

Transition from Primary to Post-Primary for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Challenges for the Pupil and Strategies for the Teacher



Participants' Booklet

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EXCERPTS FROM THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM REGARDING TRANSITION

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (1999) Primary School Curriculum Introduction, Dublin: The Stationary Office

Effective education for children with special needs involves a balanced provision of education and care, the nature of which can vary as the child develops and progresses. It is essential, therefore, that it is flexible enough to accommodate both ease of movement between special and mainstream education and the transition from primary to post-primary level.

p.29

Occasions in the child's life in which discontinuity can occur include the transition from home to school, from class to class, and from primary to post-primary school. To maintain continuity for children at all stages, and in order to circumvent unnecessary duplication or gaps in information, principals need to ensure that procedures for consultation and liaison are put in place

p.19

The transition from primary to post-primary education represents a significant and challenging step in the child's educational experience and may present difficulties for some children. Consistency of approach between the primary curriculum and junior cycle curricula, and the developmental nature of the learning experience they offer, should help to ease children's progress from one level to the other. Furthermore, the detailed statement of content in the primary curriculum, and the assessment procedures inherent in it, will greatly assist in facilitating communication between teachers and schools at both levels.

p.31

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE GUIDELINES REGARDING TRANSFER OF PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS TO POST- PRIMARY

Department of Education and Science (2007) Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs. Post Primary Guidelines, pp.46 - 48

2.4.4 Transfer of students to post-primary schools from primary schools

Most post-primary schools have established procedures with “feeder” primary schools that are designed to facilitate the transfer of students from primary to post-primary education. These procedures include visits by teachers to the other schools to gather and transfer information, circulating school brochures to prospective students, and open days for students and parents.

With regard to the admission of new students to the school, including students with special educational needs, a written policy should be drawn up in relation to the transmission and receipt of information that is generally regarded as confidential, such as personal details, results of school assessments, individual education plans, and professional reports. When a policy on the transmission of confidential information is being drawn up and implemented, care should be taken that the personal and statutory rights of the students are protected. Schools are advised that the agreement of parents should be obtained before the transmission between schools of confidential information, for example the results of school assessment tests, end-of-year school examinations, and individual education plans. Permission should be obtained from the student’s parents and from the relevant professionals before psychological and other professional reports are passed on to others.

Some examples of information that should be regarded within the school as confidential are listed above. Confidential information is information that is personal or private to the individual student and is not available to the general public. There is an expectation that confidential information will be handled carefully within the school and that it will be shared only with those who have legitimate reasons for having the information. There is also an expectation that those who have access to confidential information will use the information only for the purposes and within the scope for which they have received the information. Finally, it is expected that those who have access to confidential information will make that information available to others in limited circumstances only: when there is good reason for passing on the information and when the approval of the interested persons has been granted in advance.

Because of the nature of the information that may be involved, schools are advised to act sensitively in relation to the transmission of information that may be personal or private and to operate in accordance with any guidance that is provided by the Department of Education and Science, the National Educational Psychological Service, the school

management authorities, and such agencies as the National Council for Special Education and the National Educational Welfare Board.

Moving Up: The Experiences of First-Year Students in Post-Primary Education (NCCA, 2004a) is a report of a study of transfer to post-primary school that was carried out for the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. The report contains a series of recommendations for schools in relation to the admission and inclusion of new students. These recommendations are summarised below. The implementation of these recommendations is likely to be as valuable for students with special educational needs as for students without such special needs. In the planning for first-year students, consideration of the following curriculum and support structures is recommended

- pre-entry contact between the post-primary school, incoming students, and their parents or guardians
- a good information flow between the feeder primary school and the post-primary school, particularly in relation to students' achievement, learning strengths, and material covered at primary level
- an understanding by subject teachers of the teaching and learning approaches that characterise students' experiences in primary school in order to help them to make connections with and build on the learning that has taken place in primary school
- open days, parents' evenings, induction events, and the provision of class tutors and student mentors
- a positive school climate that encourages good relations among students and between students and teachers
- mixed-ability grouping in first year
- a clear and effective anti-bullying policy
- the availability for all students of a variety of subjects, including subjects with a practical emphasis
- a range of "taster" subjects offered as part of first year
- the careful monitoring of students' progress to identify those who need extra support
- the provision to parents and guardians of accessible information on all aspects of first year.

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH GENERAL LEARNING DISABILITIES REGARDING TRANSITION

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2007) Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities: Introduction, pp. 5 – 6

Planning for transition from primary to post-primary education

The focus of planning for transition should be on preparing for change before it happens. Three phases can be identified in this process of planning for the transition of students with general learning disabilities from primary to post-primary education:

Communication, Consultation, and Consolidation.

- **Communication**

Ongoing contact between the schools involved, whether mainstream primary schools or special schools, and the post-primary mainstream school is vital. This contact may be part of ongoing liaison with feeder primary schools. The SENO, in communication with the principal, parents, and with support from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), will plan how best to support the transition and help the school to prepare to meet the learning needs of students prior to their arrival in the school.

- **Consultation**

Once the school becomes aware that a student with general learning disabilities will be transferring from a primary or a special school, a process of consultation needs to take place to gather information about the learning and other needs of the student. This information may be sourced from Individual Education Plans (IEPs), NEPS assessment reports, from parents/guardians, from social services where relevant, and from the school from which the student is transferring. In consultation with the SENO, the support, time, resources and personnel that have been available to date can be ascertained and the support which will be available to the school for the student beginning junior cycle can be planned for. Other considerations at this stage of the planning process could include the possibility of developing a buddy system for first year students use of withdrawal and in-class support as appropriate sharing of information and feedback between learning support staff and other staff involved how homework can be supported building in time to communicate with parents. Key personnel in this phase include all staff with responsibility for special education and those with particular responsibility for first year students (tutor or year head). Towards the end of this stage, all teaching and ancillary staff that will be in contact with the student in their first or subsequent years in post-primary school should be informed and involved.

