

MAYOR AND CABINET			
Title	Review of Transition from Primary to Secondary Schools CYP Select Committee	Item No	
Contributors	Executive Director for Children and Young People		
Class	Part 1	Date	7 June 2017

1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1 As part of its work programme the CYP Select Committee undertook an in-depth review into transition from primary to secondary schools.
- 1.2 This paper summarises the recommendations from the review and provides an initial response from the Children and Young People Directorate for the Mayor to note.

2. Context and background

- 2.1 This report presents the findings of an in-depth review on transition from primary to secondary schools that the Children and Young People Select Committee undertook between October 2016 and February 2017. It summarises evidence gathered from a range of sources and makes a number of recommendations to ensure that children attending Lewisham's schools are well supported to get the best possible start to their secondary education and to set them up to achieve their full potential as they move through their secondary education.
- 2.2 Transition in Lewisham varies on a school by school basis. The large number of primary feeder schools – as many as 30 or more - for every secondary school complicates the picture. Secondary schools find that many pupils entering Year 7 lack the necessary skills to find their way independently through the early weeks of secondary school. On the other hand, there are lessons to be learned from primary schools about providing individually tailored support to children with a variety of needs.
- 2.3 Late sharing of crucial pupil information can impact on secondary schools' ability to put support in place for more vulnerable or disadvantaged pupils. Without the necessary plans and support in place to enable a strong start in Year 7 for every student, seamless pastoral transition is difficult to achieve.
- 2.4 The long break from academic work between the end of SATS in Year 6 and the start of Year 7 exacerbates the natural dip that all teachers are familiar with after the summer holidays. Recovery from this dip can be further hampered by secondary schools reluctance to rely on primary assessed levels, which can lead to repetition of work done in primary school and a slowdown of academic momentum as secondary schools make their own assessments of students' attainment levels. The Committee found evidence that most primary and secondary schools are broadly unfamiliar with

- each others' curricula, which creates an additional obstacle to seamless academic transition.
- 2.5 Lewisham is working hard to create an outstanding secondary school sector, and in support of this a Transition Working Group (TWG) was set up in the summer term of 2016 to improve practice across Lewisham schools, as well as to increase numbers of pupils choosing Lewisham secondary schools. Improving transition is an important element of secondary school improvement which the recommendations from this review seek to support.
- 3. Recommendation**
- 3.1 The Mayor and Cabinet is recommended to note and endorse the report.
- 4. Recommendations and responses**
- 4.1 Recommendation 1**
That the importance of good transition, both pastorally and academically, is emphasised to and understood by both primary and secondary schools.
- 4.1.1 The Transition Working Group has definitely raised the profile of transition this academic year. Information has been shared with all schools in the weekly e-newsletter, at Headteacher and Governor briefings and 100% of schools attended the Transition Day in April 2017. Both primary and secondary schools recognise the importance of both academic and pastoral transition.
- 4.2 Recommendation 2**
That, as part of transition preparation, primary schools include reassurance and practical advice on keeping in contact with 'old friends' from previous school.
- 4.2.1 Documents will be going to all primary schools that includes advice on a variety of transition matters. This will be included. See Appendix A and Appendix B
- 4.3 Recommendation 3**
That vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and those likely to struggle with transition, are identified sufficiently early in Year 6 to enable secondary schools to have in place plans and support ready for the start of term in Year 7.
- 4.3.1 A very successful information sharing day is held every year at Kaleidoscope. Traditionally this has focused on SEND pupils, but this year the information form was amended to include vulnerable pupils as well. The Transition Day took place on Tuesday 18 April. 100% of schools attended. This will continue. In addition, New Woodlands School Outreach Service are offering Transition workshops for Y6 pupils in primary schools who have been identified as those who may struggle at transition.
- 4.4 Recommendation 4**
That the Transition Working Group should take note of the recommendations of this Committee.

4.4.1 Information was shared with the Transition Working Group and has been used to inform documentation circulated to schools. See Appendices A, B and C.

