



Rewarding Learning



KEY STAGE 2 TO KEY STAGE 3 TRANSITION GUIDANCE

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KEY STAGE 2 TO KEY STAGE 3 TRANSITION GUIDANCE INTRODUCTION

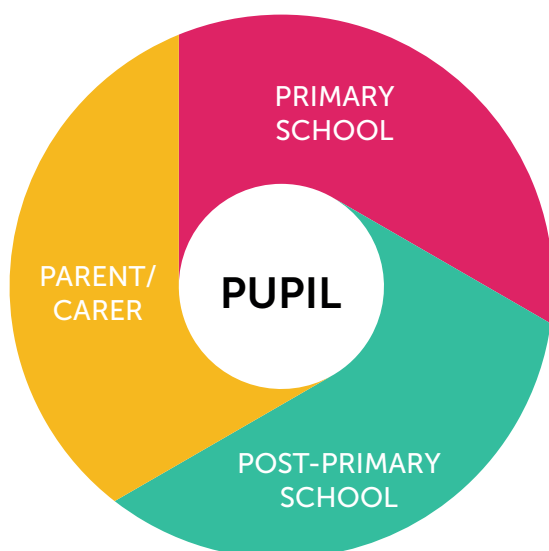
There are a number of key transitions during a child's pathway through education. These include pre-school to Year 1, Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, primary to post-primary, Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4, and post-primary to beyond.

During any transition, the child should be the central focus for all involved.

As with the move from pre-school to Year 1, the transition from primary to post-primary school is a particularly significant event in a child's life and may cause both excitement and/or some anxiety for pupils and their families/carers.

If the child is moving to or from a special school or an Irish medium primary school to a mainstream post-primary school, children and parents may have additional questions and concerns.

Primary to post-primary transition has been identified as posing particular challenges for the effects that it has on the learner's progress. Schools need to ensure the continuity of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment across the KS2 to KS3 interface.



Transition sits within a broader educational policy context linked to:

- Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- School Improvement
- Teacher Professional Learning.

In the [2021 Children & Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework](#), the Department of Education sets out the implementation plan to ensure that:

- our children and young people reach their full potential and receive the support they need; and
- we recognise the fact that a child or young person entering school who is feeling happy, healthy, safe, and connected to the school is more likely to fully engage in learning.

The Department of Education is also committed to ensuring that every school is a good school, and its policy for school improvement has identified raising standards, high quality learning and teaching, and tackling underachievement as its key priorities in enabling every young person to fulfil their potential, at each stage of their development.

To support school leadership and school improvement, the DE Learning Leaders Strategy promotes a school culture of self-directed professional and collective learning and collaborative working. This will be addressed further in Section 2 of this guidance.

This guidance aims to provide support to primary, post-primary and special school principals, senior leaders, and teachers to assist collaborative working throughout the transition process, and to support pupil progression in learning.

There will be practical constraints that will, in some cases, limit the extent to which primary and post-primary schools can collaborate. For example, post-primary schools with many feeder primary schools may find the process more challenging. There are also logistical issues to consider, such as transporting pupils between schools to attend shared events, and schools may wish to consider the use of a blended approach of face-to-face and online interaction for staff, pupils, and parents/carers.

Consideration should also be given to timely collaboration with other services such as social workers and other professionals who support the specific needs of some learners, for example looked-after children, or children moving to special schools.

Schools should share a variety of learner information during the transition process. This can include assessment data as well as information about social and emotional competencies; interests and hobbies; extra-curricular activities; which digital platforms and technologies are familiar to the learners; specific skills and personal capabilities; and pastoral issues.

This guidance contains [10 principles of successful transition](#) and includes a simple self-evaluation grid (Appendix 1) which a school could use to review its own practice in transition and manage some of the challenges outlined above.

SECTION 1

WHY IS THE KEY STAGE 2 TO KEY STAGE 3 TRANSITION SO IMPORTANT?

Many pupils relish embracing new challenges, are ready for the move to their new school, and are looking forward to opportunities to use specialised equipment and develop new knowledge, skills and relationships.

Some will also enjoy the opportunity for a fresh start, including having a range of teachers and different personalities to engage with as they build on the knowledge and skills already developed in primary school.

However, these changes may have a social and emotional impact on other pupils, causing anxiety about social and academic changes and uncertainty about starting a new school, fitting in, and making new friends. Some, especially those with poor self-belief or limited support structures at home, may feel overwhelmed, or even that they are unable to cope.

Moving to a post-primary school can disrupt pupils' friendship networks where they may lose contact with friends from primary school. They also need to have, or to further develop, the social skills to build new relationships and interact with peers and teachers. Some pupils may lack self-confidence or have low self-esteem and worry about making new friends or bullying.

Many will be concerned about what is expected from them and about their ability to cope with the increasing academic challenges. All pupils will have to contend with the challenges of becoming more autonomous and developing independent learning and social skills and all of this requires increased emotional resilience and communication skills. Although some pupils move to post-primaries that are very similar in ethos and pupil makeup to their primary school, the transition generally will involve pupils adjusting to the following:

- being the youngest in the post-primary school rather than the oldest in their primary school;
- an unfamiliar peer group, including pupils from different backgrounds and experiences;
- a new school pastoral system with a different type of pastoral support;
- having to move around the school to a range of classrooms;
- timetabled classes and being taught by a variety of teachers with different styles of teaching;
- being grouped with pupils in other classes for some areas of the curriculum, often streamed according to ability;
- competing demands from different teachers and homework priorities; and new travelling arrangements, for example, this may be the first time that pupils have travelled alone using public transport.



What do we know about Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 transition in Northern Ireland?

In Northern Ireland, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2014) publication [Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education for Northern Ireland \(OECD, 2013\)](#) highlighted Year 6 pupils' excellent performance in reading (Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS)) and mathematics and their strong performance in science (Trends in Mathematics and Science (TIMSS)). Pupils performed well above the international average in these areas; however, there was a dip in attainment in literacy and numeracy at post-primary level. This is associated with pupils' transition from primary to post-primary school and it is similar to the pattern found internationally (Jindal-Snape et al, 2020).

Evidence from the OECD Report suggests that around one fifth of primary pupils are vulnerable and at risk of underachieving.

Pupils in vulnerable groups including 'looked after' children may have greater difficulty coping with transitional changes in their schooling than their peers (Brewin and Stathem, 2011).

Ongoing work on Taking Boys Seriously (Harland and McCready, 2012) highlights the fact that boys, particularly those from working-class Protestant communities, are at risk of underachieving. Research also shows that children from the Irish Traveller community are another vulnerable group (McVeigh and Joyce, 2011).

Those Newcomer pupils who have had only limited time in primary education may also find the move from primary to post-primary school challenging. 'Newcomer' pupils are

defined by the Education Authority as follows: 'A Newcomer pupil refers to any pupil for whom English is not the home language and who may require support in school for this reason.' This is particularly apparent if there are intercultural barriers, or if they do not have the language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum (DENI, 2009b). You can find further information about supporting Newcomer pupils at [The Inclusion and Diversity Service \(ISS\)](#).

Some pupils transferring from Irish-medium primary schools to English-medium post-primary schools may initially find aspects of the subject-specific terminology used in lessons such as mathematics new to them, and will need support to adjust.

[CCEA's Curriculum Monitoring Programme \(2018/19\)](#) and [The Chief Inspector's Report, from the Education and Training Inspectorate Northern Ireland \(ETINI 2016-2018\)](#) have also identified specific transition issues from primary to post-primary that affect learner progress.

The CCEA NI Curriculum Monitoring Programme found that 'there were challenges with the transfer of consistent and accurate information from primary to post-primary schools, the cognisance taken by post-primary schools of pupils' previous learning, and the shift in pupil experience from thematic approaches to discrete subjects, taught by different teachers'. It also noted inconsistent assessment practices between the two phases.

The Chief Inspector's Report also noted concerns of ineffective communication between schools, and a lack of consistency in terms of learners building effectively on their prior learning in KS2.

It stressed the necessity of meaningful collaboration across the two phases, with post-primary schools using all available information to build an accurate picture of the learner's needs and developing purposeful curricular links with contributory primary schools.

The report also noted that 'effective curricular provision at KS3 needs to provide more suitably challenging, connected and contextualised opportunities for pupils to build on and apply their skills and competences'.

The benefits of effective transition

The benefits of a successful and well-planned transition process are significant, most notably:

- better support for pupils' emotional health and wellbeing;
- higher levels of engagement in learning;
- pupils being empowered to take greater responsibility for their learning and progress; and
- the creation of coherence to support progression in learning and improved educational outcomes.

Year 7 pupils will move more confidently to new school situations when they have been supported in primary school to have a positive approach to learning, an appreciation of their strengths and personal capabilities and of areas that could be improved, and experiences of setting and working towards personal and academic goals.

Developing resilience will help pupils through this process of moving from one phase to the next.

Learning for Life and Work is a major focus across the curriculum at Key Stage 3 and should be implemented consistently and regularly across all areas of learning and through the pastoral approach of the school. In addition, the Personal Development strands of the curriculum in both primary (PDMU) and post-primary (LLW) can help develop pupils' capacity to deal with specific issues relevant to them at this stage of their development. All of this aims to provide the foundations on which lifelong learning can be built.

Appendix 2 has suggestions for teaching and learning resources which focus on the social and emotional aspects of transition, and address the statutory requirements of PDMU/PD.

Supporting learner progression: the aims of collaborative working in schools

Threaded through the principles of effective transition is the vital importance of collaboration. The main purpose of collaborative working is to support all pupils to have a positive experience during the transition from primary to post-primary school and to provide appropriate challenge and engagement in the curriculum so that pupils can progress effectively in learning from primary school.

Collaboration between primary and post-primary schools should:

- develop and build sustainable relationships and partnerships;
- involve proactive engagement with pupils and families/carers;
- provide opportunities for teachers to share good practice and expertise that builds on pupils' experience of learning from primary school;

- ensure coherence, continuity and progression of the curriculum, assessment, and common approaches to pedagogy;
- support pupil progress and improvement in learning outcomes from primary school;
- share a common understanding of assessment approaches and standards;
- share and use assessment and other information to plan progression;
- provide pupils with challenging, enriching and rewarding learning experiences; and
- support pupils to develop the confidence, understanding and skills they need to become increasingly independent learners.

Collaboration can be facilitated by using online collaboration tools. These can be more time efficient, and in many cases, as effective as meeting face-to-face.

There are a variety of ways for primary and post-primary schools to work together which can develop into the most effective type of collaborative practices to support transition.

Schools can use the below classification when reviewing and evaluating their approaches to working together.

Networking	Primary and post-primary schools and teachers exchange information and share good practice for mutual benefit. This is the most informal type of collaboration.
Co-ordination	Primary and post-primary schools and teachers exchange information and co-ordinate activities for their mutual benefit to achieve a common goal. This requires planning, organisational involvement and commitment.
Co-operation	For their mutual benefit, schools and teachers exchange information, co-ordinate activities and share resources to achieve a common goal. Shared resources can include knowledge, experience, staffing, materials, school accommodation and finances.
Collaboration	<p>Schools and teachers exchange information, co-ordinate activities, share resources (including teacher professional learning) to enhance the capacity of their partner school to achieve a common purpose.</p> <p>This type of collaboration is about developing sustainable working partnerships.</p> <p>It requires a high level of support and commitment from the principal, the senior leadership team and the teachers involved in collaborative working. Its success depends on leadership and direction, clearly-defined roles and responsibilities, comprehensive planning, and effective communication.</p>

SECTION 2

SCHOOL COLLABORATION AND THE BROADER POLICY CONTEXT

Emotional health and wellbeing

[The Children & Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing \(EHAW\) in Education Framework](#) (DE, DoH 2021) outlines how primary and post-primary schools can promote emotional health and wellbeing at a universal level, using a holistic approach that recognises that a child or young person entering school who feels happy, healthy, safe and connected to school is more likely to fully engage in learning.

