

Butterflies for Transition



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George Greens School



Butterflies for Transition was compiled by Ruth Holden, Executive Principal, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch and Rob Carpenter, CEO, Inspire Partnership.

The Butterfly Effect



This booklet aims to provide practical solutions to some complex challenges, specifically on the theme of transition between phases of education and how schools best support students at a time of national disruption caused by Covid-19. It takes its format from the 2008 publication 'Butterflies for School Improvement' co-authored by Sir Tim Brighouse and David Woods. It was based on the principle that a single, seemingly insignificant act, such as a butterfly flapping its wings, can serve as a catalyst, impacting large scale change from seemingly insignificant beginnings.

Working with some of London's highest performing and improved schools, the original Butterflies publication provided a directory of resources and quotations supporting school improvement, drawn from the experiences of practitioners working in some of the capital's most challenging environments. The resulting publication provided a powerful antidote to prescriptive and occasionally binary approaches to raising standards, which can leave leaders sometimes scratching their heads.

What made it distinct was its accessibility and emphasis on low effort, high leverage interventions – hence the butterfly metaphor.

The Beginning of Butterflies

The genesis of Butterflies was the London Challenge initiative which orchestrated structural 'system led' school to school improvement between 2003 and 2011. Backed by government funding, led by a cadre of outstanding leaders, the London Challenge helped improve outcomes for pupils systemically, building a legacy of improving schools, creating a vision for what school led improvement could be. Notable successes included:

- Better pupil attendance across London schools
- A step change in school and pupil performance variability
- An increase in self-improving and self-sustaining schools
- Improved teaching with higher expectations.

In many ways London Challenge created a blueprint for how school networks might work together better. It provided a framework for leading collaboratively, harnessing the social capital within and beyond schools.





It also helped conceptualise a model of leadership where both challenge and support could sit together, using evidenced informed approaches to improvement, rigorous reflection and a commitment to action.

Above all, London Challenge generated confidence to do the right thing by pupils. It was unashamedly assertive that all pupils deserve the best education. In other words, it encouraged schools, "to act as if the possibilities are boundless,"¹ regardless of starting points or barriers.

Catching Butterflies

The butterfly effect, as a catalyst for change should not be confused with leveraging change forcefully or coercively. Both romantic and humbling, the butterfly effect symbolises the non-linear nature of change in a complex, modern society. It moves to the tune of creativity, moral purpose and collective wisdom rather than coercion or control. In a world post Covid-19, we are especially sensitive to environment and conditions; a tiny push, or to be more accurate, multiple tiny pushes, can make the difference, especially when they ripple outwards, beyond one classroom, one school or one community.

Evaluating the impact of school closures and remote learning across our communities, we are piecing together a picture which shows engagement with learning, resilience and agency are critical. Caring about learning, the well-being of friends and family and community are all becoming as important to education as the knowledge we teach².

To this end, high quality transition, as a journey between the stages of education, provides continuity, helping pupils make important connections between their past, present and future. Students are as concerned with the social dimension of learning process as they are the academic, including:

- Reducing pressure to catch up
- Seeing friends
- Getting back into normal routines³

To improve transition between school phases and across school sectors,

1 Charles Payne: So Much Reform

2 The Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030

3 Lockdown Lessons: Impact Ed 2021



including special schools, regardless of the geo-political climate, we need to ensure individuals have both the knowledge and inter-disciplinary skills in order to be successful. Schools featured in this booklet exemplify this in multiple ways:

- connecting learning in school with learning outside school
- building community learning and parental engagement projects
- assessment of cognitive and non-cognitive skills
- developing expert professional relationships with education
- settings to enhance communication and knowledge capital of pupils
- providing opportunities and wider curriculum experiences which build a bridge into employment

That is not to say accountability has a lesser role but that it requires a relationships first approach. It creates trust, confidence and safety. At a time when pupils have spent months away from their peers, often learning in isolation without access to play, outdoors provision or meaningful interaction, re-socialisation becomes as much a feature of learning as more formal strategies.

