

FACING TRANSITION 2004

**Research into the issues
Surrounding children's transition
From Early Years to Secondary Transition**

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Forster Park Primary School**

TRANSITION PROJECT 2004

As professionals we are well aware of the impact of a good start at any point in a child's school life. However, there seems to be a gulf between the various stages of transition and, despite recognition of this important step in a child's life, there is still a lack of practical structure to support the process.

Too often there is an assumption that children will adapt to new adults, environments and regimes and it is all part of growing up. It is not something that occurs by osmosis, but has to be part of a school's policy with agreed outlines for all adults to follow and implement. This will also aid a whole school approach to learning, looking at the child from 3 to 11 and beyond.

It is a reality that in some schools there is a great lack of understanding of the crucial input in Nursery classes and this can be reflected in attitudes to achievements with very young children. The same can be seen amongst colleagues from Primary and Secondary education and this is based on a lack of knowledge.

As part of a sabbatical scheme funded by the DFES through Lewisham Education, and in partnership with the Downham and Bellingham EAZ, I have been working on a Transition Project, looking at the issues involved and questioning children, parents and teachers.

This work has enabled me to become more aware of the concerns from children and Parents/Carers about change and what is involved for all of them. It is essential that we provide opportunities and systems that will create confidence and allow children to make an exciting and stimulating journey.

The following pages contain information and findings from the Transition Project.

Anne Simmons
October 2004

TRANSITION PROJECT 2004

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TRANSITION PROJECT 2004

AIMS

- To highlight areas of difficulty for children, parents and carers at stages of transition - Foundation-KS1, KS1-KS2, KS2-KS3.
- To identify strategies in Primary and Secondary schools, which assist transition, including Special Schools.
- To devise programmes to support children, parents and schools in the transition process.
- To identify potential areas of funding to support these programmes.

Action

- To contact children, families, schools and LEAs by means of questionnaires, visits and interviews.
- Agencies/organisations to be contacted:
 - EAZs eg. East Manchester
 - Downham & Bellingham EAZ schools, Primary, Secondary and Special.
 - Genesis Project
 - Make Believe Arts
 - Sure Start Bellingham and Downham
 - Internet contacts via DfES websites

Completion

- July 2004

YEAR 6
QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS FROM YEAR 6 CHILDREN

Letter to Heads of Primary Schools in Downham and Bellingham
EAZ.

Dear

I am currently undertaking a research project into different phases of transition for children, and would appreciate your help.

The aim of the project is to highlight difficulties for children, parents/carers and schools, and how this point in time can be eased by various strategies and interventions. I have included an outline of the aims of the project, and would like to make a time to visit you and explain how you can assist me.

I will be contacting you to make an appointment, and I will fully understand if you are unable to participate.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Simmons

For all Year 6 children

Hello, and thank you for helping me to find out what concerns you have about starting at Secondary School in September.

Please answer these questions and try to do it on your own, but if you need help ask a friend or someone in your family.

1. What have you enjoyed most at your Primary School? Name 3 things.

-
-
-

2. Can you remember 1 very special event that you were part of? (Concert, outing, special award?)

My very special event was

3. Can you remember 1 thing that made you sad or unhappy

4. Who helped you when this sad thing happened? (teacher, friend, teaching assistant, someone else?)

5. What clubs do you join in at school? (music, sport, homework?)

6. If you have been bullied in school what happens?

7. Name 3 things that you like about your school building (size, shape, playground, equipment, colour)

-
-
-

On the next sheet there is a list of things that you might be worried about when you change schools.

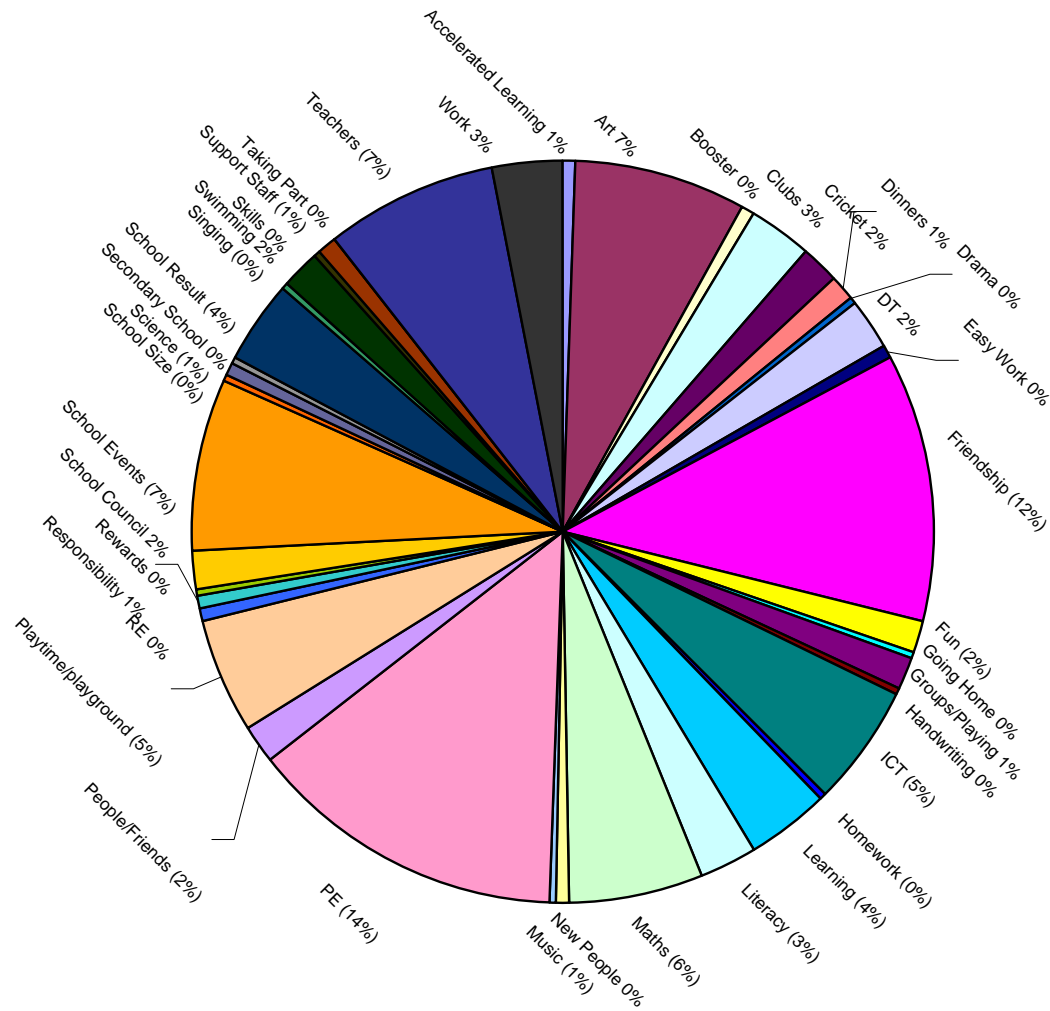
Please put a tick next to the ones that you worry about.

- Being the smallest and youngest in the school
- Not knowing anyone
- The size of the building, and getting lost
- Work being too hard or too easy
- Amount of homework
- The playground, and lunchtimes
- The journey to and from school
- Bullying
- Who to talk to if you have a problem
- Friendships

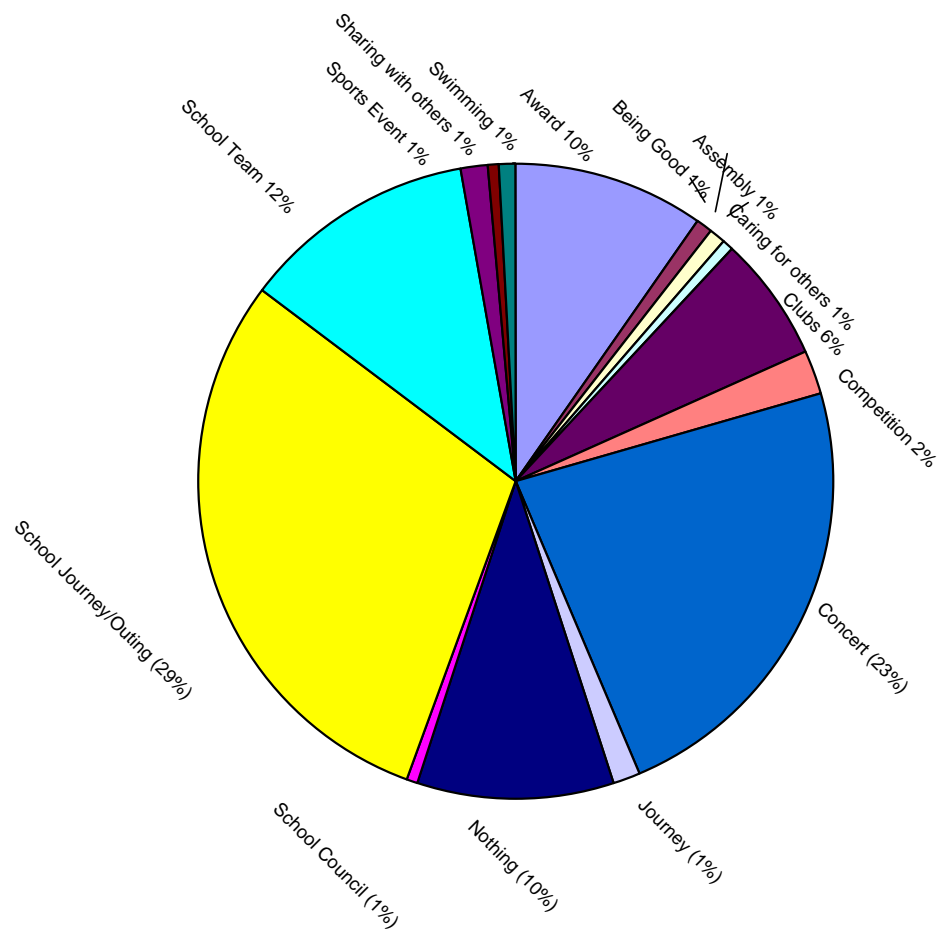
Thank you very much for filling in this form

I am sure that you will all enjoy the change to Secondary School, and will have a happy and successful time.