4.5 Recommendation 5

That secondary schools consider using their pupil premium funding for transition activities.

4.5.1 Some schools already do this, but it is up to schools how they spend this money. All schools must report how they spend their pupil premium activity and what impact this has. This information must be shared with the Governing Body and be published on the school's website. The Transition Working Group can recommend this.

4.6 Recommendation 6

That secondary schools quickly identify the most able children and have a properly resourced and rigorous academic programme in place at the start of term in Year 7.

4.6.1 All secondary schools will identify their most able pupils and make the necessary arrangement e.g. setting, identifying for teaching staff and tracking progress. This year all Lewisham Year 6 pupils will take with them a great piece of writing to their secondary schools which all class teachers will have a copy of to stick in the front of their exercise books. This should ensure that all pupils and especially the most able will be expected to produce high quality written work.

4.7 Recommendation 7

That school governor training covers transition and that one governor in each school has responsibility for focusing on transition in each school.

4.7.1 Governor training took place on 23rd May led by Jackie Jones, Service Manager for School Improvement and Intervention. Recommendations from this review were shared with governors and schools were advised to have a governor to look at transition. There was also an article about this in the Summer term Governor Information Pack which was distributed to schools in April.

4.8 Recommendation 8

That secondary schools and primary feeders work together to design their transition programmes using the best practice available.

4.8.1 All schools have received, via Schools Mailing, a suggested menu of activities for successful transition. In addition separate documents have gone to secondary schools and primary schools identifying what each can do. This includes teachers from the primary school, including the SENCO visiting their ex-pupils in their secondary school in the first half of the Autumn term. Many schools already do a wide range of activities to support transition.

4.9 Recommendation 9

That primary schools increase opportunities for children to develop their independence especially in Year 6.

4.9.1 Many Year 6 pupils are already independent in their learning as well as taking responsibility for younger pupils as Prefects for example or Peer Mentors, or

contributing to School Councils etc. However, this recommendation was also added to the primary document mentioned in recommendation 8.

4.10 Recommendation 10

That secondary school staff observe vulnerable children in their primary settings in Year 6.

- 4.10.1 This has been included in the menu of activities. The Working Party also suggested attending CAF meetings and any CP meetings that might be appropriate for individual children.

4.11 Recommendation 11

That all relevant information/files are sent from primary to secondary schools before the end of the summer term in Year 6.

- 4.11.1 This has been included in guidance sent to primary schools. All schools will complete a Transition Form for each child who is moving to Year 7. In addition, all Lewisham Year 6 children have been given the opportunity to complete their own document outlining their hopes and concerns as well as their strengths and hobbies as part of the commitment to improving the quality of information which is transferred from primary to secondary schools.

4.12 Recommendation 12

That consideration be given to means of supporting parents in the secondary school application process and so reduce the burden on primary schools.

- 4.12.1 Secondary schools will be opening their IT rooms during twilight sessions or Saturday morning to support parents in completing their applications.

4.13 Recommendation 13

That schools make better academic use of the time between end of SATS in Year 6 and start of Year 7 (e.g. bridging projects/units to introduce the KS3 curriculum in the summer term of Year 6).

- 4.13.1 All primary schools make good academic use of the time between end of SATS in Year 6 and the start of Year 7. Often pupils engage in creative activities developing a leavers play using their independent learning skills and working across the curriculum. There has also been a bridging unit in the Agreed RE Syllabus, but this is currently under review as part of the work of SACRE. Many secondary schools already provide teachers to deliver a range of subjects across the curriculum for different year groups in different schools. There has been an agreement from all primary schools that they will provide a piece of high quality written work for the secondary school. Secondary schools will use this to illustrate to all Year 7 teachers the standard that their pupils can achieve.

4.14 Recommendation 14

That all relevant primary/ secondary school staff increase their knowledge of each other's curriculum.

