



City of Westminster

Children, Sports and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

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Title:	Year 6 – 7 Transition
Report of:	Jayne Vertkin, Head of Early Help, Family Services.
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Danny Chalkley, Cabinet member for Children and Young People.
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Aspiration
Report Authors and Contact Details:	Eleanor Abrahall, Early help Development Manager eabrahall@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This paper provides an update on how the early help service is continuing to support year 6 – 7 transition and follows on from the report presented to this Policy and Scrutiny Committee in January 2015. It relates to the cohort that made this transition in September 2015 and is based on interim data. The full report on outcomes will be completed in June 2016 as it was decided for this year to track the children for a longer period.
- 1.2 To recap, most children will cope with the transition from primary to secondary school 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 see the **year 6 – 7 transition as a key opportunity to offer targeted support to these children** with the

aim of helping them to achieve and enjoy their school experience. Over the last 2 years we have been **working with partner organisations to create a more consistent and systematic framework** for this work that we have broken down into - identification, intervention and monitoring / evaluation.

- 1.3 This work is now linked with the wider Focus on Practice initiative and in particular the On Track project and continues to form a key part of our early help work. '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 a 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.
- 1.4 This update provides information on the 2015 work against the 3 areas of our framework – identification, intervention and evaluation – and explores the learning that we have implemented since the last update in relation to the following areas:
 - Parent involvement;
 - Improved evaluation of the work;
 - Earlier identification;
 - And a transition review meeting in the secondary schools.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 The committee are asked to note progress made in this area of work.

3. Background

This section outlines progress to date against the 3 areas of the framework

3.1 Identification

- 3.1.1 In 2015 **87 children were identified** for additional support with the year 6 – 7 transition. In previous years, children were identified at the beginning of the summer term but for 2015 **we identified children a term earlier**. This enabled us to have a longer period of time to assess their needs, as well as improve our relationship building with the children and it provided more opportunities to engage with parents.

3.1.2 The actual process of identification was felt to be good and was again undertaken with primary schools, using school information, previous referrals to family services, children who had been subject to a CAF (common assessment framework) and those already known to our services. A full list of the criteria used to identify children is attached at appendix 1.

3.1.3 The children identified were then discussed at each primary school in a meeting that we call the 'Transition TAS' (Team around the School) and prioritised into two levels of support depending on their needs.

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

3.1.4 Previously there was a third level; those identified for low level support. However, following a review, we decided to remove this option from our menu as these provisions, such as positive activities delivered through local youth clubs, the play service and Edutain sports were already widely available and known to the schools we worked with. It risked becoming confusing to schools as we were not actually delivering a service to this group. There have been no negative outcomes that we are aware of as a result of offering a more targeted service.

Other improvements in 2015 included the following:

3.1.5 In 2015 we ensured that all secondary schools received a list of children across the borough to reduce the issue of schools not being aware of children who might have been identified in a primary school outside of their locality.¹ This was in response to feedback in 2014. However, **secondary schools still felt that they received the data too late in the term** and so for 2016 there are on-going discussions regarding bringing the identification period forward to before the summer term.

3.1.6 A **transition review meeting has been introduced to take place** in the autumn term once the children are at their secondary school. This meeting is separate to the normal school TAS so that the focus is on this specific cohort. The data from these meetings is still being collated but will be included in the final report in June 2016.

¹ The early help service is grouped into 3 localities – North East, North West and South – and work is planned and delivered in these local areas.

3.1.7 It needs to be noted that for schools there is still the issue of out of borough children who attend Westminster schools as these boroughs may not offer a similar level of support and this is something that needs to be reviewed further.

