unit test (October) showed an increase from an average of 0.84 of a sublevel of progress by the previous Year 5 cohort to an average of 1.56 sublevels of progress by the cohort participating in the jointly planned and delivered unit.

A number of surveys were undertaken with the pupils before and after transfer:

- 66% of pupils registered that they enjoyed science in Year 4; this was built on in Year 5 with the figure climbing to 93%;
- every child could identify at least one skill developed in Year 4 that had improved in the first half-term of Year 5 (frequent mentions were made of skills related to questioning, estimating and making predictions);
- a survey undertaken with the previous cohort in 2006 found that 64% of Year 5 pupils had repeated work they had done in Year 4; this dropped to 18% with pupils involved in this project;

The project involved the Year 5 teachers in Year 4 lessons.

*"I was able to observe their approach, watch the way staff related to children and see the amount of responsibility the children are given and the levels of independence. We were able to use and refer to different techniques used in the primary schools to ensure consistency for pupils. Most importantly I was made aware of the differences in teaching and learning and the environment in which the children are taught."* (Year 5 science teacher)

The middle school teachers used the Primary National Strategy's AfL school self-evaluation grid to assess their implementation of elements of AfL. Significant improvement was noted in the following areas.

- conditions for learning;
- the use of curricular targets;
- designing opportunities for learning.

Based on discussions with staff, the response of the pupils and feedback from parents, the headteacher at the middle school assessed this year's transfer as "the best ever".

### Where next?

- Continue to strengthen the professional links between teachers.  
*"The most significant developments have been the relationships and links formed with primary school staff."* (Year 5 science teacher)
- Continue to enhance mutual understanding of approaches to learning and jointly plan for consistency of approach, for example by developing the use of Edward de Bono's 'Thinking Hats' and of accelerated learning strategies in all schools.
- Extend consistency and confidence in assessment practice at all transfer points, including a shared moderation process of end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments that involves the middle school teachers.
- Increase the regularity of lesson observations and team teaching between schools.  
*"The opportunities to observe other teachers and discuss approaches with them have greatly improved my own skills."* (Year 5 science teacher)
- Develop a pre-transfer meeting with each child, their Year 4 teacher and receiving Year 5 form teacher. This will have a focus on the pupil's prior achievements and targets for the coming year.

## Hampshire – Partnership C

### Background

The secondary school is an 11–16 mixed comprehensive with Technology status and approximately 1000 pupils on roll. The four partner primaries involved in this project provide 60% of its intake and the remaining 40% are from approximately 20 other primary schools.

The initial motivation for this action research came from a series of visits to the main partner primaries undertaken by the deputy headteacher responsible for Key Stage 3 (KS3). He was impressed at how capable the pupils were at managing their own learning and recognised this as a missing element from the progression of pupils as they entered Year 7. Work began to develop continuity and consistency among the primary schools that would enable the secondary school to continue to support the development of professional learners.

### Outcomes

- Accelerated progress in mathematics
- Increased pupil responsibility for their own learning
- Increased pupil engagement in learning
- Increased continuity of curriculum and of teaching and learning

### Contributory actions

The senior leadership from all the participating schools remained central to the work throughout. From the start it was recognised that the key to the success of this project would be collaboration. Discussions led to a shared vision for what they were trying to achieve and a sense of shared responsibility for achieving it.

The senior leadership at the technology college have made some significant commitments that have promoted a stronger working relationship with partner primary schools:

- the deputy headteacher responsible for KS3 has taken overall responsibility for strengthening transfer;
- a 'transition coordinator' has been appointed and a framework for discussing *pupils as learners* has been developed;
- a 'transition teacher' has been appointed to support those that may be vulnerable at transfer;
- a mathematics Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) has been employed to promote continuity of curriculum and of teaching and learning.

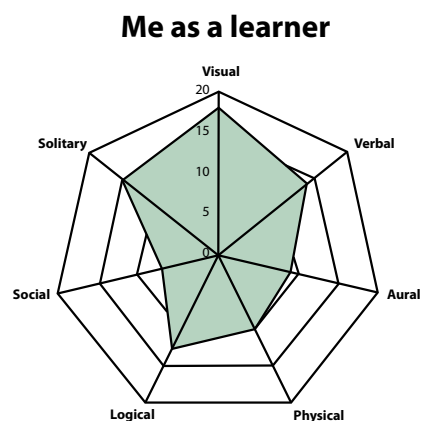
All were given time and resources to work with teachers and pupils from the main partner primary schools.

A series of structured lesson observations were undertaken to determine the similarities and differences between Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. Observations were made at five-minute intervals, recording approaches to learning and pupils' responses.

It was observed that pupils were given greater control over their learning in Year 6:

- lessons were objective-led but pupils were given a choice about how to approach activities;
- pupils made predictions and chose a method for testing them;
- they were given the opportunity to identify their own extension work;
- pupils readily drew from a variety of curriculum areas.

Children in Year 6 completed a questionnaire to identify their preferred learning styles. This stimulated discussions with their teachers in Year 6. The intention was not to label children as particular types of learners but to increase pupils' awareness that they are in control of their learning and that they have the ability to expand their learning style.



Pupils then produced a PowerPoint presentation to deliver at their new school entitled 'Me as a Learner'. The intention is that this will be a live document that is updated as the pupil develops throughout their learning journey.

The work continues in Year 7 where radar charts have been produced and stuck into pupil planners. Teachers in Year 7 refer to these in their one-to-one discussions with pupils. The focus is on how the pupil can identify an approach to learning that will be successful for them.

To complement this analysis, pupils also 'traffic lighted' themselves in the following areas:

- organisation;
- problem solving;
- recognising when they need help;
- gathering information;
- making connections with other work;
- planning for and evaluating success.

'Active learning' lessons have been introduced to develop the pupils' capacity to learn. Academic mentoring days have also evolved and the discussions between tutors, parents and pupils have a significant focus on how to develop skills and abilities to accelerate learning.

The secondary school has ensured that teachers have been given advice, guidance and/or training about how to use these developments to support teaching and learning in their lessons.





