

# **Primary**

## *National Strategy*

Transition at Key Stage 2–3:  
supporting positive behaviour  
and regular attendance

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# Transition at Key Stage 2–3: supporting positive behaviour and regular attendance

**This session will take a minimum of 75 minutes.**

It explores the ways in which we can support children at times of change in their lives. The focus is on transition from primary to secondary school, but there is much that is of relevance to other transitions also – moving school during a key stage, for example, and transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

## Objectives

For participants to:

- gain an understanding of transition as a process of change, and of common responses to it
- explore the key components of a framework for supporting children through transition
- have considered whole-school systems and processes to support effective transition
- have considered a possible framework for preparing groups of children for the social and emotional aspects of transition through a programme of curricular activities
- be familiar with good practice in working with partners (parents and carers, schools and others) to ensure a smooth transition
- be in a position to identify and plan to meet the needs of individuals who may be ‘at risk’ on transition and for those who have additional needs

## Resources

- OHTs 1.1–1.7
- Handouts 1.1–1.10

- Five flipchart sheets displayed around the room, each with one of the following headings.
  - Physiological needs
  - Safety and security
  - Belonging
  - Self-esteem/sense of competency
  - Self-actualisation – engaging with learning
- Sticky notes (several per participant)

## Linked sessions

This session links to the following general sessions in the Primary National Strategy behaviour and attendance professional development materials.

- *Working with colleagues on behaviour issues* (1732-2005PD5-EN)
- *Focusing on solutions: a positive approach to managing behaviour* (1733-2005PD5-EN)

This session also links to the following specific sessions in the behaviour and attendance professional development materials.

- *Classroom communication* (1746-2005PD5-EN)
- *Conflict and confrontation* (1748-2005PD5-EN)
- *Positive behaviour and the learning environment* (1738-2005PD5-EN)
- *Understanding behaviour* (1743-2005PD5-EN)
- *The importance of emotions in the classroom* (1745-2005PD5-EN)
- *Relationships in the classroom* (1744-2005PD5-EN)
- *Developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills: a whole-school approach* (1747-2005PD5-EN)
- *Working with parents and carers* (1750-2005PD5-EN)
- *Attendance and punctuality* (1736-2005PD5-EN)
- *Bullying: policy and practice* (1755-2005PD5-EN)

You may want to use this session if school self-evaluation, using the Primary National Strategy materials *School self-evaluation: behaviour and attendance* (1732-2005CD0-EN), has shown that aspects relevant to issues of transition, such as pupil support systems, are areas the school wants to address. Many schools will want also to make links to their work on the National Healthy School Standard, and to the NHSS briefing *Promoting emotional health and wellbeing through the National Healthy School Standard* (DfES, DoH 2004), which emphasises the importance of supporting children emotionally and practically at times of change.

For schools that are using the materials *Excellence and Enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning* (DfES 0110-2005), you will be able to make links between this session and the work you may be doing through the 'Changes' theme. It might be helpful to have the booklets for this theme on display for those who are not familiar with the materials.

If you are using this session with a whole-school staff group, it will be important to be aware of linked materials that some colleagues may have used, for example: *Behaviour in the classroom: a course for newly qualified teachers* (DfES 0030-2004); *Teaching assistant file: induction training for teaching assistants in primary schools* (DfES 0626-2002); *Self study materials for supply teachers* (DfES 0260-2002).

## Session outline

Introduction: a framework for successful transition	10 minutes
Understanding transition and common responses to it	15 minutes
Providing for the social and emotional demands of transition	20 minutes
Practicalities	25 minutes
Optional additional activity: supporting individuals with additional needs	15 minutes
Conclusion	5 minutes

## Information for presenters

This session will be most effective when used with a mixed group of Year 6 teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) and secondary staff – for example, Year 7 tutors and head of year.

The session is based on the following underlying principles.

- Children's behaviour is underpinned by the stage they have reached in social and emotional development, the level of skills they have in this area, and their emotional health and well-being, in interaction with the social, emotional and physical environment.
- We cannot assume that children already have the skills they need in order to manage their emotions and meet our expectations about their behaviour. We need to take active steps to develop children's social, emotional and behavioural skills to help them cope with change.
- Positive relationships between primary and secondary schools, with carefully planned joint arrangements for supporting Key Stage 2–3 transition, are key to children's successful responses to change.
- Participants may well already have some or all of the knowledge and/or skills to be covered in this session and need to draw on each other's experience.
- Where possible we are trying to take a solution-focused approach so will be asking participants to reflect on what is already working for them and how to develop it, rather than on what is not working.

Some of these principles will be explored and developed in this session. Others relate to linked sessions. It will be important for you to be aware of these principles and you may wish to share them with the group.

## Introduction: a framework for successful transition

10 minutes

Start by showing **OHTs 1.1** and **1.2**, to share with the group the objectives of the session and the principles which underpin it.

### OHT 1.1

#### Objectives

For participants to:

- gain an understanding of transition as a process of change, and of common responses to it
- explore the key components of a framework for supporting children through transition
- have considered whole-school systems and processes to support effective transition
- have considered a possible framework for preparing groups of children for the social and emotional aspects of transition through a programme of curricular activities
- be familiar with good practice in working with partners (parents and carers, schools and others) to ensure smooth transition
- be in a position to identify and plan to meet the needs of individuals who may be 'at risk' on transfer and for those who have additional needs

### OHT 1.2

#### Principles

Children's behaviour is underpinned by the stage they have reached in social and emotional development, the level of skills they have in this area, and their emotional well-being, in interaction with the social, emotional and physical environment

We cannot assume that children already have the required skills to manage their emotions and meet our expectations about their behaviour. We need to take active steps to develop children's social, emotional and behavioural skills to help them cope with change

Positive relationships between primary and secondary schools, with carefully planned joint arrangements for supporting Key Stage 2-3 transition, are key to children's successful responses to change

Participants need to draw on each other's experience and knowledge

It is important to have a solution-focused approach



## Activity 1: What are we aiming for?

(5 minutes)

Ask participants, working in pairs or groups of three, to carry out the task given on **OHT 1.3**.

