



CASE STUDY REPORT

A transition pledge to pupils and parents

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This study was originally published in 2009 as part of the 'What Works Well' initiative, part of the National Strategies for Education in England.

Abstract

Background: The purpose of the study was to devise a pledge for pupils and parents regarding transfers from primary to secondary school, and measure its success through surveys and questionnaires.

Aims: The main aim of this development work was to create a Charter School Transition Pledge to support pupils and parents during the transfer from primary to secondary school, and to measure its success through surveys and questionnaires.

Methods: The participants included pupils, parents/carers, teachers, headteachers, senior leadership teams, subject leaders, and school improvement partners. The methods used included consultation with pupils, teachers, partner primary schools and parents/carers, liaison between pupils, teachers and parents, and using increased understanding to inform planning for teaching and learning.

Findings: The main findings are that the Charter School Transition Pledge was successful in increasing pupil confidence and improving the chances of pupil progress. It was measured through surveys and questionnaires from pupils, parents/carers, and teachers.

Implications: The findings suggest that increased communication between schools, pupils, and parents/carers can lead to increased confidence and engagement in learning, resulting in improved pupil progress.

This abstract was generated by Camtree using a large language model (LLM) and added to the original report in 2023.

Keywords: Secondary education; Transfer and transition

Introduction

What were your reasons for doing this type of development work?

A group of local authorities have been working with London Challenge to devise a pledge for pupils and parents regarding transfers from primary to secondary school. Charter School took this and customised it, incorporating ideas from their home/school agreement and the school's ethos.

We believe that a successful transfer is important if pupils are to continue their progress from the beginning of Year 7.

Watch the Teachers TV video of this case study:

Who might find this case study useful?

- Carer
- Head of school improvement
- Headteacher
- Middle leader
- National Strategies consultant
- Parent
- Pupil
- Senior leadership team (SLT)
- SIP (School Improvement Partner)
- Subject leader
- Teacher

Description

What specific curriculum area, subject or aspect did you intend to have impact on?

- Transfer and transition

How did you intend to impact on pupil learning?

We introduced the Charter School Transition Pledge (see below).

Where transfer from primary to secondary school has been a positive experience for children they are more likely to engage with learning from the start of Year 7. Increased pupil confidence and greater curriculum and pedagogical continuity improves the chances of pupil progress.

What were your success criteria?

We felt that the key people to judge the success of the pledge were the pupils and their parents.

The success was measured at our first Academic Review Day when parents/carers were asked to complete a survey asking them about their thoughts about the Pledge in general and how they felt it had supported them and their child. Parents/carers were also given the time to talk face to face with Personal Tutors (PT). We regularly reviewed the Pledge with our students in PT time and did this formally with a questionnaire.

What information or data did you use to measure progress towards your success criteria?

- Observation outcomes
- Pupil consultation data

Describe the CPD approaches you used

Transfer of information and liaison between schools has resulted in increased levels of understanding between teachers approaches to teaching and learning.

What CPD materials, research or expertise have you drawn on?

The London Challenge is in the process of developing a 'transition pledge' to encourage a commitment to strengthening transfer between primary and secondary schools. The Charter School adapted the pledge (as it stood) and consulted with partner schools, pupils and parents.

Relevant National Strategies materials:

Who provided you with support?

- Senior management

How were you supported?

Strengthening transfer requires cooperation at Senior Management level. We work closely with our partner primaries and consulted with each Headteacher about the pledge. They were sent a copy of the pledge with a letter explaining the route to its creation and the objectives and inviting feedback as 'critical friends'.

Impact

What has been the overall impact on pupil learning?

The pledge reinforced the advantages of having clear targets which were regularly reviewed.

Quantitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Periodic teacher assessment

Qualitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Pupil consultation data

Describe the evidence of impact on pupil learning

After the first half of the Autumn term The Charter School had an Academic Day Review for the whole school and a Year 7 parent/carer 'tea'. At both events parent/carers were given opportunities to comment on the pledge. Questionnaires were distributed and responses analysed. Pupils spent review sessions with their Personal Tutors discussing the pledge and comments were recorded and analysed.

- 75% of pupils felt the pledge was a good idea and that it showed that the school was 'caring' and 'serious'.
- 80% of pupils felt that the pledge highlighted the advantages of having clear targets which were regularly reviewed.
- 75% of pupils felt that bringing a portfolio of work helped their Year 7 teachers understand them better.
- 75% of pupils felt supported by the work done by The Charter School to integrate them into the school from the moment they accepted their place.
- 80% of parents/cares felt that the pledge was 'clear', 'supportive' and 'encouraging'.

What has been the impact on teaching?

The information provided through liaison with partner primaries has provided Year 7 teachers with a greater understanding of pupils and their potentials.

Evidence of impact on teaching

- Evidence from planning

Describe the evidence of impact on teaching

Teachers have used increased their increased understanding to inform planning for teaching and learning.

What has been the impact on school organisation and leadership?

This initiative has built on the close working relationship between The Charter School and its partner primary schools.

Evidence of impact on school organisation and leadership

There has been increased liaison between The Charter School and its partner primary schools.

Summary

What is the crucial thing that made the difference?

Consultation with pupils, teachers, partner primary schools and parents/carers.

What key resources would people who want to learn from your experience need access to?

The key resources are the pupils, teachers from all participating schools and parents.

What CPD session and resources were particularly useful?

Liaison between pupils, teachers and parents.

If another individual or school was attempting to replicate this work, where would they start and what would the essential elements be?

We saw the potential in the transition pledge but felt that it needed to be based squarely on the ethos of The Charter School. Our pupils and parents needed to be able to relate to it directly and so listening to them is the first and essential step. This work builds on existing partnership working and we wanted our parents/carers to understand that this was closely linked with our home/school contract.

What further developments are you planning to do (or would you like to see others do)?

It is our intention to include the pledge in our transition package and to deliver it to primary schools when we make our liaison visits.

We will also share it with parents/carers in the admissions interview and hand out a copy asking families 'face to face' to read it and share the ideas at home.

Supplementary Materials

This report is accompanied in the library by the following supplementary material:

- The Charter School Pledge
- The Charter School pledge

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About 'What Works Well'

This case study was originally published as part of the 'What Works Well' section of the National Strategies for Education in England. The National Strategies were professional programmes aiming for improvements in the quality of learning and teaching in schools in England. 'What Works Well' involved teaching practitioners from all phases and areas of education sharing accounts of real developments which had improved learning and teaching, and made a difference to pupil progress. 'What Works Well' case studies were designed to support practice transfer and include sufficient detail and resources to enable others to implement the effective practice described. They were reviewed by experts prior to publication as 'User Generated Content' (UGC) under a licence which encouraged reuse and derivative works, but which precluded commercial use.

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