- **Consolidation**

This third phase involves the bringing together and co-ordination of the relevant aspects of the school plan and ensuring that the desired outcomes are achieved prior to the arrival of the student in the school. The plan will need to be monitored and developed throughout the student's school career. This is consistent with the idea of school development planning as a cyclic rather than a linear process. Once the student arrives in the school the communication and consultation phases are consolidated within the ongoing planning process

EXCERPT FROM EDUCATION FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ACT 2004

9.—(1) An education plan under *section 3* or *8* shall be in such form as the Council may determine from time to time and specify in a notice published, in such manner as it thinks fit, for the purposes of this subsection.

(2) **The matters to be specified in an education plan under *section 3* or *8* shall include—**

- (a) the nature and degree of the child's abilities, skills and talents;
- (b) the nature and degree of the child's special educational needs and how those needs affect his or her educational development;
- (c) the present level of educational performance of the child;
- (d) the special educational needs of the child;
- (e) the special education and related support services to be provided to the child to enable the child to benefit from education and to participate in the life of the school;
- (f) where appropriate, the special education and related services to be provided to the child to enable the child to effectively make the transition from pre-school education to primary school education;
- (g) **where appropriate, the special education and related support services to be provided to the child to enable the child to effectively make the transition from primary school education to post-primary school education,** and
- (h) the goals which the child is to achieve over a period not exceeding 12 months.

EXCERPTS FROM GUIDELINES ON THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN PROCESS NCSE, 2006.

(1) Stages of Transition

Primary School to Post-Primary (Section 4.3 Particular Stages of Transition
Page 51)

- The school organising the departure should make contact with the SENO and the post-primary school.
- In anticipation of the transition, the final review of the student's IEP in the current school should include, if possible, someone from the receiving school.
- The receiving school should read all assessment reports well in advance so that applications can be made to the SENO for Special Needs Assistant support and resource teaching etc., to ensure successful transition into post-primary or SES. Updated assessments and recommendations should be forwarded with other reports by the principal of the new school to the local SENO as part of the general application for resources.
- Support services and health personnel should plan what equipment is needed and discuss mobility issues for those with physical and sensory disabilities.

(2) Example of Education Plan from NCSE that refers to transition located on pages 79 -80. This IEP relates to a pupil that is in sixth class with Special Educational Needs. There is an explicit section that pertains to transition planning.

Transition planning:

'Oisín and his father to visit St Kieran's in May. Mr. Jackson to liaise with Mrs. Maloney in St Kieran's about Oisín sitting the entrance examinations. Ms Smith to liaise with SENO and NEPS psychologist about possibility of Oisín using a lap-top in secondary school' p. 80

BEN'S STORY

AN EXAMPLE OF HOW PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY TEACHERS CAN WORK TOGETHER

From: [Opening the Spectrum - Insights into Working with Pupils on the Autistic Spectrum](#). A Special Educational Needs Cross-Border Professional Exchange Programme under PEACE II. Pages 17 – 18

http://www.sess.ie/ess/Files/autism_crossborder.pdf (4.79MB)

Ben is transferring from primary to secondary school. He had ongoing sensory problems with the school bell. He could tell the time and he had a watch. What follows illustrates the interaction between the two teachers (primary school teacher = italics, secondary school teacher = bold) and the pupil (standard text).

I'm going to a new school in September.
I'm worried about the bell.
Will the bell be louder in my new school?

I don't actually know.
I'll be with you when we visit your new school.
Let's ask the headmaster when we get there.
It's not really the noise he's worried about.
It's the number of bells he will have to cope with.
I must tell Mrs. Moore (secondary school teacher) about Ben's fear of the bell ringing.
I wonder what we can do about this?

The two teachers meet

Ben has had a lot of problems getting used to the school bell. It took him over two years to become comfortable with it. We'll also need to promise to warn him a few minutes before the bell rings.

We'll try to schedule the visit so that he arrives between bells and make sure he's not in the corridor when the bell rings.

Issues

The bell was not a problem for Ben on this occasion but it was a continuing issue for the first few months at his new school. He continued to need reassurance that he would be told when the bell was going to ring. He would endeavour not to be in the corridor when a bell was likely to ring. Initially if he was inadvertently caught in the corridor, he would put his hands over his ears and run quickly to the home-room. Every time this happened Mrs. Moore would talk to him about the bell and his reaction to it. Gradually he became more

comfortable with the bell ringing and by the end of the first year he didn't mention it any more.

Key learning points from Ben's story

In many situations faced by children with ASD, there is no 'quick fix'! Often the solution is quite a simple one, but it does not become clear until teachers have worked through a lengthy process of experiences and examined reactions to those experiences.

Ben visits his new school with Teacher 1 and meets Mrs. Moore

Hello Ben, it's nice to see you.

Hello Mrs. Moore. When's the bell going to ring?

It's going to ring at 11.30.

How loud is it going to be?

I remember when I was

in your school the bell sounded just the same as the bell in my school.

We'll be inside the classroom when the bell rings.

It sounds quieter in there. We'll be with you.