A transition teacher has been appointed to provide vulnerable pupils with an experience of Year 7 that is closer to a primary school approach for a proportion of their timetable. The transition teacher has three afternoons a week to work directly with the primary schools.

There has been specific work in mathematics to empower the learner. The standardisation of equipment among all the schools has begun and an AST has established links to strengthen continuity of teaching and learning. Information from Year 6 teachers has directly influenced planning in the department, resulting in a greater emphasis on pupils understanding process.

The ongoing links between the technology college and the primary schools after transfer have been particularly valuable. Year 6 teachers were invited to the school to meet up with pupils and review the work they had done in the first half of the autumn term. They were given the opportunity to give feedback to Year 7 teachers regarding the pupils' approach to learning, their standard and their rate of progress.

### Evidence

Using the National Strategies' Self-evaluation diagnostic toolkit, the following progress has been made between January and October 2007

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
<b>Use of data and information</b>				
<b>Targeting supporting and intervention</b>				
<b>Continuity of curriculum, teaching and learning</b>				
<b>School ethos and climate for learning</b>				

The performance of the students has been analysed in relation to pupil attainment at the end of KS2. This has been compared with the previous cohort to establish improvement.

- 75% of Year 7 pupils arriving in September 2006 made progress in mathematics by the end of the autumn term. The average progress was 0.25 sublevels.
- 90% of Year 7 pupils arriving in September 2007 made progress in mathematics by the end of the autumn term. The average progress had increased to 1.35 sublevels.

A workshop was run with a sample of students to assess whether they had developed an understanding of their learning styles. The children engaged readily in the various activities and were clearly familiar with this sort of reflection.

*"I am a logical thinker and enjoy challenges. I enjoy working in groups as well as on my own. I enjoy physical puzzles and take the role of leader whenever necessary."*

*"I work better if I can see things so I draw things so I can understand. I like doing hands-on activities."*

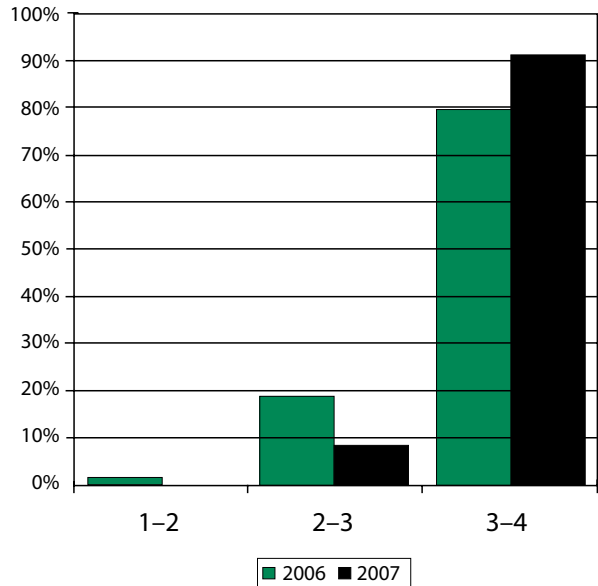
*"I am an inquisitive learner. I like to know what goes on around me and enjoy doing things for myself. I work slowly but eventually get things done."*

The pupils easily moved to identifying approaches to teaching and learning that suited their styles and how they can get the most out of lessons.

Pupil engagement in learning also increased.

A system of grading each student based on attitude to learning was introduced in September 2005. A numerical value is assigned to attitudes from 'Excellent' to 'Poor'. The 2007 data show the improvement since the start of the project. Pupils' scores for attitude have shifted towards 'Excellent'.

Attitude to learning		
Attitude	2006	2007
$1 \leq a < 2$	1%	0%
$2 \leq a < 3$	20%	9%
$3 \leq a < 4$	80%	91%



### Where next?

- The transition teacher will deliver a transition-focused series of lessons in the main partner primary schools and work with the Year 6 teachers to identify and target vulnerable pupils. He will develop intervention strategies to support learning and deliver Active Learning and Personal Development (ALPD), with a focus on developing students as learners and promoting an independent understanding of how to manage learning in the secondary environment.
- Year 7 English sets will be mirrored in MFL to allow lower ability students to have more time for literacy: 5 hours a week taught by the transition teacher (MFL to be introduced over the year at an appropriate level).
- A teacher responsible for developing learning (a new post for 2008/09 as a result of the transition project) will extend the ALPD course through Years 8 and 9.
- The mathematics AST will continue to strengthen links with partner primary schools to align approaches to teaching and learning.

## Swindon – Partnership D

### Background

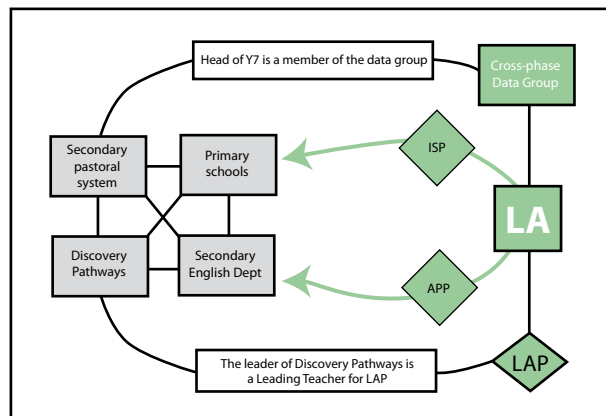
There are three strands to Swindon’s action research.

At school level:

1. aligning ISP and APP practice in English to improve pupil progress across transfer;
2. supporting vulnerable underachievers to accelerate progress in Year 7 through a booster year in which they are taught the majority of subjects by one teacher, ensuring continuity and cross-curricular links.

At LA level:

3. developing strategic collaboration and drawing together the introduction of ISP and APP, the Low Attainers Project (LAP) and the development of a cross-phase data group into a wider strategic approach to raising standards.



### Outcomes

- Accelerated progress in writing
- Increased continuity of curriculum and of teaching and learning
- Increased consistency of assessment and curricular target setting between schools
- Reduction in pupil anxiety before and after transfer
- Increased parental satisfaction with transfer arrangements

### Contributory actions

The project was given a high-profile launch with senior representatives from the LA and each school. Presentations from the local authority, the schools and a National Strategies’ Regional Adviser all reinforced the shared recognition of the vital role that effective transfer plays in ensuring a child achieves their potential. The purpose of the launch was to secure a shared vision, strong professional relationships and a culture of openness within a framework of agreed protocols.

