

School Background.

The school is located in a medium sized town in Carmarthenshire and can easily access the countryside, woodland and beach. The school is situated within a deprived area of the town. The school have 26% free school meals receiving £83,000 from the pupil development grant. The school currently has 243 pupils, 23% of the pupils have additional learning needs and are well catered for. The school has a cohort of eight teachers excluding the head teacher, six learning support assistant and one one to one learning support assistant. It is a mixed school catering for boys and girls and is an English medium school. The pupils come from a variety of backgrounds. There are no exclusions in place at the moment. The school has had a recent Estyn inspection which indicated that the school is performing well in most aspects however following the questionnaire that was issued to parents prior to the Estyn inspection it was apparent that the transition between key stage two and key stage three should be addressed as the current method of transitioning is not preparing the pupils sufficiently for their start at comprehensive school. This is being addressed within the school development plan and will be monitored by the school and Estyn.

School Development Plan.

(Appendix 2)

Explain the Context (Evidence / Data): It has been noted from the last questionnaire completed by parents that the year 6 pupils do not feel adequately prepared for the transition between the end of key stage two and the beginning of key stage three. Currently we have an assembly to explain to the children and parents what the procedure is when the children move from key stage two and key stage three and the parents are encouraged to take the children to the chosen comprehensive on their open evenings.

Aim.	Objectives.	Timeline.	Stakeholders.	Cost.	Measure / Review.	Success Criteria.
To ensure that the year six children are well prepared for the transition to key stage three.	. To continue with the assembly for parents and pupils with regards to the transition to KS3. . To meet with the comprehensive schools and ask for 3 taster days for the year 6 pupils over 3	Initially this will start in the summer term with the intention for this to be embedded within the school schedule.	The pupils, parents, teachers, governors and local authority.	Coach Hire: £720.00 Cost of Supply for the comprehensive school: £1200.00 Transition Training for the year six teacher: £350.00.	. We would review the 3 day taster days after they take place, asking the pupils what they felt about the experience. .We would ask parents to feedback their thoughts on the process via an	If the feedback from the meetings and questionnaire then this will be rolled out as an ongoing way of transitioning between KS2 and KS3.

School Development Plan.

(Appendix 2)

	weeks which will lead to a whole week towards the end of term. .To contact previous pupils and ask them to be part of a Q & A panel for the year 6 pupils. . We would ask that the pupils to nominate a buddy in order for them to move up into KS3 with a friend to make the transition smoother and				informal parents meeting and questionnaire. . We would ask the comprehensive school teachers how they felt the process went and if there were any improvements to be made.	
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School Development Plan.

(Appendix 2)

	ensure that they already know someone in their class. . To provide circle time within the class directly linked to the transition. . To provide a counselling service to the pupils.					
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Script - Transitioning between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

Thank you for your attendance at this meeting today. Any questions will be welcomed at the end of the presentation.

It has been brought to our attention through a recent parent questionnaire prior to an Estyn inspection that our year six pupils felt under prepared for their move to comprehensive school. They felt that there wasn't sufficient preparation time for the pupils to become accustomed to the transition between primary school and comprehensive school. The wellbeing of our pupils as set out by the UNCRC during this transition is paramount and it appears that we may be failing the pupils within this aspect. The questionnaire (appendix 1) and some parent concerns have led to an investigation into the information and activities that we provide as a school for the year six pupils during this transition. The school currently works well with the secondary schools to impart all educational information required as to where the individual pupils are and provide them with detailed pupil profiles, however we do not seem to be preparing our pupils mentally or emotionally which is essential when looking to progress the pupils in their learning. (Bulkeley & Fabian, 2006 P 18)

As a school we currently hold an assembly meeting for parents and pupils to explain the procedure for the transition between key stage 2 and key stage 3 and hold this meeting 4 weeks prior to the end of the school year in June. The parents also have an information pack provided to them at the beginning of year six which is prepared by the comprehensive schools to aid the decision in choosing an appropriate comprehensive school for their children. This appears to be lacking in the emotional and social aspect of the transitioning period. Following this questionnaire we have included this transition point to be within our school development plan, which has been provided to you at the beginning of this meeting.