We have seen this approach so vividly in the work undertaken by schools to support communities. The rise in civic leadership in all schools illustrates the powerful impact of the butterfly effect in action. Over the past year, we have made it our business to deliver food packages, hold check in meetings with vulnerable children, provide additional remote learning support and generally maintain high quality relationships with families. We are re-defining the purpose of education. If we are truly serious about ensuring those students most affected by poverty, so cruelly exposed by Covid-19, it is our community focused approach to education which provides a bridge to recovery.





Reconnect London

Against this backdrop, in 2021, Reconnect London was born: a collaborative group of London school system-leaders working together to help tackle the impact of Covid-19 in education, including learning loss for disadvantaged and vulnerable students. Building on the work of London Challenge, Reconnect London is all about leading in an age of networks, where the power of the group to make a collective difference leads to increased collective efficacy.

The network spans the system - local authority and Trust schools, single academies and large MATs as well as third sector organisations, driven by a common desire to improve the life chances of the most vulnerable. Our challenge is to bridge the gap between lost learning for those pupils most disadvantaged by events of the past year whilst at the same time writing a new narrative for both deep learning and what continuous school improvement could be like. In times of uncertainty, it is reciprocal accountability to both communities and each other which is needed more than ever.

If the unprecedented events of the past year have taught us anything, surely, it is that a world class education gives status to what education should be as much as what education should do. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have come to realise that schools are communities who serve. A misplaced emphasis on the product of learning being most important takes us away from tackling the real needs of students.



A Beautiful Transition

Butterflies are the embodiment of a beautiful transition; a spectacle of transformation. Yet within the chrysalis, a slow, gradual process of change takes place over time, as the caterpillar evolves into a new form. The journey of change, at every stage, is as important as the final metamorphosis. To become a butterfly, every micro transition is significant. This requires:

- Continuity
- Nurture
- Preparation

Within our education system, student transition between age phases presents a distinct marker in time; a huge step which signals growing independence and broadening of horizons. These changes are a normal part of everyday life. They provide opportunities for personal growth, self-efficacy and build resilience. Most pupils not only cope well with this but thrive as they look ahead to new challenges.

However, whilst school transitions are considered a milestone or check point, for some pupils, it can feel abrupt and sudden, like a door closing, rather than a seamless movement through to the next stage of education. This can create anxiety, turbulence and uncertainty.

Our best schools strive to ensure all students, like the caterpillar, are able to move through to the next phase within a nurturing environment. They minimise potential stress through the way they guide pupils, developing academic rigour and knowledge, matched equally by the quality of learning experiences. This ensures learners feel proud of who they are, can celebrate achievements and are confident about the future. Regardless of school phase, these characteristics are both cultural and expressed through students' lived experiences. This includes:

- Building knowledge – students are academically engaged
- Promoting a sense of safety – students are valued
- Building self and collective efficacy – students have agency
- Developing connectedness – students belong
- Promoting hope – students feel confident



These themes are explored as case studies within Butterflies for Transition 2021, spanning all age ranges from early years through to post-16. They weave between the phases of education, from pre-school into reception, to post-16 and the world of work. We have included examples from special education, a sector which is sometimes marginalised from other settings. Special schools work so hard to promote meaningful partnerships between pupils, parents and peers in order to promote an inclusive society, one which recognises the talents of all children and young people.

We hope this work is a celebration of innovation, creativity and high-quality guidance which helps students navigate the challenges of a complex modern society in a world post Covid-19. Our aim is that it provides schools with uplifting ideas, to ensure pupils experience the joy of education in all its forms; to be excited by change but not overwhelmed and above all else, to be better prepared to meet the world.



Section 1

Early Years into Primary



Looking ahead: reception to year 1



Description

Transition to year 1 should be joyful; adequate preparation, good communication and collaborative practice between key stages allow for children to successfully bring the delight of EYFS into their first year of key stage one.

Regularly going for story time in the year 1 classroom and beginning to invite children to complete learning at a different style of table develops the learner naturally towards readiness for transition. Teachers connect to collectively observe and develop a rich dialogue around the individual children. In the first half of the autumn term, reception teachers are present in year one classrooms to offer reassurance to the children where necessary. EYFS leaders also support with planning in the initial part of the term to ensure high standards of early years learning are maintained, as well building in support mechanisms.

Comment on Impact

Small acts the in the summer term of their reception year allow children to gain independence and intrinsically absorb expectations of the new key stage. The receptions teachers' confidence in the children and understanding of their precise abilities ensures that, where Early Learning Goals to not match year 1 KPIs, positive trajectory of learning is maintained.