### OHT 1.3

#### What are we trying to achieve?

Working in groups of three, list the purposes or desired outcomes of practices and support in relation to transition, for:

- the child
- the school(s)
- parents and carers or the wider community

Take feedback. Responses about the purposes or desired outcomes might include:

- for the child:
  - to allow closure and moving on in a way that marks a status passage from childhood to young adulthood;
  - to reduce anxiety about change;
  - to ensure that children have the practical skills and knowledge to be confident and competent in fully accessing post-transition opportunities;
  - to ensure that they have the tools and emotional resilience to manage the social and emotional challenges and opportunities of transition;

- to ensure that their motivation, positive attitudes and self-image as learners are maintained or developed;
- to ensure that all children continue to make academic progress, to achieve and to enjoy learning;
- for the school:
  - to ensure that conditions are in place that will allow for continuity and progression in academic, social and emotional learning;
  - to ensure that new, cohesive, achieving and supportive groups are formed as soon as possible;
  - to build positive relationships and shared practice between primary and secondary schools;
- for parents and carers:
  - to ensure that parents and carers are fully involved, in a position to make informed choices and able to support their child in partnership through the emotional and practical demands and opportunities of transition.

You may wish to give out **handout 1.1**, which summarises some key research findings and proposes a framework for successful transition.

## Handout 1.1

<p><b>Handout 1.1: Key research findings</b> page 1 of 2</p> <p>Key findings are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiences of transitions can make a difference to commitment to learning and progress.</li> <li>• there is often a hiatus in progress – 38% of Year 7 children in one study failed to achieve better results in mathematics, language and reading at the end of their transfer year.</li> <li>• there can be a decline in motivation and engagement with learning following transition.</li> <li>• attendance can also slump: 47% of pupils in Years 7 and 8 play truant for the first time following the transition to secondary school.</li> </ul> <p>Reasons put forward by researchers for such issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anxieties around 'settling in'.</li> <li>• difficulty in adjusting to new routines.</li> <li>• losing old and making new friends.</li> <li>• coping with a range of teachers and different expectations.</li> <li>• academic and interactional discontinuity – pedagogical approaches; interaction styles; mismatch of work and capabilities and/or learning styles.</li> <li>• organisational structures that give pupils a negative sense of themselves as learners.</li> </ul> <p>The key components of a framework for successful transition might therefore need to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basing practice on an understanding of the process of change and human responses to it.</li> <li>• effective administrative procedures, derived from collaborative planning about the documents to be passed on, their contents and delivery dates.</li> <li>• curriculum support in developing the social, emotional and behavioural skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable children to manage the challenges and opportunities of saying goodbye (closure) and joining a new community (moving on) with a positive attitude and emotional resilience.</li> <li>• an ethos in both pre- and post-transfer schools that enables children to manage the social and emotional aspects of learning effectively.</li> <li>• practical and concrete activities that reduce children's anxiety and support them in meeting the organisational and new learning demands of transfer. Positive experiences in the destination school, such as an induction day jointly planned by primary and secondary staff, have been found to be the most effective way of reducing pupils' anxiety about transfer.</li> </ul> <p style="font-size: small;">© Crown copyright 2005 1754-2005PD5-EN Transition at Key Stage 2-3: supporting positive behaviour and regular attendance Primary National Strategy</p>	<p><b>Handout 1.1</b> page 2 of 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the involvement of parents and carers, since their attitudes and expectations can have a great effect on those of the children. The ideal is an informed partnership which supports both the child and the family or carer emotionally and practically.</li> <li>• provision and procedures for ensuring that children with additional needs access appropriate and effective support through the process of transition.</li> <li>• an effective system for ensuring curriculum continuity, continuity of pedagogical approaches and continuity and progression in learning.</li> <li>• a system for obtaining feedback on what works and what needs changing. The most useful feedback will come from the children themselves.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further reading</b></p> <p>Galton, M. et al. (1999) <i>The impact of school transitions and transfers on pupil progress and attainment</i>, DfES Research Brief 131, DfES, London</p> <p>Hargreaves, L. and Galton, M. (2002) <i>Transfer from the primary classroom</i>, Routledge: Falmer, London.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Transition at Key Stage 2-3: supporting positive behaviour and regular attendance Primary National Strategy</p>
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# Understanding transition and common responses to it

15 minutes



## Activity 2: Why transition can be difficult

(5 minutes)

Handout **1.2**

Handout 1.2  
Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The diagram shows a pyramid divided into five horizontal sections, from top to bottom:

- Self-actualisation
- Self-esteem
- Love, affection and belonging
- Safety
- Physiological or survival needs

Below the pyramid are four numbered questions:

- 1 What feelings did I experience in relation to the change? (before, at the time of the transition, afterwards)
- 2 How did it affect my sense of:
  - security?
  - belonging?
  - competency?
- 3 How did it affect my behaviour or ability to function at my full potential?
- 4 What helped me to manage the challenges and opportunities?

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Give out **handout 1.2**. Explain that one way of understanding why change can feel uncomfortable, even when it is chosen or expected, is by linking it to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, shown on the handout. Participants may have come across this model in previous sessions or contexts. Explain that Maslow (a humanist psychologist working in the 1930s) proposed that there are universal human needs, organised hierarchically, which motivate our behaviour. He proposed that we would not be motivated by a higher need, for example cognitive curiosity, if a lower need was not being met – for example we will not be able to focus on learning if we are hungry or feel threatened or unsafe.

Ask participants to think of a time when they faced a transition or major change in their own lives. (They do not need to share the context with anybody else.) It could be a change of job, or a more personal example. Ask them to reflect individually on the impact of the change on:

- their sense of security;
- their sense of belonging;
- their sense of competency and self-esteem;
- their ability to function at their full potential.

Participants can share thoughts with a partner if time allows.

Make the point that when basic needs are satisfied we can function at our best.

Change (even a change that we welcome or have sought) can threaten some or all of these basic needs, and therefore change can impact on:

- how we feel;
- our thoughts;
- how we behave;
- our capacity for learning.



### Activity 3: Understanding the feelings associated with transition (10 minutes)

Give participants **handout 1.3**, which comes from the Primary National Strategy materials *Excellence and Enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning* (DfES 0110-2005). It is used in these materials in an activity that helps Year 6 children to reflect on how their needs are met in their current school and any worries they might have about the impending move to a new school. Ask participants to put themselves in the children's shoes and write ideas in the grid on the handout.