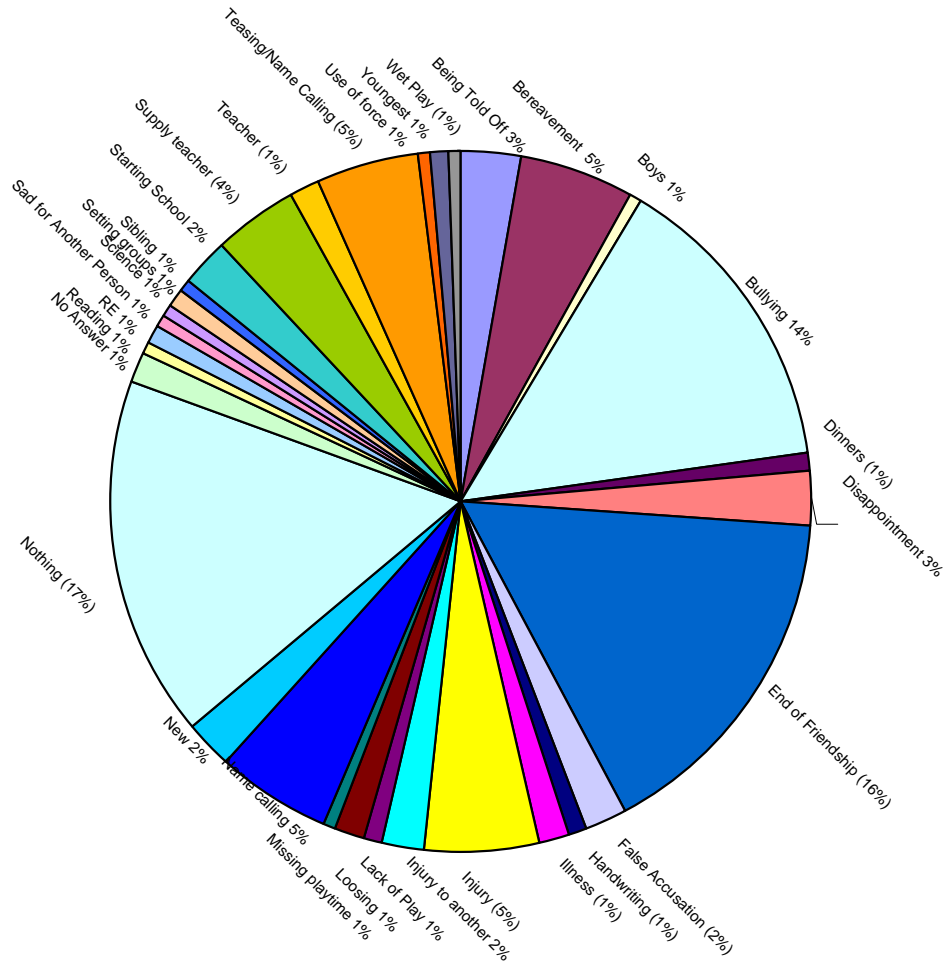
Transition Questionnaire - Year 6 Children
What have you enjoyed most at your Primary School?



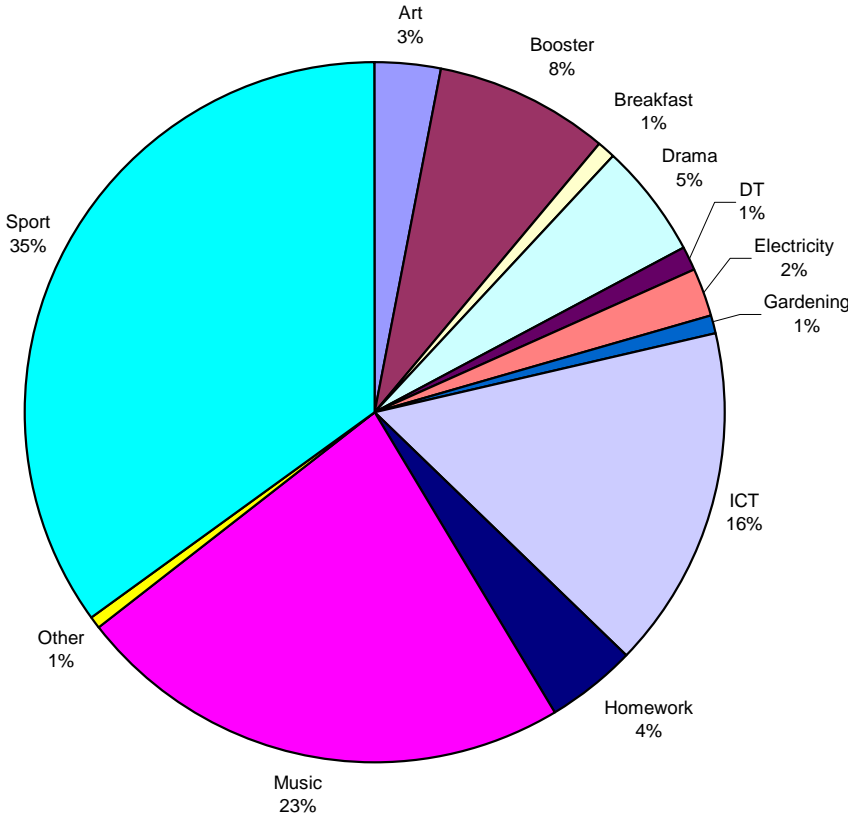
Transition Questionnaire - Year 6 Children
Can you remember one very special event that you were part of?



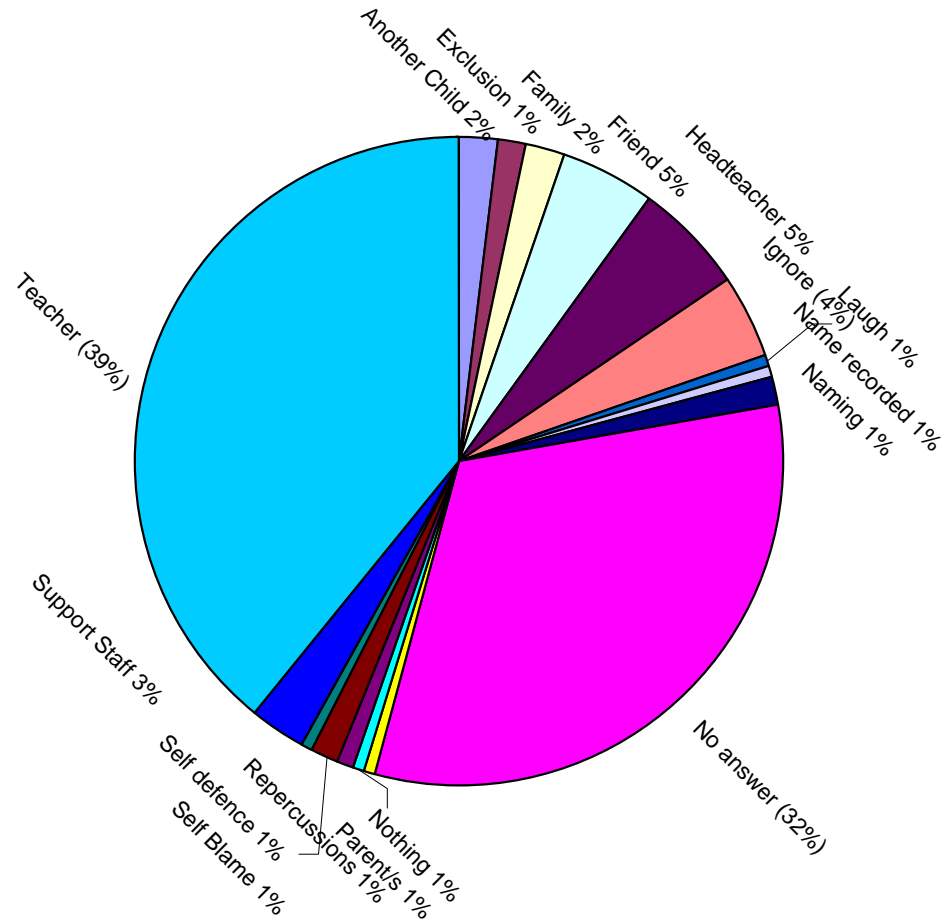
Transition Questionnaire - Year 6 Children
Can you remember one thing that made you sad or unhappy?



