

Children, Sports and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Tuesday 21 April 2015
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Year 6 – 7 transition; Progress in developing a systematic approach to supporting Year 6 – 7 transition lead by the Early Help service.
Report of:	Director of Family Services
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Children and Young People
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Better City Better Lives Priority
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1. Executive Summary

In January 2014 the paper attached as appendix 1 (in the background papers) was presented to the Policy and Scrutiny Committee; it outlined a framework and systematic approach to the management of year 6 – 7 transition. The approach was broken down into 3 parts – identification, intervention and evaluation. The aim was for this to be an integrated response between Westminster’s early help service, schools and the voluntary sector; 2 packs were produced detailing the approach – one for schools and another for locality practitioners. This report provides an update on progress against each of the 3 areas and sets the work in the wider context of the new ‘on track’ project. ‘On track’ is a tri-borough initiative, which is a part of Focus on Practice, and aims to reduce the number of older children (10 years plus) from entering the care system. The hypothesis being that there are a number of ‘missed opportunities’ in a child’s life when we could work with the family to prevent problems reaching crisis later; the year 6 – 7 transition will be seen as a key opportunity to identify children more at risk of becoming late entrants to care.

Both the year 6 – 7 transition and the ‘On track’ project are set within the context of the Early Help Strategy.

Although progress has been made in 2014 in prioritising this cohort, there is still considerable work to be undertaken in 2015 to fine-tune the approach.

2. Key Matters for the Committee’s Consideration

- The committee are asked to note progress and invited to provide any challenge to the approach.
- The committee are asked to note that this approach relates only to Westminster children and a challenge for schools is accessing similar levels of support for out of borough children.

3. Background

This section will outline progress against the 3 areas in our emerging framework.

3.1 – Identification

In summer 2014, as a part of the new framework, we aimed to create a list of children in each locality who were deemed more at risk in their transition from primary to secondary school. This list was populated by the early help locality teams using agreed criteria for example children who had been subject to a common assessment in the last year (CAF), those known to social care services and children identified by schools as likely to struggle with transition. These children were then discussed at each primary school in a meeting that we call the ‘transition TAS’ (team around the school). These children were prioritised into 3 levels of support depending on their need as follows:

1. High level of support;
2. Targeted support;
3. Lower level support.

In reviewing progress made last year, we made significant steps in developing a systematic approach to identifying children but the model was too locality focused in that a list of children was collated for each locality rather than for each secondary school. This meant that a school in the north-west may not have heard about a child living in the south of the borough. This is being addressed and ***in 2015 each secondary school will receive a transition list made up of children from across Westminster.*** We will also ***introduce a transition review TAS*** in the autumn term once the children are in their new schools.

It needs to be noted that for schools there is still the issue of children who attend Westminster schools but live in other boroughs as these boroughs may not offer a similar level of support.

3.2 – Interventions

The interventions that were delivered for each area of need are indicated below:

3.2.1 High level

- Either 'Going Places Speech and Language Programme' (more details are attached in the report at appendix 1) or the 'Stepping Up to Secondary School Transition Programme' delivered by the Early Help teams. The latter consists of workshops and fun activities.
- One to one support from a young people's practitioner from the early help teams;
- Positive activities delivered through local youth clubs;
- Support from a volunteer mentor over a longer period, and out of office hours, to raise aspirations;
- Gangs awareness workshops;
- Play service holiday opportunities including a residential;
- Edutain summer sports programme;
- Specific school based programmes i.e. the Quintin Kynaston Nurture groups.

3.2.2 Targeted support

- Support from a volunteer mentor;
- Gangs awareness workshops;
- Positive activities delivered through local youth clubs;
- Play service;
- Edutain summer sports programme.

3.2.3 Lower level support

- Positive activities delivered through local youth clubs.
- Play service
- Edutain sports opportunities

3.2.4 In My Backyard (IMBY)

In addition, all children were invited to attend an IMBY group. This is a 20 week programme introduced into Westminster by Save the Children; children are encouraged to share their fears and work on communication skills with other young people they have not previously met, increasing their confidence and replicating the transition they will encounter into secondary school. In 2014 Save the Children trained 2 Westminster staff in each locality to offer and deliver to our transition

cohort. Following this training, IMBY was successfully delivered after school in the autumn term.

For 2015 we have adjusted the timetable of when the programme will be delivered to take into account the length of their school day, clocks changing (participants often did not want to leave the sessions after school when it was dark) and the resources needed to deliver the programme to have the most impact. For the academic year 2015-2016, IMBY will be delivered from **February 2016 for 20 weeks**. This is so that we can take into account the school day, delivery to (hopefully) take place in school during the day (tutor time). We aim for the cohort for IMBY to be the original transition group (2015) plus any other pupils that have been identified (at a Transition TAS Review in the Autumn term as needing more support and that would benefit from the IMBY programme.