We'll tell you when the bell is going to ring.

Will you really?

We promise!

We promise!

APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE USE

It is important that we use appropriate labels and terminology when referring to people who have a disability or who have special educational needs. These guidelines may be of help.

GUIDELINE 1: See the person, not the disability.

Do you need to use a label or a category at all in describing this pupil? His / her first name is the most important label he / she has. Use this in the first instance. Do not make the child's disability his / her predominant or only characteristic.

GUIDELINE 2: If using a label, use people-first language.

Terminology has changed over the years. Whereas in the past, the disability may have taken precedence, it is now generally accepted that we use 'people-first' language. This means we say:

<i>Person with a disability</i>	rather than	<i>Disabled person</i>
<i>Child with autism</i>	rather than	<i>Autistic child</i>
<i>Person with mental illness</i>	rather than	<i>Crazy / mad / depressed person</i>

GUIDELINE 3: Use currently accepted terminology.

Some labels that were used in the past are no longer deemed to be acceptable, because they have been seen as offensive. Use the currently accepted terminology.

Examples:

<i>Person with General Learning Disability</i>	has replaced	<i>Mental Handicap / Mentally Handicapped</i>
<i>Person with a Visual Impairment</i>	has replaced	<i>Blind person</i>
<i>Physical Disability</i>	has replaced	<i>Cripple / Spastic</i>
<i>Wheelchair user</i>	has replaced	<i>Wheelchair bound</i>

Note 3(a): People who are *deaf* may wish to retain this term, rather than the term *hearing Impairment*

GUIDELINE 4: Be sensitive to the feelings of others.

Avoid making fun of or cracking jokes about people with disabilities.

Avoid making offensive or derogatory remarks.

Avoid using the phrase 'suffers from' if describing someone who has a disability.

Treat people with disabilities as you would treat all other members of society – with respect and dignity.

LESSON PLAN

Aim: To develop self awareness, positive self esteem and reflect on achievements to date (This can be linked into Social Personal and Health Education – SPHE). Could be utilised as part of an introduction to transition activities / lessons for pupils.

Stages of Lesson	Resources Required
<p>Introduction Teacher will explain that this is the first lesson in preparing the pupils for move to their new school(s). In this lesson the teacher will be looking at achievements up to now so that pupils can feel good about themselves. Teacher discusses how feeling good about oneself – self esteem – is important at any time of change (give examples e.g. starting a new job)</p>	<p>On the Blackboard, lesson title – <i>‘Moving on to a new school, what have I achieved up to now’</i></p>
<p>Game Start by encouraging pupils to think about their achievements. Elicit some responses. The game starts by the class making three claps, then the first person mentions any one achievement e.g. listening/ learning to read/ playing basketball etc. The class then claps 3 times again and the next pupil mentions an achievement. The game continues in this manner. If a pupil cannot think they can just say the word achievement.</p>	
<p>Brainstorming and Mindmapping Elicit from pupils what are the most important things that they have learned in primary school and in life up to now. Create a mind map of responses on the blackboard. Discuss what of the responses are the most important. Perhaps pupils could put the top three in order of merit e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd</p>	<p>On the blackboard ‘ Important things I have learned’</p>
<p>Silent Statements Stand up and cross the circle if... You remember learning how to make a cup of tea You remember learning the alphabet You remember learning how to tie your shoes You remember learning how to own up if you did something wrong You remember learning how to ask for help if you cant do something by yourself You remember finding something easy to learn You remember learning how to be kind You remember finding something difficult to learn</p>	
<p>Discussion Teacher Teacher reads the following excerpt from a pupil who cannot think of any achievement <i>‘The teacher was asking us in school today what we have</i></p>	

<p><i>achieved in primary school and I couldn't think of a thing. I can't do long division and my spellings are terrible. Everyone makes fun of me when I read out loud and I'm no good at sports or art. When we play the tin whistle I can't even keep up with the class. I am so thick! I wonder would anyone be able to tell me if I am good at anything?</i></p> <p>Questions for class</p> <p>What does achievement mean to this pupil? What other skills can one include under achievement – elicit kindness/listening etc. Brainstorm and record on blackboard (elicit achievements not solely academic) How does this pupil feel about themselves? Etc</p>	
<p>Recap and Finish</p> <p>Each pupil thinks of a quality one needs to be happy in life and have good self esteem. Teacher gives examples. Each child is given a paper petal to put on a flower on the wall. Each petal will represent a quality the child would like to give to their peers. Each child writes the quality on the petal and as they (in turn) stick the petal on the flower says I give my class..... (kindness/joy/sharing etc)</p>	<p>Paper flower petals.</p>

Adapted from: Cowling A. and Vine P. (2001) Bridging the Circle: Transition Through Quality Circle Time. Lesson Plans for years 6 and 7, Wiltshire: Heron Press

SIXTH CLASS AUDIT

This simple activity will give the teacher a picture of what knowledge the pupil has already in relation to post-primary school.

Complete the Grid on this Page. There are four boxes in the grid.
You can fill each grid with words, sentences, pictures or a mixture of all of these

Here are some tips

1) I expect

(In this box you will be filling in what you think your new school will be like. For example, more homework)

2) I feel

(In this box you will be filling in how you feel about the move to your new school. For example, happy, excited.)

3) Things I am sure of

(In this box fill in what you know for sure about your new school. For example colour of uniform, is it a boys/girls/mixed school)

4) Things I am not sure of

(In this box fill in things you are not sure of. For example what time schools starts, where will I keep my books?)