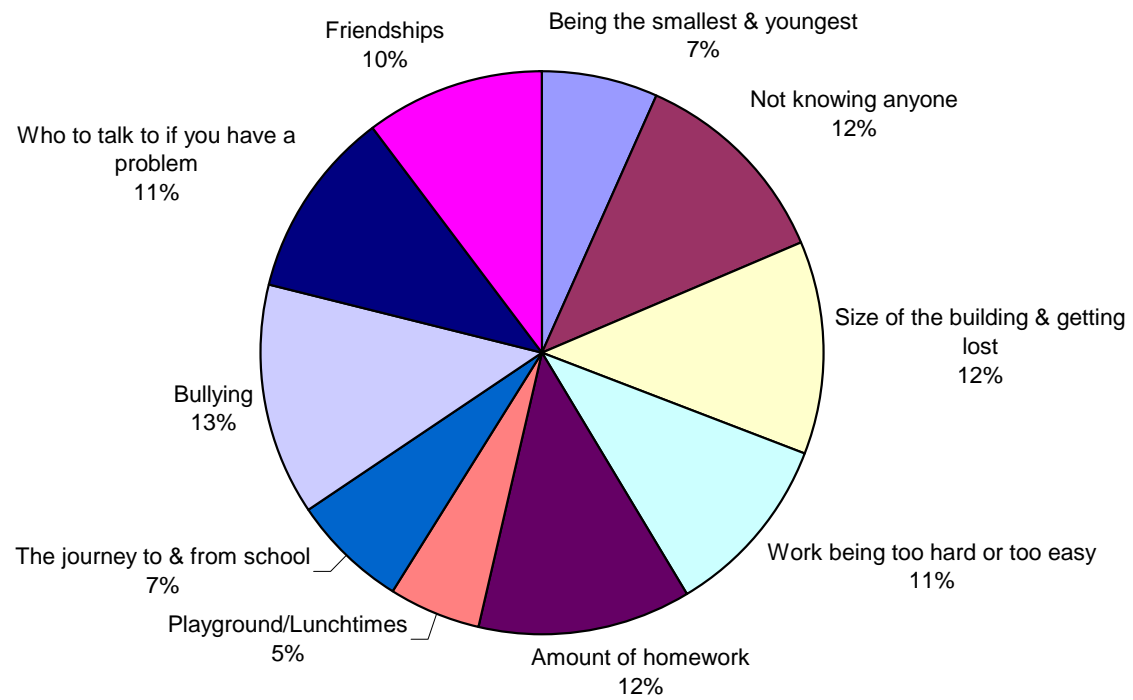
Transition Questionnaire - Year 6 Children
What clubs do you join in at school?



Transition Questionnaire - Year 6 Children
If you have been bullied in school what happened?



School Transition Questionnaire - School Responses



YEAR 6
QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS FROM PARENTS/CARERS

For the Parents/Carers of Year 6 children

I am working on a project to put in place systems and strategies to support children changing from Primary to Secondary schools.

Children in Year 6 have completed a questionnaire and I would like to have your concerns and expectations.

The sheet lists common concerns from children, and I have adapted it to reflect your concerns as Parents/Carers. Simply tick those you can identify with and please add any of your own.

Please would you complete this form and return it by:
Monday, 29th March.

Thank you,
Anne Simmons

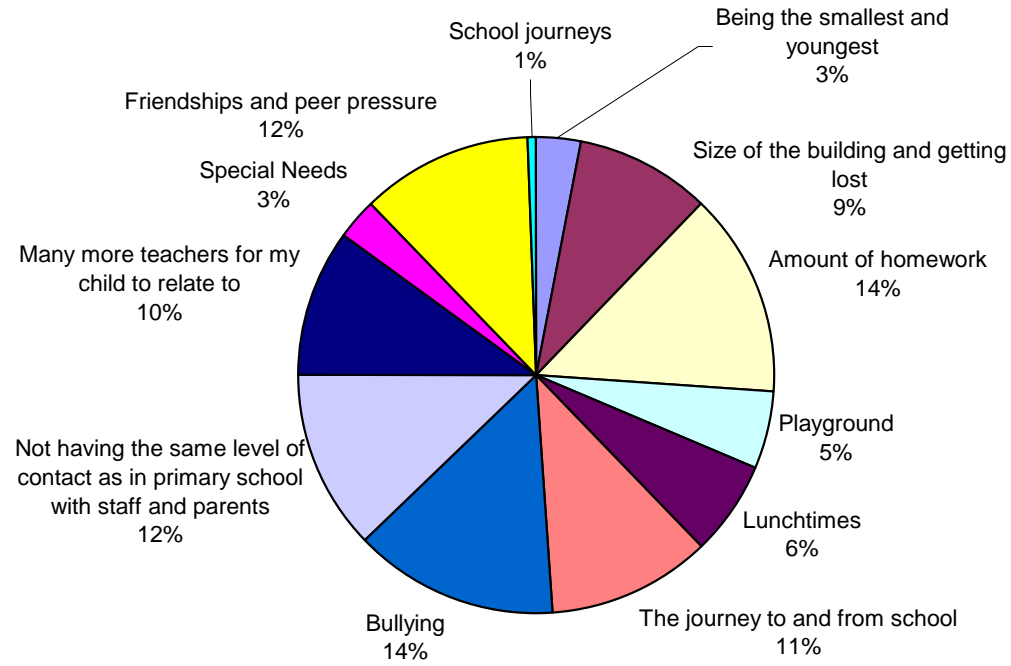
Parents'/Carers' Response Sheet Secondary Transition

- My child being the smallest/youngest
- The size of the building, and getting lost
- The journey to and from school
- Bullying
- Not having the same level of contact as in Primary school with staff and Parents
- The playground
- Lunchtimes
- Too much or too little homework
- Many more teachers for my child to relate to
- Special Needs
- Friendships and peer pressure
- Others? Please add any of your own concerns not listed.

It would be very helpful to know which aspects of Primary school you think could be adopted by Secondary schools to make the initial stages of transition smoother for children.

Please add any suggestions you have.

School Transition - Year 6 Parents/Carers Questionnaire Responses



YEAR 7
QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS FROM CHILDREN IN
SECOND TERM AT SECONDARY SCHOOL

28th January 2004

Dear

I am currently undertaking a research project into different phases of transition for children, and would appreciate your help.

The aim of the project is to highlight difficulties for children, parents/carers and schools, and how these can be eased by various strategies and interventions.

I have enclosed copies of a questionnaire to be completed by the children in Year 7, with encouragement from your staff. If any child is unhappy about this they do not need to do it.

In order to collate the information from the forms it would be very helpful if they could be returned to me by **Friday, 13th February**.

Please contact me if you have questions or suggestions about this project.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Simmons

Catford Girls'
Sedgehill

For Year 7 pupils from
Forster Park, Torricon, St John Baptist, Elfrida

Hello, and thank you for helping me to find out what concerns you had about starting at your Secondary School in September 2003.

Please answer these questions and try to do it on your own, but if you need help ask a friend or someone in your family.

1. What did you enjoy most at your Primary School? Name 3 things.

-
-
-

2. Can you remember 3 things about your first day at Secondary School?

-
-
-

3. How did your day visit from your Primary School help you before starting in September?

4. Who helps you when you need help or advice? (teacher, friend, teaching assistant, someone else?)

5. What clubs do you join in at school? (music, sport, homework?)

6. If you have been bullied in school what happens?

7. Name 3 things that you like about your school building- size, shape, playground, equipment,

-
-
-

On the next sheet there is a list of things that you might have worried about when you changed schools.

Please put a tick next to the ones that you found difficult.

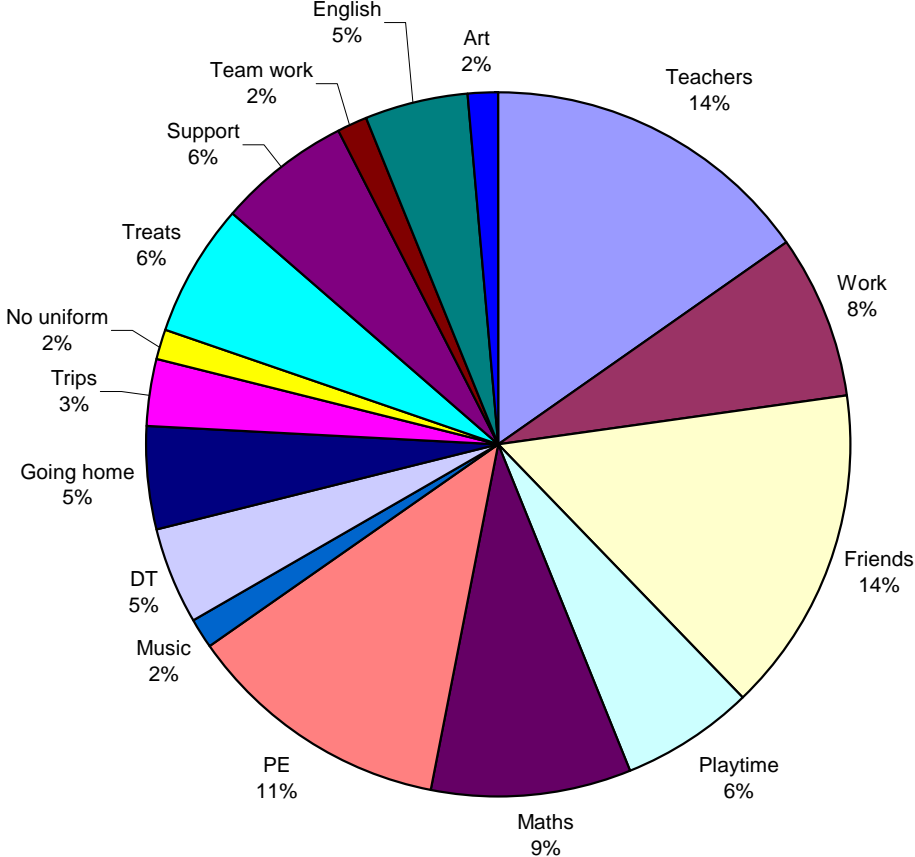
- being the smallest and youngest in the school
- not knowing anyone
- the size of the building, and getting lost
- work being too hard or too easy
- amount of homework
- the playground, and lunchtimes
- the journey to and from school
- bullying
- who to talk to if you have a problem
- friendships

Thank you very much for filling in this form.