During any transition, it's important that children and young people are able to talk about their concerns and are supported to cope with any readjustments.

If a child struggles with a transition, it can have a negative impact on their wellbeing and academic achievement.

The EHAW framework recommends that school leaders should prioritise a culture and ethos that promotes a sense of caring, belonging and respect for everyone, and strategically plans to improve emotional health and wellbeing for all.

School improvement

As part of self-evaluation and development planning for transition, schools should consider how collaboration during this process is linked to and can be developed within the broader educational policy context (Appendix 1). The transition process needs to be part of each school's strategic approach to school improvement.

DE has provided a range of [initiatives, policies and strategies](#) which are relevant to school improvement and raising standards. These include Every School a Good School (ESaGS), its policy for school improvement. The arrangements that a school makes to collaborate with other schools can be used as an ESaGS quality indicator to assess the school's connections with the local community (DENI, 2009a). Primary and post-primary schools could work collaboratively to support improvement.

The [Count, Read: Succeed strategy \(DENI, 2011a\)](#) is also part of the Department of Education's School Improvement policy. This strategy aims to:

- support teachers and school leaders in their work to raise overall levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy among young people; and
- narrow the current gaps in educational attainment.

TRANSITION BRIDGES



Transition from primary to post-primary can be likened to crossing a bridge (Galton, 1999).

For successful transition pupils must be supported to cross five different kinds of bridge. These are:

- Administrative (efficient organisation of the transition process)
- Social (easing the emotional-social stresses)
- Curriculum (building on work done at primary school, support for cross-phase teaching, teaching bridging units at the end of Year 7 which continue into the first term of Year 8), running a transition summer school, the sharing of good practice and shared planning, and teacher exchanges
- Teaching or Pedagogical (sharing of teaching approaches in order to achieve a greater continuity in classroom practice and teaching)
- Managing of learning (providing pupils with necessary skills to be active participants in transition and their own learning).

PROMOTING SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION



When working collaboratively to plan and develop their transition arrangements, primary and post-primary schools should consider the following 10 key principles of successful transition.

A successful transition should:

- establish **effective communication channels** with all stakeholders;
- **maintain systems and structures** that support links, partnerships and sustained collaboration between schools;
- be **child-centred**, engaging pupils in the transition process, meeting the needs of individuals and enabling them to develop fully;
- **engage parents/carers** in the transition process;
- **ensure coherence, continuity and progression** of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment;
- share and use assessment and other meaningful information **to plan progression**;
- **support collaboration** between teachers from primary and post-primary schools to **share best practice and expertise**;
- **build relationships** based on a **common vision, co-operation, shared responsibility and trust**;
- focus on **improving standards**, in particular standards in literacy and numeracy; and
- support pupils to **develop the confidence, understanding and skills they need to become increasingly independent learners**.

These principles align with the DENI school improvement policy, the transition bridge model, and the recommendations from the Chief Inspector's report.

The EA Literacy and Numeracy KS2 and KS3 CPD Transition Project – Building Bridges to Better Learning

In 2014, in order to address existing concerns about the KS2 to KS3 transition process in Northern Ireland, DE initiated its Literacy and Numeracy KS2 and KS3 CPD Transition Project: Building Bridges to Better Learning. The Education and Library Boards (now the Education Authority (EA)) delivered the project.

The project had a strong focus on collaboration within Area Learning Communities and between post-primary schools and primary schools. It brought together KS3 teachers with KS2 (Year 7) teachers from partner primary schools, for part of its CPD programme, in order to facilitate sharing of good practice and to improve transition for pupils from KS2 to KS3.

A key aim was also to develop area teacher networks of teachers of KS2 and KS3 for English and Mathematics, to share practice and collaborate to improve pupil outcomes in both phases of education. The DE Learning Leaders strategy of developing a teacher as a leader of learning was incorporated in the development of collaborative practice and projects. The participants also used the [10 principles of successful transition](#) to set meaningful objectives for their practice and the CCEA transition self-evaluation framework (Appendix 1) to measure improvements.

Some of the EA collaborative case studies from the period 2016-2019 are included in this guidance as examples of real-life practice in Northern Ireland school partnerships.

Teacher Professional Learning

Self-evaluation of transition arrangements and collaborative practice may lead to schools identifying needs for shared teacher professional learning to bring about improvements. This should involve consideration of the [Learning Leaders DE strategy for Teacher Professional Learning](#).

Central to the objectives of the Learning Leaders strategy is that teachers should have:

- Access to practice-led support at all career stages.
- Planned opportunities to work collaboratively to share best practice among school communities.

To support schools in implementing Learning Leaders a further document called [Teacher Professional Conversations and Reflections about Learning](#) (CARAL) was provided by ETI, in close collaboration with the Education Authority (EA) and the Council for Catholic Maintained School (CCMS). This supports a shared understanding for schools about professional learning, reflective practice, school development and action planning, and self-evaluation (including obtaining appropriate first-hand evidence).

SECTION 3

TRANSITION IN PRACTICE

The Curriculum

The Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC) is designed to be coherent and support pupils to gain a better understanding of their learning experience as a whole. The curriculum at KS3 builds on the curriculum at KS2. The component parts of the NIC have a clear and explicit relationship with each other within each year of each key stage and over time. This is illustrated in the CCEA Big Pictures of the Curriculum at KS1 to KS2 and KS3 (Appendix 3).

The aim and objectives of the curriculum remain the same at all key stages.

Aim: The NIC aims to empower young people to develop their potential and to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

Objectives: The learning objectives provided through the NIC should help young people to develop as:

- Individuals
- Contributors to Society
- Contributors to the Economy and Environment

The main difference in the curriculum between KS2 and 3 is that some of the Areas of Learning (AoLs) from the primary curriculum take on different names at KS3, and there is a new compulsory Modern Languages AoL. As acknowledged in research, there is a disconnect in the curriculum between primary and post-primary schools, and pupils may be taught content and skills more than once, or are taught the same concepts in different or even contradictory ways by different teachers (Jindal-Snape et al, 2020).

In Northern Ireland there is flexibility within the curriculum as to when and how the content is taught. In order to ensure that there is curriculum coherence across KS2 and 3, school leaders and teachers from primary and post-primary schools who are involved in curriculum planning and development should work **collaboratively** to:



- review and plan programmes/schemes of work for AoLs;
- clearly describe the relationship between knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities within and across AoLs;
- make explicit the learning connections between and across AoLs;
- build on progress from the primary school;
- provide differentiation in learning for the different needs of pupils;
- avoid unnecessary repetition and overlap of content;
- plan progression within AoLs in relation to knowledge, understanding and skills;
- support improvements in standards in literacy and numeracy;
- produce resources to support pupils during transition and address the attainment dip; and
- emphasise how pupils' learning experiences are relevant to:
 - everyday life;
 - personal development;
 - the world of work and learning and career pathways;
 - active citizenship within the community; and
 - the environment and sustainability.

In practice, this might mean KS2 and KS3 teachers:

- share practice and planning, as well as teacher collaboration and exchanges to facilitate cross-phase teaching;
- observe classroom practice;
- engage in joint TPL;
- facilitate summer schools; and
- develop bridging units for the end of Year 7 and start of Year 8.

The following examples show:

- a partnership focusing on its shared audit and planning of literacy teaching; and
- an example of a KS2 to KS3 bridging unit.



EXAMPLE 1:

TANDRAGEE PARTNERSHIP IMPLEMENTS TRANSITION CHANGES

Building on existing literacy links, the schools in this Tandragee cross-phase partnership focused initial discussion on writing, joint planning and marking codes.

The partnership was guided by a booklet produced by Craigavon ALC schools in April 2015 which recommends areas of focus for schools working cross-phase.

Refining writing cross-phase has been one of the main foci of the Tandragee partnership which includes Tandragee Junior High School, Tandragee Primary School and Clare Primary School.

The Tandragee partnership carried out a cross-phase audit of writing skills to help develop this area at transition. They looked at spelling, punctuation, grammar, and the marking of written work. After discussion common marking codes have been agreed, shared and are now operational in all three schools.

'It was beneficial to look at the Year 8 Schemes in terms of progression as it helps us as Year 7 teachers see how it all fits in. It has given us the opportunity to establish relationships which we can now build on,' said Cathryn Donaldson of Tandragee Primary School.

Tandragee Junior High School Literacy Co-ordinator, Mrs Sarah Steele described the partnership's collaboration as a very worthwhile and very positive experience as the partnership teachers are now more knowledgeable about what happens in P7 and Year 8 in terms of what is covered in Units of Work.

'It was extremely useful to be given the opportunity to talk with other co-ordinators and to evaluate what is going on in each school in terms of Literacy,' Mrs Steele said.

Relationships have been developed further between primary and post-primary schools and a network has now been established with dates already being discussed to continue work next year in August 2016.

Challenge

One of the challenges that emerged for the partnership was identifying a suitable topic for a bridging unit if the primary schools have composite KS2 classes.

Samples of reading and writing tasks have been shared which has clarified standards. Information on standardised tests has also been shared, e.g. PIE.



EXAMPLE 2:

MAPPING THE WAY THROUGH TRANSITION

CAMPBELL COLLEGE SENIOR SCHOOL AND CAMPBELL COLLEGE JUNIOR SCHOOL

As a result of the Cross-Phase Bursary Scheme, PE Teacher Stephen Collier has developed a unique bridging unit to benefit P7 pupils in Campbell College Junior School ahead of their transition to Campbell College Senior School. Combining PE, Geography and Mathematics Mr Collier devised an active learning programme that was delivered through the medium of Orienteering which he hopes can be rolled out to other schools.

Mr Collier commented, 'One of the difficulties P7 pupils face when they move to a new environment is finding their way. I thought it would be beneficial on numerous levels to use the idea of orienteering as a means to develop wider skills in Mathematics, ICT and Geography whilst also engaging the pupils in physical activity. The aim was to ensure that pupils were comfortable and knowledgeable about the environment they are going into and to empower both pupils and teachers to embrace new ways of learning. In addition, this approach aimed to enhance the pupils' ability to work within a team and develop their decision-making and problem-solving skills.'

The project focused on understanding how Numeracy topics are taught simultaneously in P7 and Y8 classrooms and discovering ways to bridge the gap. Mr Collier firstly worked with class teachers to observe Numeracy lessons and spoke to pupils, teachers and parents to understand needs around transition. The main observation centered on how P7 Numeracy learning is often active and cross-curricular, whilst in Y8 Numeracy takes a whole school approach. Taking more responsibility in PE for Numeracy is a positive step.

Mr Collier continued. 'Cross-curricular connection is an area that this project identified as an opportunity for the Senior School Curriculum at KS3. Greater links between subjects ensures cohesion of the curriculum and helps to bridge the transition for P7 pupils who have been taught with a cross-curricular approach in KS1 and KS2.'