The LA arranged a two-day residential conference for Year 6 teachers, Year 7 teachers and pastoral leaders to explore the opportunities and potential barriers to effective cross-phase collaboration. The time was also used to jointly plan a transfer unit based on Roald Dahl’s ‘Boy’.

Ongoing liaison between Year 6 and Year 7 teachers engendered a greater understanding of teaching and learning and influenced the planning and delivery of lessons in both phases.

Assessment practices were aligned and teachers worked together to generate layered curricular targets that spanned Year 6 and Year 7.

Primary schools provided a portfolio of work for each child, allowing Year 7 teachers to refer to prior accomplishments and previous assessments. The alignment of assessment practices (i.e. using the same criteria, language and approaches) has meant that Year 7 teachers can engage the pupils in effective AfL from where they left off in Year 6.

The 'Discovery Pathways' project is a programme to give low-attaining pupils a booster year where the majority of subjects are taught by one teacher. There is an emphasis on skills for learning and cross-curricular links. The project has established links with the primary schools and the leader was involved with the planning of the 'Boy' unit from the start.

Parental support was seen as vital for the success of the project. Information relating to its aims and operation was provided, as well as opportunities to discuss their child's progress and guidance regarding how they can support their child's learning at home. Feedback regarding their views and experiences was considered a valuable aspect of the process.

### Evidence

The Head of English measured the impact of the transfer project by analysing the progress of pupils in her class in the first half of the autumn term.

The overall class average for progress was 0.94 of a sublevel in the curricular foci that were being measured as part of the project. It was 1 sublevel for pupils from primary schools that were part of the project and 0.5 of a sublevel for pupils from primary schools that were not part of it.

The proportion of pupils in the Discovery Pathways programme who either maintained or improved their level of attainment in the curricular foci being measured as part of the 'Boy' transfer project was 95%, while 47% demonstrated 2 sub levels of improvement.

*"The Discovery Pathway in Years 7 and 8 is outstanding in boosting the performance of vulnerable pupils and easing their transition to secondary school."* Ofsted (December 2007)

*"The project has highlighted that Year 6 teachers should see achievement in Year 7 as part of their responsibility."* (Year 6 teacher)

*"Collaborating more closely with primary schools has raised our expectation for pupils' progress in Year 7 and raised our game in planning for that progress."* (Head of English)

The impact of the literacy project on how pupils feel about their transfer is reflected in comments given at a pupil feedback session. One pupil linked his ability to make connections between work in primary and secondary school with his ability to cope emotionally with transfer:

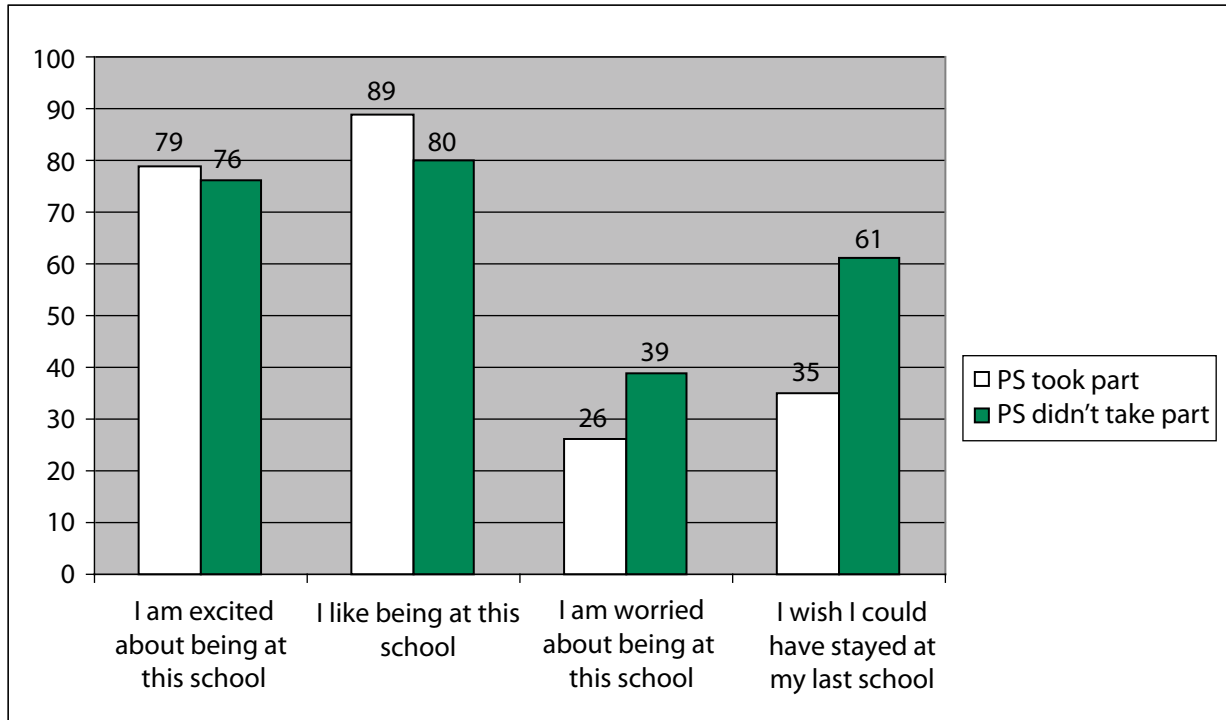
*"I think it was good to do it ['Boy'] in both schools because you can remember stuff and you don't feel so sad about moving."*

The majority of pupils felt more confident about the move to the secondary school as a result of the project. They recognised the differences between primary and secondary school but felt positive about them:

*"Changing schools can make a big difference to learning. It is magical because we are getting more adventurous."*



The secondary school undertook a survey of pupils' thoughts and feeling about being in Year 7. Responses from pupils from primary schools that had taken part in the project were analysed separately from those of pupils who had come from schools that had not participated. The graph shows the percentages that said the statement was 'a lot' or 'a bit' like them.