4.14.1 This has already been a focus of professional development this current academic year. The development of the school wide partnership for Lewisham will further develop opportunities for this cross-phase work.

4.15 Recommendation 15

That secondary schools are reminded to ensure that academic needs are given the same importance as pastoral needs throughout KS3.

4.15.1 Secondary schools know that this is a priority. All secondary schools have actions in place to ensure quality teaching and learning across the curriculum in all year groups.

4.16 Recommendation 16

That schools give a high priority to KS3 in aspects of school planning, monitoring and evaluation.

4.16.1 Secondary schools know that this is a priority. All secondary schools have systems in place to monitor the progress of all pupils including those at KS3. Data is regularly reviewed to ensure progress and each school will have a robust structure to ensure that regular and effective monitoring takes place.

5. Further implications

At this stage there are no specific financial, legal, environmental or equalities implications to consider.

For further information please contact Jackie Jones, Service Manager, School Improvement on 020 8314 6773

Appendix A – Menu of possible activities shared with all schools in Lewisham

Primary to secondary transition Menu of possible activities

Sharing of information

- Primary and Secondary pupil information sharing day in April.
- Pupil information form to be completed by Year 6 pupils after SATS and sent to secondary schools.
- Primary schools send the secondary school one piece of high quality written work for each pupil so that secondary staff know what standard the pupil can achieve. This could be sent electronically or handed over when transition coordinator visits. It could also be taken by pupils on induction Day or first day of term.
- Secondary school staff visit primary schools to meet with Year 6 staff. Collect information such as home language, talents, who to be with or not. Could use this visit to collect pupil -information form. Share core values of the secondary school.
- Secondary staff attend any appropriate CAF or CP meetings in the Summer Term.
- Contact maintained between primary and secondary schools in order to discuss any problems that may arise and share strategies.
- Secondary schools let primary schools know the dates of Open Days etc.
- Secondary schools to host application sessions where parents can use the school's IT facilities to do their secondary school application.

Secondary school activities in the Summer Term

- Induction day e.g. taster lessons, hand over sample written piece of work.
- Induction evening for parents.
- Tutor group planning – think about one tutor group where those pupils who have come ‘on their own’ are placed, have at least one other person from their primary school for other tutor groups and mixed ability groups.
- Regular visits for SEND pupils while they are still in Year 6 so that they can familiarise themselves with their new environment, meet key staff etc.
- Have designated Year 8 and 9 pupils to be ‘buddies’ for transition activities so that they can be a point of contact for the new pupils. They could be associated with their own primary school.
- Prefects connected with tutor groups from induction day.
- Sports leaders or similar to work with primary schools organising events.
- A specific meeting for those pupils coming on their own from a primary school so that they can get to know each other.
- Individual pupil and parent meetings with key secondary school staff. Pupils could be given a task to do e.g. a scrapbook or capsule that says something about themselves that they can share on their first day at secondary school.
- A series of subject twilights in the Summer term to introduce Year 6 pupils to the type of work they can expect in secondary school.
- A social event soon after Induction Day e.g. Saturday barbecue and family fun day run by staff and sports leaders.
- Summer school – combines academic and social events e.g. sports, challenges.

Start of Year 7

First day of term

- Just for Year 7 and spent with their tutor group.
- Parents come in for the first assembly at the start of the day. This can reassure parents that the school wishes parents to be as involved as possible and know that their child is safe and secure.
- Pupils share their scrapbook or similar as a way to get to know each other.
- Have some lessons.
- Assembly at the end of the day as well. Parents invited and pupils share something they have done during the day e.g. drama, music.
- Pupils bring in their one written piece of work. The secondary school ensures that this is shared with year 7 teachers so they know the standard expected.
- Prefects attached to tutor groups and spend a day a week in the Autumn Term there. This could reduce during Spring term. They could help with equipment checks, act as reading buddies.

Later in the term

- Mid-September parents evening to meet tutors and check all is OK.
- Before the end of term progress report against school's flight path or similar.