The introduction of orienteering as a focus encouraged P7 pupils to understand Numeracy concepts that would be taught in Y8 – pacing distance, co-ordinates, scale, protractor and compass work. It also allowed Y8 teachers to develop cross-curricular links between Geography, ICT, Mathematics and PE.

Lesson plans were developed that involved pupils working in pairs and engaging in map reading as part of different outdoor activities. Pupils had to follow a course set on a map for a cross-country race and undertake a pacing competition around short looped circuits utilising a compass.

Pupils recorded distances and began to understand the concept of scale. The final lesson was to undertake a full orienteering competition in an unfamiliar location to put all their skills to the test.

Mr Collier said he would like to see this work rolled out to other schools, 'The next steps should be to roll this model out to other schools and look further at how to develop the concept of cross-curricular learning at KS3. This cross-curricular collaboration could be widened as Orienteering could also link with Science – looking at heart rates and Home Economics – looking at calorie expenditure for instance.'

High Quality Learning and Teaching Experiences

It is important for pupils to have continuity in their experience of teaching and learning. When the NI Curriculum was introduced more than 10 years ago, it was on the basis of research and review of other educational systems that identified the fact that the most effective way of raising standards was through the optimum delivery of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of the learning journey.

In the time since the initial implementation, international studies and research analysis conducted by OECD (OECD, 2018) and international programmes from the British Council have continued to highlight that, in order for young people to remain motivated learners and effective contributors to society, the economy and the environment, they need to develop mastery in personal and interpersonal skills and capabilities alongside subject knowledge. The table below shows the characteristics of quality teaching and learning in the classroom. **The curriculum pedagogy promoted is the same for all key stages.**



Characteristics of Quality Teaching and Learning in the Classroom	
Create a safe learning environment	Teachers should create an environment that encourages pupils to share their views and participate in their learning. Teachers should build good relationships with and between pupils, based on trust, co-operation and respect.
Set high expectations	Schools and teachers should convey and set realistically high expectations that challenge and inspire all pupils.
Acknowledge and build on prior learning	Teachers need to help pupils to make explicit what they already know and understand, and the skills they have developed. This will help pupils to identify what they need to do to make progress.
Recognise the significance of informal learning	Teachers should support pupils to make connections between the formal learning process and pupils' informal learning. This may make their formal learning more meaningful.
Use a range of teaching and learning strategies	Teaching and learning strategies should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be learner-centred; • involve and engage pupils in the learning process; • provide a range of appropriate opportunities for pupils to acquire and develop skills and capabilities alongside knowledge and understanding; • include enquiry-based and active learning approaches that motivate, engage and challenge pupils; • encourage pupils to work both collaboratively and independently; • promote positive attitudes and dispositions to learning such as commitment, determination and the confidence to be able to take responsibility for learning; and • enable pupils to develop their metacognitive ability.

<p>Take individual learning needs into account</p>	<p>Teachers should get to know pupils as individuals and gain a good understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their abilities; • their personalities; • what motivates them; and • how they learn best. <p>Teachers should differentiate lessons in terms of levels of demand to meet individual pupil needs.</p> <p>Teachers need to take the personal and cultural experiences of different groups of pupils into account.</p>
<p>Use ICT to enhance learning</p>	<p>Teachers can use ICT in innovative ways to extend and enrich their pupils' learning experiences.</p>
<p>Provide scaffolded support</p>	<p>Teachers should ensure that their lessons are well-structured and that they deepen and consolidate learning.</p> <p>They should provide activities and structures of intellectual, social and emotional support to help pupils to progress in their learning. This helps pupils to gain confidence in their own ability and gradually be able to take greater responsibility for their learning.</p>
<p>Enable pupils to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding in different contexts or area of learning</p>	<p>Teachers should engage pupils in learning about big ideas, key issues and concepts, key processes, subject narratives and discourses. Teachers should enable pupils to connect, transfer and apply their learning from one area of learning or context to another.</p>
<p>Enable pupils to develop their capacity for thinking skills and personal capabilities</p>	<p>Teachers need to provide pupils with motivating and challenging learning opportunities so that they can use higher order thinking skills and creativity. This requires pupils to apply their learning to abstract concepts in unfamiliar contexts, leading to deeper learning.</p> <p>Teachers can use the guidance for the statutory Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities to design learning experiences. They could also use the revised Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide to formulate and use effective questions.</p>

Support pupils to acquire and develop the statutory Cross-Curricular Skills	Teachers should provide pupils with a range of opportunities to acquire and develop the Cross-Curricular Skills of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT.
Clarify learning intentions and agree success criteria	Teachers should model and guide pupils in recognising and using the features that define high quality work.
Encourage learning through collaboration	Learning is a social activity. Teachers should provide opportunities for pupils to work together, to share ideas and thinking, and to learn from and with others.

Teaching and learning at KS2 and KS3 should demonstrate these characteristics. Teachers in primary and post-primary schools should have opportunities to share best practice in order to establish a shared understanding of how pupils are taught and to develop and use a range of teaching and learning approaches that support progression in learning.

This can be achieved by understanding differing teaching methodologies, by engaging in shared teacher professional learning and teacher exchanges, and by KS2 and KS3 teachers observing each other in practice.

To ensure that pupils have continuity in their experience of teaching and learning, teachers in primary and post-primary schools should work collaboratively to develop a range of teaching and learning approaches and try to ensure consistent language and terminology both between and throughout the key stages, as appropriate. These approaches should:

- support pupils to become increasingly independent learners;
- prepare pupils for lifelong learning; and
- promote a learner-centred pedagogy.

Teachers should use:

- every opportunity to help learners make meaningful connections across different areas of their learning;
- an infusion approach to teaching skills alongside subject knowledge and understanding;
- active enquiry-based learning and active teaching methodologies;
- effective questioning; and
- a range of assessment approaches to support progress in learning.

For further guidance on teaching and learning approaches, refer to the list of CCEA resources in Appendix 2.

The following example shows how a primary and post-primary school in Northern Ireland in the EA Transition project shared pedagogical approaches to support Newcomer pupils.



EXAMPLE 3:

TRANSITION AND NEWCOMER PUPILS! DRUMGLASS HIGH SCHOOL DUNGANNON AND BUSH PRIMARY SCHOOL DUNGANNON

Drumglass HS was keen to use existing links with primary schools in the local area with the aim of learning more about their teaching techniques regarding Literacy. Through the Literacy and Numeracy KS2-KS3 CPD Project, Mrs McKillion partnered with Bush PS in Dungannon and planned to focus on observing teaching and learning. Mrs McKillion commented, 'Little did I know just how much I was about to learn.' She said, 'The whole experience was a real eye-opener. I watched how seamlessly primary pupils go about their daily lessons, how meticulous the teacher planning was and the ways pedagogy must be carefully chosen to differentiate the material for various levels.' In particular, Mrs McKillion also observed how natural classwork and homework activities were well suited for Newcomer pupils. As a result of this collaboration strategies for teaching Newcomers were discussed which helped inform planning for the Newcomer pupils in Drumglass HS. It was agreed that a focus on some of the strategies that were being used in the primary setting could be introduced to scaffold the skills and build on this in the post-primary setting.

Both teachers agreed that having experienced practical training in the latest pedagogy on the CPD Project training days and observing it first hand in Bush PS was invaluable. Drumglass HS English teachers are now looking into how to implement inclusive strategies to develop Literacy Across the Curriculum and plans to create bridging units with the primary school are under way.

Planning ahead for our Newcomer Pupils!

This year the schools are piloting a unit of work on Picture Books. Picture Books are very current and easily accessible for Newcomers which makes them ideal material for an inclusive classroom. Pupils have enjoyed the hands-on activities, loved working in teams, and developing their discussion skills while trying to see beyond the pictures in the books. Both teachers remarked on how well this strategy was working to help their pupils infer meaning.

Pupil engagement!

The pupils have shown a great interest and put a lot of thought into working with Picture Books. Quite often, pupils have extended their class time through to their break time because they were so engrossed in the discussions. Picture Books have proven to be a great success and as a result the English Department at Drumglass HS are going to develop the use of Picture Books in KS3 and create units of work for Y9 and Y10.

Using a Primary Strategy in a Post-Primary Classroom! Mrs McKillion was hooked on Guided Reading!

In her observations, Mrs McKillion was intrigued at the scale of the use of Guided Reading in the primary setting. She noted that guided or paired reading is a great way forward in developing Literacy at all levels, whether a pupil is a beginner in English or a confident reader wishing to build more sophisticated language skills.



EXAMPLE 3 CONTINUED

Opportunities ahead ...

This is a great opportunity to adapt the Guided Reading model for the secondary setting. Careful collaboration with the primary partners helped create a reading programme to run in May and June 2017 when classroom assistants and volunteer pupils would be upskilled to mentor and assist Newcomers in their reading.

Pupils get to choose!

It was important for all mentors to know that the readers could choose their own reading material. A range of suitable reading material gave pupils ownership to making connections with topics and themes to ease any possible worry about content. That was the first hurdle!

The environment!

Secondly, a user friendly, relaxed environment, with sympathetic staff and peers, was carefully created for the Newcomer pupils. Mrs McKillion said, 'The learning that goes on during such sessions is immense. In my observations, I can see my Newcomer pupils working hard to expand on their vocabulary and they are learning the sentence structure and methods of punctuation extremely well.'

Result!

A personal high for the Newcomer pupils is the oracy which is being developed. The Guided Reading model has given rise to fantastic intonation and expression in reading. Mr Thompson, VP in Drumglass HS said, 'All of the skills that have been developed as a result of the CPD Transition Project have built capacity in our pupils, especially in their confidence to approach the technical skills required which we know will be invaluable across our curriculum.'

Dissemination to Colleagues

Mrs McKillion is involved in the Cross-Phase Placement Bursary Scheme and has presented to cross-phase colleagues on the sharing of practice event in Fortwilliam in May 2017. She confidently showcased ways to focus on the teaching and learning with Newcomer pupils.

SECTION 4

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Successful transition from primary to post-primary school depends on the commitment and support of each school's principal and senior leadership team and the importance of building in sufficient time for planning this process. The principal and senior leadership team should:

- ensure that school policy and practice meet the Department of Education's Post-Primary Transfer Policy (DE, 2016);
- lead the school self-evaluation and development planning process in their respective schools (Appendix 1, see also DENI, 2010a; DENI, 2010b; DENI, 2010c; ETI, 2017);
- review relevant school policies to ensure that they are aligned with broader educational policies and that they are implemented effectively to enable all pupils to have a successful transition;
- ensure that there is continuity and progression in pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment between primary and post-primary schools;
- lead, establish and build sustainable primary–post-primary collaborative partnerships, based on a shared vision and purpose;
- ensure that structures, processes and procedures are in place to support collaboration and information sharing between schools;
- ensure effective channels of communication with all stakeholders;
- ensure that those involved in working collaboratively have clearly-defined roles and responsibilities;
- support and empower teachers to share effective practice and expertise by providing sufficient time and resources;
- ensure that the transition process builds on prior learning, supports improvements in learning and contributes to raising standards;
- ensure that there is a focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy through a broad and balanced curriculum;
- give parents/carers information, support and advice;
- provide opportunities to engage pupils and parents/carers actively; and
- gather the views of pupils and parents/carers, and use these to inform improvements in the transition process (DENI, 2009a).

Successful transition also relies on primary and post-primary teachers building collaborative relationships which are based on trust and co-operation.