A parental survey found that:

- 89% of parents who already had a child at the secondary school felt the new arrangements were an improvement
- 96% thought the 'Boy' project had been useful for their child's transfer
- 94% knew where their child was in their learning and 82% knew which areas their child needed to focus on next
- 100% were happy with the information they received about transfer
- 99% felt able to share their concerns about transfer

### Where next?

- Build on the stronger collaboration engendered through the project to refine it and expand the curricular focus.
- Extend the Discovery Pathways programme to Years 8 and 9.
- The LA will continue to explore how strategic collaboration and alignment of programmes for school improvement can improve transfers and transitions.

## Leeds – Partnership E

### Background

The project focused on transfer to two Leeds high schools from 16 partner primary schools in the west area of Leeds, but for the action research project there was a particular focus on two of the partner primary schools. The two high schools are both 11–18 mixed comprehensive schools, one with 1450 pupils and the other with 794 pupils.

All these schools work in challenging circumstances in a socially deprived area of the city, and have a very good record of partnership within the family of schools.

The overall aim of this project is to ensure that all pupils continue to learn and show high levels of achievement across upper KS2 and lower KS3. In order for this to happen, primary and high schools are working together on developing a shared understanding of effective:

- teaching and learning;
- use of assessment information including pupil tracking and AfL; and
- conditions for learning.

### Outcomes

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ● Increased rates of pupil attendance                                     | ● Improved use of assessment information, pupil tracking and AfL                         |
| ● Increased pupil confidence  | ● Increased consistency in best practice in strengthening curricular aspects of transfer |
| ● Increased professional understanding between Year 6 and Year 7 teachers | ● Stronger parent partnerships   |

### Contributory actions

The headteachers agreed to cross-monitor writing and mathematics during June 2007, with moderation and monitoring of progress in October 2007. The LA committed five National Strategies consultants to facilitate this.

In all partner primary schools, Year 6 teachers set targets for pupils for the end of Year 7. There was, in addition, a commentary on how to achieve these targets. These were sent out to parents with the pupils' Year 6 annual reports and are being used as part of Year 7 parent consultation sessions.

Lessons are taught in the primary schools with an emphasis on transfer to Key Stage 3. Examples are:

- 'circle time' lessons designed to discuss and alleviate pupils' anxieties about moving to secondary school;
- science lessons that focus on how the topic might be taught at secondary school and included as part of a 'bridging unit' designed with and jointly taught by Year 6 and Year 7 teachers.

In both participating high schools, the Year 7 pupils are taught separately from the mainstream, with the curriculum delivered through teaching and learning styles that are complementary to those used in the partner primary schools.

Publication and dissemination to all schools and Chairs of Governors of a high-quality LA document 'Transforming Transfer', published in autumn 2007 and the culmination of one year's work with Leeds schools.

The LA organised six cross-phase briefing sessions throughout the authority to inform schools of the requirements, purposes and mechanisms for effective data transfer and five area-based conferences to support local partnerships to deliver the transfer entitlement as specified in the local authority document, 'Transforming Transfer'.

### Evidence

Year 7 attendance during the autumn term has increased compared with the previous cohort.

2006		2007	
Whole year	Pupils from focus primary schools	Whole year	Pupils from focus primary schools
91.9%	92.8%	94%	93.6%

Pupils find the move to secondary school a safe and exciting experience.

*"At first I thought it was going to be a bit frightening but after the first day I could not wait until the next day. I really enjoyed the jump from primary school to high school. The teachers made us really welcome and plus we got our own year group area. I thought this was a great idea because it let us get settled in before going round the full school."* (Year 7 pupil)

*"I was quiet and shy at [primary school] and I had no friends but now I'm more confident and I have lots of new friends."* (Year 7 pupil)

*"I thought the transition of moving up to [secondary school] was full of great ideas...The new Year 7 corridor made it a lot simpler than it might have been...Project Day is a really good idea to get us working with our tutors and being more confident."* (Year 7 pupil)

Teachers recognised the value in the closer working relationship between primary and secondary school.

*"The cross-moderation session with primary teachers was very helpful. I think the various descriptions help me to feel more secure (and less subjective) about the levels I am assigning my students. They also aid me in choosing very specific targets on which pupils should focus."* (Year 7 English teacher)

*"The project has helped us improve departmental assessment and target setting in KS3 but especially in Year 7. A very worthwhile exercise."* (Year 7 English teacher)

*"The project has been very useful. Secondary staff can learn a lot from primary colleagues and vice versa, especially on group work, AfL and questioning."* (Year 7 mathematics teacher)

### Where next?

- There will be more focus on AfL and pedagogic continuity.
- The work of this project will be linked with other transfers and transitions and cross-phase work that the LA is engaged in. There are currently transfer projects in each of the LA's other four designated areas of the city. In each case, a high school is working with four partner primaries on skills-based units in English, mathematics, science and ICT. All participants are required to use the majority of the funding to enable Year 6 and Year 7 teachers to work in each other's classrooms.
- School Improvement Partners (SIPs) will be discussing with secondary schools how they are meeting the advice of the 'Transforming Transfer' document. Key advice includes:
- The school improvement plan incorporates a transfer plan with dedicated resources
- Schools have an experienced member of staff leading teaching and learning in Year 7 on a permanent basis, who is familiar with standards and expectations between Year 6 and Year 7
- Secondary schools consider appointing Year 7 staff who have the experience of working in the upper part of primary school.

## Coventry – Partnership F

### Background

There are three strands to Coventry's action research, involving three different secondary schools and some of their partner primary schools. Their starting point was that effective practice was most underdeveloped in continuity of curriculum, teaching and learning styles.

Strand A	One secondary school, a designated Mathematics and Computing College, worked with two of its partner primary schools to compare and contrast two different models of strengthening transfer and transition between Key Stages 2 and 3, with mathematics being the chosen focus for the project.
Strand B	One secondary school, a Business and Enterprise College, focused on MFL and continuity of language provision with one of its partner primary schools.
Strand C	One secondary school, also a Business and Enterprise College, worked with one of its partner primary schools to focus on literacy through the skills and competences acquired at primary school and to further develop them in the context of the 'Opening Minds' curriculum that all Year 7 pupils would be taught through from September 2007.