EYFS Year 6 buddies

Description

Cedar tree (Y6) and Acorns (Reception) set up a reading buddy scheme in which half Cedar tree split with half of Acorns to adopt a reading buddies partnership. Year 6 would listen to and support the reception children with their own reading book. Afterwards, the year 6 children would then read to the reception children; demonstrating and modelling the aforementioned reading skills. Reading buddies were generally in pairs and only changed every 3 weeks so as to build a positive and trusting relationship between the children.

Impact

Both year groups thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it gave a huge amount of autonomy to the year 6 children and how they would support their buddy. The reception children would listen intently to their buddy and it was beneficial for them to see children (and not just adults) using the reading skills they were learning.

Butterflies from Eleanor Palmer

Description

Led by a support assistant, a book about the next class is created towards the end of each summer term. It contains simple photos and text about the new teacher, the room, the routines and anything new, for example a new play space or residential. This goes home over the summer and parents are encouraged to read it with their child regularly. There is space to jot down questions – from the parent or the child- and these are picked up at the start of the new term.

Parents of SEND children always meet with their out-going and new teacher together before the end of term and again, the new teacher calls just before term starts.

Comment on Impact

The pre-emptive nature of this routine means that changing classes almost always goes smoothly, anxieties are allayed and vital relationships are built.





Early Years Transitions in a Special School

Description

Both into and out of our EYFS department we place a great emphasis on giving our children with complex medical needs and autism time to adjust and understand the process. Before joining us, children will attend play sessions with parents and/or nursery staff. Our teachers will visit children in their previous setting and at home to learn about them and to allow the child to become familiar with their new teacher. Children are also given a transition booklet with photographs of their new classroom, learning environments and key staff. When a child joins us they are the only new child that day, allowing adults to focus on them. Before children leave our EYFS they begin attending Key Stage One assemblies with the wider school. We arrange a series of visits to their new classroom, allowing children time to adjust to coming in from their bus to a different class by a different route, and enabling them to feel comfortable with new adults.

Impact

The sharing of information between home and a child's previous setting with us, and subsequently from our Early Years team to the child's next teacher, is hugely important for children whose communication is often impaired. The extra time taken at both ends of our transition processes enables children to continue making progress and generalising skills.

Micro Transitions within a Special School



Description

Children at Willow Dene use a variety of supports to enable them to understand the passage of time day to day, as well as daily routines and movements between areas within school. A transitional cue is used to support a child's understanding and awareness of these transitions and can take many different forms, depending on the child's cognitive and developmental level. These cues range from a touch cue, musical cue, sensory calendar, object of reference, photographic, symbolic or written timetable. These cues are individualised to the child so they are relevant and accessible to them.

Impact

Many children with additional needs require routine and structure to enable them to make sense of the world around them. These cues have a huge impact on a child's ability to understand their sessional, daily, weekly routines and can ease stress and anxiety related to transitions which ultimately has a positive impact on behaviour and learning.



Moving classes; transition booklets for SEND pupils

Description

Led by a support assistant, a book about the next class is created towards the end of each summer term. It contains simple photos and text about the new teacher, the room, the routines and anything new, for example a new play space or residential. This goes home over the summer and parents are encouraged to read it with their child regularly. There is space to jot down questions – from the parent or the child- and these are picked up at the start of the new term.

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Comment on Impact

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Music Therapy and Transitions within Special School Settings

Description

The music therapy team has undertaken research in this special school specifically related to transitions. O'Neill and Crookes (2017) Murison (2014) and (2019) and O'Dempsey and O'Neill (2019) which has helped to inform and evaluate our practice.

Our work in the preschool and EYFS areas of Willow Dene special school aims to provide every child with a period of assessment and support at the beginning their school journeys in collaboration with the MDT and education team. It is at this time that families are making key decisions about schooling and that children are building the foundations of their learning and development in school.

We also target therapeutic intervention at transition into primary special education from mainstream education settings. O'Dempsey/O'Neill (2020) reviewed a number of referrals of this type and interviewed parents about their experience of the targeted support. Joint work between the MDT and the education team at these points has enabled us to provide a broader assessment of individual strengths and needs as some of these cases will not have had access to the specialist support services available within Willow Dene.