During the transition process, schools should:

- engage pupils and parents/carers;
- help to make pupils and parents/carers feel involved and valued;
- give pupils a voice; and
- ensure parents/carers are well informed about processes and decisions that affect their child.

The following example from a County Antrim school partnership shows how the school developed a pupil questionnaire to help identify improvements to their transition below.



EXAMPLE 1:

PUPIL VOICE INFORMS CHANGE IN COUNTY ANTRIM

The use of a pupil–teacher questionnaire has provided a County Antrim partnership of schools working cross-phase, with the impetus to identify how to enhance their transition practice.

St Killian’s well-established transition programme involving the Science Department and forensic analysis activity: ‘Who Stole Mr Brady’s Chair’ has certainly ignited the imaginations of new Year 8 pupils, helping them to navigate the campus and to identify staff (from photographs of a list of chief suspects accused of spiriting the chair away!)

A partnership of schools including St John’s, Carnlough, St Mary’s, Cushendall, St Ciaran’s, Cushendun, St MacNissi’s, Larne and St Killian’s College are improving transition further with a focus on literacy and numeracy cross-phase.

The partnership schools attended the KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project Principals’ Conference in Dunadry on the same day and the collaboration between the schools has since been ongoing. Discussions have taken place between the Senior staff and teachers as part of the KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project.

They have been engaged in a number of initiatives following meetings and a shared staff development day which has resulted in an audit of literacy and numeracy in their schools cross-phase.

As a result of the audit of literacy and numeracy provision, the schools’ partnership has decided on a focus on times tables and the adoption of common terminology for routine functions in maths. Sharing sessions were also held on Izak 9 which resulted in new lessons being planned on problem solving cross-phase. As not all of the partner schools have access to Izak 9, St. Killian’s will host a competition for those partner schools involved in the project.

The discussion of poetry provision in Year 8 has led to plans for a post primary teacher to deliver poetry sessions in the primary schools in June. The P7 pupils will respond to a poem entitled ‘Word Party’ which will be filmed on iPads and then screened when the pupils join St Killian’s in September.

Other literacy initiatives include a novel to bridge P7 and Year 8 and valuable discussions ensuring novels were not duplicated between P7 and Year 8. Teachers from the partnership will also soon team-teach Shakespeare together. Plans are also being made to re-visit schemes of work in light of the discussions and a pupil questionnaire.

The pupil questionnaire was compiled by Louise Cuning, a KS1 teacher currently, with wide experience of KS2, as part of her PQH preparation. She also took charge of the cross-phase audit of literacy and numeracy provision with the guidance of Mrs Eileen McKay, Vice Principal of St Killian’s College.



EXAMPLE 1 CONTINUED

Mrs Cunning's questionnaire was designed to highlight the overlap between P7 and Y8 in Literacy and Numeracy and incorporated some questions on the views of teachers working with year 8 pupils. She feels that giving the pupils an opportunity to communicate their experiences in Year 8 is seen by pupils as investing in them and that it encourages greater commitment from pupils, as they feel they are being listened to. The teachers participating in the questionnaire highlighted the difficulties in identifying gaps in pupil knowledge because of the limited information available about each child.

Mrs Cunning was impressed by the maturity of the respondents to the questionnaire. 'The pupils admitted that in maths they preferred group work but confessed that more learning took place independently.' One of the most simple ideas suggested by the pupils was the creation of a maths dictionary with a list of all the new terms being encountered between P7 and Year 8, an idea that is being followed up currently.

Both Mrs McKay and Mrs Cunning stressed the importance of listening and sensitivity to each other in the partnership discussions and the importance of not trying to force your practice on another school.

Surprising recommendations from the numeracy pupil questionnaire included that maths task boards used in Year 8 be part of the P7 experience and the retention in Year 8 of the colourful materials and carousel numeracy activity which are more common in P7. A discussion on preparing pupils in P7 to take brief notes when the occasion arises has also caused a re-think. Some primary schools have moved away from this practice entirely but many subjects post-primary will incorporate some note-taking into lessons.

The role of teachers

The senior leadership team should work with and support teachers in their own schools and work collaboratively with colleagues from their partner school. Teachers should work collaboratively to develop ways to support pupils during transition.

Primary teachers can:

- help to prepare pupils for the changes they will face by giving them opportunities to discuss and express their views about going to post-primary school;
- invite an Education Welfare Officer to talk to the Year 7 pupils in Term 3 about transition;
- make pupils aware of the different AoLs at post-primary school and how they relate to the primary curriculum;
- engage and support parents/carers to be involved in their children's transition process and encourage them to use the areas of the curriculum:
 - for example, for PDMU, they could discuss issues or topics such as relationships, diversity, bullying or coping with change, that will help pupils develop resilience and prepare for transition;
- explore opportunities for pupils to learn modern languages in primary school;
- make pupils aware of the key staff and their roles in the post-primary school, for example class or form tutor, head of year, head of department, and counsellor;
- help pupils to practise and build on their existing school and life skills that will prepare for post-primary school:
 - for example, many Year 7 children can already read simple timetables, use homework diaries, and have introduced themselves to new friends through shared education and other school partnership working, so pupils could explore using a post-primary timetable to plan how to pack a bag including their homework,

books or files relevant to the subjects taught each day;

- help children to become familiar with the digital tools used in their new post-primary school:
 - for example, by inviting the ICT post-primary teacher to demonstrate this to primary pupils in Term 3;
- use digital technology to collaborate with post-primary staff and setting;
- record assessment data and other information relevant to pupils' learning;
- use assessment information to identify low achievement and underachievement and then develop interventions to support these pupils and set targets for progression and improvement to pass on to post-primary school; and
- give pupils who have been taught through the medium of Irish the experience of classes taught through/in English.

Post-primary teachers can:

- ensure that they use the pastoral care system effectively to support pupils;
- engage and support parents/carers to be involved in the transition process;
- be mindful and supportive of the additional challenges many pupils may face when transferring into a new language environment, particularly in developing subject-specific terminology;
- support pupils to develop the personal and social skills, self-confidence and self-esteem necessary to:
 - settle well into school life and routines;
 - develop a sense of belonging;
 - relate well to teachers and peers; and
 - make new friendships;
- give pupils opportunities to engage in a range of activities and school events;
- give pupils a forum in which to express their views and concerns about transition;

- acknowledge and welcome pupils proficient in two or more languages, and recognise and promote the additional cultural and cognitive advantages that come with this;
- ensure continuity of the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment; and
- ensure that information provided by primary schools is shared with all subject teachers and used to plan progression, build on each pupil's prior learning, and set targets to improve learning and raise standards.
- develop interventions to support low-achieving and underachieving pupils and set targets for progression and improvement;
- develop approaches or strategies to improve learning and to raise standards; and
- ensure learner support as they encounter new subject-specific terminology, particularly in Mathematics, Science, and Using ICT.

Primary and post-primary teachers can work collaboratively to:

- ensure individual pupils' needs are met;
- ensure that there is an effective pastoral support programme to support pupils during transition;
- engage and support parents/carers to be involved in the transition process;
- plan a range of joint activities for pupils in Year 7;
- give pupils opportunities to participate in activities in the post-primary school and to meet new teachers;
- review schemes of work to ensure that there are strong links between the primary and post-primary curriculum;
- engage in TPL to support them in the transition process;
- share effective practice and expertise on pedagogy;
- share a common understanding of assessment approaches and standards;
- share and use assessment information to build on prior learning and to plan progression;
- identify low achievement and underachievement;



EXAMPLE 2:

LIMAVADY'S DIGITAL LITERACY FOCUS ON WORKHOUSE WOES!

Working together in Limavady to plan and deliver activities for a Year 7 transition day. Post-primary teachers used digital literacy ideas from primary teachers to plan a project for Year 7 pupils when they visited the post-primary school.

Limavady pupils stepped back in time to recreate the lives of their Victorian ancestors on film, as part of the transition partnership between Limavady High School and Limavady Central Primary School.

The teachers involved were inspired by the digital literacy strategies they saw at the CPD Transition Project training events last year.

Mrs Jennifer Given, P7 teacher at Limavady Central Primary School and her colleague Mrs Joy Caskie, a P5 teacher explained that film was a popular focus for their partnership as they had used one from The Literacy Shed selection successfully with accompanying support resources from the Project's training days.

'We taught fairy tales through digital literacy to add that little bit of extra impact in the classroom and the film resources we discovered at the training days really helped with story boarding,' Mrs Given said.

Mrs Shauna Devine, Head of English at Limavady High School also attended the CPD Project training events and agreed that the close proximity of the town's workhouse would be an inspiring focal point for their pupils.

'Limavady is steeped in Victorian heritage, as the old Limavady workhouse has been preserved as part of the town's heritage trail,' Mrs Devine explained.

Mrs Caskie and Mrs Given gave schemes of work and other useful information to the Limavady High School teachers to inform the planning for the transition day activities. Mrs Given attended the transition day with her pupils.

'The pupils enjoyed the day enormously and it was most educationally beneficial,' she added. The P7 pupils enjoyed the event so much that they all wrote thank you letters to the transition day organisers at Limavady High School.

The partnership teachers were synonymous in their praise for Mr George Dallas, Head of History and Religious Studies who brought the historical aspect of the Victorian experience to life on the day.

The pupils worked in pairs, on newspaper clippings from the Victorian era followed by a Moving Image Art exercise which incorporated a Hiring Fair role play inspired by the actual fair that used to take place in the town.

Mrs Caskie explained that channels of communication that didn't exist previously have now been opened for the two schools because of the CPD Transition Project. 'For year one a central benefit has been communication,' she said.

She added that any weaknesses found by Year 8 teachers with regard to literacy, can now be communicated and could be addressed in the partnership's new Action Plan.

EXAMPLE 2 CONTINUED



Mrs Devine is keen to develop consistency in literacy cross-phase throughout the range of subjects on offer in Limavady High School. Staff training days on consistency in report and newspaper writing etc are planned, events that her primary school partnership colleagues are keen to share in.

Mrs Devine found watching the exemplar lessons from the primary school teachers very informative when she attended the CPD Project training.

'When I watched the primary lessons my expectations of pupils entering Year 8 were immediately raised. If that's what teachers are doing in primary school then we are not doing enough with pupils in Year 8,' she added.

Prior to contacting the Limavady Central Primary School, Mrs Devine carried out a whole staff audit which revealed that teachers of all subjects were keen to know more about what the pupils did in primary school. 'Our initial focus will be on literacy and numeracy and then it will widen out to incorporate other subjects,' Mrs Devine added.

The Limavady teachers are planning to extend their transition partnership events with a focus on Victorian poetry next time. Mrs Devine has also commenced on the Teacher Placement Bursary Scheme with the Transition Project which will enable her to expand and develop her knowledge of learning cross-phase.



EXAMPLE 3:

'GETTING THE BEST OUT OF OUR CHILDREN' HOLYWOOD SCHOOLS AGREE STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

Sharing a common approach to assessment standards and approaches to work in Hollywood.

Building on existing good relationships, partnership schools in the Hollywood area have used the Transition Project to crystallise the standards and expectations of pupils during transition from P7 to Year 8. The schools involved are Glencraig Integrated Primary School, Hollywood Primary School, Priory Integrated College, Rockport School (Junior and Senior), St Patrick's Primary School, Sullivan Upper School and Sullivan Preparatory Department.

The journey began six years ago when Mrs Millar held a transition conference focussing on sharing transition 'Best Practice'. She invited all of the partner primary schools, in her area to Sullivan where discussions took place on book choices and schemes of work. Mrs Millar explained that the schemes of work were revised in light of these discussions.

