

Children and Young People Select Committee

Report Title	Transition from Primary to Secondary School in-depth review – 18 month update	
Key Decision		Item No. 7
Contributors	Executive Director for Children and Young People	
Class	Part 1	Date: 17 th October 2018

1. Purpose

- 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 provides a 18 month review of progress on the actions following the Children and Young People's Select Committee's review of transition from primary to secondary school.

2. Summary

- 2.1 This report sets out progress and updates against each action.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 Children and Young People Select Committee is recommended to consider and note the report.

4. Context and Background

- 4.1 The Children and Young People Select Committee undertook a review between October 2016 and February 2017 considering transition from primary to secondary school. The review gathered evidence from a range of sources and made a number of recommendations to ensure that children attending Lewisham's schools were 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.
- 4.2 Lewisham is working hard to create an outstanding secondary school sector, and in support of this a Transition Working Group (TWG) of officers and school representatives 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, a key focus of the local authority and Lewisham Learning.

5. Recommendations and responses

5.1 **Recommendation 1**

That the importance of good transition, both pastorally and academically, is emphasised to and understood by both primary and secondary schools.

5.1.1 The Transition Working Group has definitely raised the profile of transition. Information has been shared with all schools in the weekly e-newsletter, at Headteacher and Governor briefings. Both primary and secondary schools recognise the importance of both academic and pastoral transition.

5.1.2 While this aspect had a higher profile at the end of the academic year 2016/17 when there was a 'big push', it is recognised that this needs to be kept as a high profile as it has become clear from visits to secondary schools that information and suggestions for activities have not always been taken up.

5.1.3 In May 2018 the information sharing day held at Kaleidoscope included a greater number of secondary schools, including some of the out of borough schools that admit Lewisham pupils. The form was updated to include more information about the vulnerable pupils. All staff who attended reported how useful it was as they were able to share information about the pupils verbally as well as via the completed form. The primary schools who had not attended were contacted by the Service Manager for School Improvement and Intervention to ascertain why this was and urge them to share information.

5.1.4 For the transition process in 2019 an addition to the form has been made to include information about those pupils who received extra time in their SATS tests.

5.2 **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.

5.2.1 Documents are now sent annually to all primary schools that includes advice on a variety of transition matters.

5.2.2 The documents went via Schools Mailing in 2016/17, but there is not a complete picture of take up of recommendations.

5.2.3 Officers did a deep dive as part of a pastoral review in one school, speaking to Year 7 pupils. They were confident that transition had been effective and that they had settled well. They talked about being in the same tutor groups as people from their primary schools, which helped initially, but that they quickly made friends from other feeder schools.

5.3 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.

5.3.1 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. 100% of schools attend. This will continue. In addition, New Woodlands School Outreach Service are offering Transition workshops for Y6 pupils who have been identified as those who may struggle at transition. This approach will continue.

5.3.2 In the May 2018 event, the headteacher of New Woodlands school was at the information sharing day which was of benefit for the schools taking those pupils deemed ready for re-integration into mainstream schooling.

5.4 Recommendation 4

That the Transition Working Group should take note of the recommendations of this Committee.

5.4.1 Information was shared with the Transition Working Group and has been used to inform documentation circulated to schools. This will continue to be highlighted to schools on a regular basis.

5.4.2 The Service Manager for school Improvement and Intervention has used Headteachers' Mailing to update schools on any transition matters as well as consulting with small groups of headteachers about any proposed changes e.g. the Year 6 piece of writing.

5.5 Recommendation 5

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

5.5.1 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 will continue to recommend specific activities that appear to have impact.

5.6 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.

5.6.1 All secondary schools identify their most able pupils and make the necessary arrangements e.g. setting, identifying for teaching staff and tracking progress. From 2016/17 it was agreed that all Lewisham Year 6 pupils would take with them a great piece of writing to their secondary schools which all class teachers have a copy of to stick in the front of their exercise books. This aimed to ensure that all pupils and especially the most able will be expected to produce high quality written work. This was not done universally.