#### Handout 1.3

**Handout 1.3: Understanding the feelings associated with transition**

Needs	How these needs are met for me now (current school)	How meeting these needs could be threatened when I move schools
To be stimulated, learn, and enjoy myself		
To be valued by myself and others		
To feel I belong		
To be safe		
To be fed, sheltered and warm		

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Take feedback if you have time available. A completed example is provided as **handout 1.4**, against which participants can compare their responses.

## Handout 1.4

Handout 1.4: (Completed example of handout 1.3)

Needs	How these needs are met for me now	How meeting these needs could be threatened when I move schools
To be stimulated, learn and enjoy myself	<i>I find the work interesting. We do fun things.</i>	<i>My brother says it's boring at secondary school – but I'm not sure. It could be really good having science labs and a big gym.</i>
To be valued by myself and other people	<i>I know I'm good at most of my work. I'm kind – I know because I have lots of friends. My teachers tell me they miss me when I'm away. My friends like me and think I'm funny. My dad thinks I'm really good at football.</i>	<i>I don't know if I will be able to do the harder work at secondary school. I will be nervous and might show myself up. The teachers won't know me. They won't know what I'm good at. There'll be lots of new people and I don't know if they will like me.</i>
To feel I belong	<i>My family love me. I know I belong at the Mosque. I feel accepted in my class and by my friends. I feel I belong when I'm with the school football team.</i>	<i>I will be in a new class and won't know everyone in it. I won't be in school teams to start with. I will have to make new friends.</i>
To be safe	<i>I feel safe at home and school because I know every inch.</i>	<i>I might get lost. I won't know where I have to go. I might get picked on or bullied.</i>
To be fed, sheltered and warm	<i>Mostly I get these at home. Home will still be the same. At school I can always get a drink of water when I want one. The dinners are OK.</i>	<i>At school we might not be allowed to have a drink of water when we need one. I might hate the dinners.</i>

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Show **OHT 1.4** and explain that there are commonly found patterns in individuals' responses to change. The process of coming to terms with a major change such as Year 6–7 transition is similar to the sequence of phases often experienced in relation to loss. This is not surprising as change nearly always involves a degree of loss, even when it is welcomed and self-chosen. As with responses to loss, however, there is rarely a straightforward progression from one phase to another. Reactions are highly individual.

## OHT 1.4

### Coming to terms with change

This process often comprises some mixture of the following 'phases':

- shock, denial
- recognition of the inevitability and reality of transition
- acceptance of or identification with the new school
- detachment from current situation
- planning positively for the future

Talk through the stages of coming to terms with change, which can be as follows.

- Shock, denial: there is a lack of reality about the transfer to come.
- Recognition of the inevitability and reality of transition may be accompanied by insecurity, uncertainty, sadness, anxiety, anger, and/or excitement, feeling motivated, anticipating positive aspects.
- Acceptance of or identification with the new phase may be idealised and the status of moving 'up' may be keenly enjoyed.

- Detachment may involve rejecting the authority of current school, challenging boundaries and so on.
- Planning positively for the future may include engaging with activities linked to the new school, reduction of anxiety, positive feelings, recognising benefits.

Ask participants in pairs to think about how some of the Year 6 behaviours they observe might map onto these phases. Examples of common behaviours are:

- clinginess and reverting to younger behaviours;
- behaving in an uncharacteristic 'too big for their boots' manner;
- refusing to engage with the change process;
- withdrawal;
- not bothering with work;
- being fascinated by rumours and myths about the new school;
- talking enthusiastically about aspects of the new school.

Although these responses are common, the individual nature of responses must be stressed. When faced with the reality of transfer, children's feelings and reactions will differ according to:

- the child's personality;
- their degree of attachment to or reliance on their 'school world';
- the strength of their peer-group relationships (both in and outside school);
- their personal circumstances (particularly any stress factors within these);
- their developmental level;
- their skills in social and emotional learning and the strategies they use.

If additional time is available, ask the group to come up with other factors that will affect responses to the transition process. These might include:

- knowledge of the receiving school;
- having family members or friends who attend;
- family and community attitude to the new school (which will affect the attitude of the child);
- feelings about the current school.

## Providing for the social and emotional demands of transition

**20 minutes**



### Activity 4: Building on good practice: What do we do already and how can we develop this?

**(10 minutes)**

This activity uses the headed flipchart sheets you have prepared and placed around the room. The flipcharts are organised according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Ask participants, working individually or in school groups, to consider what their school does to help meet children's diverse needs at the time of transition. For example:

- physiological needs: providing breakfast clubs, or toast at break in the new school;
- the need for security: making the new situation feel safe for children by increasing familiarity, providing planners or timetables in advance;
- the need to belong: establishing rituals for saying goodbye, joint activities with the transfer school, team-building activities for new classes;
- a sense of competency and self-esteem: finding ways to show that the individual is valued, making children feel competent and reducing feelings of disempowerment;
- ability to function at full potential and make academic progress: use of transition units of work, exchange of visits by Years 6 and 7 teachers to develop consistency of pedagogical approaches.

Participants should write actions or initiatives on separate sticky notes and place these around the room on the appropriate flipchart sheet.

Ideas can be typed up and sent to participants after the session.

If further time is available participants could be asked to consider the ideas of other schools, then, in the light of this, identify how they could improve their own practice.



## Activity 5: What strategies, skills, knowledge and understanding in the area of social and emotional knowledge do children need to successfully negotiate transition?

(10 minutes)

Handout **1.5**

**Handout 1.5: Typical comments from Year 6 children**

Not many of my friends are in my tutor group – what if no-one wants to sit next to me in class or hang out at break?

I've heard that boys and girls have to shower together and I've told my mum I won't go on PE days.

I feel so nervous – people think I'm shabby but I'm not – I just don't talk sometimes because I know I'll say something stupid and dumb...

I feel like I belong here – I know it will take a while to feel as secure and confident as I do now in my new school.

I feel nervous and excited, but I know that everyone feels a bit like this – it's normal.

I'm really glad to be moving – I think I've got a bit of a reputation with the teachers here and at the new school they won't know me.

I breathe deeply and think about stroking my cat to calm myself down when I feel scared about being in my new school.

I try to think about all the exciting things I will be able to do at my new school – I can't wait to use the sports complex.