### Outcomes

- Increased learner confidence
- Sustained contact between primary and secondary school mathematics teachers
- Year 5 awareness about 'Opening Minds' curriculum delivery
- Increased parental understanding of a competency-based curriculum and how to support their child at home
- Increased levels of professional understanding
- Enhanced partnership working
- Increased capacity for strengthening transfers and transitions

### Contributory actions

#### Strand A

Year 6 and 7 teachers team teach in summer and autumn terms.

Mathematics lessons are specifically designed to strengthen transfer, with a particular focus on algebra.

#### Strand B

The pupil voice was used to ascertain pupils' perceptions of their abilities in modern foreign languages at KS2. These were used to develop seating plans that matched stronger pupils working with weaker pupils in Year 7.

An LA MFL transition booklet was completed by the cohort and shared with parents.

A modern foreign languages transition day was organised to provide pupils with opportunities to consider how they would prepare themselves for learning a language at Key Stage 3.

The above were used to develop pupil recognition of progression in their work from Year 6 to Year 7.

### Strand C

'Opening Minds' taster days were put on for Year 5 pupils and taster evenings for parents in the partner primary school.

Secondary school staff attended Year 5 and 6 parents' evenings to share information on the project.

A joint literacy / writing skills programme was set up with Year 5 pupils through a shared teaching and learning focus between staff.

Year 6 and 7 worked together to deliver the 'Building Bridges' programme. This led to discussions on teaching and learning that improved transition for the pupils.

### All strands

The three LA advisers, who each support one of the families of schools in the project, have become a Transitions Advisory group for the LA.

An LA-sponsored Transition Conference with over 70 primary and secondary staff attending was used to share and disseminate excellent local and national practice in strengthening transfers and transitions.

The Excellence in Cities programme has created and distributed a generic programme for transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 for all Year 6 pupils called 'Moving On.'

### Evidence

- Of primary school students transferring to the Business and Enterprise College (Strand C), 51% are performing above the expected class average in Year 7 and 22% are performing at the expected class average.
- The results from the Strand B school's pupil survey on their attitudes towards studying MFL following transition work between KS2 and KS3 show that:
  - pupils are more confident, enthusiastic and receptive to studying MFL at KS3;
  - a growing number of pupils are not daunted by the task of studying foreign language texts;
  - a growing number of pupils have greater confidence in initiating conversations in a foreign language.
- The results from the Strand A school's pupil survey on their attitudes towards studying mathematics following transition work between KS2 and KS3 show:
  - an increase in pupil confidence in working with algebra;
  - continuity of curriculum content and teaching and learning styles present an exciting start to Year 7 mathematics;
  - sustained contact with Year 6 pupils by teachers from the secondary school has a strong positive impact on transfer to KS3.

*"I think it was good to get a taste of what secondary school is like through these transition lessons." (Year 6 pupil)*

*"I liked the questions we did because they were challenging." (Year 6 pupil)*

### Where next?

- Pilot groups of parents and pupils will be set up to provide feedback to inform future actions.
- The Transitions Advisory group will meet to strategically plan to strengthen transfers and transitions using the evaluation of this project and feedback from all stakeholders.
- A further two secondary schools and their partner primary schools will be identified and supported in their work to strengthen and improve transfer from Year 6 to Year 7.
- A further two LA cross-phase forum meetings about transfers and transitions will be held during this academic year.
- An LA transfer document will be developed that establishes pupil and parent entitlements.

## Gateshead – Partnership G

### Background

The secondary school is an 11–18 mixed comprehensive with Specialist Arts College status. It has five main partner primary schools that provide around 66% of its intake. The school's commitment to strengthening transfers and transitions can be gauged from the fact that under the new Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) arrangements, transfer and transition became a stated responsibility for all curriculum leaders. The action research project focused on how dialogue could be used effectively to impact on the transfer of pedagogy to facilitate uniformity across the partner schools. This utilised the AfL strategies of success criteria, feedback and peer- and self-assessment.

Four partnerships were created to facilitate and develop dialogue amongst the groups.

1. A steering group network for Headteachers (HTs) / Senior Leaders (SLs) from each school. These met every half-term.
2. A cross-phase teachers' network consisting of five secondary and five primary teachers. The secondary teachers each held a responsibility point for transition and taught in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, ICT and design technology. The primary school teachers came from Years 5, 6 and 2. For a number of reasons the majority of teachers were from Year 5. Firstly, Year 5 teachers would not be under the pressure of Standardised Attainment Tests (SATs) testing. Secondly, they would have more flexibility to experiment with their practice and to visit colleagues in other schools. Thirdly, the primary schools would benefit from being able to see how the children's learning developed over two years.
3. These ten teachers were further subdivided into three cross-phase groups. These partnerships provided them with opportunities to observe each other teaching and the pupils learning. More collaborative work between feeder schools and the secondary school opened up opportunities to develop continuity in pedagogy.

This model of working in threes was based on coaching and thinking skills work already going on in the authority. Also it provided a structure to enable a

*'change-friendly culture where committed individuals are encouraged to develop their understanding and practice, and gradually share these with other willing volunteers.'*  
(Swaffield and MacBeath, 2006)<sup>4</sup>

Both networks met once every half-term between January and November 2007. These meetings have been vital to provide the project with 'momentum, collegiality, and opportunities for further training, reflection and self-evaluation' (Transfers and Transitions Newsletter (2), 2007).

4. A secondary teachers' network meeting. This was not initially planned for but was requested by the teachers to discuss what they had seen and to plan ways ahead.

### Outcomes

- Enhancement of partnership working led to increased dialogue about learning between:
  - teachers from different schools;
  - teachers and their pupils;
  - teachers in their own school.
- Increased levels of professional understanding of AfL

<sup>4</sup> 'Embedding Learning: How to Learn in school policy: the challenge for leadership', Swaffield and Macbeath, 2006, Research Papers in Education **21** (2)

- Commonality of learning approaches and teaching styles
- Increased pupil confidence that they can transfer learning from primary to secondary school
- Raised teacher expectations regarding pupils' ability to engage in dialogue and how this impacts on pupils' independent learning skills

### Contributory actions

Direction was provided by the alignment of strategic leadership at school and local authority levels. The focus was agreed so that this project built on existing work aimed at local authority and national priorities. The headteachers and senior leadership teams ensured that it was incorporated into whole-school development of AfL and facilitated the process by ensuring staff were supported and provided with time to attend observations.