3.2 Interventions

3.2.1 The early help team work with partners to create an integrated 'menu of interventions' and then each child has a programme offered depending on their needs. An example of the support a child could receive, who is assessed with a high level of need, is set out below:

Intervention offered	When is it offered?	By whom?
Homework support, home routines	As soon as identified	Befriend A Family
Gangs Awareness	As soon as identified	Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU)
Going Places Programme for children with speech and language needs, details of this programme are attached at appendix 2.	Dependant on school timetable but usually summer term	Going Places a part of Westminster's Special school Outreach Programme.
Early help transition programme – stepping up to secondary school . This covers routines, what happens when you have a detention, organising yourself, friendships, peer pressure and bullying.	Summer holiday	Early help team, family services.
1:1 support from an early help practitioner	From summer term of primary school to spring term in secondary school	Early help team, family services.
In My Backyard Group	Now February after starting secondary school	Early help team, family services.

3.3 In My Backyard (IMBY)

3.3.1 Following training from Save the Children in 2014, the early help team have been delivering IMBY as a part of the transition offer. IMBY is a 20 week programme where children are encouraged to share their fears and work on communication skills with other children **aimed at increasing their confidence and continued success in their move to secondary school**. However, feedback from children invited to attend the programme in 2014 suggested that attendance was difficult because IMBY was delivered alongside other transition activities in the summer or autumn term. In the Autumn, it meant that these children who had just started secondary school had to stay behind later, or travel to another location, at the end of a long day, it was dark by the time the sessions finished and this left participants unwilling to attend. It was also challenging for practitioners to manage this time over the summer, delivering two programmes to the same cohort simultaneously.

3.3.2 In 2015 Save the Children trained additional members of our early help staff in order to support delivery as well as to make it more likely that the programme will remain sustainable in the future. As a response to this for 2015/16 the IMBY programme will be delivered from February 2016 and run for 20 weeks. This will be delivered in one secondary school in each locality and will be offered to the existing transition group initially, but also **widened out to include those struggling with transition who were not identified in year six**. This enables the **inclusion of children who might have attended a primary school outside of the borough** and it removes the requirement for children to travel to another location after school. We are also hoping that in some cases it may be possible to deliver during the school day. This is a trial for 2015/16 and feedback will be included in the final report.

3.4 Learning and next steps about the interventions.

Participation

The table below outlines participation levels.

	North East		North West		South	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Original number of children identified & invited to programme	24	43	16	19	9	25
No. who participated	16	13	7	10	5	12
No. of non-engaged	8	30	9	9	4	13

3.4.1 The number of children identified has increased across all localities with a higher number of children being identified by schools. Participation has increased alongside this in two of the three localities but **non- engagement is a significant issue.**

3.4.2 Reasons for non-engagement include - parents not wanting their children to attend, families being on holiday throughout the summer period, practitioners not being able to make contact with families despite concerted efforts.

One to one support for children

3.4.3 In 2015 all children identified as having a high level of need by the primary school, who did not already have an allocated worker, **were allocated a Young People's Practitioner** to continue to work with them and their family and offer support on a one to one basis at least until the spring term 2016. Our experience tells us that the first few weeks back in the second term can be crucial and therefore workers will continue to engage up until the first half term – outcomes of this will be available in the final report.

Parent involvement

3.4.4 A **parenting component was added to the work this year** and 2 different approaches were trialled as follows:

1. In one locality, a practitioner conducted joint meetings at the primary school with the school staff, parents and children before the transition programme started and a further four home visits to each family (at the beginning of summer programme, at the end of summer, during October half term and during the Christmas holidays). This enabled the practitioner to build relationships individually, and go through the programme in detail. Out of 14 children, 14 home visits were attempted and 2 were unsuccessful. From the practitioners point of view this improved their engagement as it enabled them to go through the child's school report, which the parents appreciated and the practitioner was able to see the impact of the home life on the child in question. The practitioner also ended up advocating for the parents with issues such as housing, which perhaps would not have been brought to light in a coffee morning or group setting.
2. Another locality offered coffee mornings in a nominated school. These were set up in order for parents to find out more about the parenting support available and to get to know the detail of the programme. However take up was poor, only one parent attended.

3.4.5 In addition, across all the localities parents had the option of being signposted to existing parenting programmes that were scheduled to run during that time.

3.5 In 2016 the approach that will be adopted across all areas is offering a model of home visiting to build relationships with parents as early as possible.