I expect	I feel
Things I'm sure about	Things I'm not sure about

QUESTION TIME

This activity gives pupils the opportunity to ask and discuss possible questions they may have regarding post-primary.



Ask your pupils to think of questions that they would like to have answered about post primary schools. Give some examples. Distribute pieces of paper which the pupils can write their questions on. It may be a good idea to let pupils think this over and write the questions as a homework exercise so that they won't feel on the spot. Have a question box in the classroom where pupils can place their questions. Every day pick out a few questions and answer them. Brainstorm with the class what the possible answer/solution to each question is and add/rectify information if necessary.

Convey to the pupils that if they think of new questions they can be put in the box at any time.

FEELING FINE or FEELING FUNNY

This is a circle time activity wherein which pupils are given the opportunity to voice how they feel about the move to post-primary level.

Circle Time is a great opportunity to address fears/concerns/excitement etc that pupils have in relation to transition. Possible topics may relate to:

1. Friendship – losing friends, making new friends etc
2. Bullying
3. New opportunities
4. Developing self esteem etc

These can be successfully incorporated into the SPHE programme.



In a circle pass a ball/object. Only the pupil with the ball/object can speak. No negative comments towards other pupils allowed. Everyone must listen to each other. Pupils have the option to 'Pass' if they do not wish to comment. The activity simply involves the pupil saying how they feel about entering a new school. Words will suffice initially. The activity can be extended if you wish pupils to discuss their feelings in more depth. It can also lead into a more detailed lesson in relation to transition.

- Encourage a variety of responses from the pupils when dealing with the area of transition - pictures, mime, drama, oral, written etc.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

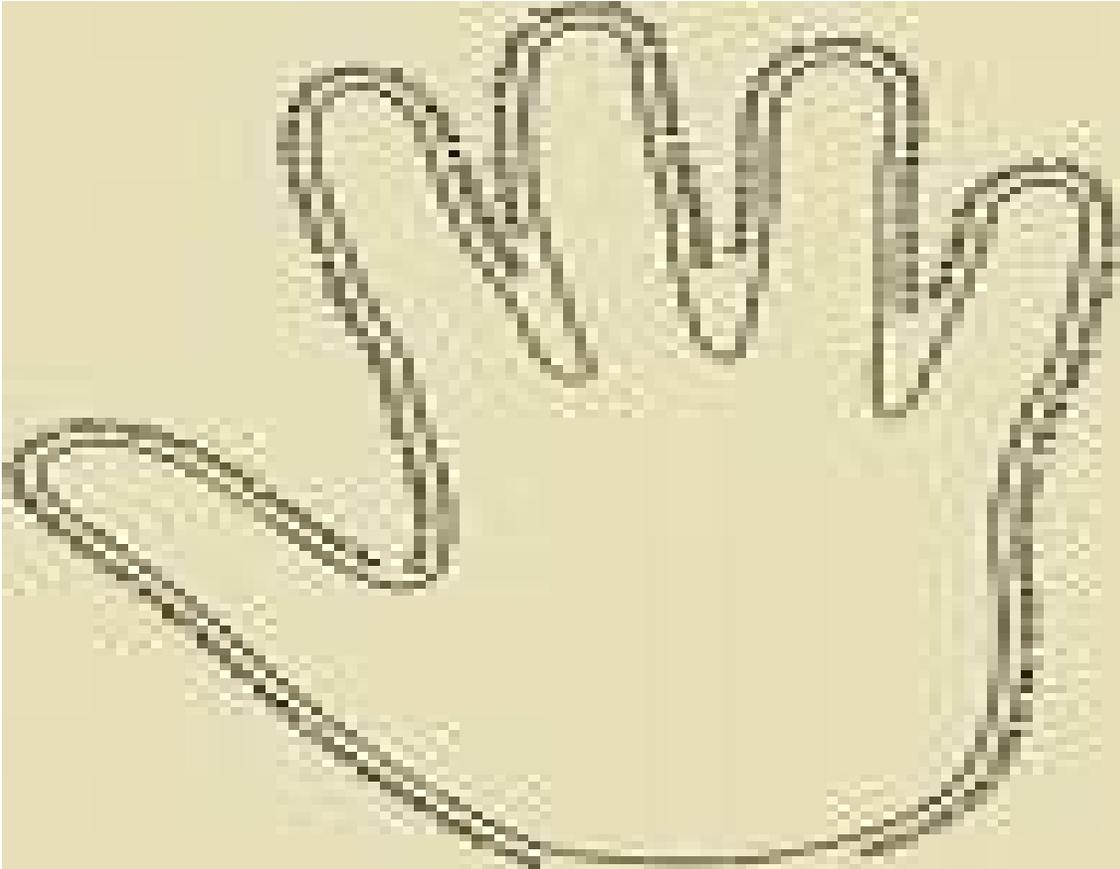
This activity opens up discussion as to the 'horror' stories pupils in primary school hear in relation to post-primary and lends itself to one clarifying the actuality in these instances.

Everyone hears stories of what secondary school is like, maybe you have heard things from your friends, your family or maybe you read it in a book. Sometimes you may hear things that make you think that secondary school will not be a very nice place. These stories are usually not true, they are made up, and they are false. Think about and talk with your class about the stories that you will read below, they are all FALSE, and figure out that the TRUE thing to say might be.