'We have shared our novel resources and looked at our curricula to avoid overlap,' Mrs Millar said.

Mrs Millar was encouraged by the District School Inspector, Mr John McCusker. He suggested a variety of ways to ensure transition was manageable and varied each year. Thereby ascertaining what was happening in literacy lessons in P7 to avoid overlap and a disconnection in learning when pupils started Year 8.

Mrs Shaunagh McKirgan, Principal of Glencraig Integrated Primary School explained that an area such as report writing introduced in literacy in Primary 7, could be

revised briefly in Year 8 and built upon to ensure pupil engagement did not lapse by re-introducing the topic again.

The KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project has helped the schools to share and benefit further from their transition experience.

'Sharing our work has been prompted by our desire to get the best out of the children,' Mrs Debbie Crookshanks, Principal of Hollywood Primary School added.

The Hollywood Schools' Partnership members agree that they are building their transition practice and constantly learning over the years.

The schools found that bringing examples of pupils' work to their meetings has created a clearer understanding between them so that expectations of pupils can be altered accordingly. 'We stepped back from pro-forma transition forms as we found conversation to be more useful,' Mrs McKirgan added.

Mrs Crookshanks related the experience of working with Priory College, Hollywood on looking at the standards of pupils' work. 'We looked at a sample of pupil work dating from P7 into Year 8. The difference in application evident from P7 to Year 8 in some subjects was revealing and offered teachers an opportunity to share the differences with pupils and parents.'



EXAMPLE 3 CONTINUED

Mrs Jacqui Argument, Principal of Priory Integrated College added: 'We have valued the opportunity to learn from our primary school colleagues. It has been really enriching for our staff and has given us the opportunity to begin work on a model that will ultimately be of long term benefit to all of the young people who make the transition from KS2 to KS3.'

John Stevenson, former Principal of Sullivan Upper School, author of transition text 'Moving Up', spoke to staff and pupils recently on transition.

At this meeting Year 8 pupils answered questions from P7 pupils curious about the next stage in their educational experience.

'This is a hugely successful exchange, as no one could answer the questions more clearly than pupils who recently made the transition to Year 8,' Mrs McKirgan added.

The role of the pupil

Primary and post-primary school collaboration aims to ensure that pupils experience a successful transition (Evangelou et al., 2008). The DENI school improvement policy states that the transition process should be child-centred (DENI, 2009a). In practice, this means that schools should listen to the views of children and young people and involve them in discussions and decisions about school life that directly affect them.



EXAMPLE 4:

THE PUPIL'S POINT OF VIEW! ST. MARK'S HIGH SCHOOL WARRENPOINT, ST. DALLAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL WARRENPOINT, ST. BRONAGH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL ROSTREVOR AND ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL HILLTOWN

The Pupil's Point of View!

St. Mark's HS in Warrenpoint, Co. Down participated in the Placement Bursary Project to work in collaboration with three local Primary Schools – St. Dallan's PS Warrenpoint, St. Bronagh's PS Rostrevor and St. Patrick's PS Ballymaghera, Hilltown. The aim of this partnership was to examine the transition phase from a pupil's point of view. Mrs Featherstone, the teacher leading the project, wanted to open up communication with her colleagues in primary school in an effort to share practice and research on 'reading habits' of pupils in KS2. St Mark's was also keen to learn more about P7 pupils and their curriculum prior to their intake in an effort to make connections and avoid possible overlap with their own planning at KS3.

A uniform approach was taken and Mrs. Featherstone led a transition lesson in all three primary schools to prepare the pupils for moving to post-primary school. This lesson involved a range of paired and whole class discussions reflecting on what pupils would miss about primary school. This focus on developing their speaking and listening skills was very productive with all primary schools reporting on full engagement and there were some great testimonials of 'life in a primary school'. However, the main focus of the lesson was to help pupils deal with their emotions, develop their confidence and raise awareness of life in the next part of their school journey in the post-primary school.

Such discussions provided numerous opportunities for Mrs. Featherstone to

develop a personal rapport with the pupils before they arrive at St. Mark's HS.

'The question and answer sessions that followed put many pupils at ease as they queried and asked many things about lessons, timetables and 'lunches' in St Mark's,' Mrs Featherstone said.

The Impact!

The primary school placement also allowed Mrs. Featherstone the opportunity to complete a personal reading audit with all P7 pupils to uncover their reading habits after the school day and outside of reading homework. The results from this audit were invaluable and positively showed that P7 pupils enjoy personal reading and do read for enjoyment. Mrs. Featherstone feels personal reading needs to be promoted within the post-primary school to ensure that the pupils continue to read for pleasure as they enter KS3 and KS4.

Putting Pen to Paper!

The pupils' main task was to write an informal letter to themselves stating what they would miss about primary school; pupils were also asked to explain their thoughts and feelings about moving forward to post primary. At the end of Y8 the pupils will have their letter returned to them to give time to reflect and note how they have progressed in the transition process. All teachers were keen to develop 'the pupil's point of view' and this model provided them with the provision to do that. It is the intention that this initiative will continue annually.



EXAMPLE 4 CONTINUED

Partners – they're all set to continue ...

A very good base has now been established; one that all schools are keen to promote and develop next year. Excellent working relationships have been developed between the four schools and plans are set to continue in the future to create a transition scheme of work and bridging unit that pupils will begin in P7 and complete in Y8.

A Transition Policy is also underway to ensure that the pupils feel safe and supported during the transition process and this will inform all staff at whole school level.

Mrs Featherstone is delighted and enthused that the project was so successful. 'I thoroughly enjoyed the experiences I had in the primary schools. No textbook could explain how the children feel about this daunting process. This placement gave me the opportunity to work with the children, interview them in small groups and build a positive relationship with them. I hope this project continues next year to ensure that this wonderful opportunity continues to benefit all our pupils.'

Research shows that pupils can play an active role in helping to make the move from primary to post-primary school successful (DCSF, 2008, Sutherland et al., 2010). By engaging effectively with pupils, schools can create benefits for pupils that include:

- reducing anxiety;
- having their views listened to and respected;
- building self-confidence and self-esteem;
- feeling that they can make a difference and influence change;
- helping them to adjust to and settle into the post-primary school;
- encouraging them to take greater responsibility for their learning;
- improving motivation;
- developing a sense of belonging;
- developing communication, personal and social skills; and
- developing democratic skills.

Engaging effectively with pupils also provides benefits for schools, including:

- improved pupil–teacher relationships;
- enhanced engagement with teachers and school;
- a better understanding of pupils' views;
- an insight into pupils' capabilities;
- a more inclusive approach to school self-evaluation and development planning; and
- improved learning outcomes.

Engaging pupils

Schools should consider pupil engagement in relation to their transition arrangements as part of the self-evaluation and school development planning (Appendix 1).

Schools should gather and use pupils' views, along with other evidence, to inform improvements in their transition process. Schools should give pupils a range of opportunities to become involved in the transition process. These could include:

- regular opportunities to discuss and share their views about the transition experience;
- joint primary and post-primary school events, activities or lessons, online and face-to-face;
- visits, activities or lessons in the post-primary school;
- online information (in language accessible to the pupil, which should consider the first language of Newcomers, British Sign Language, Irish Sign Language, Braille, and Makaton) to support physical interaction with the post-primary school:
 - for example, providing photographs (or a virtual tour) of the school and some of the relevant areas of the school they will be using (the photos can then be uploaded to the school website);
- question and answer sessions with post-primary teachers – online and face-to-face;
- post-primary pupils mentoring primary pupils;
- buddy systems whereby Year 9 pupils can be buddies to Year 8 pupils; and
- afterschool clubs and societies.

SECTION 5

INVOLVING PARENTS/CARERS IN TRANSITION

Research highlights the importance of a strong pupil-parent/carer-school relationship to support school improvement. Engagement with parents/carers is particularly important to ensure that pupils have a successful transition from primary to post-primary school (Jindal-Snape et al, 2020). The school and parents/carers are two key agents that share responsibilities for the pupil's wellbeing, socialisation, and personal and emotional development.

Engaging with parents/carers promotes inclusion and contributes to improvements in pupils' social, emotional and academic outcomes. The following points show how pupils, parents/carers and schools all benefit from well-planned and considered engagement between home and school.

Pupils:

- may have a less stressful transition from primary to post-primary school;
- are more likely to adjust to their new school;
- find learning easier when they have supportive parents/carers at home;
- will do better and achieve more when their parents/carers are involved;
- may have their concerns dealt with more quickly when parents/carers have a positive relationship with the school and teachers;
- are more confident knowing they have their parents'/carers' support;
- develop more positive attitudes and behaviour; and
- are often happier and more likely to want to go to school.

Parents/Carers:

- have stronger links with teachers and improved relationships;
- are better informed about the school and transition process;
- may be less anxious about the transition process;
- are reassured about their children's education;
- know more about their children's learning and can encourage them;
- are better placed to support their children;
- often find that their children do better; and
- build their own confidence and skills.

Schools:

- develop improved relationships with parents/carers;
- support collaborative working between teachers and parents/carers;
- receive support from parents/carers;
- can use the skills that parents/carers bring to complement teachers' skills and expertise;
- may share ideas that parents/carers contribute;
- can support parents to encourage other parents to become involved in the school and with their children's learning; and
- see an improvement in pupils' academic performance, outcomes, attitudes, behaviour and attendance.

To engage parents/carers successfully in their children's learning, schools can consistently reinforce the importance of the role that parents/carers play in supporting their children's education (Evangelou et al., 2008).

By working together, teachers and parents/carers can develop a relationship based on mutual trust, respect, and a commitment to improving learning outcomes (Sutherland et al., 2010). This can help pupils to overcome the social, emotional and academic challenges they may face during the course of their school lives.

All pupils can benefit from their parents/carers engaging in their education and supporting them through the transition process (Sutherland et al., 2010). Therefore, it is important for primary and post-primary schools to convince parents/carers of the value of their support.

Schools can provide a range of opportunities, such as volunteering, events and coffee mornings for parents/carers to become actively involved with the school. Parents need to be able to support their children through the transition process and to help improve their learning during this time of change and beyond.

As part of the transition process, primary and post-primary schools can work independently and collaboratively in school self-evaluation and development planning to evaluate parental engagement. Schools could invite parents/carers to share their views. They could use this along with other information to help improve their transition arrangements (Appendix 1).

Primary and post-primary schools could work collaboratively to develop ways to engage parents/carers. Some parents/carers may need to help to develop the skills and knowledge to support their children's learning.

Schools can engage parents/carers by offering bespoke forms of support such as literacy and numeracy classes, parenting skills support or

pastoral care provision. Schools can work with the Inclusion and Diversity Service to develop strategies to support and engage parents/carers of Newcomer pupils in their children's learning. Schools may find some of the following strategies useful for engaging with parents/carers.

When communicating with parents, schools should, for example:

- provide clear and easy-to-understand information about the transition process;
- make early contact between parents/carers and post-primary school teachers;
- make sure parents/carers know who to contact in school;
- make sure parents/carers know what their children will be learning;
- respond promptly to enquiries and offer ongoing dialogue and support for any concerns or issues;
- provide information in different languages (which can include British and Irish sign languages, Makaton and Braille), where appropriate;
- provide translation and interpreting services, where appropriate;
- provide guidance for parents/carers on how best to support their children's learning in Irish medium or other immersion education settings;
- use ICT, for example the school website, emails and text messaging alerts, online surveys or blogs;
- hold parents'/carers' consultation evenings, open evenings and school events such as taster days, school plays and sports days;
- publish newsletters or use effective online communication; or
- provide weekly or monthly drop-in sessions/coffee mornings.