3.5.1 Learning will also be gathered from the On Track pilot work with parents in schools (see details under Next Steps below) and we will ensure that this learning is put into practice for 2016/17.

3.6 Evaluation

3.6.1 As mentioned in the original paper we have chosen to use the Outcomes Star in order to assess and measure the needs of the children accessing the Transition Programme.

3.7 Use of the Outcomes Star

3.7.1 The Outcomes Star is a tool used to support and measure change when working with people; it provides a baseline measure and measures change over time. It is well researched and widely used and endorsed across several Local Authorities. The Star measures and supports progress for children and families towards self-reliance or other goals. It consists of a number of scales based on a model of change and a Star Chart onto which the child, family and worker together plot where the service user is on their journey. The attitudes and behaviour expected at each of the points on each scale are clearly defined, usually in detailed scale descriptions, summary ladders or a quiz format. An Outcomes Star reading is taken by the worker and service user at or near the beginning of their time with the project. Using the ladders or other scale descriptions, they identify together where on their ladder of change the service user is for each outcome area. Each step on the ladder is associated with a numerical score so at the end of the process the scores can be plotted onto the service user's Star. The process is then repeated at regular intervals (every three, six or 12 months depending on the project) to track progress. The data can be used to track the progress of an individual service user, as well as to measure the outcomes achieved by a whole project. The Star covers the following 8 key areas of a young person's life:

- Physical health
- Where you live
- Being safe
- Relationships
- Feelings and behaviour

- Friends
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Education and learning

3.7.2 Staff in Family Services have been trained in the use of My Star (for use with children and young people) and Family Star Plus (for use with Families).

3.7.3 As well as helping practitioners to assess the children participating on the transition programme use of My Star also supports the identification of any needs additional to those raised around transition and enables a measurement of distance travelled and evaluation of the programme.

3.7.4 Due to staff capacity it was decided to offer practitioners the opportunity to complete the My Star in a group setting. This method had both advantages and disadvantages. In one locality, they found that the group engaged well, however there were a lot of comparisons made between individual children for example they asked each other “what did you say for question x?”. This made us question the accuracy of their individual ratings. In another locality, due to the group dynamics, this task was not feasible. In the third locality the My Star worked well as it was completed on a one to one basis.

3.7.5 Across the three localities **37 Outcomes Stars** were completed, of these 17 have already completed a review star. In one locality no review stars have been completed, in another the review stars show a slightly increased score (a better outcome) in all but one area (where you live) and the score remained the same. In the third locality scores improved in three areas (physical health, where you live, being safe), but reduced in five (relationships, feelings and behaviours; friends, confidence and self-esteem and education and learning). It is very difficult to draw firm conclusions at this stage – we often see that scores can go down at review as children feel more comfortable revealing their true feelings about a situation, or their situation does genuinely get worse before it improves. It will be easier to draw clearer conclusions at the final closing review star in June 2016.

3.7.6 With regard to attendance currently data has only been collated from one locality. This shows an improvement in attendance for eight of the 13 children who participated, a slight reduction in attendance for three and there is no data available for two of the children. We are reliant on schools for this data and it can take time. There will be a more complete picture in the final analysis.

- 3.7.7 The data above is far from conclusive and more detailed information and analysis will be available with the final report.
- 3.7.8 One locality was able to give qualitative feedback on how the children were progressing. Of 10 children who took part in the programme nine are progressing well and two still have on-going concerns.
- 3.7.9 Given what we have also learnt regarding parental engagement in 2016 the plan is to use the Family Star Plus with families and the My Star completed in addition to this on an individual basis.

3.8 Parental survey

- 3.8.1 Due to the limited engagement of parents in previous years, in 2015 we wanted to pilot capturing their views via Survey Monkey. The survey had aimed to find out what parents were most concerned about for transition. The aim was to make this accessible for parents to complete and to provide an easier way of analysing this data. The timing of the survey being sent out to practitioners meant that the localities did not capture the email addresses of the parents and so the survey was not viable. To correct this, the Parental Agreement Form has now been amended to gather this information for future years. The Parental Agreement Form has been devised to obtain consent from parents and enable practitioners to see their child in primary school, offer post summer support in secondary school by seeing them during their school day (timetable permitting) and to share any relevant information with the child's secondary school that may impact on their progress.