We often target class group music therapy work at year 6 in preparation to transition to secondary school, and in year 7, at the first year in place at their new school. This provides opportunities to support core skills such as interaction, attention, communication and resilience, which have been identified as highly important in regard to indicators of positive transition outcomes.





Comment on Impact

The Nice Guidance on supporting transitions identifies the importance of a phased transition, supported by familiar relationships across settings for a period of settling in. We are fortunate that the two main in Borough secondary special schools, where the majority of children from Willow Dene school go on to, have music therapists in place who work both in these primary and secondary settings. Operationally, this provides highly useful opportunities for consistency and continuation of therapeutic work in collaboration with the education teams.

Vignette

Referral: A child with Severe learning difficulties and autism, who was unable to be part of the class group work, due to difficulty with regulation, hyper activity and attention.

Teacher referred him (age 7 years) for individual music therapy. After a term, he was able to be integrated into a group of 3 students from his class and then be part of a music therapy class group. The strong relationship he had built with the therapist and his motivation to musically interact, enabled him to transition in a graded way to ultimately generalise his experiences in class. This is a format which can be used at any age or stage.



Toucan Specialist Provision for 2 Year Olds: Supporting Transitions

Description

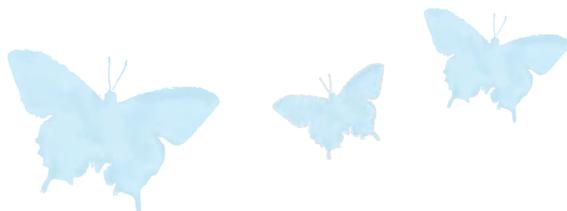
Toucan is a specialist setting for children aged 2 to 3 years. Many families starting with us will have spent long spells in hospital with their child. They may be awaiting diagnosis and will certainly still be processing learning about their child's needs and what impact they will have. Children may have complex medical needs and trusting them to adults they don't know can often be very frightening. In many cases families will feel overwhelmed and very emotional. They are often nervous about the idea of their child starting in any sort of setting.

We work closely with the pre-school therapists and provide photo booklets which families can look at before visiting. We are happy for families to bring therapists or someone they feel comfortable with when they visit. We offer plenty of time for families when they visit and encourage them to call or visit again if they would like to. We record their visit with photos of them and their child in the setting that they can take away with them at the end of their visit. We often hear later that these have been shared with Grandparents and friends.

We explain carefully what happens when children start particularly that families are able to stay in the setting if they want to. We treat each family very individually. We have worked with lots of families who stay in Toucan for quite a long period of time before they are ready to leave their child with us.

Impact

Without exception this has meant that families then feel confident and happy to start to go home while their child is in Toucan. Offering this level of flexibility and meeting individual needs has been really important.





Peer Mediators

Description

Pupil leadership and panels are key to ensuring children feel they have a voice and are always supported. Each class choose one member to become a peer mediator, being a role model for children in their respective playgrounds. Each Peer Mediator is trained in restorative justice and able to take a lead role in organising games and activities and solving minor playground disputes. They play a key part during transition times. Each Peer Mediator is then selected to help transition the year below them into their new key stage playground. This means the children in the year below have already built relationships with others who will share their playground, have familiar faces and are able to smoothly transition into their new routines.

Comment on Impact

Children find playtimes and lunchtime easier to transition due to the strong relationships already built.



Welcome Party

Description

Central to our school ethos and approach is building relationships: teachers and children, children and children and teachers and parents. This shapes our transition routines and traditions.

6 weeks into term we have an informal 'Welcome Party' from 6-7.30 where all early years families (including older siblings) bring some food to share (we provide drinks and play equipment) and staff - critically, including all the leadership and admin team - and families gather in the hall. Parents and staff are able to meet each other in a more relaxed context whilst the children play together. We work hard to ensure all our families attend and are made to feel welcome. Allowing older siblings - who remember their own party - to come is key.

At this event the headteacher speaks about the importance of building strong and supportive connections as a class: 'you're in this together for 7 years'.

Comment on Impact

The investment of time pays huge dividends. From the outset, social capital and a sense of belonging is built.