Schools should give parents/carers/family members opportunities to volunteer, for example:

- as school governors;
- as members of the Parent–Teacher Association (PTA);
- as members of the parents’ forum or council;
- with school events and trips; or
- with afterschool clubs.

Including the wider family will support groups that tend to define ‘family’ in broader terms, as well as children whose immediate family need support from the wider family. Schools should give parents opportunities to engage in decision-making, for example:

- as school governors;
- as representatives on the PTA;
- at a stakeholder day;
- in online surveys; or
- as part of parent focus groups.

Schools should enable parents/carers to support their children’s personal, social and emotional development and learning – family learning – by encouraging teachers to:

- discuss activities with parents that they can then undertake at home with their children, in order to link and extend the learning taking place in the classroom;
- provide parenting classes;
- provide basic skills classes in literacy, numeracy and ICT;
- provide guidance or classes to support parents/carers to deal with their children’s personal, social and emotional development;
- provide reading clubs for parents/carers and children;
- provide mentoring for parents/carers who lack the confidence or skills needed to support their children’s learning; and
- provide family learning days.

Barriers to engaging parents/carers

Transition is also a challenging time for parents/carers. As well as being anxious about how their children settle into their new school, parents/carers have to cope with change, and may feel overwhelmed. They need to develop new relationships with post-primary teachers and become familiar with the post-primary school structure, organisation and processes. Some parents may not have the skills or be able to support their children academically, or with emotional or behaviour problems. Some parents/carers may lack the confidence to engage with their children’s teachers and may find becoming involved in their education difficult (Sutherland et al., 2010).

Research suggests that there are links between parents’/carers’ level of engagement and their socio-economic status and experiences of education. Parents/Carers from disadvantaged communities or those who have had a negative schooling experience are less likely to want to engage with schools. Schools and teachers often view these parents/carers as hard to reach. Information on effective parental engagement (specifically section 4) can be found [here](#).

Parents/Carers of Newcomer pupils may also be unfamiliar with the school system, or there may be language barriers that make fully engaging with the school difficult. Parents with disabilities or SEN will need support from schools to engage (for example, a sign language interpreter).

SECTION 6

SHARING AND USING ASSESSMENT AND OTHER INFORMATION

Research demonstrates the importance of schools sharing and using assessment and other pupil-related information to support pupils to make a successful transition from primary to post-primary school (Evangelou et al., 2008; Sutherland et al., 2010; WAG, 2011).

Sharing and using assessment and other data effectively is one of the quality indicators for teaching and learning (DENI, 2009a). This is essential for planning and ensuring individual pupil progression. Research shows that effective use of assessment data is essential for school improvement:

‘... data is only effective if it stimulates questions about the actual learning that is taking place and how it can be developed further ...’ (Kirkup et al., 2005).

The effective use of data in school self-evaluation and planning for improved outcomes for pupils is central to DENI’s school improvement policy (DENI, 2009a). Sharing and using data across the transition phase could be a focus for self-evaluation and development planning. Primary and post-primary schools could work collaboratively to identify strengths and areas for improvement around sharing and using assessment and other data (Appendix 1).

Statutory requirements

When a pupil is transferring to a post-primary school at the end of KS2, the Education (Pupil Records and Reporting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (HMSO, 2009; DENI, 2013c) require the primary school to give the receiving post-primary school:

- the level of progression each pupil has achieved in any cross-curricular skill they have been assessed in;
- a statement, if a pupil has been exempted from any part of the assessment arrangements in that school year; and
- the pupil’s formative record of progress and achievement.

The regulations define the minimum requirements for transferring information to post-primary schools.

Most primary schools provide a variety of information. They give post-primary schools a range of assessment data and other useful information. Schools should therefore have an efficient system for sharing and exchanging information about pupils.

Gathering, recording and sharing assessment data

All schools must establish manageable processes and procedures. Schools can use School Information Management Systems (SIMS) and Assessment Manager to record and analyse their assessment data. The primary school can also use the Common Transfer File, found on the SIMS, to transfer data to the post-primary school (see OECD 2013).

Schools should use assessment data to inform actions that:

- enhance teaching and learning;
- improve learning outcomes; and
- contribute to raising standards.

The extent to which schools can use assessment data to improve learning outcomes depends on collecting the right type and quality of data. Before gathering and recording assessment information, schools need to ask:

- Is the information appropriate for this purpose?
- What will we use the assessment evidence for?
- Could we use assessment evidence already available for this purpose?
- Do we need to gather other assessment evidence?
- Is the assessment evidence dependable?
- How will we gather and record the assessment information?
- When and how often will we gather and record the assessment evidence?
- Who is responsible for gathering the data?
- How will we analyse and interpret the data?
- How will we use the data to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment?
- How will we use the data to improve learning outcomes?

Assessment data

The pupil assessment data that primary schools can share with the post-primary school include:

- the levels attained for each Cross-Curricular Skill: Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT;
- information from diagnostic and/or commercially-based tests such as Progress in English (PIE) and Progress Test in Maths (PTM) (where used in schools);
- class tests; and
- formative assessment information, including teacher observation.

Sharing other information

The primary teacher can share further information about the pupil including their:

- record of achievement;
- progress in learning;
- attitude to learning;
- interests and motivations;
- capacity for independent learning; and
- strengths and areas for development.

Using assessment and other information to identify low achievement and underachievement

Primary teachers can share information with their post-primary colleagues about low-achieving and underachieving pupils, including what best motivates these pupils to learn.

Many factors related to low achievement and underachievement are not directly measurable. Teachers can use pupil observation and other school data to identify low achievement and underachievement (Montgomery, 1996; Underwood et al., 2009).

Teachers can also use their knowledge of pupils and their professional judgement to complement assessment information. They should consider other factors that may act as barriers to learning, including:

- personal or individual differences and behaviours;
- behavioural and emotional factors;
- socio-economic and cultural factors;
- positive and negative effects of current friendships;
- special educational needs;
- attendance figures;
- persistent absenteeism;
- pupil mobility; or
- difficulty with communication skills.

Intervention strategies

The primary school can share information with the post-primary school about low-achieving and underachieving pupils and any interventions they have put in place. Teachers from primary and post-primary schools could collaborate to develop an intervention approach that is consistent across the KS2 to KS3 transition. Intervention strategies can include:

- additional provision for specific areas of subject knowledge and understanding;
- a focus on developing specific skills such as self-management and study skills;
- mentoring support;
- targeted support to tackle specific problems, for example improving motivation, concentration, self-esteem and self-efficacy;
- pastoral support for pupils experiencing behavioural or emotional problems; and
- engaging parents/carers and the wider community in learning support programmes for their child.

The OECD Report (2013) suggests that primary and post-primary schools could work together to use data more effectively to monitor individual progress, particularly during transition. The report states that exchanging information effectively between primary and post-primary schools will help to strengthen and better promote the curriculum focus on the progression of pupil learning across KS2 and 3.

CCEA's 2018/19 Curriculum Monitoring Programme identified that the transfer of consistent and accurate information from primary to post-primary schools was a problem for some schools. According to post-primary representatives, this issue is compounded because they accept pupils from many primary schools and there is no standardised method of information sharing to assist in transition.

However, examples of good practice have been provided by post-primary schools, highlighting strong links with primary schools and effective transition in relation to the sharing of assessment information, and showing that schools can improve their methods of sharing information.

Examples of collaboration between schools from the EA KS2/3 Transition project included work by a partnership of special schools to develop a shared approach to assessment and tracking in literacy and numeracy using SIMS to record and track pupil progress between KS2 and KS3.

(Case study on next page.)



EXAMPLE 1:

BELFAST SPECIAL SCHOOLS' PARTNERSHIP ADOPTS BESPOKE APPROACH TO TRANSITION TRACKING

The initial intention of this partnership which includes Mitchell House, Cedar Lodge, Fleming Fulton and the Belfast Hospital School was to develop a common approach to assessment and tracking in literacy and numeracy for all four schools, using SIMS to record and track pupil progress.

School principals and all co-ordinators of KS2 and KS3 Literacy and Numeracy met to discuss and share the types of tests they currently use but they could not identify an assessment that would match the needs of all four schools.

'While one size fits all doesn't work, collaboration is very useful in raising and discussing issues and sharing practice, which can then be tailored to suit individual schools,' Miss Laura Matchett the Principal of Mitchell House explained.

The most appropriate tests have now been identified for each school which dovetail with training received from St Mary's and Stranmillis through the SEN literacy project.

Following the identification of need as reflected in the results of literacy and numeracy tests, the Belfast Special Schools' Partnership is developing the type of additional support programme which may complement the existing practice of all four schools. The schools will meet again to explore best practice and this will culminate in individual schools planning their own bespoke programme.

The staff involved agree that this project has been a great driving force for schools to focus on transition.

'There is now good contact between the schools with reference to transition and communication with colleagues at principal and co-ordinator levels,' Miss Matchett added.

C2K supported the Belfast Special Schools Partnership by providing training for all principals and co-ordinators to demonstrate SIMS assessment manager. They visited each school individually to help them to set up their own tracking system.

'C2K were very helpful at a whole group and individual school level. Their support was much appreciated and helped us to get the system working the way we wanted, not just using a standard form,' Miss Matchett explained.



EXAMPLE 2:

BELFAST TEACHERS AND PUPILS CREATE DIGITAL PICTURE OF LEARNING NEEDS

An innovative collaboration between a Belfast post-primary school and its feeder schools resulted in the development of a transition report card (e-learning passport) which was sent out to all partner primary schools to provide a common framework for literacy, numeracy and pastoral information.

A Belfast partnership of schools has created a new digital channel of communication to help track and support the learning needs of pupils as they move cross-phase.

Forge Integrated Primary School, Millennium Integrated Primary School and Loughview Integrated Primary School have worked with Lagan College in the development of an innovative e-learning passport to help their P7 students to transfer.

Mrs Una Walters, Senior Leader and Head of AEN at Lagan College initiated the development of the interactive passport in Lagan College which started as a paper resource originally. 'The e-learning passport was an idea that I had which built upon our transition work with enhancements for newcomer students and children with social and emotional needs,' Mrs Walters explained.

'This new interactive feature enhances Lagan College's already well-established transition programme. Feedback from students, parent and guardians has been significant in improving the passport which includes information on the curriculum and pastoral issues,' she said.

'The input of primary students has enabled Lagan College to appreciate further what young people and their families require to make the move to 'big school' as smooth and as positive as possible,' Mrs Walters added.

The four schools have engaged in a number of other cross-phase initiatives also. Training has been led by Lagan College in the use of modelled language frameworks. Loughview IPS teacher, Mrs Jennifer Fuller (CPD link teacher) and Mrs Walker in her role as Numeracy co-ordinator, have collaborated on KS2 Functional Maths delivery and transferrable skills development cross-phase, using Dienes and Numicom to support Mental Maths development.

Mrs Fuller explained that the partnership work had really broken down barriers between the primary and post-primary worlds. 'We have created an avenue of communication that is open and honest. Being a reflective practitioner and helping each other to explore learning and teaching in a trusted colleague network has been of great benefit. This link ensures that students know there is a real and tangible link between their learning cross-phase. Students can see that their learning is purposeful as they move on,' she said.