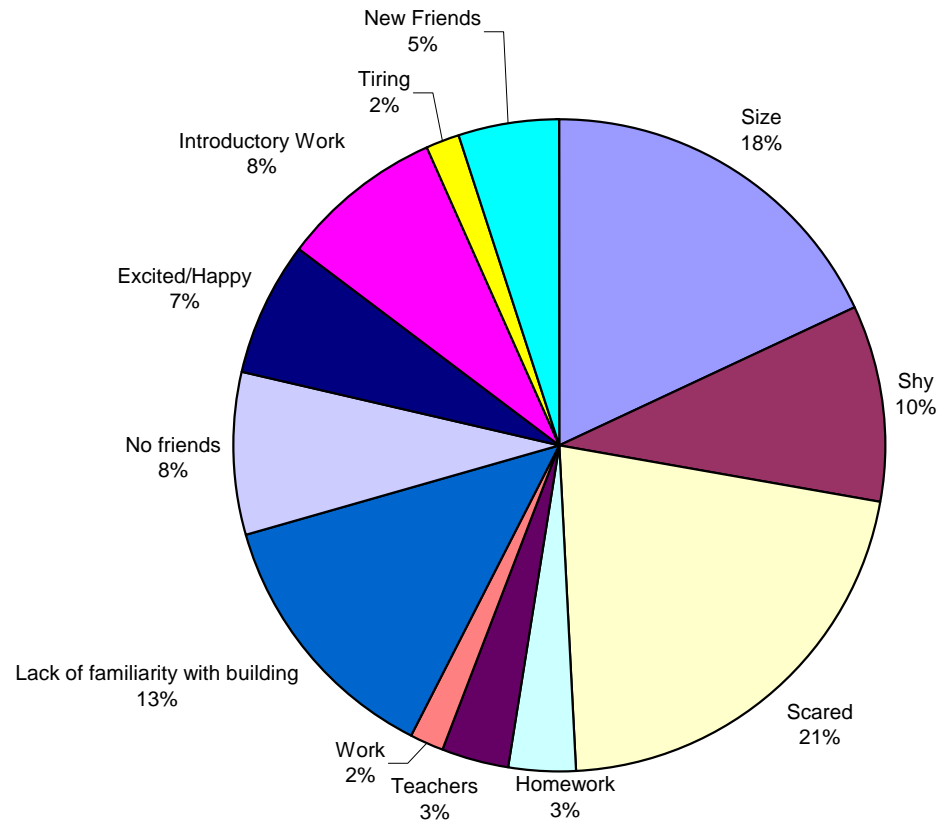
I am sure that you will have a very successful time at your Secondary School and a bright future.

Anne Simmons, Headteacher, Forster Park School

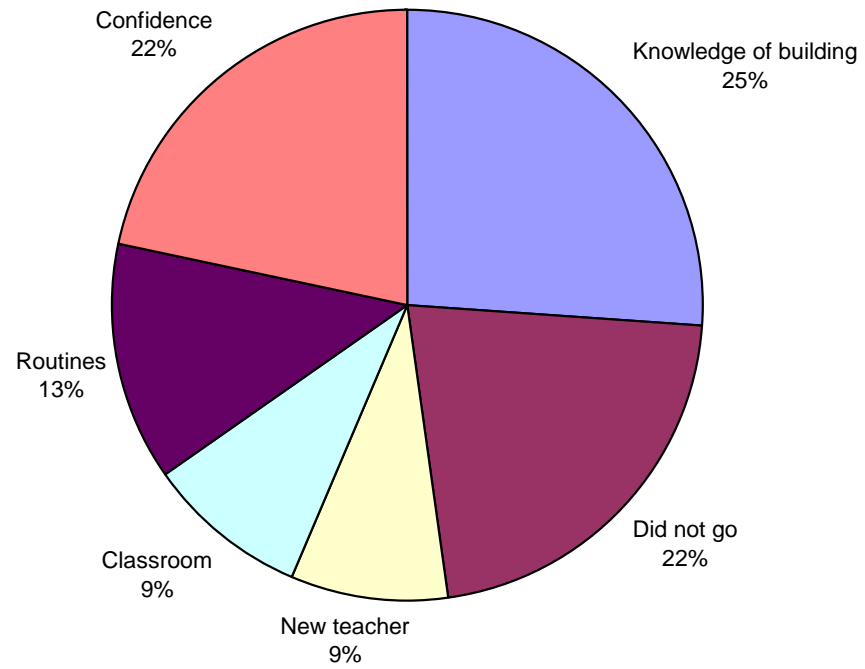
School Transition Questionnaire - Year 7
What did you enjoy most at your Primary School?



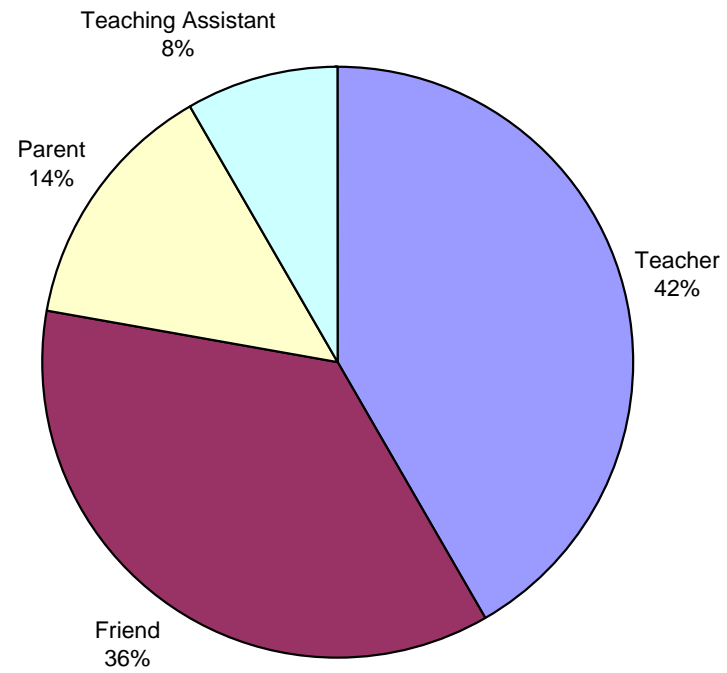
School Transition Questionnaire - Year 7
Three memories of first day at Secondary School



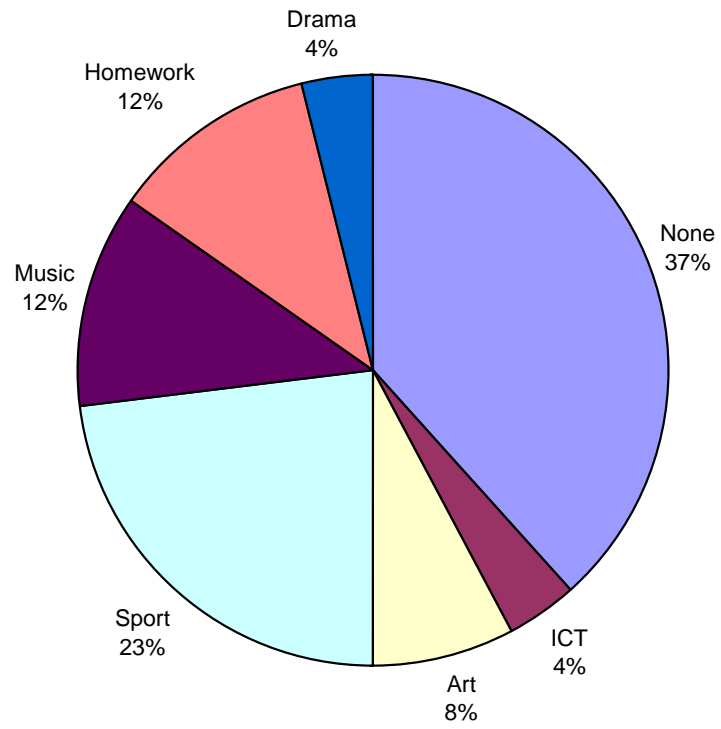
School Transition Questionnaire - Year 7
How did your day visit beforehand help you when you started in September?



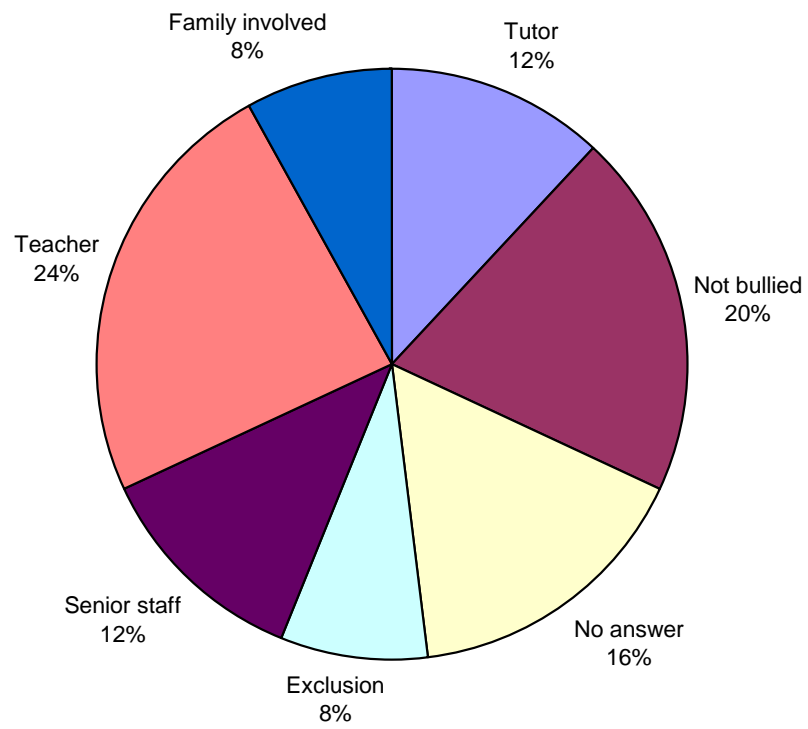
School Transition Questionnaire - Year 7
Who helps you when you need help or advice?