My trouble is that when I am feeling unsure in a new situation I go quiet/talk too much/get my words muddled up/show off, then I get cross with myself.

Well, moving schools is exciting really – I've moved home five times already and coped with that.

I'm worried about having arguments – I lose my temper so easily and I don't want to get off on the wrong foot.

I'm worried about what to do if I have a problem – what if I can't do the homework or lose my timetable?

My brother's had trouble with some boys who will be starting with me – I'll soon show them they can't mess around with my family.

My new teachers will ask me to read out in class, then everyone will think I am stupid and laugh at me – I'm going to sit right at the back so that they don't ask me.

I can't believe I'm leaving here – there's so many things I'm going to miss.

Everyone will be cleverer than me.

I can't wait to go – loads of my friends go to [this school] so it'll be cool.

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Give out **handout 1.5**, which lists some typical things that children say in Year 6. Participants can use it (if they wish) in pairs or small groups to help them to identify the skills, knowledge and understanding that children need to successfully negotiate the social and emotional demands of transition.

## Handout 1.6

**Handout 1.6: Some examples of the social and emotional skills, knowledge and understanding that support successful transition**

**Self-awareness**

- I can identify my strengths and feel positive about them.
- I can identify and accept my own limitations, and learn from my mistakes.
- I know what I am feeling, and can label these feelings.
- I understand that the way I think affects the way I feel, and know that my thoughts and feelings influence my behaviour.

**Managing feelings**

- I am able to express my feelings to other people in ways that are appropriate for the situation and not damaging or destructive.
- I can resist impulses that would lead to negative consequences for me or for other people.
- I can calm myself down when I am experiencing feelings like anger and anxiety.
- I understand that changing the way I think about people and events can help me reduce uncomfortable feelings like anxiety, anger, and sadness.
- I know that I can seek support from other people when I feel angry, worried or sad.

**Motivation**

- I can accept my mistakes and bounce back from disappointment or failure.
- I can use my experiences to change my behaviour.

**Empathy**

- I can try and work out how people are feeling through their words, body language, gestures and tone.
- I can see the world from other people's points of view, taking into account their feelings, intentions, preferences and beliefs.

**Social skills**

- I know how to be friendly and join a group.
- I know how to be a good friend and group member.
- I can evaluate and choose from a range of strategies to solve problems and resolve conflicts with other people.
- I can stand up for myself while showing respect for the needs and values of others.

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You might invite participants to compare their ideas with those on **handout 1.6**, which offers some examples of the skills, knowledge and understanding that support successful transition.

These skills, knowledge and understanding are ordered under five key social and emotional aspects of learning:

- self-awareness;
- managing feelings;
- motivation;
- empathy;
- social skills.

**Note:** Participants will be aware of these aspects of learning if they have previously used the professional development materials *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years* (DfES 0518-2004).

A number of curricular programmes are available to help children develop these skills. You might want to have participants look, for example, at the *Excellence and Enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning* (DfES 0110-2005) materials if they are not already familiar with them, at Unit 12: 'Moving on' from the QCA citizenship scheme of work for Key Stages 1 and 2, and at materials from commercial publishers that focus explicitly on preparing children for transition.

Participants could assess the extent to which these materials fulfil the key factors in effective curriculum support relating to transition, which are given on **OHT 1.5**.

### OHT 1.5

#### **Key factors in curriculum support to meet social and emotional demands of transition**

Curriculum support relating to transition:

- involves all children transferring, is differentiated and supplemented for children with additional needs
- is part of a structured and progressive curriculum to develop children's knowledge and understanding about change
- offers opportunities for sharing concerns and hopes; 'debunking' myths; rehearsing skills and strategies such as joining a group, dealing with conflict or overcoming shyness
- enables children to say goodbye and celebrate their competencies as learners and the resources they bring to the new setting

## Practicalities

25 minutes

Explain that here the term 'practicalities' includes timetables, systems, working with parents and carers and with communities, and arrangements for children at risk.

Begin this part of the session with a reminder that, although so far the focus has largely been on the needs of children around transition, the needs of parents and carers should not be forgotten.

Talk participants through the key points on **OHT 1.6**.

### OHT 1.6

#### **Meeting the needs of parents and carers**

- Parents' and carers' expectations and anxieties
- Making informed choices - the need for clear and accurate information
- Ideas for supporting their child emotionally and socially
- Information about supporting their child practically
- Strategies for supporting children with educational demands (e.g. homework)

Make the following points.

- Parents and carers will have their own expectations and anxieties, for themselves (for example, worries about their child growing up and becoming less attached), and for their child ('Will my child be bullied/be understood/cope with the new demands?').
- Parents and carers need clear and accurate information (or support in asking the right questions of schools) in order to make informed choices.
- They may need ideas about how to support their child emotionally.

- They may welcome information about how to support their child practically (for example, checklists with key contacts and telephone numbers to use if a problem arises).
- They may want to know how best to support their child with educational demands, such as how to help with homework.

Invite the group to share examples of the work they do with parents and carers to meet these needs.



## Activity 6: Countdown to transition

(20 minutes)

### Handout 1.7

**Handout 1.7a: Transfer timetable (primary)**

	Pupils	Parents and carers	Comments/ideas for improvements
Prior to Y6			
Sep Y6			
Oct			
Nov			
Dec			
Jan			
Feb			
Mar			
Apr			
May			
Jun			
Jul			
Summer			
Follow-up			

**Handout 1.7b: Transfer/induction timetable (secondary)**

	Pupils	Parents and carers	Comments/ideas for improvements
Prior to Y6			
Autumn Y6			
Jan/Feb/Mar Y6			
Apr Y6			
May Y6			
Jan/Jun Y6			
Summer Y6			
Sep Y7			
Oct Y7			
Nov/Dec Y7			
Other			
Jul			
Summer			
Follow-up			

Ask participants to consider, in school groups or individually, their current timetable for supporting pupils and parents and carers, and to use **handout 1.7a** (for primary colleagues) or **handout 1.7b** (for secondary colleagues if they are part of this session, as is strongly recommended) to record the nature and timing of key events. (These will include exchanges of information, liaison with transfer schools over individuals, reviews and planning for children at risk, information or support sessions for parents and carers, induction days for children, etc.).

**Note:** Unless extra time is available, it is unlikely that participants will be able to complete this chart in the session. It might be a useful resource for them to complete in their own time and for their own organisation.