FALSE	TRUE
 <p>The school is so massive you will get lost all the time and no one will tell you where to go.</p>	
<p>All first years get their heads flushed down the toilet</p> 	
 <p>The teachers will not let you ask questions if you cannot understand the work</p> 	
<p>If you make a mistake in your homework or cannot do it you get detention</p> 	
 <p>You will have 4 hours of homework every night</p>	
<p>It will be really hard to make friends because everyone else will know each other</p> 	

A HELPING HAND

This activity will aid pupils in becoming more aware of the possible sources of help when they enter the post-primary setting



Elicit from your class what kind of help there may be in the new post primary school when they arrive? (Brainstorm) Talk with your class about the many forms of help that will be in post primary such as year heads, class teachers, friends, principal, vice principal, other pupils, older brothers and sisters etc.

Get the pupil to write different sources on each finger. They can accompany this with written/visual descriptions.

A concept map is also a useful idea in relation to this topic.

GETTING TO MY NEW SCHOOL

This activity enables pupils to consider and discuss how they will be travelling to their new school, what route will be taken etc. Access to software in relation to route-planning may also be utilised in discussing this activity in class.

Think about how you will travel to your new school in September. You may need to get up earlier to get there on time. If you are getting a bus, you will need to know where the bus stop is. If you are walking or cycling, do you know the safest way? Ask at home which way you will be travelling to your new school and fill out the information below. Only fill in the information that deals with how you will be travelling. Ignore the others.

Walking 	Cycling 	Travelling by Car 	Travelling by Bus/Luas 	Travelling by Train//Dart 
Do you know the way to walk to school?	Do you know the way to cycle to school?	How long will it take to get to school?	Where is the stop where you wait in the morning?	Do you know what platform you will be leaving from before school?
How long will it take?	Is there a place in school where you can put your bike?	Who will be driving the car?	Where is the stop where you will wait after school?	Do you know what platform you will be leaving from after school?
Will there be anyone walking with you?	Will your cycling helmet fit in your locker?	Where will the driver drop you off?	Have you a bus timetable?	How will you get to the stations?
Have you walked to the school before?	Will there be other students cycling with you?	Where will the driver collect you?	What is the number/name that will be on the bus?	Where will have to pay for your ticket?
	How long does it take to cycle to school?	Do you know how to walk to school from where you will be dropped off and collected from?	How much is each journey?	How much is each journey?
			How long does the journey take?	How long does the journey take?

SCHOOL UNIFORM

This activity encourages the pupil to find out about the uniform that they will be required to wear in their new school. Pupils should be encouraged to observe the uniform on open nights and find out if any items of clothing are forbidden e.g. earrings

It is important that you start your new school by wearing the correct uniform. The uniform will be different to the one that you are wearing now. The clothes for PE will also be different. There will also be things that you cannot wear. You can find this information out on the school open night, from the school journal or by asking people you know that are in the school.

Fill in as much as you can in the worksheet below about what your new uniform will be like and what you are not allowed to wear. You can draw pictures or write words. The choice is yours.

What I will be wearing next September. <u>My New Uniform</u>		
<u>School Clothes</u>	<u>PE Clothes</u>	<u>What I Cannot Wear</u>

WHAT DOES IT ALL STAND FOR?

This activity familiarises pupils with possible abbreviations that may appear on post-primary timetables, new subjects are also referred to. This activity could also be used as a springboard to introduce subject related terminology as part of oral language development within the curriculum.

The words in the first column are a quick and short way to write subjects in a timetable. Can you figure out what they stand for? The answers are all in bold writing. Fill in the ones you know. The first one is done for you.

Metalwork Science French History Business Studies German Geography Religion Metalwork Social, Personal and Health Education Woodwork Religion Civic, Social and Political Education Maths Metalwork Gaeilge (Irish) Woodwork
--

SCI	Science
HIS	
GEOG	
FRE	
REL	
MAT	
BUS	
W.WK	
WOOD	
M.WK	
METAL	
GAE	
PE	
CSPE	
SPEH	
GER	
MUS	
ART	

TIMETABLE

A sample timetable which highlights the complexities pupils may have with deciphering post-primary timetables.

Time	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.
9.00 – 9.40	ENG RM 6	GAE RM 6	HIS  RM 6	METAL ROOM 20	PE GYM
9.40 – 10.20	SCI LAB 1	RE RM 6	SCI LAB 1	METAL ROOM 20	ART ROOM 14
10.20 – 10.55	HIS  RM 6	MAT RM 6	MUS MUSIC RM	GAE RM 6	MAT ROOM 6
Break					
11.10 – 11.50	GAE ROOM 6	ENG RM 6	MAT ROOM 6	GEOG GEOG RM	RE ROOM 6
11.50 – 12.25	MUS MUSIC RM	FRE ROOM 6	ENG RM 6	ENG RM 6	MUS MUSIC RM
12.25 – 13.05	SPHE ROOM 6	PE GYM	CSPE ROOM 6	MAT ROOM 6	ENG RM 7
Lunch					
13.45 – 14.25	MAT ROOM 6	BUS ROOM 11	FRE RM 6	ART ROOM 14	FRE LANG LAB
14.25 – 15.05	FRE RM 6	ART ROOM 14	BUS ROOM 11	BUS ROOM 11	GEOG GEOG RM
15.05 – 15.45	GEOG RM 6	HIS RM 6 	RE LIBRARY	SCI RM 10	GAE RM 6

Many activities/questions can be generated from such timetables (preparation and induction), for example:-

- How many days a week do this pupil /you have Irish?
- What day will the pupil/you need to wear your PE gear into school?
- Are all the science lessons in a lab?
- What subject has a double class?
- How long is break?