Other Primary/secondary activities

- Year 7 pupils could visit their old school with staff e.g. subject staff to share/teach a topic to Year 5.
- Year 6 teachers visit secondary school to see their ex-pupils. They could also look at the standard of work being produced and comment on whether or not the pupils are working to/above their previous attainment.
- Moderation of work cross-phase e.g. literacy and numeracy.
- Year 8 pupils could be paired with Year 5 pupils when Year 5 visit for specific events e.g. science lessons.
- Secondary schools to enable parents to use their ICT suites to apply for secondary school places e.g. on a Saturday before the deadline day in October.

Appendix B – Email to Primary Schools sharing learning from the Transition Working Group and CYP in depth review with Secondary Schools

Primary schools and KS2 to KS3 transition

As you are aware there has been a Transition Working Party operating in the borough for the past year.

There are a number of recommendations that have come out of this that I would like to share with you and hope that you will actively support them.

- **Pupil information form:** this will be completed by the Year 6 pupils themselves. It was sent out in Schools Mailing on Thursday 11th May. We hope that it will be useful in helping you get to know a bit more about your new Year 7 pupils before they start with you. These can be collected during your primary school visits or the primary schools will send them to you.
- **Written work:** primary schools committed at Executive Briefing in March to providing a piece of written work from each Year 6 pupil so that their Year 7 teachers can see the standard of which they are capable. This should be brought on Induction Day to their new school. If the pupils cannot attend Induction Day then between the feeder and secondary school arrangements can be made for its delivery. The secondary school will photocopy this piece of work for each subject so that it can be stuck into the front of their exercise books to ensure all staff know the standard of written work that should be expected.
- **SEF:** we have produced a SEF which should be relatively straightforward to complete. It would be really helpful to us if you could arrange for it to be completed. Nick Langham at Conisborough is leading on this so contact him for the SEF document and send it back to him. His email is nlangham@cc.lewisham.sch.uk .
- **Open days:** secondary schools to can let admissions know these dates as soon as possible.
- **Menu of suggested activities:** this is in Schools Mailing, but will be updated as new ideas are shared. We would welcome any feedback about this: whether your school has tried any of them that might be new to you and how they worked.
- **The admission process:** many of our parents find this very hard and need support. Conisborough have committed to having a twilight session and possibly a Saturday morning when any local parent of a Year 6 child can use their IT facilities to do their application. I believe that Deptford Green have also done this in the past. I have asked the other secondary schools to consider offering this as well.
- **Secondary schools hosting primary staff visits in the Autumn term:** the Working Group think it would be really helpful to have Year 6 teachers and/or the SENCO visit to see how their ex-pupils have settled and see them at work. It would also be an opportunity to develop some cross-phase working especially in English and maths.
- **CAF meetings:** it would be really helpful if the lead for Year 7 or the Inclusion manager, whoever is the most appropriate, was invited to any Summer term CAF or CP meetings for the children transferring to their secondary school.

- **Maintaining friendships:** research has shown that it is important for pupils to maintain their friendships from primary schools as it can have a beneficial impact on their academic achievement. Can primary schools facilitate or advise on this?
- **Sharing information:** apart from the information sharing day in April secondary schools would really appreciate KS2 SATs information as soon as possible as well seeing the SATS papers so that they have a better understanding of what the pupils were expected to be able to do.

In the Autumn term we will be asking for an evaluation so that we can reflect on what we have done and the impact.

Jackie Jones

Appendix C – Email to Secondary Schools sharing learning from the Transition Working Group and CYP in depth review with Secondary Schools

Secondary schools and KS2 to KS3 transition

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- **Hosting primary staff visits in the Autumn term:** the Working Group think it would be really helpful to have Year 6 teachers and/or the SENCO visit to see how their ex-pupils have settled and see them at work.

In the Autumn term we will be asking for an evaluation so that we can reflect on what we have done and the impact.

Jackie Jones