In pairs or school groups, ask participants to identify two or three aspects of the current timetable that they would like to develop or change in the light of the learning from this session. They might like to consider:

- what needs or concerns parents and carers might have; whether current systems for providing information and support meet these needs, and how they know;

- what liaison takes place with transfer schools and for what purpose;
- what records or information are exchanged and how effective the system is (in particular, what non-academic information is exchanged or is necessary);
- how feedback is obtained about the effectiveness of transfer processes;
- how children are consulted about the process.

Ask participants to note their thoughts or highlight areas for change as a starting point for their next steps upon returning to their organisation.

### Optional activity 7: An introduction to good practice in supporting children with additional needs at transition (15 minutes)

Note that some children will require additional support at Key Stage 2–3 transition. Although meeting social, emotional and academic needs is a prerequisite for all children to learn and achieve, this is often of even more significance in the case of children with additional needs.

#### Handout 1.8

**Handout 1.8**

Work in pairs.

- List the nature of the needs of three children you know who required additional support at transfer.
- Record one or more differentiated strategy or activity that has worked well in meeting these needs.
- Give these to the facilitator for collation and later distribution.

Nature of needs of child requiring additional support (brief)	Strategy that supported the child at transfer	Comments, caveats, etc.

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Ask participants, working in pairs, to complete **handout 1.8**. This asks them to complete the following tasks.

- List the nature of the needs of three children they know who required additional support. (Change will affect children differently. Examples might be the child with an autistic spectrum disorder for whom any change can be extremely difficult, and the child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) who requires constantly changing stimuli. Between these extremes there will be a range of responses to change dependent on personality, culture and individual history.)

- Record one or more differentiated strategy or activity that has worked well in meeting these needs.
- Give these to the facilitator for collation and later distribution.

You could, if you have time, provide examples of effective practice from your own experience, emphasising that it is important that those involved take the following action.

- Work with other schools to establish consistent systems to support the transition of individuals with similar needs and to share ideas.
- Find out about local projects and local authority support systems for children with additional needs.
- Start planning well in advance.
- Ensure that all parties are involved in the planning process (include the child, parent or carer, SENCOs from both schools if appropriate, learning mentor, head of Year 7, social worker, educational psychologist, physiotherapist, etc.).
- Ensure that there is time and opportunities for key relationships with staff in the new school to develop (for example, have a named person in each school; provide shadowing opportunities; organise pre-induction activities).
- Work with the child on an individual programme that begins in the primary school and is picked up in the secondary school, covering:
  - the new environment (for example, finding their way around);
  - managing the day (for example, reading a school timetable);
  - getting to know the school community – adults and pupils;
  - independence skills (for example, practice in managing bus journeys, using the telephone);
  - strategies to use if things go wrong (for example, if the child forgets their homework, loses their planner, feels bullied).
- Enlist parents and carers in reinforcing the learning from a child's individual programme.

Source: The above list is based on ideas from Cossavella, A. and Hobbs, C. (2003) *Farewell and Welcome – a neat finish and a good start*, Lucky Duck Publishing, London.

Alternatively, you could ask participants to read **handout 1.9**, a case study of effective joint work between a secondary school and its primary feeders, and discuss implications for their own practice.

## Handout 1.9

**Handout 1.9** page 1 of 2

**Supporting children with additional needs at transition**

**A case study**

A secondary school and three feeder primary schools formed a network to focus on effective transition. They planned a range of activities to build on the existing pattern of visits by pupils, induction days and effective sharing of records and data. A first step was for secondary staff to visit the primary schools and undertake team-teaching with Year 6 teachers in the autumn term. Primary staff visited the Year 7 children they had previously taught, to familiarise themselves with the secondary curriculum and differences in teaching and learning. The secondary school surveyed its Year 7 pupils' views on their experience of transition through a questionnaire that helped to highlight things they liked about the new school, but also things they had found difficult or stressful.

One of the issues to emerge was the difficulty for some children in forming new friendship groups; those who already know each other tended to stick together, while those whose friends had gone to different schools struggled to fit in. There was also little mixing between different ethnic groups; the children from one primary with a largely Bangladeshi population had little to do with pupils from another feeder primary with a high number of children of African-Caribbean heritage. To promote cohesion and help children make new friends, the secondary school decided to plan a residential week at an outdoor activity centre for the whole of their new Year 7 in the second week of the autumn term.

Both sets of teachers decided to work together on bridging units of work in core subjects, and on PSHE work on change. In the summer term, for example, secondary staff and primary staff did some team-teaching using the primary SEAL curricular materials. Secondary staff then planned how they would follow up this work with opportunities for children to review their expectations about secondary transfer and how they now felt about the change, during circle time in tutor groups in the late autumn term. Children had an opportunity to look back at scrapbooks of memorabilia from their primary years that they had brought with them, and add new memories from their first term in the new school.

Using the SEAL approach highlighted children who were particularly vulnerable at times of change. Learning Mentors worked with these children before and after their move to secondary school.

The more vulnerable children and those with identified special educational needs were also linked individually to a Year 8 mentor from the secondary school. Prospective mentors were interviewed and received four sessions of training. They visited their mentees while they were still in Year 6 and set up regular email links with them. After the move, mentors met the mentees twice a week initially to provide a listening ear and practical support.

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**Handout 1.9** page 2 of 2

The SENCO in the secondary school was already attending review meetings for children with special educational needs (SEN) – Year 5 annual reviews for statemented children, and further review meetings for both statemented and non-statemented children and their parents and carers in the spring and summer terms of Year 6. She built on this by having members of the secondary SEN faculty work directly with some of the children in their primary schools, and accompany them on individual familiarisation visits to the secondary school. All the children were provided with a booklet written by one of the secondary TAs, containing practical activities to help them find out about the new setting and advice on using the canteen, doing homework, what to do when things go wrong, packing their bag for each day, and so on. On induction day each child was also given an individual welcome booklet with information about their form and the name of their form tutor, photographs of key people they would meet, and information about what they would do on their first day in secondary school.

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## Conclusion

5 minutes

Use **OHT 1.7**, which reminds participants of the session objectives, to sum up the key points covered.

