

## Hampshire – Partnership C

### Background

The secondary school is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive with Technology status and approximately 1000 pupils on roll. The four partner primaries involved in this project provide 60% of its intake and the remaining 40% are from approximately 20 other primary schools.

#### Summary of the first year of the project

The original motivation was to have closer links with primary partners in developing a structured programme for transfer. The aim was to create a situation where the primary model/mindset was recognised in terms of how pupils' learning was managed and to use learning styles of pupils as a springboard for their continued independent learning and accelerating progress across Key Stages 2 and 3.

- Structured observations were undertaken to determine the similarities and differences between Year 6 and Year 7 lessons.
- Pupils and teachers completed a questionnaire to identify their preferred learning styles and this was used to stimulate pupil-teacher dialogue and increase pupils' awareness that they have the ability to expand their learning style.
- 'Active learning' lessons were introduced to develop pupils' capacity to learn.
- A transition teacher was appointed to provide vulnerable Year 7 pupils with lessons closer to their primary experience.
- In mathematics – equipment used in Year 6 and Year 7 was standardised and an Advanced Skills Teacher was employed to strengthen continuity of teaching and learning with an emphasis on pupils understanding process.
- Cross-phase partnership extended beyond transfer with Year 6 teachers being invited to the secondary school to discuss their Year 7 work with pupils and give feedback to Year 7 teachers regarding pupils' standards and rates of progress.

### Ongoing and additional outcomes

- Accelerated progress in mathematics
- Increased pupil engagement in learning
- Increased pupil responsibility for their own learning
- Increased continuity of curriculum and teaching and learning
- Accelerated progress in science

### How has previous work been built upon?

Innovation and investment in this area has continued.

- The number of hours given for secondary school staff to work in partner primary schools has increased since February 2008: three hours per week has risen to seven and a half hours per

week.

- Partnership has expanded to include another primary school; not a designated 'feeder', but one from whom the secondary school receive approximately 60% of their Year 6 cohort.
- The focus has extended to science as well as mathematics.
- More detailed profiling of learning/behavioural needs in Year 6 including tracking through behaviour logs, identification of learning needs (e.g. where the child has a statement, an Inclusion Partnership Agreement<sup>1</sup> or is on the G&T register).
- Work to ensure a consistent approach with regards to learning styles and how it impacts the learning across the curriculum. Starting this in Year 6 and continuing in the first term of Year 7 is making the Year 7 pupils more aware of how to approach their learning. This influences teaching and learning throughout the curriculum and has been embedded within the Year 7 personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum scheme of work, consolidating and reinforcing the *learning styles* work done with the pupils in their Year 6.
- An extra one hour 'booster' literacy lesson was included this year to support those pupils struggling. It was identified that they go from five to six hours per week at the end of Key Stage 2, to three hours at Key Stage 3. This extra lesson targets reading/phonics/spelling recovery.
- The addition of a transition 'portal' as part of the whole school Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) initiative. This portal gives primary pupils access to college information and includes video links, site maps and a question and answer forum. This will include links for parents and Year 6 teachers next academic year.
- Student voice has increased including a Year 7 questionnaire support ongoing evaluation and review of transfer arrangements.
- The secondary school now starts with Year 7 when it comes to whole-school timetabling. The Year 7 curriculum is given equal status to Year 11. Ensuring provision is appropriate for each child from their first year of secondary school will result in raised attainment at GCSE.
- A specific PSHE transfer unit, starting in Year 6 and finishing in Year 7 allows pupils to discuss issues and strategies to support transfer and induction.