Year 6 buddies

Description

Moving from Nursery into Reception, whilst being the same site, does involve a move to 'the big playground' and eating alongside all the older children in the hall. Each Reception child is assigned a Year 6 'buddy'. Buddies collect their child from class one day a week, help them manoeuvre the lunch routine and then join them in the infant playground to support games and social skills.

Impact

We put great thought into the matching process and without doubt, we have to credit many of our 11 year olds with supporting a smooth integration, for SEND children in particular. Our youngest pupils feel special and there is a huge impact on the oldest children's empathy and nurturing skills. We know of relationships that have stretched into young adulthood.





Stay and Plays and home visits

Description

Before joining our school (either in nursery or Reception), members of staff will carry out a home visit. Staff (from across the EYFS) and family members are able to meet each other, and we are able to begin a collaborative relationship to work together to meet the needs of the children. Children also attend weekly stay and plays in the summer term where families can be introduced to the provision, and children can learn to feel safe and secure in the new environment before starting full time with us.

Comment on Impact:

Relationships are built with parents and families from the beginning to the children's journey through school. Staff can also begin to pinpoint developmental points from the children early on in order to meet their needs.

One Page Profiles



Description

Strong pupil relationships with staff are central to the ethos of Woodhill Primary School. Not all pupils experience positive interactions with adults on a consistent basis at home so staff go above and beyond to develop nurturing, trust building connections.

One way we do this is by developing one-page profiles for all pupils at the end of an academic year. Pupils meet with their new in-coming teacher for a 1:1 interview so that the teachers can find out:

1. What are pupils' likes, needs interests?
2. What things are important to me?
3. Which adults are important to me?
4. What don't I like/need?
5. How can you help me learn most effectively?



Each profile is kept in a secure place at school and forms the basis of a regular review in a 1:1 meeting with class teachers periodically. (See example attached). If a pupil is unable to articulate their responses, we use pictures to replace words.

Comment On Impact

When we introduced the 1 page profiles, we discovered that across the school, there were fewer incidents of poor behaviour. Staff also commented that their relationships with pupils became stronger because they knew pupils better. For example, it meant at the beginnings and ends of the school day, staff could ask about children's experiences outside of school. Pupils commented that they felt more valued and recognised not just for what they achieve in learning but because of who they are.





Section 2

Primary into Secondary



Transitions from Primary to Secondary Site within an 2-16 Special School

Description

Year 6 children transition from Willow Dene, Swingate Lane (Primary) to either Willow Dene, Oakmere Road (Secondary) or another local special school. Within Willow Dene, the transitions involve a change of school building, staff members and classmates. Careful thought and planning go into these transitions to ensure they are as smooth and supportive for the child as possible. They are facilitated by a planned approach to learning environment and staffing. The learning environment provides continuity between primary and secondary sites, providing children with a 'same but different' experience i.e. the same furniture with different colour aspects, the same uniform but in a different colour. Key staff members, including leaders, admin team and therapists work across both sites so that year 7 children begin the year with familiar faces to give familiarity. Planning starts in the Summer term and pertinent information is shared between current and prospective class teams. Examples of these can include communication strategies, specialist equipment and medical care plans. Children meet their new staff teams in their current classrooms to help develop familiarity, before beginning phased transitions to their new school and classroom. The frequency and duration of these transition visits are discussed between parents, class teachers and where appropriate, children in order to ensure each transition is personalised.

Impact

Transition from primary to secondary school can be a daunting and disconcerting period for our children and their families. A smooth and well-planned transition ensures as much continuity for the children as possible, that the whole family feel nurtured and that children begin the next chapter of their school journey with the best possible support.

Reading Buddies: key stage one to key stage two



Description

Transition should not be a single act. We recognise that growth happens over time; children connecting with their peers from other year groups assists them in making connections to one another and reinforces their understanding of their educational pathway.

Reading Buddies is a simple idea: once a half term, children from different year groups meet to share a story. Teachers work together to build successful pairings and the older child reads to the younger child, or supports them to read for pleasure.

Comment on Impact

Younger children make connections to children and adults placed in other year groups, demystifying the learning ahead. Often the story time develops into an opportunity to ask and answer questions and share anecdotes. Friendships and mentorships naturally develop. Older more reluctant readers are elevated in their status as role model. All children, even those usually lacking in confidence, demonstrate increased interest and participation in learning following these sessions.