School Transition Questionnaire - Year 7
What clubs do you join in at school?



School Transition Questionnaire - Year 7
If you have been bullied in school what happens?



**EARLY YEARS
QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS FROM PARENTS/CARERS OF
CHILDREN IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS/CARERS - MARCH 2004
(Parents/carers were asked to complete one questionnaire giving
their child's reactions and another with their own reactions)

Early Years

Please circle your answer

- Is your child in one of the following? Nursery attached to a school; nursery; playgroup; childminder; other.

- Does your child attend full time or part time?
FT/PT

- Did you visit the setting with your child prior to starting?
Yes/No

- Did you receive enough information prior to starting?
Yes/No

- If no, what would you have wanted to know more about?

- How long were you encouraged to stay to settle your child?
1 session; 2-3 sessions; as long as it took; other

- The next sheet has 2 sections - please complete both.

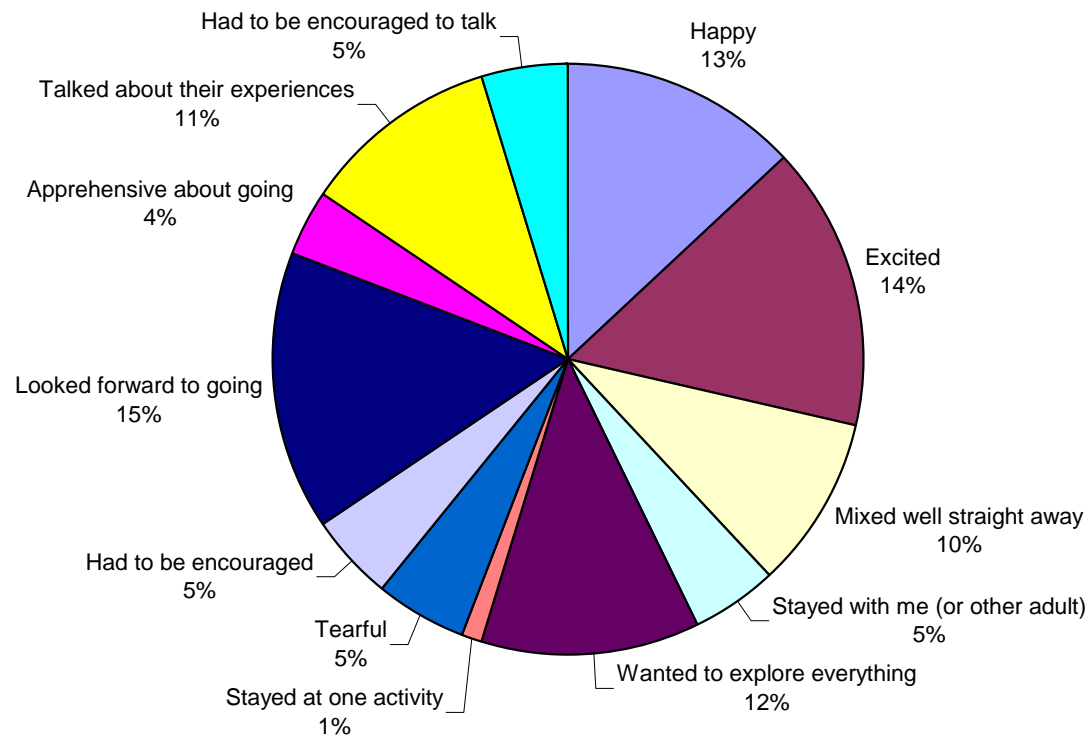
My child's reactions please tick

- Happy
- Excited
- Mixed well straight away
- Stayed with you (or other adult)
- Wanted to explore everything
- Stayed at one activity
- Tearful
- Had to be encouraged
- Looked forward to going
- Apprehensive about going
- Talked about their experiences
- Had to be encouraged to talk

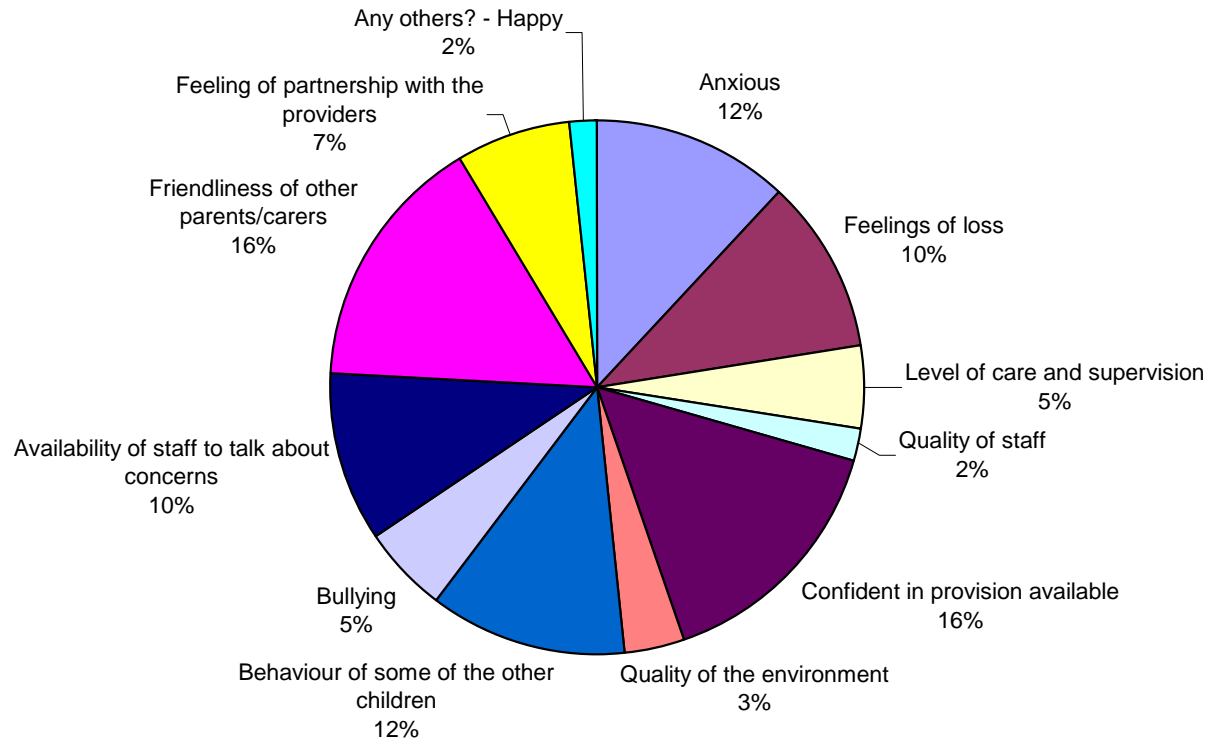
Adult's reactions/concerns

- Anxious
- Feelings of loss
- Level of care and supervision
- Quality of staff
- Confident in provision available
- Quality of the environment
- Behaviour of some of the other children
- Bullying
- Availability of staff to talk about concerns
- Friendliness of other Parents/Carers
- Feeling of partnership with the providers
- Any others?

Questionnaire for parents/carers - Early Years
My child's reaction

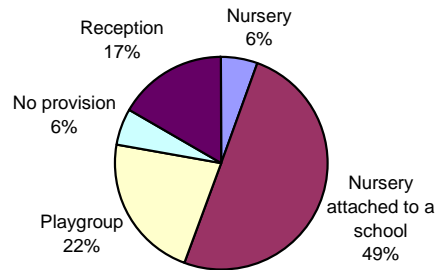


**Questionnaire for parents/carers - Early Years
Adult's reactions/concerns**

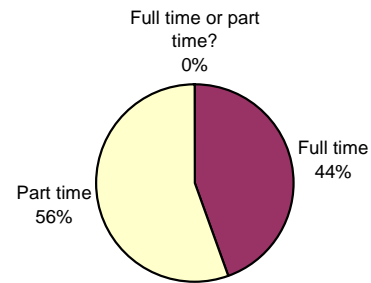


Questionnaire for Parents/Carers Early Years

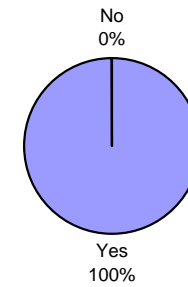
Which of the following is your child in?



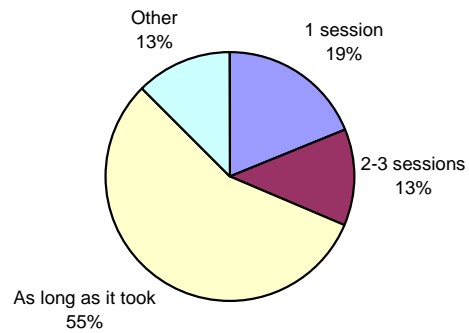
Full time or part time?



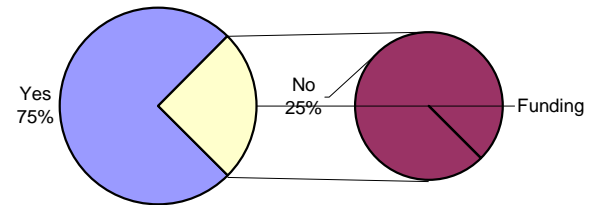
Did you visit the setting with your child prior to starting?



How long were you encouraged to stay to settle your child?



Did you receive enough information prior to starting? If no, what would you have wanted to know more about?



SUGGESTIONS TO ENSURE CONTINUITY WITHIN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Transition within the Foundation Stage and into Key Stage 1

Within the Foundation Stage

Common practice currently is for children in the Nursery to be introduced to the Reception class in the term prior to admission. This normally consists of:

- visits to the classroom for a story session
- meeting the new teacher
- going to assembly with the Reception children

There may be other introductory activities, but these are the most common.