## OHT 1.7

**Summary**

The aim of this session was for participants to:

- gain an understanding of transition as a process of change, and of common responses to it
- explore the key components of a framework for supporting children through transition
- have considered whole-school systems and processes to support effective transition
- have considered a possible framework for preparing groups of children for the social and emotional aspects of transition through a programme of curricular activities
- be familiar with good practice in working with partners (parents and carers, schools and others) to ensure smooth transition
- be in a position to identify and plan to meet the needs of individuals who may be 'at risk' on transfer and for those who have additional needs

Offer participants the opportunity to take a couple of minutes to reflect on the objectives of the session and the personal learning they have gained. They could share their thoughts with a partner and/or you could take brief feedback if time is available.

To encourage reflection on current and future practice and professional development needs, suggest that participants use **handout 1.10** to identify action points.

Handout **1.10**

**Handout 1.10: Key points for action from this session**

What do I want to do in my classroom or school to develop my practice?

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- 
- 

How will I do this?

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What is my timescale for this to happen?

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How will I know that I have been successful?

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Do I need to involve anyone else in enabling this to happen?

- 
- 
- 

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Primary National Strategy

43

## Post-session activities

Identify with the group some shared follow-up activities. Some suggested ideas are given below. If you are using this session with a mixed group of primary and secondary staff, make time to meet again so that people can talk about the activities they undertook, and what they learned.

- Conduct an audit or survey of pupil support structures for transition in the school. The DfES primary and secondary audit tools contain a range of possible surveys, some specifically focusing on parents and carers, pupil and staff perceptions of pupil support systems. This process could be repeated at intervals to evaluate progress and the success of the initiatives put into place.
- Trial one or more ideas from the curriculum materials you have looked at in the session with your current Year 6, and evaluate their impact.
- Set aside some time for mapping what goes on in the school that contributes to the social, emotional and behavioural skills children will need to draw upon during the process of transition, using the activity undertaken in the session as a starting point. Ensure that the whole school community is involved to gain the widest possible perspective. Identify the knowledge, understanding and skills you as a school staff would like children to have when they transfer, and identify any gaps within the current provision.
- Set up mechanisms for staff (teachers, TAs, learning mentors) to spend some time working collaboratively with secondary colleagues, sharing practice and ideas on how they can improve the arrangements for transition.
- Try out and evaluate one or more PSHE programmes designed to support children over the period of Key Stage 2–3 transition.
- Identify a person in the school or cluster to keep abreast of local authority and national developments on issues linked to transition (perhaps on a rolling basis). This person could make available research briefs and publicise useful resources, websites and so on.



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## Objectives

For participants to:

- gain an understanding of transition as a process of change, and of common responses to it
  - explore the key components of a framework for supporting children through transition
  - have considered whole-school systems and processes to support effective transition
  - have considered a possible framework for preparing groups of children for the social and emotional aspects of transition through a programme of curricular activities
  - be familiar with good practice in working with partners (parents and carers, schools and others) to ensure smooth transition
  - be in a position to identify and plan to meet the needs of individuals who may be 'at risk' on transfer and for those who have additional needs
-

## Principles

Children's behaviour is underpinned by the stage they have reached in social and emotional development, the level of skills they have in this area, and their emotional well-being, in interaction with the social, emotional and physical environment

We cannot assume that children already have the required skills to manage their emotions and meet our expectations about their behaviour. We need to take active steps to develop children's social, emotional and behavioural skills to help them cope with change

Positive relationships between primary and secondary schools, with carefully planned joint arrangements for supporting Key Stage 2-3 transition, are key to children's successful responses to change

Participants need to draw on each other's experience and knowledge

It is important to have a solution-focused approach

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## What are we trying to achieve?

Working in groups of three, list the purposes or desired outcomes of practices and support in relation to transition, for:

- the child
- the school(s)
- parents and carers or the wider community

## Coming to terms with change

This process often comprises some mixture of the following 'phases':

- shock, denial
- recognition of the inevitability and reality of transition
- acceptance of or identification with the new school
- detachment from current situation
- planning positively for the future

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## Key factors in curriculum support to meet social and emotional demands of transition

Curriculum support relating to transition:

- involves all children transferring, is differentiated and supplemented for children with additional needs
- is part of a structured and progressive curriculum to develop children's knowledge and understanding about change
- offers opportunities for sharing concerns and hopes; 'debunking' myths; rehearsing skills and strategies such as joining a group, dealing with conflict or overcoming shyness
- enables children to say goodbye and celebrate their competencies as learners and the resources they bring to the new setting

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## Meeting the needs of parents and carers

- Parents' and carers' expectations and anxieties
- Making informed choices - the need for clear and accurate information
- Ideas for supporting their child emotionally and socially
- Information about supporting their child practically
- Strategies for supporting children with educational demands (e.g. homework)

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## Summary

The aim of this session was for participants to:

- gain an understanding of transition as a process of change, and of common responses to it
  - explore the key components of a framework for supporting children through transition
  - have considered whole-school systems and processes to support effective transition
  - have considered a possible framework for preparing groups of children for the social and emotional aspects of transition through a programme of curricular activities
  - be familiar with good practice in working with partners (parents and carers, schools and others) to ensure smooth transition
  - be in a position to identify and plan to meet the needs of individuals who may be 'at risk' on transfer and for those who have additional needs
-



Key findings are that:

- experiences of transitions can make a difference to commitment to learning and progress;
- there is often a hiatus in progress – 38% of Year 7 children in one study failed to achieve better results in mathematics, language and reading at the end of their transfer year;
- there can be a decline in motivation and engagement with learning following transition;
- attendance can also slump: 47% of pupils in Years 7 and 8 play truant for the first time following the transition to secondary school.

Reasons put forward by researchers for such issues include:

- anxieties around 'settling in';
- difficulty in adjusting to new routines;
- losing old and making new friends;
- coping with a range of teachers and different expectations;
- academic and interactional discontinuity – pedagogical approaches; interaction styles; mismatch of work and capabilities and/or learning styles;
- organisational structures that give pupils a negative sense of themselves as learners.