3.2.5 Learning and next steps about the interventions.

- **Attendance was variable** at the sessions (in all areas of need) and non-attendance was not rigorously followed up. For example, 71 children were identified to attend the stepping up programme delivered by the Early Help teams and 55 (77%) attended consistently. The programmes were seen as part of a summer holiday programme and **input needs to be sustained for longer**.
- In 2015 **all children identified as having a high level of need will all be allocated a 1:1** worker who will aim to build a relationship with them and their family and offer support at least until the Christmas break and maybe longer; the worker will follow up non-attendance.
- In 2014 the **support was too focused on the child and we missed an opportunity to work with the whole family**. In 2015 parenting support will be made available to the parents alongside support for the child. When children are identified at the transition TASs, names will be forwarded to the parenting co-ordinator and her team so that they can start to build relationships with the parents. Parents ideally identified by April/May, with a view to them participating in a parenting programme between June-July. There is also the possibility of providing an evening parenting group running from 6.30-8.30 in one locality for all localities, for those parents who may not be able to access the parenting sessions during the day due to work commitments.
- In 2015 we will focus on **2 levels of support high and targeted** and aim to be more active in following up the children in the high category for longer and working with the whole family.

3.3 – Evaluation

A DfE commissioned research paper¹ identified five aspects to a successful transition for children as follows:

¹ Research Report DCSF – RR019. What makes a Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School? (2008)

- developing new friendships and improving their self-esteem and confidence;
- having settled so well in school life that they caused no concerns to their parents;
- showing an increasing interest in school and school work;
- getting used to their new routines and school organisation with great ease
- experiencing curriculum continuity.

Any evaluation in 2014 was very limited. We reviewed attendance and what we had achieved in relation to the process but we did not formally track the outcomes for each child or link to their progress in school. However, staff have now been trained to use the outcomes star and in 2015 we are planning to use this so that we can report on individuals and as a cohort. The Outcomes Star is a unique suite of tools for supporting and measuring change when working with people; it is well researched, widely used and endorsed. Staff in family services have been trained to use the ‘family plus star’ and the ‘my star’. The star will be able to highlight issues and progress in the 5 areas flagged above.

In addition, as a part of the On Track programme mentioned in the introduction we will also be using a predictive model to identify children most of risk of coming into care later; this will be achieved by identifying key risk factors and this will support the identification of children at year 6 – 7 transition. A tracking tool is being developed alongside this to better understand outcomes and the interventions that make the most impact.

3.4 Next steps

The transition TAS meetings will start in the summer term and all the changes to processes identified above will be implemented. A review of progress will be available in January 2016.

4. Health and Wellbeing Implications

N/A

5. Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications. This is a priority and the main cost is staff time.

6. Risks and Mitigations

N/A

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the
Background Papers please contact Jayne Vertkin Ext 5745**

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1

Briefing on how Westminster's Early Help (locality) service will support Year 6 – 7 transition

1. Introduction

The move to secondary school means a number of major changes for all children. Most children will cope with these with support from their family, school and peers but children who are more vulnerable, because of their social or family circumstances, may be less resilient and find the move a lonely and challenging time that can spiral into poor outcomes. Westminster's early help teams, also known as the locality service, sees this transition as a key opportunity to offer targeted support to children with the aim of helping them to achieve and enjoy their school experience. Although this work has been a priority previously, we have been further developing it over the last year to create a more consistent framework that we have broken down into - identification, intervention and monitoring / evaluation. Our aim is to develop a more systematic approach that joins together what different agencies provide into a single, consistent offer for children.

2. Identification

In term 5 (April-May) we have developed an additional 'team around the school' (TAS) meeting to discuss children transitioning from year 6 to 7 who may need additional support during this period. From 2014 a list of children, who may experience difficulties, will be created ahead of the meeting as follows:

- The locality service will create a list of all transition students who have a common assessment (CAF)², who are children in need (CIN) or subject to a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority (LAC). This list is sent to the TAS chair.
- The locality service will also ask schools to provide a list of children they feel should be considered for extra support. This will include children, who have a statement of educational needs (SEN), children with social / emotional difficulties, children who have been excluded from primary school or are at risk of exclusion and children who are gang affiliated.

² A common assessment is an early intervention assessment that can be generated by any one working with children and is usually undertaken at the first sign of concerns.