3.9 Next steps

Learning from On Track

- 3.9.1 As stated earlier, On Track is a new Tri-borough programme, as part of Focus On Practice, with a focus on reducing the number of older children (10 years plus) from entering the care system.
- 3.9.2 In 2016 we will be delivering an On Track Transition Pilot in three primary schools. This programme will provide help to support parents around the most common themes which present themselves at transition over a ten week programme based on condensed session plans of Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities. This is a nationally recognised parenting programme. Alongside this there will be a six week programme delivered for the children within the school.

- 3.9.3 The three nominated schools will lead on engaging parents and guiding them through why they have been selected to participate to the pilot. The schools which have been identified are Hallfield, Gateway and Paddington Green Primary Schools, this is subject to change as we are still in the process of establishing where the programme best sits within the school year. The parenting element of the programme will also be delivered in the school and co facilitated with a school member of staff on hand, so they have a familiar face to connect to. **We are hoping that this will tackle some of the problems that we have encountered in engaging parents.**
- 3.9.4 The sessions for the children in year 6 will cover rules, routines and boundaries, peer pressure, friendships and resilience and being assertive. This will prepare them for participating in our Stepping up Transition summer programme which will be delivered to them in the summer/end of Year 6.
- 3.9.5 Children will be identified for the programme by using the University College of London STARS. 'STARS' is a research study based at University College London and Cardiff University which aims to find out what helps children make a successful move to secondary school (e.g. making new friends, doing well at school work, good attendance record).
- 3.9.6 In Westminster the current plan is that the On Track transition pilot will be delivered in primary schools in the three localities from January 2016. The programme will be evaluated through the On Track evaluation process, using trained researchers employed specifically for the evaluation of the On Track programme and the findings will provide some insight into how the localities might deliver transition programmes in the future especially in relation to parental engagement.

The Serpentine Gallery – including new partners

- 3.9.7 The Serpentine Gallery have an artist based transition programme that has been piloted, which aims to give children the space to express their concerns about transitioning to secondary school through the medium of art. The Serpentine Gallery hope to roll out the programme for schools to deliver themselves, universally to the whole cohort (Year six). **We are considering the possibility of our practitioners working with schools at the introductory session of this series of workshops, alongside the teachers, and then re visiting the group towards the end of the series of workshops when the sessions will have supported the teachers to identify children who may have some concerns or difficulties around transition.** At this point it would be possible for the early help practitioner to undertake more in depth work with the child hopefully increasing their likelihood of attending the summer transition programme. This plan is very much in its infancy at the current time.

3.9.8 **In summary**, work with parents is key and this is the area that we need to continue to develop. The families we perhaps really need to focus on are those that don't engage. We need to take note of any learning from the On Track Transition Pilot to maximise the engagement of parents by replicating some elements of that programme.

Appendix 1

Identification Criteria

Children who have one or more of the following:

- Social / emotional difficulties
- Speech / language / communication needs
- A statement of special educational needs (SEN) / education, health and care plan (EHCP)
- Display anti-social behaviour / are at risk of offending / have a gang affiliation
- Are at risk of exclusion
- Have a current CAF (common assessment)
- Are on the current TAS (team around the school) list
- Have an early intervention support process (EISP) plan
- Have a child in need (CIN) plan
- Are on a child protection (CP) plan
- Are a looked after child (LAC)
- Young carers
- In the school's opinion are likely to have particular difficulties with the transition to secondary school and feel the additional support would have a significant impact on their future outcomes.

Appendix 2 - Going Places Transition Programme

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:

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- 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.***

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Report Author x2098 eabrahall@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

For any supplementary documentation; especially from external stakeholders or documents which do not fit this template.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

This section is for any background papers used to formulate the report or referred to in the body of the report.