Observation of practice and professional dialogue were essential elements. Structured network meetings between schools had specific focuses providing an opportunity for discussion and reflection on how to proceed with the work. These meetings were used by teachers to feed back their lesson observations and to learn about the variety of pupils' learning experiences. This has led to the development of a bank of strategies to trial and an agreement on common vocabulary for discussing teaching and learning.

From the beginning of September pupils in English, Design and Technology, ICT, mathematics and science used 'success criteria' and 'talking partners'. This increased pupil ownership of their learning and enhanced their ability to be specific when asking for help or when helping other pupils.

The use of an action research approach enabled all people involved to feel able to experiment with their practice without fear of failure.

The success of the project depended on the strong relationships between the schools and the local authority, founded on mutual professional respect and trust.

### Evidence

Using the National Strategies' Self-evaluation diagnostic toolkit, the following progress has been made between January and October 2007

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
<b>Continuity of curriculum, teaching and learning</b>			→	
<b>School ethos and climate for learning</b>			→	

Pupils in ICT are working at level 5, whereas in previous years pupils of similar ability were working at level 4 at this stage of Year 7.

Feedback from pupils confirmed that the curriculum content and teaching approaches used presented an exciting and positive introduction to Year 7.

In all core subjects at this stage last year, 3% of pupils were working at level 5. In the present cohort of Year 7 involved in this project, 32% of pupils are working at level 5



### Where next?

- Produce and distribute a booklet to all stakeholders involved in the project, highlighting common terminology and strategies used.
- Further enhance partnership working between primary and secondary schools.
- The secondary school is to provide financial support – half a day per half-term per school to continue enabling teachers to develop partnership working.
- Develop common policies, e.g. marking.
- Create documents detailing common elements such as transfer Key Stage 2/3 (expand to include Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1).
- Disseminate practice and messages across all staff.
- Enhance communication with parents as partners in strengthening transfers and transitions.
- The Strengthening Transfers and Transitions project as developed in Gateshead, will be used as a model to inform other LA's schools' work on strengthening transfer.
- Possibly invite another secondary school in the local area to join the project.

## Salford – Partnership H

### Background

The secondary school, a specialist Arts College, has nine main partner primary schools. Since September 2003, all the schools have been partners in the local Excellence in Cities Action Zone family of schools. From September 2006, pupils moving to Year 7 at the secondary school transferred to a newly established Foundation Year with its own skills/competences-based curriculum, facilities and organisation. This was designed to:

- improve transition for students from Key Stage 2 into Key Stage 3;
- help develop transferable skills and competences such as critical thinking, enterprise, independent learning, managing information, citizenship, managing people and situations, literacy, numeracy and ICT;
- address the Every Child Matters agenda directly through curriculum provision;
- embed Emotional Intelligence and Learning to Learn in the curriculum;
- extend and challenge the more able, and engage those pupils who may become disaffected in Key Stage 3;
- develop an approach to learning that will become habitual throughout the key stage.

### Outcomes

- Increased continuity of teaching and learning
- Increased levels of professional understanding
- More effective use of data and information
- Shared confidence in teacher assessments across all schools
- More effective targeting of support and intervention
- Enhanced partnership working between primary and secondary schools
- More effective tracking of pupil progress

### Contributory actions

Teachers in partner schools met together to discuss aligning teaching and learning approaches and to jointly plan aspects of the curriculum.

Effective communications through meetings enhanced the transfer and use of data, teacher assessment and information about pupils' achievement and prior experience, to set challenging targets for Year 7.

Intervention programmes designed to meet individual pupils' learning needs were implemented from the start of Year 7.

Curricular targets were set by Year 6 teachers and these were monitored and reviewed in October half-term of Year 7.

Curricular targets for writing have been used to tailor Wave 1 teaching for Year 7 pupils.

Teachers also took part in cross-phase standardisation of recount writing. Both Year 7 Foundation Curriculum teachers and Year 6 teachers brought examples of pupils' recount writing to the meeting. This enabled Year 7 Foundation Curriculum teachers to deepen their understanding of levelling from primary specialists.

Year 6 teachers and Year 7 Foundation Curriculum teachers reviewed the writing targets set by Year 6 teachers for pupils in the summer term. This enabled Year 6 teachers to remain involved in their past pupils' progress and opened up a dialogue about the teaching of literacy, mainly around pedagogical continuity and progression.

The Year 7 Foundation Curriculum tracking spreadsheet is available on the school network, enabling all staff to use the data, particularly the assessment of key competencies.

Literacy is more effectively taught in the Year 7 foundation curriculum through use of sequence for teaching for writing.

Reading is explicitly taught using targets identified through question-level analysis of KS2 English test papers.

Speaking and listening skills are explicitly taught in Year 6 and 7.

Year 7 Foundation Curriculum teachers are now linked to one of the nine partner primaries, and a number of exchange visits have taken place. This has enabled Year 6 teachers to see the Year 7 Foundation Curriculum in action, helped to develop trust between the high school and the primaries, and promoted dialogue about teaching and learning between Year 6 teachers and Year 7 Foundation Curriculum teachers.

### Evidence

- Pupil progress data from Year 6 National Curriculum tests to end of Year 7 has shown that pupils have made more progress in 06-07 than was made in 05-06.
- Provision for numeracy within the Foundation curriculum was judged as good by HMI in June 2007.
- Year 7 attendance for the autumn term in 2005 (the year prior to the creation of the Year 7 Foundation Curriculum) was 90.8%. In 2006 (the first year of the Year 7 Foundation Curriculum) it was 91.1%. In 2007 it had gone up to 93.4%.
- Literacy is now at the core of the Foundation curriculum.
- Year 7 Foundation teachers' planning demonstrates increased confidence in teaching literacy, specifically writing.
- Through senior leadership team (SLT) observations, there is evidence of improved quality of teaching and learning.
- Specific times for assessment of reading and writing are built into the year plan.