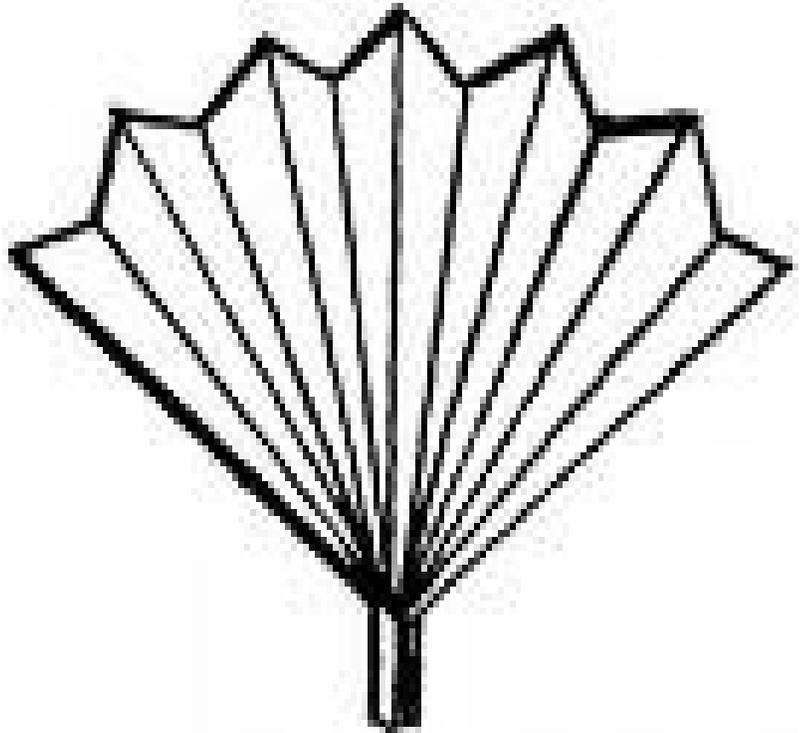
Timetables can be generated to include the names of teachers, visual clues for subjects and for some pupils a good strategy is to colour code the timetable in tandem with colour coding subject books and copies. It may be a useful idea to get sample timetables from the prospective schools to which pupils will be going.

A "FAN" OF SUPPORT

Activity to assist in building self-esteem.

In this activity pupils share appreciative comments about each other.

- Give each pupil a piece of paper.
- Have pupils make a fan by folding the paper back and forth into equal sections. Once fans are folded, have pupils write their names on the top section, unfold their fan, and pass it to a classmate.
- The classmate writes something he or she really appreciates about the pupil in the section immediately below the pupil's name, folds the section under so the comment is hidden, and passes the fan to another pupil.
- Pupils pass the fans until each section has a positive statement. When completed, fans are returned to the pupil whose name is at the top.
- This activity works well in developing the pupils sense of self worth and self esteem



SAMPLE LEAVING CERTIFICATE

Example of a certificate presented to pupils upon completing primary level.



This certificate is proudly presented to

For completing primary school at

Teacher _____

Principal _____

LESSON PLAN

Aim: To enable the pupils to feel positive and supported in their new school. Useful as part of induction plan.

Stages of Lesson	Resources Required
<p>Welcome</p> <p>Explain that this lesson will be conducted similar to circle time. Explain rules of circle time. Brief overview of content.</p>	
<p>Game</p> <p>Pupils to introduce themselves and say something about themselves. The trick with this activity is that they have to introduce the pupils on their right first: ‘This is Deirdre. She likes going on holidays. I am Jimmy and I like machinery’.</p> <p>(other activities in this transition pack in relation to getting to know classmates may also be used here)</p>	<p>On the blackboard write, ‘<i>getting to know each other</i>’.</p>
<p>Pair work</p> <p>In pairs discuss the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What I have enjoyed so far about my new school is... 2. What I am worried about in my new school is... <p>(write down on blackboard, link concerns into the discussion aspect of today’s lesson later on)</p>	<p>Blackboard to record responses</p>
<p>Silent Statements</p> <p>Stand up and cross the circle if...</p> <p>You have lost your way in the school so far (and congratulate pupils for getting to this class)</p> <p>You didn’t know anyone in your class when you arrived</p> <p>You have learned the name of another pupil</p> <p>You like the grown up feeling of being in a new school</p> <p>You enjoy having lots of different teachers</p> <p>You crossed the circle because someone else did!</p> <p>You stayed in your seat because someone else did!</p> <p>You think you are beginning to find your way about the school</p> <p>You had problems understanding the timetable</p> <p>You are more tired than you were in primary school</p> <p>You know the names and faces of all your new teachers</p>	
<p>Discussion</p> <p>Can we help each other solve our problems?</p> <p>Going through the silent statements encourage discussion as to what difficulties may arise and how we can solve them. Pupils should be encouraged to add other ‘problems’ which may have occurred. Link into issues that arose at pair work stage of lesson. At the end summarise the various courses of action.</p>	<p>On the blackboard ‘<i>Helping each other – finding solutions</i>’</p>
<p>Recap and Finish</p> <p>Something positive I have learned today is (this is best done in a round getting pupils to clap twice as a group before each response)</p>	

Adapted from: Cowling, A. and Vine P. (2001) Bridging the Circle: Transition through Quality Circle Time. Lesson Plans for years 6 and 7, Wiltshire: Heron Press

WHO

An icebreaker activity to help pupils get to know their peers upon entering post-primary.