Rite of passage



Description

On the very last day of term, once we have said our farewells to the outgoing Year 6 and they have left the hall for the proverbial playground T-shirt signing, we have a tradition where all remaining classes are addressed as their new year group. "Stand up Year 6" is an instruction to Year 5 who then stand and file out with their new teacher...and so on. About an hour is then spent in their new classroom, talking about the following year, answering questions and finding out what the children already know about the planned over-arching Autumn term topic, and what the children would like to find out. We try very hard to have any new staff joining us in September, at this occasion.

Comment on impact

This is a hotly-anticipated tradition not least as a few children always stand up for the whole class! Children leave for the summer feeling secure with their new teacher and with a golden thread into the next chapter in their learning journey.



Junior Citizen Workshop

Description

Each year the Year 6 children take part in a Junior Citizen Workshop. The children take part in activities and discussions with people from various organisations, such as, London Fire Brigade, London Ambulance Service, Metropolitan Police, Road Safety Unit, Transport for London and Battersea Dogs Trust. The children have time to think about travelling safely and being more independent when they go to secondary school.

Impact

The children are able to talk about their new journeys and how they feel about travelling to secondary school. They are taught how to use various types of transport and how to stay safe when travelling. They are also taught some basic first aid and fire safety skills.



Secondary School Transition Programme

Description

Last year, our councillor ran a secondary transition programme with the Year 6 class over 6 weeks. This gave the children a chance to reflect about how they were feeling about different aspects of secondary school and learn different techniques to help them manage those feelings. She created introductory videos and activities to do to help them examine different changes that might be happening and helped them to feel positive about them.

Impact

The children were able to think about and discuss anything they were worried about when thinking about secondary school transition and all said they felt more positive and confident after the sessions.



Year 6-Year 7 taster sessions

Description

We have worked closely with Greenwich Trust in the past and, pre-Covid, were holding transition afternoons with the year 6 children within the secondary setting; giving them the opportunity to tour the school, ask questions and participate in a secondary lesson for the afternoon. Greenwich Trust provided their current year 7 leaders to escort the year 6 children around the school, which gave them a view of the school from a pupil's perspective. As Trust is a technology based school, the lessons the children experienced were centred around this. Using equipment within a practical based lesson, whereby the children had to work on their collaborative skills to build something.

Comment on Impact

This was beginning to be a successful partnership and collaborative experience with another school. As the year 7 leaders were leading the sessions, it gave the Year 6s a sense of comfort to be able to ask open and honest questions to peers of a similar age. Even just touring the school and getting familiar with being in a secondary setting.



Transition for our more vulnerable or SEND children Year 6-7



Description

We are dedicated to ensuring that we support those children whom we know are more vulnerable at every stage of their transition. Transition to secondary school is a worrying time for children and families. We know that the leap in independence and expectation of personal organisation is a big jump from primary to secondary and want to ensure this is as smooth a transition as we can make it. We identify children in year 4 whom we think this initiative will be most useful for and begin our focus around road safety. In Year 4 the children, with the learning mentor, begin their learning around road safety. They go out on short trips beginning by walking around the streets near to the school and build up to further trips and crossing bigger road through year 5. In year 6 the children learn how to go on the bus and to the local high street and go into the shops and buy a few items from a list. Initially with support and then on their own. They do this in two localities one which is quieter and at the end of the year one which is busier.

Comment On Impact

The investment in this pays huge dividends for the children and their families when they then start secondary school in September. It gives them assurance in themselves and their ability to manage their organisation and also opportunities to learn how to solve problems when travelling as they occur. They always report back that it has made them feel more confident and less scared in those first few weeks.

Parents are truly grateful that we are supporting them in their independence and ability to solve everyday situations which may arise. Unfortunately, due to Covid, we have not been able to follow this transition through as we normally would but are looking to focus on those year 6 children in the last part of this year.



Welcome Back Year 7s



Description

We are committed to developing and nurturing strong relationships across our school, ensuring that these support children to transition to secondary school smoothly. For many of our children, transition is a worrying time, and they rely heavily on the relationships formed with staff across the school.