5.6.2 In the summer term of 2018 the Service Manager for School improvement and Intervention therefore consulted with a small group of primary headteachers as to how to improve the piece of writing delivery. This was shared with all headteachers along with contact details for the secondary schools both through WebDav as Headteachers' Mailing in May, June and July. An additional reminder went out in September 2018 at the start of the academic year.

5.6.3 Secondary headteachers welcomed the idea of receiving this as it would enable their staff to understand the standard of writing they have achieved. However, from asking secondary headteachers in September 2018 this once again is not universal. The Service Manager is therefore considering how to simplify this for the summer of 2019.

5.7 Recommendation 7

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

5.7.1 Governor training took place 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 lead on transition. There was also an article about this in the summer term Governor Information Pack which was distributed to schools in April.

5.8 Recommendation 8

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

5.8.1 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 do a wide range of activities to support transition but this is for schools to arrange.

5.8.2 It is clear that there is increasing cross-phase working from speaking to both primary and secondary headteachers. For example one secondary school is

planning an event for primary headteachers whose year 6 pupils attend this school to visit them in the Autumn Term.

5.9 Recommendation 9

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

5.9.1 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 guidance document mentioned in recommendation 8.

5.9.2 Secondary schools usually elect school council members in the first half of the autumn term and this is an early opportunity for Year 7 pupils to continue their leadership roles from their primary schools. Other opportunities can include sports captains, taking part in clubs and societies.

5.10 Recommendation 10

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

5.10.1 This continues to be included in the menu of activities. The Working Party also suggested attending Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings and any Child Protection (CP) meetings that might be appropriate for individual children.

5.11 Recommendation 11

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

5.11.1 This continues to be included in guidance sent to primary schools. All schools complete a Transition Form for each child who is moving to Year 7

5.11.2 In the summer of 2018 the Service Manager decided after consultation with a small group of headteachers, including the primary headteacher on the transition working party to keep the process as simple as possible in order to get 'buy-in' from all schools. Therefore, the pupil information form which had been trialled was not sent out this time. This is something that will be reviewed again for 2019.

5.12 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.

5.12.1 Experience is showing that it is nursery schools who are best placed to help parents with the secondary transfer process and they do help parents, especially those who are vulnerable.

5.13 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).

5.13.1 Our primary schools continue to 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 e.g. developing a leavers play using their independent learning skills and working across the curriculum. Secondary schools continue to provide teachers for some curriculum subjects in to primary schools to aid transition e.g. MFL.

5.14 Recommendation 14

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

5.14.1 This features the work of Lewisham Learning in partnership with the Secondary Challenge and teaching schools. It is being planned into the professional development provided by the Teaching Schools for this coming academic year.

5.15 Recommendation 15

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

5.15.1 All secondary schools have actions in place to ensure quality teaching and learning across the curriculum in all year groups.

5.15.2 All secondary schools now have Peer reviews during the autumn term which look at, among other aspects the quality of teaching across the school. This happened for the first time in autumn 2017. These reviews provide an assessment of the quality of provision at all key stages and, therefore, the academic progress pupils are making in Year 7.

5.15.3 The peer reviews consider the school's Self Evaluation and observe the teaching at key stage 3 as well as KS4.

5.16 Recommendation 16

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

5.16.1 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 has a robust structure to ensure that regular and effective monitoring takes place.

5.16.2 This is an on-going process throughout the academic year. This enables schools to track the progress made by all pupils as well as different pupil groups such as those entitled to the Pupil Premium, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, students for whom English is an additional language as well as the different ethnic groups in their schools. Therefore, the progress made by pupils in Year 7 is scrutinised as part of schools' monitoring, evaluation and review processes.

6. Financial implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7. Legal implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

8. Equalities implications

8.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

9. Environmental implications

9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

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