### Where next?

- Use the PAT analysis of strengths and weaknesses of current Year 7 pupils from the Key Stage 2 National Tests to inform CPD planning for Year 7 Foundation Curriculum teachers.
- Continue the teacher exchanges to share best practice between Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3.
- Set up a teacher forum for Year 7 Foundation teachers and Year 6 teachers on the authorities Virtual Learning Platform.
- Involve the high school and partner primaries in the next phase of the introduction of use of the Virtual Learning Platform for electronic transfer of Year 6 pupils, work to high school.
- Involve the foundation Curriculum Co-ordinator in planning a Year 8 'Citizen' curriculum (combination of citizenship, geography, history, ICT and RE) to strengthen transition from Year 7 to Year 8.
- Disseminate the above through the LAs annual transfer conference.

# Significant elements of effective practice

The following elements emerged in a number of the schools' projects as having particular leverage:

- Headteacher / SLT involvement. The crucial element here is a 'leader' with the status to give importance to transfers and transitions, but additionally able to align it with wider school improvement priorities.
- Ongoing collaboration before and after transfer in the context of both key stages. This has not been one key stage 'doing' transfer to the other, but an equal partnership that has professionally developed all stakeholders.
- Cross-phase network meetings whose agenda and discussions have focused on professional dialogue about teaching and learning within the contexts of transfers and transitions, and not about the cohort or individual pupils that are involved.
- The development of pupils' skills through either a part- or full-time competency-based curriculum designed to build on prior learning and to facilitate successful movement to the following year / key stage.
- Building capacity and sustainability for ongoing improvement by involving pupils and parents in the monitoring, reviewing and planning process and strategically sharing effective practice through a planned process, both within an LA and a school.

# Implications for local authorities

During the Strengthening Transfers and Transitions Pilot Programme, the LAs have shown they can be the bridge that links cross-phase partnership working.

For effective practice to develop for pupils transferring from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1, from Key Stage 1 to 2 (if these are in separate schools), from Key Stage 2 to 3 and from Key Stage 3 or 4 to external provision post-14, cross-phase partnership working needs to be a non-negotiable ingredient.

The LA can:

Establish a clear strategic vision for strengthening transfers and transitions through:

- consulting with key stakeholders, including schools, parents and children
- developing an LA transfers and transitions policy that aligns with the Children and Young Peoples' Plan (CYPP) and contributes to raising standards and closing attainment gaps between identified groups
- developing a strategic improvement plan that takes advantage of national developments in Children's Services

Support partnership working through:

- establishing cross-phase working within and between children's services
- facilitating and supporting local cross-phase network meetings of families of schools to jointly plan for strengthening transfer
- promoting the role of parent partnerships (e.g. through Parent Advisers)

Increasing capacity through:

- providing professional development opportunities for senior leaders, teachers and other adults who work with pupils and/or their families
- developing and promoting guidance materials
- organising conferences and forums to enable professional dialogue, the dissemination of research findings and sharing of practice

## Implications for schools

Evidence that effective transfer can accelerate progress, increase confidence and reduce anxiety indicates that work to strengthen transfers and transitions is an important contributor to whole-school improvement. It deserves to be part of schools' ongoing efforts to drive up standards and deliver their statutory responsibility to promote the well-being of their pupils.

The schools can:

Establish a clear strategic vision for strengthening transfers and transitions through:

- the work of the governing body, self-evaluation and the school improvement plan
- consulting with staff, children and parents
- developing a transfers and transitions policy that aligns with the school improvement plan and contributes to raising standards and closing attainment gaps between identified groups
- localising transfers and transitions practices within the context of the LA Children and Young People's Plan and curricular and qualification developments

Support partnership working through:

- establishing systems and structures that facilitate collaboration with partner schools
- engaging with and contributing to local authority plans to share effective practice and develop consistency
- promoting and enhancing parent partnerships
- using pupil and parent voice to monitor and evaluate practice

Increasing capacity through:

- appropriately incorporating transfers and transitions into their performance management criteria
- planning CPD to strengthen their work in transfers and transitions for all staff
- planning schemes of work that promote continuity of curriculum and of teaching and learning styles
- keeping the child at the centre of all of their work

## Appendix 1

### National Strategies materials to support strengthening transfers and transitions

The National Strategies has developed the following materials to support the work of LAs and schools in strengthening transfers and transitions.

#### Resources developed as part of the strengthening transfers and transitions project

Description	Location
Detailed case studies	<a href="http://whatworkswell.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/">http://whatworkswell.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/</a> Transfers and transitions can be found in the 'curriculum' drop down menu.
Three transfers and transitions newsletters	<a href="http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/learning_and_teaching/ns_transf_news/">www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/learning_and_teaching/ns_transf_news/</a> <a href="http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/secondary/keystage3/all/respub/ns_transf_news">www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/secondary/keystage3/all/respub/ns_transf_news</a>

#### Other National Strategies resources available to support the strengthening of transfers and transitions

Description	Location
Primary and secondary self-evaluation toolkits supported by an ePD <sup>5</sup> designed to guide senior leaders through next step activities and to provide CPD opportunities identified through the self-evaluation process	Self-evaluation toolkits: <a href="http://www.supportingselfevaluation.org.uk">www.supportingselfevaluation.org.uk</a> ePD: <a href="http://www.supportingselfevaluation.org.uk/training/d4/index.html">www.supportingselfevaluation.org.uk/training/d4/index.html</a>
A cross-phase 'roadshow' presentation for use by local authorities to engage senior leaders	A CD-ROM of the 'roadshow' will be sent to all Primary and Secondary Managers in 2008
A model for effective consultancy to support consultants working with schools to strengthen transfers and transitions	<a href="http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/secondary/keystage3/all/respub/con_wrkgwithschs">www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/secondary/keystage3/all/respub/con_wrkgwithschs</a>

<sup>5</sup> Electronic professional development package

## Appendix 2

### Project methodology

This Strengthening Transfers and Transitions project's aim has been to explore how transfers and transitions can be strengthened to accelerate pupils' progress. The project was launched in December 2006 and impact was measured at the end of October 2007. It has clearly demonstrated that a significant difference can be made in a relatively short period when there is effective collaboration.