The investigation has led us to look into what other schools provide for their year six leavers and it appears that we could be doing more to ensure that our year six leavers feel more prepared for the change ahead. The NFER (2006) suggest that schools should work closely with the local authority and the comprehensive schools to ensure a smooth transition, it is essential that we use our multiagency links in this process to ensure the wellbeing of our pupils during this what can be difficult time. We currently have a good relationship with the local comprehensive schools as previously mentioned and we suggest that we make these

links stronger through meeting with the teachers from the comprehensive schools to arrange activities within the comprehensive for taster days and a taster week. The transitions co-ordinator will be central to aid the process in being more streamlined and appropriate for our pupils between primary and comprehensive. We suggest as do Estyn (2004) that having circle time with the children may help to dispel any myths or misunderstanding about what they face as a year seven pupil. Circle time will help the children to express their feelings in a familiar, safe environment and enable the teacher to identify the children's concerns and allay their fears. Having spoken to other primary schools in the area and researching what other schools do, we feel that it would be in our pupils best interest to continue with the parent assembly and welcome pack provided by the comprehensive school but that we also adopt the same procedures as suggested within these schools and roll out a the circle time activities, taster days, taster week, buddying within the secondary school, provide a peer talk and counselling service for our pupils. Through the research carried out there are case studies such as a school in Porthcawl (Estyn, 2013) where they introduced circle time, buddying, counselling and peer listening for their year six leavers and it has been noted that there was a significant improvement in the children's wellbeing and ability to manage the transition emotionally. The secondary school saw an improvement on pupil engagement, attendance and pupil progress. We in turn hope this to be the case within our school.

The transitions within education is being addressed in Donaldson's Successful Futures. As stated in the review children should have continuity in their education without the added pressure of frequent transitions. Education should be on a continuum and through the new curriculum the transitions that the pupils have to face will become less daunting for them as there will be less of a jump between these phases.

We will look to monitor the transition methods through questionnaires being sent to parents and teachers where they will be asked what their view points are about the new transitions policy and this will be fed back to the stakeholders once the information has been collated. We will monitor the pupils wellbeing through circle time activities linked to the transitioning period. We will endeavour to roll out this transition plan in the summer term and then be continued as part of the transitions policy for the foreseeable future. A questionnaire will be presented to the children, parents and teachers of both the primary and secondary school at the end of the transitioning activities to ensure we are engaging in the best possible way to ensure the wellbeing of our year six pupils. It has been shown in another local school that this

approach will allow the pupils to feel mentally and emotionally prepared for this important transition.

The cost will be in the region of £2300 and in order to help fund the taster days, taster week, staff training and transport we will be looking into the Transitions Grant (WAG,2006), we also have a very supportive PTCA and will ask them for any fund raising ideas in order to help with the cost.

Thank you for your time and participation in this meeting, if you have any questions I would be happy to take them now.

Explanation of the Intervention.

The intervention takes is to aid the pupils wellbeing at the end of year six leading into year seven in comprehensive school. The transition period between the two key stages can be a difficult one for the pupils to undertake. To ensure their wellbeing is being catered for the school will introduce circle time to ensure that the children have an opportunity to voice their fears and concerns about the transition to comprehensive school. The school will also introduce taster days at the chosen schools along with a taster week. We will also ask the comprehensive school to create a buddy system where the pupils in year six choose a friend that they will be paired with in their registration class. The school will ask some year seven pupils to come to the school as a panel where year six pupils can ask questions to their peer. We will also introduce a counselling service for the pupils most effected by the upcoming change. This will give the pupils a good understanding of how the comprehensive school will work and what is expected of them and allay any fears or concerns that they may have. This new transition policy will be in conjunction with the current transition policy which is where the parents and pupils come to an assembly meeting to discuss the transition, the welcome pack provided by the comprehensive school and the encouragement to the parents to take their child to the chosen comprehensive school on their open days. Wellbeing is the key aspect of this new transition policy.

Transition Between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

Having been through this transition before it was felt that this would be a good base for the assignment as first hand experiences are essential to draw upon. Bronfenbrenners Ecological System (1992) shows how we as teachers are an inherent impact on a child's ability to develop and cope with different situations, teachers are part of the microsystem closest to the child. This transitioning period is a difficult time in a child's life and needs to be managed to allow the child to be comfortable with the changes ahead. (Evangelou et al, 2008). There are many changes that occur at this time and if a child is anxious or worried this will inhibit the child from learning and developing as the child's psychological needs are not met as indicated by Maslows hierarchy of needs (Maslow, A, 1943). Donaldson and DFES agree that a child's education should be continuous and that as facilitators we need to ensure as little disruption as possible during transitioning periods to enable the learner to develop and continue to learn without disruption. Teachers are an essential part of this. (Donaldson, 2015), (DFES, 2004). Transitions are a way of helping children develop their confidence and help them to gather the skills necessary to changes that they may face in their lives. (LTS Scotland, 2011). It is believed by Fabian and Dunlop (205, p.229) that having a smooth transition can aid in the child's attitude towards learning and encourage them to develop their learning. In the intervention it has been suggested that the transition between key stage 2 and key stage 3 be as continuous and smooth as possible to enable the learner to continue their learning at the next stage of their educational career. There is a counter argument made by that transitions however they happen help to develop a child's understanding that life is not a continuum and that there will be points in their lives where they will have to cope with a less than smooth transition (Page, 2000).