### Evidence

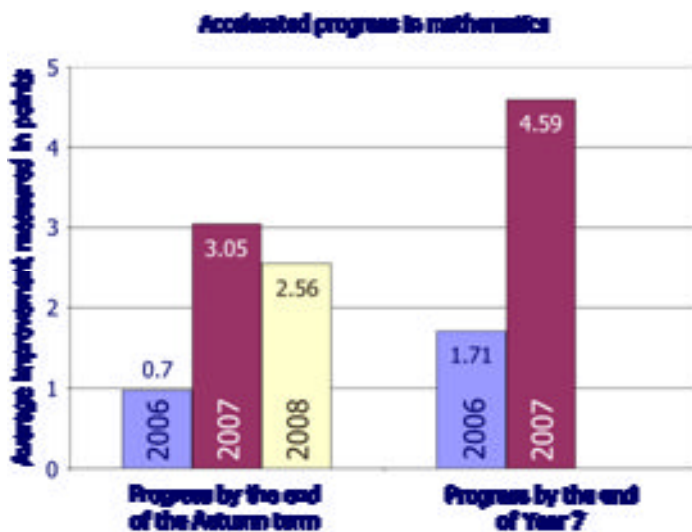
Using the National Strategies' self-evaluation diagnostic toolkit, the following progress has been made in the second year of action research.

---

<sup>1</sup> An alternative to some statutory assessments that records information about a child's strengths and needs, arrangements already in place to meet those needs and identifies what new arrangements might be required.

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
Use of data and information			→	→
Targeting supporting and intervention			→	→
Continuity of curriculum, teaching and learning			→	→

Evidence of accelerated progress has been maintained in mathematics. The average progress over Year 7 in terms of points score remains significantly better than the year before the changes were introduced.



Although mathematics was the original focus of the initial project, similar work was started in science where improvements in progress can also be measured. By the end of December in 2006 Year 7 pupils had made an average of 1.95 points progress; in 2008 the average was 2.64 points.

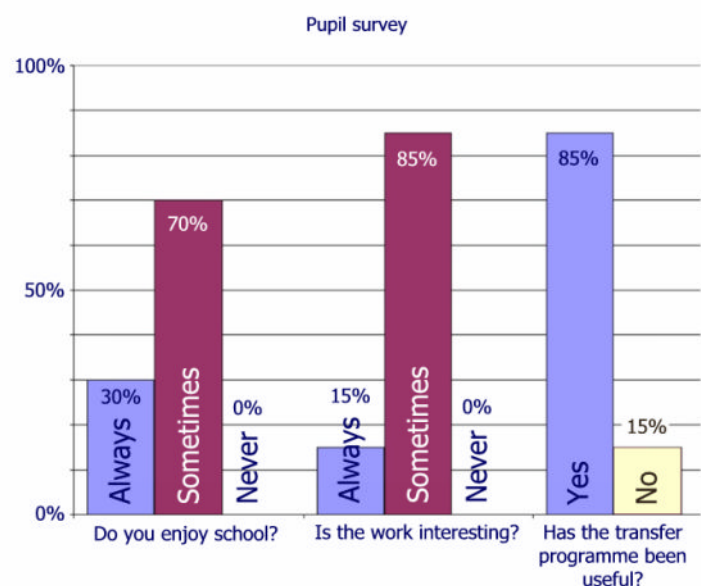
Individual pupils have also benefited: one child at risk of completely disengaging from education at transfer has improved attendance from 50% in Year 6 to 61% in Year 7. Working with his primary school the secondary school was able to build a strong team to support his needs.

A pupil survey reflects the importance of this work to their experience of Year 7.

Comments from pupils reinforce this.

*'You get to have the confidence to go to different lessons and you get to have different teachers. So now I am really enjoying the school, so don't worry!'* (Year 7 girl)

*'I have one piece of advice – pay attention to the tour and then you will know your classrooms. Remember never be nervous as you will get through it. Just have fun!'* (Year 7 girl)



**What do those involved think is needed to sustain improvement and build capacity?**

There are a number of elements needed for sustainable improvement:

- a relationship of trust between the leadership teams at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3
- the development of a shared vision for learners over Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3
- professional dialogue between practitioners leading to a greater shared understanding of the differences and similarities.
- a willingness to collaborate with innovation.

Strengthening transfer is not a job that can be 'done'. Formal, focused and ongoing partnership is essential. The agenda for the next meeting<sup>2</sup> of schools includes planning for further collaboration with regard to:

- developing learners
- extended schools
- provision for pupils with SEN
- improving the use of the VLE to support pupil transfer.

Initial stages of this work can be teacher/personality reliant but it is sustainable where there are structures and resources to support cross-phase joint planning and implementation to:

- improve subject area progression
- develop 'professional learners'
- support children's development of social and emotional resilience and competence.

---

<sup>2</sup> February 2009