Parents/carers are usually involved in the process by:

- meeting or interview with the Headteacher
- information on the school with a prospectus, lists of school uniform and a look at the new classroom area

Again, there may be other activities.

The move from Nursery to Reception should be seamless with the emphasis placed on children learning through play, and the development of exploratory learning. The Foundation Curriculum allows children to gain skills through a varied, but balanced, range of activities, which are monitored and assessed by adults.

The Foundation Stage should be seen as Nursery and Reception, and it may be appropriate for children to spend extra time in a Nursery setting as opposed to that in a Reception class. The needs of a child may indicate that the professional judgement is that the child would benefit for the following reasons:

- a late summer born child
- lack of time spent in a Nursery setting (eg. new arrivals, social services/ medical referral)
- inability to cope with a change, needing slower integration
- SEN indicate extra time in a Nursery

Any decision to allow the child more time in a Nursery must be fully shared with the Parents/Carers to avoid tensions or the misapprehension that the child is being "kept back", and is somehow failing.

Parents/carers must be instrumental in integrating the child into new and positive situations, working alongside school staff.

Close links are forged with parents/carers in the Foundation Stage, and these diminish within the child's Primary education, and are limited, on the whole, to Parents' evenings at Secondary School.

Within the Foundation Stage a wider range of strategies may make transition smoother for the children and parents/carers.

The following suggestions could be tried.

- Class teachers "swapping" by changing class responsibility for a regular time slot each week.
- Nursery Nurses/Teaching Assistants to change classes.
- Nursery Nurses to spend the first week with the Reception class, with the important knowledge they have of the children, and being a familiar face.
- Adults within the Foundation Stage to have lunch with the Nursery children.
- Tours of the school with older children as guides to show parents/carers and new children areas of the school with which they might not be familiar.
- Pupil School Councillors to support children at playtimes and lunchtimes, and in particular when it is wet and the children cannot go out.
- Photographs in the classroom of each of the new children. This would be especially important for any new admissions who have not attended the school before.

These are a few ideas, which would impact on a child's confidence and ability to adapt to a new situation.

What support is given to children and families who find it difficult to settle?

Parents/carers may have concerns about changes occurring for their child at various stages throughout their education from starting school to leaving home to go to University. All change can potentially cause anxiety for those involved and should not be underestimated.

Assumptions are made that parents know how to deal with separation, but stages of transition can be distressing for many reasons.

TRANSITION FROM FOUNDATION TO KEY STAGE 1 - CHANGE CAN BE ALARMING!

There is a growing concern about the difference in the styles of teaching and learning between the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

This is identified in various areas and is compounded by the need for schools to prove that children are achieving at the age appropriate level, exemplified by the success of schools, not children, being judged by levels and percentages.

The Foundation Curriculum focuses on active discovery on the part of the children in all areas of the curriculum, including numeracy and literacy. This is stimulated and supported by a child centred focus with adults facilitating the activity and guiding the child.

In Year 1 a more rigid timetable is set to incorporate the numeracy and literacy hours, and then to ensure coverage of the rest of the prescribed curriculum. This impacts on the ability and desire of teachers to build into the timetable the essential elements of creativity and exploration.

In the majority of schools the move into Key Stage 1 is regarded as something that happens for children at the end of Reception and poses no difficulties for children or staff. However, without consideration of the impact of change and the needs of individual children this could prove to be a time in which "dips" may occur.

This can be identified in particular in the increase in changes in children's behaviour, which may be quite marked. Relationships with peers and adults may change, and parents often identify difficulties at home.

These changes may be caused by:

- Leaving close friends in the Nursery
- Making relationships with different adults, and usually this is one teacher without full time support staff.
- More adult directed activities, and less child initiated choice
- A change in parental expectations, "you've got to work hard now"
- Homework/home learning
- Available space within the classroom
- New arrivals to the UK for a variety of reasons, some of which may be traumatic

- Problems within the family, such as bereavement, divorce, moving house
- Medical reasons which impact on the child
- Poor experiences of the education system on the part of the parents/carers
- Worries around safety of the child

PROJECT UNDERTAKEN WITH YEAR 1 CHILDREN

Prior to children leaving the Foundation Stage and going into Year 1 it is essential that a detailed process of consultation and discussions take place.

As in the case of allowing children the extra time and experiences in a Nursery it may be advantageous to allow children more time in Reception before entering Year 1.

This has been successfully initiated at Forster Park School by using a teacher and a full time teaching assistant to create a class of children working towards the Year 1 curriculum.

During the latter part of the Summer Term children were nominated by teachers, support staff and the SENCO as likely to benefit from reinforcement of aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum integrated with changes in that of Year 1.

The class opened at the start of the Autumn Term and consisted of 14 children with a full time teacher and teaching assistant. All available information had been passed on and individual needs were highlighted. Both managers from the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 were involved in the planning and assessments of the children.

The positive benefits to the children were discussed with parents, and whilst there was some apprehension that this could be considered as their child failing or being kept back, they were supportive.

During the Autumn Term the emphasis changed to adapt to the expectations of the Year 1 curriculum. The children spent periods of time individually or in groups in the Year 1 classes, and were able to form relationships with the new staff.

They transferred to the Year 1 classes at the start of the Spring Term, with the exception of 1 child who has extreme emotional and behavioural difficulties.

There have been benefits for the children who transferred into Year 1 in the Autumn Term. There were fewer children in the classes, and the teachers were able to give more attention to the individual needs of these

children. They were more settled when the other children joined them in the Spring Term.

Before transfer it would be helpful to consider the following:

- The learning environment is key to children's ability to settle into a new class, and the familiarity found in a well-resourced and stimulating area will allow children to feel involved in their learning.
- The creation of time for staff in Reception and Year 1 to discuss the learning needs and teaching styles appropriate for individual children.
- Observation in the Reception classes by the Year 1 teachers and vice versa to consider the teaching and learning styles and children's responses.
- Talking with children about the change of class, teacher and other adults. This may be difficult if the teacher is a new appointment. Perhaps a visit could be arranged with the new teacher and the present school.
- Using the pupil school councillors to talk and listen to the children and any concerns they have, perhaps about the playground and being with a number of other, predominately larger, children.

Reception/Year 1 Transition Pilot
2004

Class Teacher: Ruth Marley

AUTUMN TERM 2003

Number of children in class: 14

Impact of a small class in the Autumn Term on:

- Behaviour, and adult intervention

Bad behaviour kept to a minimum due to small number
Adults able to intervene to stop poor behaviour
Adults working 1:1 and with small groups

- Relationships with peers

Due to range of demands of some children, relationships were hard to form.

In terms of learning, children supported each other.

- Adult's ability to focus on target groups

2 full time adults with 14 children allowed specific intervention.

Assessments made and individual observations

Discussions between adults on individual needs of children.

- Use of support staff

Regular discussions and observations between staff.

- Evidence of progress during the Autumn Term
(assessments, records, observations etc.)

Definite progress using data from initial and final assessments

Increased maturity on the part of most children

- Comments from Parents/Carers
All Parents were very positive about the progress of their children.

- Effectiveness of children integrating into Year 1 lessons.
More able moved onto full days before others.
Children went at intervals, mostly for afternoon sessions.
This allowed more focussed work with the remaining children.

- What assessments/records were made available from the previous class? What else would have been useful?

SEN folders

Work samples

Next time- more information on background and learning

- Please add comments and suggestions as to whether this is worth repeating and does it impact on the children's learning and progress.

Benefit of structured play

Slow and appropriate integration into the Year 1 curriculum.

Confidence building

Perhaps a more experienced teacher next time

Reception/Year 1 Transition Pilot
2004

Class Teachers: John Pegden, Yvonne Dobbs

AUTUMN TERM 2003

Number of children in transition class: 9,5

Number of children in Year 1 class: 21,25

1. Impact of a smaller class in the Autumn Term on:

- Behaviour, and adult intervention

Far easier to give support/intervention where necessary.

Teacher able to give good level of support.

Classroom less crowded, fewer conflicts.

Fewer behaviour problems, areas to isolate child if needed.

Able to establish high expectations for work and behaviour.

Children more confident to learn independently, with more adult support and intervention.

- Relationships with peers

Very good sense of class as a team and related well to others.

Children readily accepted Year 1 structure.

Readily welcomed transition class children with no negative stigma attached.

Senses of being a class prevailed.

- Adult's ability to focus on target groups

Teacher time not taken by children who are not ready to work/learn independently.

Able to secure less able in class as confident, independent learners (this group is where behaviour was initially the greatest issue)

Able to establish other groups as very independent learners, and to extend them.

Group size was more manageable, teacher more relaxed.

- Use of support staff

Less support necessary this term, used mainly to support lower ability children.

Teacher focussing on upper/middle groups.

Day to day jobs undertaken: filing, copying etc.

- Evidence of progress during Autumn Term (assessments, records etc.)

Excellent progress made particularly in writing and reading.

Most of class started as non-independent writers. By

December all children made significant progress, more so than otherwise would be the case.

More able made significant progress.

- Children's ability to adapt to the Year 1 curriculum in general, and specifically to the NLS and NNS.

Settled and adapted well.

Support given where needed and strategies were phased in.

Helped by the Reception work on the strategy and similar styles of teaching. Teaching style in Year 1 was adapted.

- Comments from Parents/Carers (if any)

Some parents had concerns about changes in the curriculum form Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1.

- Effectiveness of children from transition class integrating for some lessons. How frequent and for which lessons?

Fairly effective, mostly for children who were more ready.

Sometimes difficult to timetable for NLS and NNS as lessons were isolated from rest of week.

Other linked activities were missed.

