

# How Good is Your School's Primary/Secondary Transition?



A guide for school leaders on improving  
transition planning and processes

[www.hashtag-learning.co.uk](http://www.hashtag-learning.co.uk)



## Primary to Secondary Transition

The transition from primary to secondary school is an important life transition that can affect children's attainment and wellbeing in the longer term.

Most schools implement formal programs to support pupils through school transition although research shows that these vary considerably in content and focus.

Typical practices employed by schools to support transitions include:

- the sharing of information between schools
- visits to schools by prospective teachers, children and their parents
- the use of bridging materials
- distribution of booklets and literature
- information on the school website
- transition/induction days
- enhanced transition arrangements for learners with additional needs
- joint social events between schools

Research shows that children who make a successful transition to secondary school:

- adapt positively to the new school environment and routines
- develop new friendships
- display increased confidence and self-esteem
- show an increased interest in learning
- experience curriculum continuity
- receive effective levels of information, encouragement and support

## Evaluating the Quality of Primary to Secondary Transition

The following page shows a suggested audit for evaluating the quality of your school's primary/secondary transition. It amalgamates one key feature from Theme 3 from HGIOS Quality Indicator 2.6 (Continuity and Progression in Learning) and one key feature from Theme 2 (Support for Children and Families).

The full audit of QI 2.6 can be accessed online.

Use the Impact online quality improvement tool to complete the traffic lighting exercise and record strengths and weaknesses.

[www.hashtag-learning.co.uk](http://www.hashtag-learning.co.uk)

## Theme 3: Continuity and progression in learning

### Primary to secondary transition

Primary and secondary staff work closely to ensure information about each child's learning and achievements is passed on and used.	
There are shared approaches to record keeping and passing on information.	
Transition data includes information about each child's learning and achievements as well as friendship groups, health and social issues.	
Attainment data and P7 profiles are used to plan progressive pathways in S1 and ensure continuity of learning.	
Learning and teaching approaches in S1 take account of and build on P7 experiences.	
The S1 curriculum builds on the experiences and outcomes covered in primary school (ie, no 'fresh start').	
Vulnerable learners and their families are well known by staff by the time they arrive at secondary school.	
P7 children complete a personal profile or transition booklet as part of transition to secondary school.	
Literacy and numeracy assessments are completed early in S1, which highlight early intervention requirements.	
Parents receive information about starting secondary school and how they can support their child's learning.	
P7 children visit the secondary school before they start, to become familiar with their new school and setting.	
There is a common language for learning between primary and secondary staff across the learning community.	
Children are supported in developing an increased awareness of their own progress and next steps in learning.	
We operate joint primary/secondary curricular programmes, eg, transition projects, IDL themes.	
Staff from the secondary school visit to provide lessons and assemblies in specific subjects.	
Guidance staff visit P7 classes to meet the children ahead of transfer.	
There are opportunities for shared lesson observations and team teaching across stages.	
P7 residential and/or other events across the learning community help build relationships and confidence in preparation for secondary.	
Parent/carers understand their child's learning journey and the continuity between primary and secondary.	

## Theme 2: Arrangements to support learners and their families

### Support for learners with additional needs

Transition planning takes account of relevant advice and statutory requirements/timelines.	
We work effectively with a range of agencies to meet the additional support needs of the child or young person.	
We involve families and relevant agencies in designing transitions for those requiring additional support.	
We seek and take account of the views of the child or young person and the parent throughout the process.	
We ensure that there is good communication between the child/young person, parents and supporting agencies.	
Information is shared promptly and effectively, in a format accessible to all.	
We provide enhanced transition programmes for vulnerable children and those with additional needs including additional school visits.	
We provide additional support to address potential barriers to learning (eg, health, bereavement, bullying, sensory impairment or communication problems).	
We hold or attend multi-agency transition meetings well in advance to support planning and preparation.	
We maintain relevant documentation, eg, risk assessments, care plans, health plans, IEPs, CSPs.	
Transition planning meetings are held for all learners with complex and enduring additional support needs.	
We provide time for staff to observe/work with child or young person in their current setting.	
For some learners at risk of disengaging we provide alternative curriculum options and choices.	
Peer support is provided from learners at the same stage, social circumstances or with a similar support need.	