At the meeting each child's needs will be discussed, recorded and prioritised, showing which children most require support. A plan of intervention will be developed as part of a multi-agency panel. Children who have been referred will be offered opportunities from the following Interventions to compliment school based programmes.

3. Interventions

Once identified children are currently offered a range of the interventions listed below but from 2014 **we want to improve our offer and ensure that the children with the greatest needs receive the most help and this needs better co-ordination between agencies.** The aim is for every organization's intervention to become part of a 'whole' rather than a standalone offer.

Support to children and their parents consists of a range of the following interventions:

- Targeted **group workshops** in primary schools; themes include staying safe, how to develop safe and positive friendships, who to ask for help. This will be delivered in partnership by the locality teams, Integrated Gangs Unit, Police, and local arts providers i.e. Paddington Arts.
- **One to one support.** Once the child is identified, contact will be made by a **young people's practitioner from the locality team.** The initial meeting will aim to engage the child, parent and primary school. One to one sessions will then be offered to some children with complex needs and this can continue until the Easter term of Year 7. In addition we will encourage some children to receive support from a **Boost Mentor**³, or recommend the child is linked to a **peer mentor** within their secondary school to support their successful transition.
- In the **summer holidays** secondary schools offer a transition programme to induct and support all year 7 children. As an additional to these programmes, the locality teams offer weekly **workshops and activities** to prepare the children for secondary school. From 2014, greater emphasis will be placed on working in partnership with the secondary schools to deliver **this summer transition programme jointly** and in providing ongoing support e .g. Quinton Kynaston has two year 7 nurture groups and the NE locality team will work closely with the school to offer additional transition support for those pupils who have emotional and behavioural needs. This is work in progress.
- **In MY Backyard (IMBY)** is a 20 week programme and children are encouraged to share their fears and work on communication skills with other young people they have not previously met, increasing their confidence and replicating the transition they will encounter into secondary school. The

³ This is part of the mentoring scheme that we run in Westminster City Council

programme was started through our partnership with Save the Children. The last group did this by working together to develop a video about local housing. The group met weekly and at the start of each session shared experiences about their transition at secondary school. The feedback from parents, primary and secondary schools has been overwhelmingly positive. Parents have fed back that their children settled into secondary as a result much better, identifying more confidence, better communication, less fear, awareness of support and children's more positive response to education as a result. This has been echoed by feedback from secondary schools. ***The plan is now to train our staff to deliver this programme and to offer IMBY to all children as a part of a transition offer.***

- The locality teams have started to offer **gang prevention workshops** to year 6 in targeted primary schools and the aim is to make this more consistently available. This is in addition to the Growing against Gangs programme offered as a part of the Your Choice programme delivery.
- A **supplementary school for Kurdish pupils** ran on Saturdays throughout last summer as a particular transition need has been identified within this community and it is hoped that this will continue in 2014.
- Children with **speech and language** needs are offered a **targeted programme** by Westminster Specialist's Schools outreach programme. The programme is offered to all secondary schools (to date only King Solomon has not participated and this is because they have their own model). The programme covers the areas based on current research about the issues that are of concern to children in transition to secondary, these are as follows:
 - Making new friends in school
 - Standing up for yourself/bullying
 - Getting to know new teachers
 - Finding your way around your new school
 - How to manage homework
 - Feeling lost in a new environment
 - Knowing who to ask for help
 - Ordering and eating lunch

It is a 6 week programme (delivered in the final term of year 6), where children are taken from primary school to the secondary school they will attend; they therefore have the opportunity to meet other children in the same situation. The criteria for entry onto the programme are currently very broad, one criteria being 'any other vulnerable children' and so, at times, this has had to be prioritized further. Sessions are very structured and themed so for example, look at how to buy food in the canteen – what do you need to say to the dinner

lady in ordering food, where do you sit, how do you buy the food. Feedback from teachers has been really positive in identifying children with issues earlier, who they may not have identified without this programme. ***The programme has now been published and locality staff have been trained to use the resources and co - deliver.***

- We are currently mapping what **youth and community groups** can also provide, to include in the offer of support to children at transition.

4. Reporting and Evaluation

Some limited evaluations have been undertaken of our work with transition but it hasn't been robust enough to demonstrate outcomes. However, we are currently piloting a distanced travelled tool in the south locality – the outcomes star – and plan to build its use into transition work from next year. We will then be able to use the star in year 6 and repeat at intervals. This will enable us to report on outcomes (distanced travelled) for the whole cohort. We are also developing the evaluation framework to include the evaluation of 'Going Places' and IMBY

Jayne Vertkin

December 2013