The key components of a framework for successful transition might therefore need to include:

- basing practice on an understanding of the process of change and human responses to it;
- effective administrative procedures, derived from collaborative planning about the documents to be passed on, their contents and delivery dates;
- curriculum support in developing the social, emotional and behavioural skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable children to manage the challenges and opportunities of saying goodbye (closure) and joining a new community (moving on) with a positive attitude and emotional resilience;
- an ethos in both pre- and post-transfer schools that enables children to manage the social and emotional aspects of learning effectively;
- practical and concrete activities that reduce children's anxiety and support them in meeting the organisational and new learning demands of transfer. Positive experiences in the destination school, such as an induction day jointly planned by primary and secondary staff, have been found to be the most effective way of reducing pupils' anxiety about transfer;

- the involvement of parents and carers, since their attitudes and expectations can have a great effect on those of the children. The ideal is an informed partnership which supports both the child and the family or carer emotionally and practically;
- provision and procedures for ensuring that children with additional needs access appropriate and effective support through the process of transition;
- an effective system for ensuring curriculum continuity, continuity of pedagogical approaches and continuity and progression in learning;
- a system for obtaining feedback on what works and what needs changing. The most useful feedback will come from the children themselves.

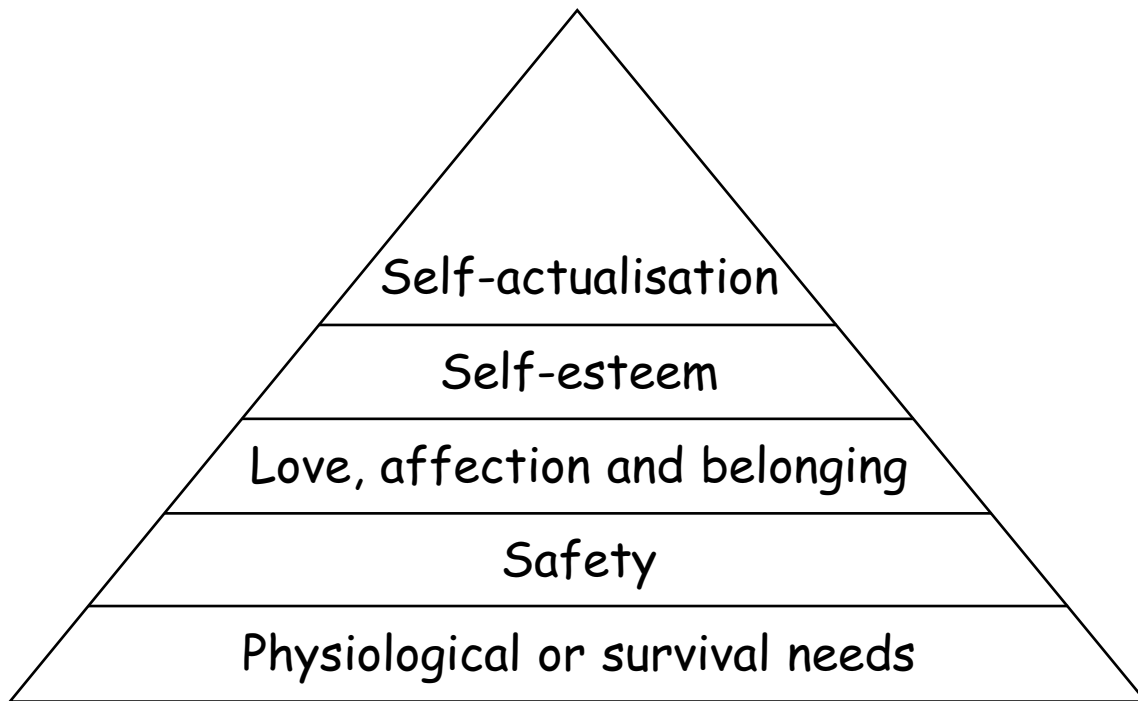
### **Further reading**

Galton, M. et al. (1999) *The impact of school transitions and transfers on pupil progress and attainment*, DfES Research Brief 131, DfES, London

Hargreaves, L. and Galton, M. (2002) *Transfer from the primary classroom*, Routledge Falmer, London

## Handout 1.2

### Maslow's hierarchy of needs



- 1 What feelings did I experience in relation to the change? (before, at the time of the transition, afterwards)
- 2 How did it affect my sense of:
  - security?
  - belonging?
  - competency?
- 3 How did it affect my behaviour or ability to function at my full potential?
- 4 What helped me to manage the challenges and opportunities?

## Handout 1.3: Understanding the feelings associated with transition

Needs	How these needs are met for me now (current school)	How meeting these needs could be threatened when I move schools
To be stimulated, learn, and enjoy myself		
To be valued by myself and others		
To feel I belong		
To be safe		
To be fed, sheltered and warm		

## Handout 1.4: (Completed example of handout 1.3)

Needs	How these needs are met for me now	How meeting these needs could be threatened when I move schools
To be stimulated, learn and enjoy myself	<i>I find the work interesting. We do fun things.</i>	<i>My brother says it's boring at secondary school – but I'm not sure. It could be really good having science labs and a big gym.</i>
To be valued by myself and other people	<i>I know I'm good at most of my work. I'm kind – I know because I have lots of friends. My teachers tell me they miss me when I'm away. My friends like me and think I'm funny. My dad thinks I'm really good at football.</i>	<i>I don't know if I will be able to do the harder work at secondary school. I will be nervous and might show myself up. The teachers won't know me. They won't know what I'm good at. There'll be lots of new people and I don't know if they will like me.</i>
To feel I belong	<i>My family love me. I know I belong at the Mosque. I feel accepted in my class and by my friends. I feel I belong when I'm with the school football team.</i>	<i>I will be in a new class and won't know everyone in it. I won't be in school teams to start with. I will have to make new friends.</i>
To be safe	<i>I feel safe at home and school because I know every inch.</i>	<i>I might get lost. I won't know where I have to go. I might get picked on or bullied.</i>
To be fed, sheltered and warm	<i>Mostly I get these at home. Home will still be the same. At school I can always get a drink of water when I want one. The dinners are OK.</i>	<i>At school we might not be allowed to have a drink of water when we need one. I might hate the dinners.</i>

## Handout 1.5: Typical comments from Year 6 children

*Not many of my friends are in my tutor group – what if no-one wants to sit next to me in class or hang out at break?*

*I've heard that boys and girls have to shower together and I've told my mum I won't go on PE days.*

*I feel so nervous – people think I'm snobby but I'm not – I just don't talk sometimes because I know I'll say something stupid and blush...*