'At the end of the first year of the Cross-Phase CPD Literacy and Numeracy Project, we noted that the CPD project had further enhanced the already excellent relationships and shared good practice which had previously existed between the schools in an informal manner,' Mrs Walters explained.



EXAMPLE 2: CONTINUED

'Lagan College is also sharing the Accelerated Reader programme with primary colleagues who in turn have happily supported a bespoke electronic transfer of KS2 data sharing and the provision of extended personal/creative writing pieces in order to benchmark students upon post-primary entry, which the children are immensely proud of,' Mrs Walters added.

Mrs McNamee, Principal of Lagan College expressed her appreciation to all the staff from across the four schools involved in the partnership, who are working successfully together in this critical transition point in a child's learning. 'All aspects of our KS2/ KS3 CPD project have proved extremely beneficial to date. We know this from staff self-evaluation, feedback and the number of teachers who have offered to open their classrooms for learning walks and sharing good practice sessions, as well as the pupil voice,' Mrs McNamee said.

The Lagan College Principal also commented that her fellow Principals: Mr Watson (Forge IPS), Mr McKnight (Loughview IPS) and Mrs Mary Roulston (Millennium IPS) endorsed this comment. 'We are delighted that Miss Colleen Haughian has also secured a place on the CPD Project's Teacher Placement Bursary Scheme to undertake good practice building 'Curriculum Bridges' in conjunction with Forge IPS. We are also eagerly awaiting the arrival of Mr Sean Spillane, who will be taking up the opportunity to work on his three day placement, from Glenraig Primary here within Lagan's English department in the New Year,' Mrs McNamee added.



EXAMPLE 3:

ENNISKILLEN SCHOOLS STRIVE FOR SEAMLESS TRANSITION THROUGH JOINT DATA FOCUS

In an Enniskillen partnership a project was developed to enable data sharing and support the individual needs of pupils in Year 8 in numeracy and literacy.

Enniskillen Integrated Primary School and Erne Integrated College placed data exchange at the core of their transition action planning so successfully that measures are underway to expand the information being transferred between the two schools.

The schools identified data sharing as a means to inform and reinforce teacher planning to ensure each child's transition is as smooth as possible, thereby accommodating the learning continuum.

Enniskillen Integrated Primary School's Principal, Mrs Adele Kerr explained that the objective of the schools' transition planning in 2015-2016 was for the GL Digital assessment pack to be implemented in both schools, to facilitate information transfer and collaborative planning.

Mrs Kerr had already invested in the GL Digital Assessment pack, which uses CAT4, PTM, PTE, Baseline, Baseline Progress and PASS attitudinal measure to provide a detailed profile of each pupil's learning needs and strengths.

Her decision to incorporate the GL Digital Assessment measures followed a process of self-evaluation at her school, which identified the need for a more coherent picture to be extracted from the data so that planning could be more specifically aligned to pupils' learning needs.

The data is used by class teachers to collaboratively review each teaching group; prioritising pupils' learning deficits and providing evidence of the need for further testing and intervention. This monitoring of pupils' needs facilitates 'Precision Planning' where the planning is targeted directly at topics where the pupils need help.

Erne Integrated College's, successful implementation of GL Digital Assessment was led by Senior Teacher, Mr Andrew Kerr.

'The PTM and PTE scores of the current Year 8 students were successfully transferred and their new teachers began working on planning for their needs in Key Stage 3 prior to their arrival,' he said.

'The mathematics subject area has requested more information and the transition Action Plan for this year is focused on transferring the complete PTM and PTE profiles for next year,' Mr Kerr added.

Erne Integrated College has incorporated the data into SIMS Assessment Manager which facilitates the sharing of data with all teachers and is now an integral part of their target setting and review process.

Principal of Erne Integrated College, Jimmy Jackson-Ware commented that the use of PTM and PTE for precision teaching will have an impact across the entire curriculum as all subject teachers will have a greater understanding of their students and will be able to model support strategies to meet the individual needs of students.

Transition and school improvement

KS2 to KS3 transition should be an important focus of school improvement for primary and post-primary schools through the school self-evaluation process and development planning.

Appendix 1 contains a model for school self-evaluation of transition arrangements which schools may find useful. It contains quality

indicators, which can be used to generate questions for discussion about the quality of transition arrangements. It may also be used to review transition and school collaboration policy and practice, identify areas for improvement and teacher professional learning, and to set targets.

Figure 1 below shows an overview of a possible self-evaluation process for transition.

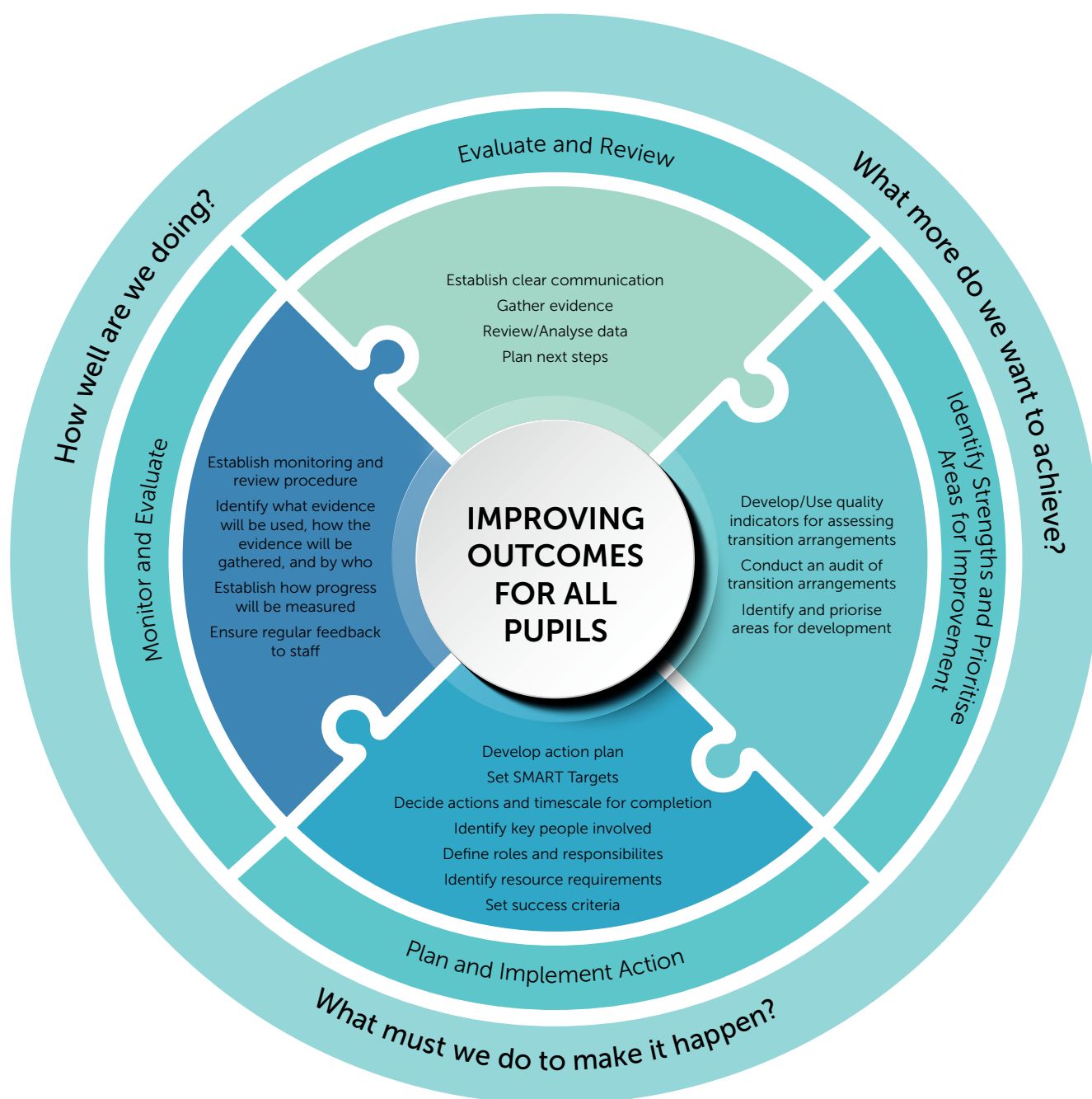


Figure 1

APPENDIX 1: QUALITY INDICATORS OF TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

ENSURING AN EFFECTIVE TRANSITION BETWEEN PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Principals and senior leaders in primary and post-primary schools may find these tables of quality indicators useful. They can use or adapt the self-evaluation model to identify strengths and areas for development.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP		EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?	
1. Relevant school policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – support pupils to experience a successful transition; and – are aligned with broader educational policies. 			
2. School transition policies are implemented effectively.			
3. There are strong links between the primary and post-primary curriculum, clearly demonstrating that the curriculum, assessment and pedagogy have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – continuity; and – progression. 			
4. There are structures, processes and procedures in place to support collaborative working and sharing information within and between schools.			
5. There is an effective communication network in place and clear channels of communication.			
6. A member of SLT or another appropriate teacher has responsibility for developing, monitoring and evaluating the success of school partnerships.			

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP		EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?	
7. Those involved in the transition process have clearly defined roles and responsibilities.			
8. Teachers have effective support, including time and resources, to ensure successful transition.			
9. Staff are empowered to share and develop good practice and expertise and to identify areas for improvement in the transition process.			
10. The transition process builds on prior learning, supports improvements in learning and contributes to raising standards.			
11. Pupils and parents are well informed and actively engaged in the transition process.			
12. Staff actively seek and use pupils' and parents' views about transition to inform improvements in the transition process.			

QUALITY OF COLLABORATION		EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?	
1. Collaboration between primary and post-primary schools is carefully planned and sustainable.			
2. Collaboration is based on agreed goals and objectives.			
3. The processes of collaboration are clear, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – roles and responsibilities; – accountability; – decision-making; – communication; and – monitoring and evaluation. 			
4. Teachers from primary and post-primary schools meet regularly throughout the year and collaborate to ensure that pupils experience a successful transition.			
5. Schools and teachers exchange information, co-ordinate activities, share resources and enhance their partner schools' capacity to achieve a common purpose.			
6. There is a clear and effective communication system.			
7. There is shared understanding of what constitutes success and how to assess it in terms of outcomes.			
8. Schools monitor and review the quality of collaboration between primary and post-primary schools as an integral part of the school evaluation and development planning process.			

INVOLVING PUPILS	EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?
1. The primary school prepares pupils for transition by making Year 7 pupils aware of the changes involved in moving to post-primary school.		
2. The primary school offers opportunities for pupils to discuss and express their views about transition including their concerns and what they look forward to.		
3. Teachers in primary and post-primary school collaborate, plan and provide a range of joint activities/events for pupils in Year 7.		
4. Year 7 pupils have opportunities to meet teachers and pupils from the post-primary school.		
5. Year 7 pupils have opportunities to participate in activities in the post-primary school.		
6. The post-primary schools' pastoral care system has a focus on ensuring that pupils experience a successful transition.		