A mixture of unitary and county local authorities from all the Government Office regions except London<sup>6</sup> was invited to participate. They all have a record of success in transfers and transitions, pilot projects or action research.

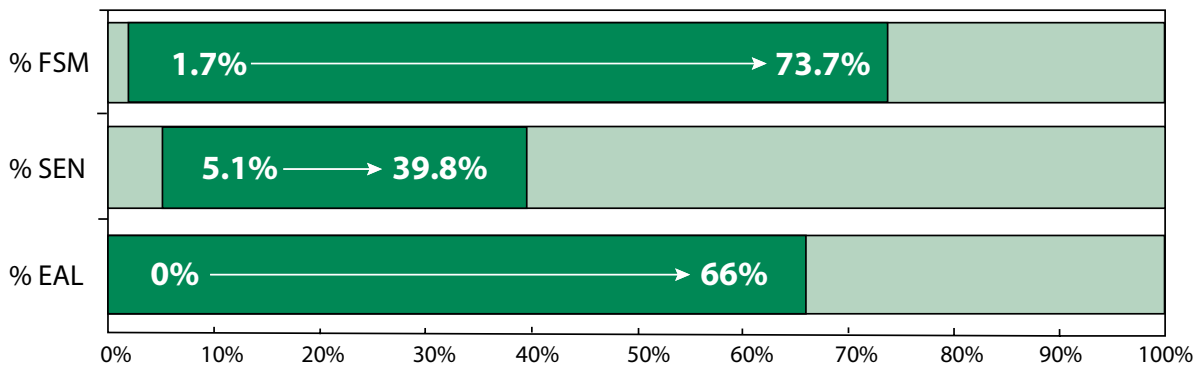
The schools were selected by the LAs in discussion with Senior and Regional Advisers. The following criteria were used:

- a good working relationships with their partner schools;
- a commitment to strengthening transfers and transitions through partnership working;
- the capacity and expertise to engage in action research.

The participating schools span a range of contexts:

- urban, suburban and rural;
- specialist status;
- first, primary, middle and secondary.

They also have significantly different pupil populations:



<sup>6</sup> London Challenge have funded a separate project to explore effective transfers and transitions.



Each local authority identified a focus for research within strengthening transfers and transitions:

<b>Suffolk</b>	Identifying generic principles for effective transfer
<b>Hampshire</b>	Developing the independent learner
<b>Swindon</b>	Developing continuity between ISP and APP across transfer
<b>Leeds</b>	Pupil tracking and intervention to accelerate progress
<b>Coventry</b>	Improving curriculum continuity across a range of subjects
<b>Gateshead</b>	Developing collaborative dialogue between teachers and pupils
<b>Salford</b>	Improving continuity and trust between schools

At the start of the action research project, the partner schools collaborated in self-evaluation<sup>7</sup> and planning for improvement.

The National Strategies supported the process through:

- Senior and Regional Advisers working alongside local authorities and schools;
- running network meetings each term to share progress and facilitate professional dialogue;
- publishing an e-newsletter each term with case studies from participating local authorities and articles exploring the implications of national developments for transfers and transitions.

<sup>7</sup> The National Strategies diagnostic toolkit transfers and transitions Self-evaluation was used. It can be found at [www.supportingselfevaluation.org.uk](http://www.supportingselfevaluation.org.uk)

## Appendix 3

### The partnerships

#### Partnership A

	Middle school	Primary schools				
		1	2	3	4	5
Roll	443	128	128	80	81	59
% FSM	2.9	5.4	3.1	-	6.2	-
% SEN	11.3	12.5	14.1	12.5	17.3	5.1
% EAL	0.5	0	1.1	1.5	0	0

#### Partnership B

	Middle school	Primary schools	
		1	2
Roll	414	222	229
% FSM	12	6.8	13.9
% SEN	24.4	9.9	27.1
% EAL	1.9	1.2	0

#### Partnership C

	Technology College	Primary schools			
		1	2	3	4
Roll	992	408	189	216	337
% FSM	5.9	8.6	5.8	12.5	3.6
% SEN	14.4	9.8	18	18.5	10.7
% EAL	7.5	13.4	8.7	3.7	2.4

### Partnership D

	Maths, Science and Computing College	Primary schools			
		1	2	3	4
Roll	1002	438	341	388	263
% FSM	18.6	14.6	25.7	11.1	28.1
% SEN	32.7	16.4	19.9	11.1	30.8
% EAL	26.1	66	21.5	5.2	6.2

### Partnership E

	High School Arts College	High school	Primary schools	
			1	2
Roll	1122	857	481	448
% FSM	27	21.5	23.5	24.3
% SEN	25.3	24.7	20.4	17.2
% EAL	1.4	9.9	1.7	3.5

### Partnership F

	Secondary schools			Primary schools			
	1*	2*	3*	1	2	3	4
Roll	1437	1457	715	470	458	233	522
% FSM	7.8	2.6	22.4	8.9	4.4	10.7	1.7
% SEN	8.2	9	26.4	9.4	9.4	23.6	5.9
% EAL	10.3	27.4	9.9	14.8	33	20	15.4

1\* = Strand B (Business and Enterprise College)

2\* = Strand A (Mathematics and Computing College)

3\* = Strand C (Business and Enterprise College)

### Partnership G

	Secondary school	Primary schools				
		1	2	3	4	5
Roll	1365	349	332	220	160	186
% FSM	19.1	24.3	18.4	33.2	20.6	5.4
% SEN	19	25.2	25.3	25.9	11.9	21
% EAL	1.9	0.4	0.4	1.1	0.9	1.8

### Partnership H

	Secondary school	Primary schools								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Roll	963	243	186	217	154	174	229	224	297	176
% FSM	40.3	37	73.7	40.6	35.7	65.5	25.3	42	43.1	46.6
% SEN	7.2	11.5	39.8	5.1	16.2	34.5	6.6	9.8	18.9	13.6
% EAL	2.4	5.4	4.4	1.2	2.7	8.8	0	1.7	0	5.3







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