*I feel like I belong here – I know it will take a while to feel as secure and confident as I do now in my new school.*

*I feel nervous and excited, but I know that everyone feels a bit like this – it's normal.*

*I'm really glad to be moving – I think I've got a bit of a reputation with the teachers here and at the new school they won't know me.*

*I breathe deeply and think about stroking my cat to calm myself down when I feel scared about being in my new school.*

*I try to think about all the exciting things I will be able to do at my new school – I can't wait to use the sports complex.*

*My trouble is that when I am feeling unsure in a new situation I go quiet/talk too much/get my words muddled up/show off, then I get cross with myself.*

*Well, moving schools is exciting really – I've moved home five times already and coped with that.*

*I'm worried about having arguments – I lose my temper so easily and I don't want to get off on the wrong foot.*

*I'm worried about what to do if I have a problem – what if I can't do the homework or lose my timetable?*

*My brother's had trouble with some boys who will be starting with me – I'll soon show them they can't mess around with my family.*

*My new teachers will ask me to read out in class, then everyone will think I am stupid and laugh at me – I'm going to sit right at the back so that they don't ask me.*

*I can't believe I'm leaving here – there's so many things I'm going to miss.*

*Everyone will be cleverer than me.*

*I can't wait to go – loads of my friends go to [this school] so it'll be cool.*

## **Handout 1.6: Some examples of the social and emotional skills, knowledge and understanding that support successful transition**

### **Self-awareness**

- I can identify my strengths and feel positive about them.
- I can identify and accept my own limitations, and learn from my mistakes.
- I know what I am feeling, and can label these feelings.
- I understand that the way I think affects the way I feel, and know that my thoughts and feelings influence my behaviour.

### **Managing feelings**

- I am able to express my feelings to other people in ways that are appropriate for the situation and not damaging or destructive.
- I can resist impulses that would lead to negative consequences for me or for other people.
- I can calm myself down when I am experiencing feelings like anger and anxiety.
- I understand that changing the way I think about people and events can help me reduce uncomfortable feelings like anxiety, anger and sadness.
- I know that I can seek support from other people when I feel angry, worried or sad.

### **Motivation**

- I can accept my mistakes and bounce back from disappointment or failure.
- I can use my experiences to change my behaviour.

### **Empathy**

- I can try and work out how people are feeling through their words, body language, gestures and tone.
- I can see the world from other people's points of view, taking into account their feelings, intentions, preferences and beliefs.

### **Social skills**

- I know how to be friendly and join a group.
- I know how to be a good friend and group member.
- I can evaluate and choose from a range of strategies to solve problems and resolve conflicts with other people.
- I can stand up for myself while showing respect for the needs and values of others.

## Handout 1.7a: Transfer timetable (primary)

	Pupils	Parents and carers	Comments/ideas for improvements
Prior to Y6			
Sep Y6			
Oct			
Nov			
Dec			
Jan			
Feb			
Mar			
Apr			
May			
Jun			
Jul			
Summer			
Follow-up			

## Handout 1.7b: Transfer/induction timetable (secondary)

	Pupils	Parents and carers	Comments/ideas for improvements
Prior to Y6			
Autumn Y6			
Jan/Feb/Mar Y6			
Apr Y6			
May Y6			
Jun/Jul Y6			
Summer Y6			
Sep Y7			
Oct Y7			
Nov/Dec Y7			
Other			
Jul			
Summer			
Follow-up			

## Handout 1.8

Work in pairs.

- List the nature of the needs of three children you know who required additional support at transfer.
- Record one or more differentiated strategy or activity that has worked well in meeting these needs.
- Give these to the facilitator for collation and later distribution.

<b>Nature of needs of child requiring additional support (brief)</b>	<b>Strategy that supported the child at transfer</b>	<b>Comments, caveats, etc.</b>

## **Supporting children with additional needs at transition**

### **A case study**

A secondary school and three feeder primary schools formed a network to focus on effective transition. They planned a range of activities to build on the existing pattern of visits by pupils, induction days and effective sharing of records and data.

A first step was for secondary staff to visit the primary schools and undertake team-teaching with Year 6 teachers in the autumn term. Primary staff visited the Year 7 children they had previously taught, to familiarise themselves with the secondary curriculum and differences in teaching and learning. The secondary school surveyed its Year 7 pupils' views on their experience of transition through a questionnaire that helped to highlight things they liked about the new school, but also things they had found difficult or stressful.

One of the issues to emerge was the difficulty for some children in forming new friendship groups: those who already knew each other tended to stick together, while those whose friends had gone to different schools struggled to fit in. There was also little mixing between different ethnic groups: the children from one primary with a largely Bangladeshi population had little to do with pupils from another feeder primary with a high number of children of African-Caribbean heritage. To promote cohesion and help children make new friends, the secondary school decided to plan a residential week at an outdoor activity centre for the whole of their new Year 7 in the second week of the autumn term.

Both sets of teachers decided to work together on bridging units of work in core subjects, and on PSHE work on change. In the summer term, for example, secondary staff and primary staff did some team-teaching using the primary SEAL curricular materials. Secondary staff then planned how they would follow up this work with opportunities for children to review their expectations about secondary transfer and how they now felt about the change, during circle time in tutor groups in the late autumn term. Children had an opportunity to look back at scrapbooks of memorabilia from their primary years that they had brought with them, and add new memories from their first term in the new school.

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The SENCO in the secondary school was already attending review meetings for children with special educational needs (SEN) – Year 5 annual reviews for statemented children, and further review meetings for both statemented and non-statemented children and their parents and carers in the spring and summer terms of Year 6. She built on this by having members of the secondary SEN faculty work directly with some of the children in their primary schools, and accompany them on individual familiarisation visits to the secondary school. All the children were provided with a booklet written by one of the secondary TAs, containing practical activities to help them find out about the new setting and advice on using the canteen, doing homework, what to do when things go wrong, packing their bag for each day, and so on. On induction day each child was also given an individual welcome booklet with information about their form and the name of their form tutor, photographs of key people they would meet, and information about what they would do on their first day in secondary school.

## Handout 1.10: Key points for action from this session

What do I want to do in my classroom or school to develop my practice?

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How will I do this?

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What is my timescale for this to happen?

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How will I know that I have been successful?

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Do I need to involve anyone else in enabling this to happen?

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