INVOLVING PUPILS	EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?
<p>7. All staff in post-primary schools support pupils to develop the personal and social skills, self-confidence and self-esteem necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – settle well into school life and school routines; – develop a sense of belonging; – relate well to teachers and peers; and – make new friendships. 		
<p>8. In post-primary schools pupils have opportunities to participate actively in a range of school activities and events.</p>		
<p>9. In post-primary schools pupils have a forum to express their views and concerns in relation to their experience of transition.</p>		
<p>10. In discussion with pupils, teachers in post-primary schools regularly review how well each pupil is settling into the school and their progress in learning.</p>		

INVOLVING PARENTS	EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?
1. There is a focus on encouraging all parents to become involved with the school and support their children during transition.		
2. Parents are invited to share their views about the transition process and given opportunities to participate.		
3. The school is aware of parents' circumstances and works to overcome possible barriers that may prevent them engaging with the school. These barriers can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – disability; – language; – parents separated; – working hours; – other caring responsibilities; and – lack of confidence or skills to engage with teachers. 		
4. The school provides support to parents to enable them to help their child during the transition process. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – parenting classes; – numeracy and literacy classes; – English or Irish Medium language classes; – family learning days; and – after school homework club and parent-pupil homework sessions. 		

INVOLVING PARENTS	EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?
5. Parents of pupils in Year 7 have opportunities to discuss their preferred post-primary school options with their child's class teacher.		
6. Post-primary schools provide information and offer support and advice to parents of Year 7 pupils.		
7. Parents have opportunities to visit post-primary schools, to meet teachers and discuss issues or concerns.		
8. Primary and post-primary schools use a range of approaches to engage parents in their child's learning.		
9. ICT is increasingly used to communicate with parents. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – school website; – email; – text messaging alerts; – online surveys; and – blogs. 		

EVIDENCE	
ENSURING CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION IN CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?
<p>1. Primary and post-primary teachers collaborate to plan programmes of learning that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – link to and build on the primary curriculum; – avoid repetition and overlap; – inspire pupils to learn, progress and achieve; – are broad, balanced and flexible; – chart clear progression; and – are skills infused. 	
<p>2. Primary and post-primary teachers collaborate to plan progression in the Cross-Curricular Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communication (Literacy); – Using ICT; and – Using Mathematics (Numeracy); <p>and the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Managing Information; – Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making; – Being Creative; – Working with Others; and – Self-Management. 	
<p>3. Primary and post-primary teachers share good practice and expertise in approaches to teaching, learning and assessment.</p>	

ENSURING CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION IN CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY	EVIDENCE		
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?	
4. Teaching, learning and assessment approaches are similar across Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.			
5. Teachers have a shared understanding of assessment standards particularly in relation to the Cross-Curricular Skills.			
6. Pupils are supported to take greater responsibility for and become more independent in their learning, for example by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – self and peer assessment; – reviewing their work; and – setting targets for improvement. 			
7. Primary and post-primary schools commonly use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – enquiry-based learning; – effective questioning; – a focus on explicit thinking; – a range of active teaching and learning methods; – an infused approach to teaching skills alongside knowledge and understanding; – effective differentiation for the range of ability within classes; – deliberate and explicit connections across learning experiences; and – assessment for learning. 			

SHARING AND USING ASSESSMENT AND OTHER INFORMATION	EVIDENCE	
QUALITY INDICATOR	STRENGTHS: What does this look like? How is it achieved?	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT What outcomes do we want to achieve? How will we do this?
1. A manageable system is in place for gathering and recording assessment and other information about pupils.		
2. Assessment data is used effectively to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – enhance teaching and learning; – improve learning outcomes; and – contribute to raising standards. 		
3. A manageable system is in place for gathering, recording and sharing assessment and other information about pupils between primary and post-primary schools.		
4. There is a mechanism in place for post-primary and primary teachers to discuss and share assessment standards.		
5. Assessment and other data is used effectively to identify low and underachievers.		
6. In post-primary schools a system is in place for sharing information related to a pupil's well-being and learning with appropriate staff.		
7. Post-primary schools effectively use information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provided by the primary schools to build on prior learning and plan progression. 		
8. Pupils in post-primary schools make good progress from their prior levels of attainment.		

APPENDIX 2

The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families has created [Transitions](#) resources which you can access through its Mentally Healthy Schools website.

BBC Northern Ireland has published a number of animated [Transition learner guides](#) for children moving from primary to post-primary education which may be helpful for pupils going through this transition.

BBC Teach also has resources for pupils [Transitioning to secondary school](#).


[CCEA's Year 7 Living. Learning. Together](#) booklet [Moving On/Ag Bogadh Ar Aghaidh \(green unit\)](#) has activities and ideas for children moving on to the next phase of education. The booklet focuses on:

- identifying the changes which will happen in the coming year;
- how moving school brings changes in friendship, and how friendships can be broken or maintained and sustained; and
- developing strategies to face the future positively.

The following **CCEA** Resources support appropriate teaching approaches to the Northern Ireland curriculum in KS2 and KS3:


- [Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stage 3](#) (this is a similar resource to the KS1 and 2 version);
- [Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide](#);
- [Guidance on Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities for Key Stage 1 and 2](#);
- [Guidance on Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities for Key Stage 3](#);
- [Insync – a resource for exploring personal development issues at KS3](#);
- [Living.Learning.Together](#);
- [SEN Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Framework](#); and
- [Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#).

APPENDIX 3

The "Big Picture" of the Curriculum at Primary		 Rewarding Learning	
CURRICULUM AIM	The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.		
CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES	TO DEVELOP THE YOUNG PERSON AS AN INDIVIDUAL personal understanding mutual understanding personal health	TO DEVELOP THE YOUNG PERSON AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO SOCIETY citizenship cultural understanding	TO DEVELOP THE YOUNG PERSON AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT employability economic awareness education for sustainable development
INFUSING	COMMUNICATION Managing Information Working with Others Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making Self-Management Being Creative		
CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILLS	USING MATHEMATICS USING ICT		
THINKING SKILLS AND PERSONAL CAPABILITIES	COMMUNICATION Managing Information Working with Others Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making Self-Management Being Creative		
ACROSS	THE ARTS LANGUAGE AND LITERACY MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING PHYSICAL EDUCATION* THE WORLD AROUND US RELIGIOUS EDUCATION		
INCORPORATING	ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING building a more open relationship between learner and teacher clear learning intentions shared with pupils shared/negotiated success criteria individual target setting taking risks for learning advice on what to improve and how to improve it celebrating success peer and self evaluation of learning		
PROMOTING/ENCOURAGING	LEARNING EXPERIENCE investigation and problem solving challenging and engaging links between curriculum areas supportive environment relevant and enjoyable culturally diverse media-rich positive reinforcement skills integrated varied to suit learning style active and hands on on-going reflection offer choice enquiry based		
FOSTERING	ATTITUDES AND DISPOSITIONS personal responsibility curiosity concern for others community spirit commitment – determination – resourcefulness flexibility tolerance openness to new ideas integrity moral courage self-confidence respect		

*Physical Development and Movement at Foundation Stage © CCEA 2019

APPENDIX 3 (CONTINUED)

 The "Big Picture" of the Curriculum at Key Stage 3															
CURRICULUM AIM	The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.														
CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES	To develop the young person as an individual To develop the young person as a contributor to society To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and environment														
FOR	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</td> <td>HOME ECONOMICS</td> <td>LOCAL AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP</td> <td>EMPLOYABILITY</td> </tr> </table>	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	HOME ECONOMICS	LOCAL AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP	EMPLOYABILITY										
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THROUGH															
KEY ELEMENTS	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>personal understanding mutual understanding personal health</td> <td>moral character spiritual awareness</td> <td>citizenship cultural understanding</td> <td>media awareness ethical awareness</td> <td>employability economic awareness</td> <td>education for sustainable development</td> </tr> </table>	personal understanding mutual understanding personal health	moral character spiritual awareness	citizenship cultural understanding	media awareness ethical awareness	employability economic awareness	education for sustainable development								
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CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILLS	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>COMMUNICATION</td> <td>USING MATHEMATICS</td> <td>USING ICT</td> </tr> </table>	COMMUNICATION	USING MATHEMATICS	USING ICT											
COMMUNICATION	USING MATHEMATICS	USING ICT													
THINKING SKILLS AND PERSONAL CAPABILITIES	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Managing Information</td> <td>Working with Others</td> <td>Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making</td> <td>Self-Management</td> <td>Being Creative</td> </tr> </table>	Managing Information	Working with Others	Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making	Self-Management	Being Creative									
Managing Information	Working with Others	Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making	Self-Management	Being Creative											
ACROSS															
AREAS OF LEARNING	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>THE ARTS</td> <td>ENGLISH (IRISH in Irish Medium Schools) with Media Education</td> <td>ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY</td> <td>MATHEMATICS with Financial Capability</td> <td>MODERN LANGUAGES</td> <td>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</td> <td>SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY</td> <td>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</td> </tr> </table>	THE ARTS	ENGLISH (IRISH in Irish Medium Schools) with Media Education	ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY	MATHEMATICS with Financial Capability	MODERN LANGUAGES	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	RELIGIOUS EDUCATION						
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GLOSSARY

ACHIEVEMENT	The progress and success of a pupil in their learning over a given time.
ASSESSMENT	The systematic collection, interpretation and use of information to provide a deeper understanding of what pupils know and understand, their skills and personal capabilities and what they can do as a result of their learning experiences.
ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING (FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)	The process of seeking and interpreting evidence for pupils and their teachers to use to decide where they are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there.
BRIDGING UNIT	Usually describes a learning project pupils begin in Year 7 and finish in Year 8 where there are clear learning objectives agreed by both the primary and post-primary school, linking learning in primary schools to that in post-primary schools and providing opportunities for children to develop the skills that pupils need for further learning in post-primary school.
DEEP LEARNING	Involves the critical analysis of new ideas, making connections with prior learning and known concepts and principles. It leads to a better understanding and long-term retention of concepts. It supports problem-solving in unfamiliar contexts and can be applied to learning, life and work.
DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT	Used to identify the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and to highlight the specific nature of difficulties that the learner might have. The information from the assessment informs future teaching and learning and implements intervention strategies to support improvements in the pupils' learning.
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	See Assessment for Learning.
ENQUIRY-BASED LEARNING	A pupil-led pedagogic approach where the teacher facilitates learning. It involves the pupils seeking answers to questions and finding solutions to problems.
LEVELS OF PROGRESSION	Used at KS1, 2 and 3 to assess pupil performance in the Cross-Curricular Skills of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT. The Levels of Progression for each skill range from one to seven. Pupil performance is judged against the assessment criteria that define each level.

GLOSSARY

LITERACY	The pupils' ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly, taking account of different purposes, contexts, conventions and audiences. It involves the development of an integrated approach to the acquisition of talking, listening, reading and writing across the curriculum.
LOW ACHIEVEMENT	When a pupil is achieving to the full extent of her or his ability, but is well below average compared to her or his peers.
NUMERACY	The pupils' ability to apply appropriate mathematical skills and knowledge in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and in a range of settings throughout life, including the workplace.
PEER ASSESSMENT	A group of pupils make judgements about each other's performance and learning and suggest ways to improve their learning.
PROGRESSION IN LEARNING	This is where learning builds on previous learning and is increasingly challenging in demand.
SELF-ASSESSMENT	Pupils reflect on their learning, make judgements about their performance, and identify ways to improve their learning.
STANDARD	A statement about the degree of quality to be attained in an assessment.
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	Used to determine a pupil's learning at a particular point.
THINKING SKILLS AND PERSONAL CAPABILITIES	Managing Information, Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making, Being Creative, Working with Others and Self-Management.
UNDERACHIEVEMENT	When a pupil's performance is below what is expected, based on their ability.

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