*Involvement in afternoon sessions were generally more successful as children were more able to cope with this style of learning- activities needed to be chosen carefully.
Good effect on maintaining class identity for the Spring Term.
Some children could be integrated full time by half term, possibly with adult help (TA).*

SPRING TERM 2004

Number of children in class: 30, 29

2. Impact of a full class in the Spring Term on:

- Behaviour and adult intervention

A strong impact. Behaviour was not an issue on the whole, with a few individual exceptions, due to the sense of class teamwork from Autumn Term.

Transition children were significantly behind in terms of academic progress, independence and maturity.

Heavily dependent on adult support, thus slowing progress of whole class.

Some with poorer social skills found it difficult to settle.

Ethos of classroom changed.

- Relationships with peers

No significant problems.

Existing Year 1 children were frustrated by the demand on adult time but were mature enough to be tolerant.

- Adults ability to focus on target groups

Very difficult. Transition children heavily dependent on adult support.

Limited TA time available.

Adult time needed to consolidate and extend more able children.

More difficult to focus on target groups due to some behaviour and learning difficulties.

- Use of support staff

Mainly to support least able.

Used to teach basic skills, mainly in Literacy, or to support a group enabling teacher to focus on target groups.

Not enough time from support staff, particularly in afternoons.

- Evidence of progress during the Spring Term for both groups of children. Are there marked differences? Has it highlighted SEN issues?

3 of 9 transition children made very good progress-ready to learn independently.

Others had few basic skills or independence-took whole of Spring Term to see any notable progress.

Progress in rest of class slowed-consolidation for Year 1 children.

SEN issues need to be addressed at this stage- in a small transition class assessment of need must be done at an early stage.

Progress continues to be better for the Year 1 children.

3 of 5 are making some progress, but need support.

- Children's ability to adapt to the Year 1 curriculum.

3 of 9 were more advanced and easily adapted.

Remainder only recently adapting (April '04), slow and difficult process.

Some not ready for Year 1 curriculum. (April '04)

- Comments from Parents/Carers (if any)

Some concerns from parents of children who have struggled to adapt.

- What assessments/records were made available from the Transition class? What else would have been useful-if anything?

Books and targets passed on.

IEP's from SENCO

Teachers quickly assessed children's ability.

- Please add comments and suggestions as to whether this is worth repeating and does it impact on the children's learning and progress.

For some of the transition children this worked well- adapted well to the Year 1 curriculum, and came to it when ready.

Year 1 children had clear advantages in Autumn Term- established a solid platform for learning.

Children benefited from more teacher input in Autumn Term.

Spring Term was difficult- some children still not ready for Year 1 curriculum.

Issues to consider:

- *Children's basic skills and independence in learning.*
- *Lack of TA support in class*
- *SEN children and support at an early stage*
- *Experience of transition class teacher*
- *Teaching independent learning skills*
- *Smoother transition in terms of adult support*
- *Some children to go into Year 1 at half term if ready*
- *Number of terms in Reception and age (Summer born)*

Conclusions

This is worth repeating.

Perhaps keeping children together and having withdrawal groups with a teacher and a TA.

TRANSITION INTO KEY STAGE 2 - THE YEAR 3 'DIP' CAN BE AVOIDED RATHER THAN IGNORED

Within the Primary school the transition from Key Stage 1 to 2 is assumed to be an uncomplicated process for children. In separate Infant and Junior schools this is not assumed, but similar areas of concern for teachers and children exist.

The external pressure placed on teachers in Year 2 to produce good SATS results can be very great, and although this may not be imposed internally, there is an awareness that test results matter. This can result in children's tasks being marked up to produce the required levels. Moderation can minimise this, but not all schools benefit from this external judgement.

The knock-on effect is, that when children enter Year 3 there may not be a true representation of the children's abilities which can result in:

- Expectations that are too high and the child is unable to respond
- At the end of year 3 tests children are unlikely to have made the expected progress.
- This undermines the Year 3 teachers' confidence in their teaching.
- Parents/Carers think that their children have done badly, or that the teaching has not been up to standard.

Parent/carer and staff expectations of children in Year 3 change subconsciously in that there is another step taken by children in becoming "juniors" and no longer are "infants". The terminology itself indicates quite a formal change in attitudes towards learning and behaviour.

The physical location of Year 3 classrooms is often removed from the KS1 rooms and may not be as accessible to Parents/Carers as before. This can cause concern for children as well as Parents/Carers, but can also give children a sense of being more grown up.

With more children in KS2, daily events such as Assembly, playtime and lunches can be quite daunting with new members of staff to relate to, and different routines. Assumptions are often made that these are minor changes and that children can adapt very readily.

Formal assessments take place in Reception and Year 2, with teacher assessments in Year 1 and Year 2. Target setting and tracking take place in

schools, but there are gaps where there has been a lack of input into the value of tracking children's progress. However, with the relevant information KS2 teachers should have an accurate picture of children's progress and predictions for achievement in the Key Stage.

It cannot be useful to depend entirely on data, but good lines of communication and knowledge of children across all the Key Stages will enhance teachers' understanding of the children new to the Key stage, as well as to casual admissions. It is useful at the start of staff meetings to allow some time for staff to share concerns, or important pieces of information (eg. Bereavement). This encourages all staff to be aware of children's needs across the school.

Within some schools there is a resistance on behalf of some teachers to change year groups let alone Key Stages. The reasoning for this on the part of teachers could be for the following reasons:

- Security of knowledge of a certain year group
- Fear of the unknown
- Lack of understanding of how younger/older children learn (is it really that different?)
- Lack of change within the school as a whole
- Working well with existing colleagues

The leadership of the school must consider the needs of the children, alongside the professional development of the teachers, and by positive encouragement and the support of enthusiastic and knowledgeable teachers, change can be very successful.

A successful team can be built with teachers from years 2 and 3 working together to share good practice as well as preparing children for the changes in year 3. A shared understanding of the achievements of year 2 children and how to encourage children to progress and reach the expectations in Year 3 is invaluable. This has been achieved at Forster Park School where teachers have moved between years 2 and 3.

As well as ensuring good lines of communication there is a need to initiate actual events and systems to support children as well as Parents/Carers. The following suggestions will become an Action Plan for transition into Key Stage 2.

- Production of a simple booklet for children to share with Parents/Carers, devised by children from KS2 with the help of their class school councillors.
- Children in Year 2 to attend KS2 assemblies increasing during the Summer Term prior to transition.
- Children to be involved in events such as the KS2 Annual Sports Day, as well as any KS1 events.
- School councillors to take the children around the school to build confidence.
- School councillors to talk about homework, new systems and answer children's questions.
- Story times with the new teacher in the new classroom on a weekly basis for the second half of the Summer Term prior to transition.
- Final staff meeting of the Summer Term to be devoted to all teachers exchanging information and data ready for the start of the Autumn Term. This would include the SENCO and Learning Mentor as well as any other relevant people, eg. Art Therapist.
- All data entered on computer and tracking sheets to be up to date for the Autumn Term.
- Certain identified children from Year 2 to have a named adult contact (usually the previous teacher) who can support the new teacher as well as the child in the case of behavioural problems. Successful behaviour strategies to be shared.

Communication with Parents/Carers often diminishes at this point and it is essential that they are involved and kept informed. This may be by class or year group newsletters, or by personal contact by the teacher face to face or by telephone or e-mail.

Parents/Carers can become quite anxious during this transition to KS2, and the first few weeks may prove to be stressful for them and the child, as well as impacting on the teacher. Patience is a vital element in reassuring Parents/Carers and children, and this applies in all areas of transition.

ACTION PLAN FOR TRANSITION TO KEY STAGE 2 - CHILDREN

ACTION	DATE	STAFF	COST	OUTCOME
Production of introductory booklet for new KS2 children and Parents/carers by Yr 5 children	Summer term	Yr 5 teachers	Printing =£200 TA to collate 5 hours @ £8 = £40	Children, Parents/Carers confident about transition to KS2, aware of times, homework, systems etc.
Attending KS2 assemblies, sports day, other KS2 events	Summer Term			Knowledge of expectations
Story times with new teacher in new classroom on a weekly basis from half term.				
School councillors working with Yr 2 - eg walkabout in KS2				

TRANSITION FROM KEY STAGE 2 TO KEY STAGE 3

Transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 has to involve a new approach to how children learn. A detailed and sustained INSET programme will enhance teaching and learning.

There is nationwide awareness of the possible difficulties that children face when transferring to Key Stage 3 at the age of 11. The importance of issues such as transference of data, bridging programmes in Literacy and Numeracy and initial visits to schools are the main focus for the receiving schools, in order to decrease the number of children experiencing a "dip" in progress in Year 7.

Whilst all of these are key to a child's success at secondary school, the main priority must be an understanding of how children learn. The planning, assessing and delivering of a relevant and creative curriculum for all children is not part of the transfer process, and there is virtually no understanding of the skills required of Primary school teachers in this vital stage of a child's learning.

Projects to assist children in the Transition process

Within Lewisham schools and schools within the Downham and Bellingham EAZ (Education Achievement Zone) there have been two main initiatives, which have addressed transition. The Genesis Project and the Citizen One Project have worked with children in Key Stage 2 in Primary schools, and followed their work into Year 7. These have been important links to build confidence in children and have provided a much needed and valued forum for children to express concerns and be reassured.

Copies of both Projects' work are attached in the appendix.

As well as a level of anxiety on the part of pupils transferring to Secondary school, this can be identified as a concern on the part of parents/carers.

Visits to secondary schools take place in the Autumn Term prior to their child starting in the next academic year, and these dates are fixed, with very few schools making it clear if they are open to parents' visits at any other time. This contrasts sharply with the "open door" policy in the majority of Primary schools.