This is a great activity for pupils to get to know and interact with their peers



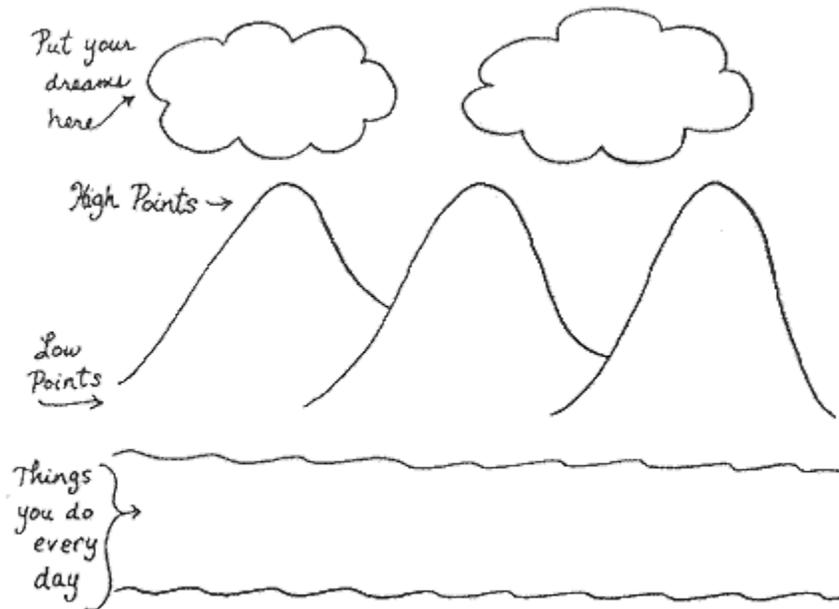
Directions

- Explain to pupils that they will be moving around the classroom to fill in this chart.
- Each pupil will have their own chart
- Read out the questions
- Explain that they have to try not to get the same persons name on the sheet more than once (model on blackboard)
- Explain that if they don't get it completed that is ok
- Get pupils to move around and find the person who matches the description in the box. Ask them to sign their name in the relevant box.
- Discuss

Has brown eyes?	Is the youngest in their family?	Is an only child?	Has a dog?
Likes GAA?	Is wearing a tie?	Likes Chinese food?	Has freckles?
Can swim?	Watches 'Home and Away'?	Has blue eyes?	Has an earring?
Is wearing a ring?	Has a cat?	Is the eldest in their family?	Follows Liverpool?
Has a fish?	Was not born in this county?	Is taller than me?	Was in my primary school?

GETTING TO KNOW ME AND OTHERS

An activity where pupils discuss and reveal information about who they are.



Activities and strategies:

1. Discuss some of highs and lows (dreams and disappointments) in a general sense that people have in life, fill in examples on the master sheet (see above) (answers can be written or pictorial)
2. Ask pupils to think of some of their own disappointments and rewards (highs and lows) and to either write them down/draw them on a sheet like the image above.
3. Pupils look over their activity sheets, thinking of the stories behind each of the things they've written. Invite pupils to share ideas with a partner/in groups/with the class.

GETTING TO KNOW MY CLASS

An activity where pupils get to know their peers.



Team Building Activity

Objective:

As a result of participating in this activity pupils learn each others names and get to know each other at a deeper level in a shorter period of time than is often possible with other types of group introductory activities.

Time Required:

At least 15-20 minutes for the question & answer portion, plus 5 minutes for reflection at the end. It can also work well if you divide this activity into shorter rounds of questions & answers between other activities.

Directions:

- 1 • Have pupils seated or standing in a circle, so that everyone is facing everyone else.
- 2 • Use the questions listed below to begin the activity, or use other questions of your own.
- 3 • Ask the first question, and ask for a volunteer to answer first. The first volunteer should say his/her full name, and then respond to the question. After the first person gives his/her response, the next person in the circle says his/her name and responds to the same question. After the second person has responded, the third person responds, and so forth until all participants have said their names and responded to the question. You may incorporate a pass option if the pupil feels uncomfortable with the question.
- 4 • Repeat the process with as many other questions as time allows.
- 5 • End the activity and evaluate how well the objective was accomplished by asking several of the reflection items. Ask all participants to quietly think to themselves how they would answer as each reflection item is asked, Then ask a few volunteers to share their responses with the group. The reflection/processing are the most important part of the activity. It allows participants to “process” and evaluate what they did in the activity, and to realise how they and the group benefited and the extent to which they achieved the objective.

Questions (Samples)

- 1 1. Where are you from? Tell me one thing about the place?
- 2 2. What is your favourite television programme?
- 3 3. What do you most like to do in your free time (may need to give some examples of hobbies, sports etc.)
- 4 4. If you could have anything you wanted to eat, what would it be?
- 5 5. What do you want to be/do when you finish school?
- 6 6. What one day in your life would you like to live over?
- 7 7. Who was your best friend in primary school and why?
- 8 8. What is the greatest problem in the world today?
- 9 9. In what ways are you like your family? ...different from them?
- 10 10. What is one of the best things you've ever done?
- 11 11. If you could invent or discover one new thing, what would it be?
- 12 12. When do you feel most lonely? ...happiest?
- 13 13. What is one thing about you that you have not shared yet, that others would find interesting?

14 **Reflection/Processing Items:** (*Important! Be sure to ask several of these questions at the end of the activity.*)

- 1 1. About which person did you learn the most? ...the least?

- 2 3. Which answer surprised you most?
- 3 4. Which person do you think/feel is most like you? Which seems least like you?
- 4 5. In what ways did this activity help you get to know your class better?