The intervention at the chosen transition point has been careful planned and make use of the multiagency links to endeavour to make the change as easy as possible. This is important to use all resources available to the school. (WAG, 2016). Within the transition the school will use the local authority and the secondary schools to aid in the development of suitable activities for the children during the taster days and weeks. This will help bridge the gap between what the children believe and what will happen when they get to secondary school, giving them a better emotional standing to deal with the transition. (Roffery & O'Reirden, 2001). Working together, the pupils, parents and teachers as a unit will help both primary and secondary school teachers to make the most fitting activities that will engage and interest the



children. Children must be engaged to learn and feel that they have ownership of their learning, transition points work well with this theory also. (Bloom, 2002). Felling emotionally and mentally secure at this stage helps tremendously with the ability to cope with the change ahead. (Porter, 2003). The taster days within the secondary school will allow the children to see the routines of their new school, meet the teachers, dinner ladies and other facilitators. This will ensure that the children feel comfortable in their new surroundings allowing them to continue with their learning experiences positively. (Donaldson, 2015). The taster week will be a full introduction into the world of secondary school. This will again allow any feelings of uncertainty to be addressed and the children will become familiar with their new surroundings.

The children will be introduced to a buddying system which worked well within the case study in Porthcawl, there was a significant improvement in the children's behaviour, attendance and attainment when they had this option. This again helps with their wellbeing and emotional state. Having a friend or a peer with you through this time allows you to have a connection with the previous stage of the child's education situation, making the feel comfortable and ready to accept changes. (Vygotsky, 1980). The wellbeing of the learners through this transition is paramount. Schools have been issued with government guidelines and Estyn to help them to aid the transition to comprehensive school. (Estyn, 2010). To further assist the children with their wellbeing there will be circle time activities within their class room where they will be able to share any thought or fears they may have. In addition a panel of former pupils will be invited to the school for a question and answer session. Peer teaching is advocated by Fisher (2005) and Briggs (1998).

The restructuring of the transition policy in this way within the school will give the pupils the most appropriate tools to cope with the emotional upheaval the children will face during the transitioning period. Hughes believes that the social aspect of transitioning is key and when the children feel socially and emotionally stable they cope with transitions in a much more positive way. (Hughes, 2011). Circle time with the children will also have social stories introduced as this has been shown to have a positive influence on a child's understanding of the transition and allows them to make links to their own lives. (Briody & McGarry, 2005).

Within the restructuring of the transition policy it has been considered carefully and many different strategies have been adopted to ensure a smooth transition for the year six pupils leaving the school. The wellbeing of the children has been escalated to be the main priority.

At the age of eleven children are going through many emotional and physical changes which can impact on their wellbeing. Having other complications or fears such as moving to secondary school is one aspect of their journey that facilitators and authorities can have a positive impact on, making the change seem less scary and more of an adventure.(West Et Al, 2010). As many schools have embarked on these transitioning activities it seems that introducing these into the subject school would be of great benefit and ensure the smooth transition between primary school and secondary school.

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Evaluation.

During this assignment I found it difficult to pin point what exactly was needed. There is an abundance of research for the transition between key stage 2 and key stage 3, most of which aim to improve the wellbeing of the child during this transitioning period. This was a very challenging activity for me. I understood what the presentation should entail but didn't feel that there were clear guidelines as to what should or shouldn't be included in the word count. The module as a whole has been insightful and has allowed me to explore deeper into what happens behind the scenes in schools and what costs they face with the lack of funding available at this current financial climate. It has opened my eyes to the fact that this is a crucial tie emotionally, socially and physically for the children and the some schools do not cater for this. It has been seen that the educational needs of the child is met in the majority of schools however it depends on which area you live in as to the emotional and social support you receive from your school.

Having completed the assignment it has sparked my interest into further developing my knowledge in this area to enable me to become a more rounded teacher in the future. It has helped with the QTS standards and I have now enrolled on a wellbeing course. I feel that with the introduction of the new curriculum there will be many more teachers and facilitators who will embark on a new way of teaching and understanding the children they teach. Wellbeing is one of the fundamental areas of learning, without good wellbeing and attitude learning cannot take place and this will inhibit the attainment of the learners. Ensuring that the children have a mental attitude and are prepared to face challenges their attainment is greatly improved.