Contact with parents' successful choice of Secondary school then consists of a visit in the Summer term before transfer for their child in the Autumn. One of the concerns highlighted in the Parent/carer questionnaire was that of a reduction in the level of contact with teachers. (See analysis of Parent/Carer questionnaire)

The involvement of Parents/Carers changes during the education "journey" through the Key Stages and into Further Education, and their active role decreases. From being very proactive in the Foundation and Key Stage 1, the presence of Parents/Carers in the classroom at the start and end of the school day lessens, and spending time in supporting the child and the school declines in Key Stage 2. Children may wish to be seen as independent of their Parents/Carers and choose to go to and from Secondary school unescorted, to be like their peers and to appear grown up. However, indication from the questionnaires for Year 6 and 7 as well as for Parents/Carers is that there are many questions unanswered and potential concerns. (See questionnaire analysis)

It is widely recognised that parental involvement is key to a child's success at school, both socially and academically, and this is encouraged in Primary schools at every opportunity, although not always successfully. There appears to be a lack of this crucial involvement consistently within Secondary schools.

How do children learn?

This is a fundamental question that is constantly being asked and reviewed and investigated.

- By teachers evaluating their own practice
- By peer mentoring
- By ongoing professional development
- By taking on new initiatives
- By analysing pupil data and acting on it
- By whole school approaches eg accelerated learning
- By consistent whole school review of the quality of teaching and learning
- By partnership with Parents/Carers
- By being creative and BRAVE
- By being aware of different needs and acting upon it
- By asking and involving children in their own learning

The ethos of the Primary classroom is one of learning in a friendly, co-operative and stimulating environment, with adults who can lead, encourage and celebrate individual success, developing independence and achievement. This is all underpinning the work done by teachers in their planning, assessing and delivery to children every day, alongside the need for them to provide aspects of pastoral care on a daily basis. This is often with Parents/Carers as well as with children. In my opinion, the professionalism and dedication of Primary school teachers, is often undervalued by some within the Education system, as well as by the general public.

There has long been a lack of understanding about teaching in Primary and Secondary schools by teachers and Parents/Carers.

How than this be addressed?

With funding from the Downham and Bellingham EAZ, it has been possible to devise an outline Action Plan for work to be undertaken in Secondary Schools. See attached plan.

The key to successful transition for pupils is continuity in the teaching and learning process.

The Action Plan suggests the following initiatives:

For pupils in KS2

- Genesis project in Year 6 in the Autumn Term
- A year's outline plan for all transition activities throughout the year.
- Creation of a Record of Achievement.
- Visits to Secondary schools with teachers in Year 5 to allow children to see the school at work.
- Parents meeting with staff and pupils to discuss choices for year 6 pupils in the Autumn Term.

For pupils in Year 7

- Year 7 mentors working alongside Years 5 & 6 on transition projects throughout the year.
- Communication by e-mail contact between mentors and Year 5 & 6 pupils.
- Production of a booklet by Year 7 pupils.
- After school club for Years 6 & 7 pupils at Secondary schools.

For Key Stage 3 teachers and support staff.

- Working alongside teachers in Years 5/6 on a weekly basis for half term to see good Primary practice.

- Feedback meetings with all teachers and support staff to discuss planning and assessment.
- INSET session on styles of teaching and learning in KS2 with Year 7 teachers of English and Maths as well as Heads of Year, Deputy Heads, Teaching assistants, years 5 and 6 teachers, Deputy Head and Teaching assistants.

This must not be seen as a token attempt to inform Secondary teachers, but as a basis for ongoing work, which becomes embedded in school policy and strategy. However, this will be heavily dependent on a willingness and commitment on behalf of Primary schools, but more so of Secondary school leadership. There would also be a financial commitment to allowing staff the time to develop strategies successfully.

There is much anecdotal evidence about Year 7 pupils returning to their Primary schools in the early Autumn Term indicating that they wish they were still at Primary school. When asked what is happening for them in Year 7, there are several responses, which are repeated year on year, such as:

- All we did today was copy out the code of conduct.
- We wrote out the rules for science/PE/DT
- We had worksheets and they were too easy.
- It was boring.
- There was nobody to talk to.
- I miss you (to their previous teacher)

Many of the pupils indicate that they expect the work to be of a similar standard and are disappointed that they are not being given work to stimulate and extend them. Conversely, some pupils with SEN feel overwhelmed and lack confidence when faced with work they are unable to tackle.

There are also positive comments about new friendships, feeling grown up and being too big for Primary school, but the other evidence points to a lack of knowledge of groups of pupils' methods of learning and how to keep them on the learning continuum successfully.

Expectations in regard to behaviour vary from school to school, and children are dealt with in different ways to maximise their own recognition of acceptable attitudes.

Rewards and sanctions may differ greatly between Primary and Secondary school, and without discussion and consultation children are often confused.

"Talking time" in Primary schools allows children to explain and listen to each other as well as to adults. School councillors are often used to support children experiencing difficulties in the playground, and to resolve conflict. Initiatives such as *Golden Time* and *Circle time* allow children to share with each other and this may include some early non-threatening work on Restorative Justice.

Secondary schools will receive pupils from many Primary schools and this results in large amounts of paperwork including test results, SEN files and IEPs (Individual Education Plans) as well as PEPs (Personal Education Plans) for Looked after children, Learning Mentor reports and details from other agencies such as Therapists and Counsellors.

The crucial piece of information must be the pupils' reports from the Primary school with details of the child, in many cases from 3-11 years old. This catalogues very clearly the child's progress through the Primary phase and as well as academic achievement will outline the social and interpersonal skills and aptitudes, and styles of learning.

The end of year report for Year 6 pupils, as with those from other year groups, are mainly computer generated and there is a basic similarity in format. This must make it easier for Secondary schools to read and gain essential information.

Data giving detailed information on targeting and tracking is commonplace, certainly in the schools in the Downham and Bellingham EAZ, and the summative assessments alongside the teachers' assessments give a thorough indication as a starting point in Secondary school. Unfortunately, this information is not always used to ensure consistent learning for the pupils.

This action plan for KS3 is for the benefit of the pupils, but must also be seen as Professional development for Secondary teachers. It has been said that once pupils leave the Primary school they are no longer that school's responsibility. I would strongly disagree, because as educators we must do our very best to ensure that pupils do not become disengaged from learning, but continue their journey with confidence and enthusiasm.

**ACTION PLAN FOR KEY STAGE 2 TRANSITION
- CHILDREN**

ACTION	DATE	STAFF	COST	OUTCOME
Genesis project with year 6	Autumn Term 2004	Year 6 teachers + TA	??	Children aware of changes early in Yr 6
Year plan for all transition activities throughout academic year. Folders prepared for children for all transition work, including Record of achievement.	Starting point for Yr 6 in September. Record of achievement in Summer Term 2005	Yr 5 & 6 teachers + TA. TA to produce folders, photocopying etc.	TA hours- 30 for year @£8 per hour = £240 Resources- paper, folders, photocopying, photos £500	Children involved in preparation for Sec. Transfer early
Visits to Sec. Schools in Year 5 with teachers to see school at work.	Late Spring/Summ 2005	Yr 5 teachers, TA		To see Sec. Schools at work, become familiar with buildings, systems etc.
Parents' meeting with children talking about schools they visited. Visits to Sec. Schools in Year 6 with Parents.	September 2005			

**ACTION PLAN FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
- KEY STAGE 3 CHILDREN**

ACTION	DATE	STAFF	COST	OUTCOME
Yr 7 mentors in Yr 5, 6 working on transition projects throughout the year.	In Spring/Summer Terms with Yr 5 From September with Yr 6	Secondary Teacher/TA To Primary school at least termly	Supply cover £180 per day- £540 a year	Peer mentoring building confidence in transition process.
Use of e-mail contacts between mentors and Yr 5 pupils. Address system to be set up.	September 2004. To be part of E-Democracy project	ICT manager in Primary and Sec. Schools to set up and monitor system.	Funding from E-democracy	Good use of ICT, open channels of communication.
Production of booklet by Yr 7 pupils for Yr 6. (see Citizen One project)	To begin Spring Term and shared with Yr 6 during Summer Term	HOY/ designated teacher/TA	Resources, printing- £300 Supply cover £180 per day- £540	Resource to be shared, raising profile of Sec. Schools, to share with pupils and parents.
After school club for Yr 6 & 7 pupils at Sec. Schools providing a range of activities eg. Homework, sports, music	Summer term prior to transition	Teacher/TA	£25 per hour, 1 hour per week for 10 weeks- £250	Familiarity with new school, awareness of facilities available. Encouraging after school learning.

ACTION PLAN FOR KEY STAGE 3 TEACHERS & SUPPORT STAFF

ACTION	DATE	STAFF	COST	OUTCOME
Teachers working alongside Yr5/6 teachers 1 session per week for half a term. 6 sessions per term	Autumn Term Spring Term Summer Term	1 English 1 Maths HOY/Deputy Head	£180 per day- £90 per half day 18 sessions @ £90 = £1,620	Improved understanding of teaching and learning in Primary school.
TA as above to shadow Primary TA	As above	1 or 2 TA's	£8 per hour 18 sessions @ £8 = £144	As above
Feedback meetings with Yr 5/6 teachers to discuss planning and assessment	As above	As above	3 sessions per year @ £90 per session= £270	As above
INSET session on styles of teaching and learning in KS2, with Yr 7 teachers of English and Maths, HOY, DH,TA's and yr.5/6 teachers,DH, TA's.	Summer term- twilight session		Planning time for KS2 teachers and DH- £180 x 3= £540 Printing of feedback information= £150	Plenary to highlight teaching and learning strategies. How can this continue in future years? Planning for Yr 5/6 teachers and TA's to observe in Yr 7.