FINDING MY WAY AROUND

This activity not only aids the pupil in familiarising themselves with the school layout, it also familiarises themselves with their peers as they work in groups.



Instructions

- (a) You need to find each of the places that are listed.
- (b) You will be working with a group to do this. A teacher/senior pupil will be with you.
- (c) When you find each place tick its box (✓) and draw it in on the map.
- (d) You have to be back in class for 10 o'clock



- (e) This is **NOT** a race



- (f) If you get lost don't worry . Look at your map or ask other pupils

Rooms to find

Did I find it? ✓

My Home Class	
The Gym	
The nearest toilets to my home-class	
The Canteen	
The Principal's Office	
The Library	
The Staff Room	
The Football Pitch	
The Science Room	
The Music Room	

MAP (Have a copy of a map of the school attached)

TIMES TO REMEMBER

This activity may assist pupils in discussing, locating and recording the various times that relate to their new school.

Now that you are in your new school there are certain times that you will really need to remember. It may be a bit tricky for the first few weeks as times are different from your primary school but you will get used to it. Fill out the information sheet below. You can do this in pairs. Most of the information is in your journal. If you have any problems or questions ask the teacher.



WHAT DO I NEED?

This information grid provides the pupil with an information sheet as to what they need for each specific class once it has been completed.

Fill in the information on the chart

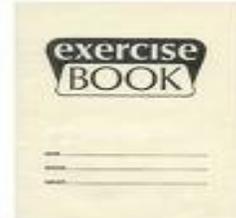
SUBJECT	NAME OF BOOK AND WORKBOOK	OTHER THINGS I NEED FOR THIS CLASS
 Irish		
 English		
 Maths		
 History		
 Religion		
 CSPE		
 French		
 Woodwork		
 Science		

GETTING ORGANISED

This is a brief questionnaire which the pupil can revisit as an aid to improving their organisational skills.

It is important to be organised. You have lots more things to remember now than when you were in primary school. These questions will help you out.

1. Is your name on all your books and copies?



get



2. Is your name on your uniform ?(remember clothes can mixed up at PE)

3. Do you fill in your homework journal every day?

Do you fill in your homework



4. Do you check your homework journal every night?

5. Check your timetable every morning before you go to school to make sure you have all that will need for the day packed in your schoolbag?



you

(Books, equipment, PE gear)



6. Remember you don't have to bring in all your books everyday just the ones you need for the subjects that day?

7. If you are having problems let someone know. Remember lots of pupils find first year difficult but people will help if you tell them.



POP QUIZ

This activity works well as a means of assessing whether the pupil knows how to react in various situations that may present during the school day.



(Can be done individually or as a class/small group activity)

1. What do I do if I feel sick when at school?
2. Is there a telephone I can use in the school?
3. Can I use my mobile phone?
4. What is the name of the Principal?
5. Who is my year head?
6. Who is my class tutor?
7. What time does school start?
8. What time does school finish?
9. Do I have a half day?
10. What do I do if I am late for school?
11. Can I leave school at lunch time?
12. What do I do if I forget my PE gear?
13. What happens if I get detention?
14. What day(s) do I have to bring my PE gear?

PLANNING FOR TRANSITION

Template for schools which may be utilised to structure transition tasks, correspondences

etc.

	Pre-Contact	Induction Activities	Extra Materials	Curriculum	Pupil Support
Task(s)					
Who/ When					
Materials and Resources					
Evaluation					

Transition Audit (Sample)

School Name:

Date:

Audit Committee:

DOES YOUR SCHOOL:

	YES	NO	DETAILS
- already have a transition plan?			e.g. It is formal/informal and detail
- have specific personnel in charge of transition?			Who
- have activities for pupils to prepare for transition/that related to orientation and induction?			Describe
- have activities for parents to prepare for transition/ orientation and induction?			Describe
- invite teachers from feeder schools to orientation? / Encourage staff to attend orientation?			Detail
- exchange records prior to the pupil transferring			Detail e.g. who, what, when, where
- make use of transition records?			Detail e.g. how
- have in place a structure that enables primary-post primary discussion in relation to curriculum?			Describe e.g. formal/informal and detail
- provide pupils, parents and teachers with <u>essential</u> and <u>timely</u> information in relation to orientation activities, school organisation, school curriculum etc.			Describe e.g. having a prospectus/information leaflet for pupils and/or parents
- have an awareness of prior learning and			Detail

curriculum covered by the pupil?			
- have information about transition activities at other schools that could be adopted for your school?			Cite examples

Reading and Resources

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- Nicholls, G. and Gardner, J. (1999) Pupils in Transition: Moving between Key Stages, London: Routledge
- Snedden, F. and Whithorn, S. (2004) Moving Up ... Ready or Not: Primary to Secondary Transition Resource, Blackburn: Educational Printing Services Limited
- Starting High School :Orientation Activities for New Students { Printed and distributed by Outside the Box, www.otb.ie}
- Software: 99½ Top Tips for Easy Transition and Timetable Maker (both available from www.transitionsoftware.co.uk)
- Speechmark, Moving on up {A game for 10 – 12 years, the theme of this game is 'Surviving Transition'} Speechmark

- Smyth, E., McCoy, S. and Darmody, M. (2004) Moving Up: The Experiences of First-Year Students in Post-Primary Education, Dublin: The Liffey Press in association with the ESRI
- Thorpe, P. Moving from primary to secondary school: guidelines for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders ISBN: 978 1 89928 090 2. Available from www.nas.org.uk