For the entirety of the first half of the Autumn term, we invite all Year 7 pupils back to school for a weekly wellbeing meeting with our Learning Mentor. We always inform parents and all secondary schools involved. Secondary staff are also more than welcome to come along with their pupils. Pupils enjoy being back, seeing each other and key members of staff. They share their experiences of transition, talk about what their new schools have to offer and how they are coping with the increased expectations, for example, of timetabling and homework. These discussions with a known, supportive adult, enable issues to be resolved quickly and coping strategies to be developed. We always keep a note of who attends these weekly sessions, and we are pleased to see the natural decline in attendance as they settle fully into life as a Year 7 pupil.

Finally, in the second half of the Summer Term, we ask for a couple of representatives to return to talk to our current Year 6 pupils and share the highs and lows of their first year.

Comment On Impact

We are delighted to have the capacity to offer this unique transition programme. This strengthens the idea of relationships within the pupils' minds and hopefully equips them to trust their new relationships their secondary school staff. One pupil said, 'It is great to come back to see everyone and know how my friends have settled in'.

Parents are truly grateful that we maintain this link during this fragile time. It reassures them that there are additional professionals supporting their children, communicating with secondary school staff if the situation requires. 'It is great that my child has the opportunity to share minor things with someone who can advise better than me' said one parent.

Unfortunately, due to Covid, we were unable to offer the face to face sessions last year, but we are hoping to offer this opportunity again this year or to utilise online meetings if restrictions are still in place.

Section 3

Secondary school: dealing with transitions



A Great School



Description

Is where transition of Year 7 includes the following:

- Every student is known to the Secondary School before starting fully.
- There is a clear transition programme in place for Year 7 in the first Half Term of the year.
- Year 7 students have an opportunity to have a voice about how they are feeling.
- This is an understanding of the Curriculum that has been delivered at Key Stage 2.

Comment on impact

The students feel nice and comforted that there is still a connection with their Primary School. The relationship between the Secondary School and the Primary feeder school is strengthened. Headteachers and staff at the Primary School love hearing from their children.



Writing a letter back to Primary Schools

Description

Nearing toward the end of the October Half Term, the English Department use two lessons with Year 7 students to draft and final draft a letter back to their Year 6 Headteacher. The letter has two main paragraphs, one saying all the things they love about their new school and another saying what they miss about their Primary School and some hellos.

Comment on impact

The students feel nice and comforted that there is still a connection with their Primary School. The relationship between the Secondary School and the Primary feeder school is strengthened. Headteachers and staff at the Primary School love hearing from their children.

[Link](#)
[Framework letter](#)



Year 6 to 7 Transition Week

Description

Ensuring Year 7 have a smooth transition into Secondary school is a priority for all teachers. Transition from Year 6 to Year 7 is a tough time for students and we wanted to do something that would reduce anxiety and worry and help them make friends. Students were in PE kit all week and had a week in the Sports Hall completing a range of activities. Two days were spent in their tutor groups with their tutors, carrying out team building exercises. One day they learned about mental health and wellbeing, which involved the students creating and performing pieces of drama and developing some extended pieces of writing. Another day was a Sports Day where students competed between tutor groups, run by the PE department, and they then had a House Day where they competed between House groups, run by the Heads of House.

Impact

The transition week was a great success with parents and students both commenting on how it allowed the students to integrate and settle into the school effortlessly. For the Head of Year and SENCO, it allowed them to efficiently observe behaviours and identify certain students requiring additional support. For the students, it allowed them to form a relationship with their tutor, peers and to learn who other members of staff were.





Year 6 Interview Day

Description

All Year 6 students and their parents who have gained a place at the school are welcomed to attend a 'Get to Know You' day in the Spring Term. They have the opportunity to talk with a member of SLT or a Middle leader to find out more detail about the school and to ask questions. A set of questions are asked to the students to find about their interests and what they are looking forward to when attending Secondary School. We provide the parents with the 'School Information Pack' and the Year 6 students are provided with a subject booklet. This booklet outlines the subjects and topics they will study in Year 7. This booklet also included activities to complete and a reading list.

Impact

The parents really enjoy attending this day and we have always had a high attendance. It allows the Year 6 students the opportunity to ask any questions or concerns they might have to reduce anxiety of transition. For the school it is vital in gaining further information about the students arriving in the following September. It aids placing the students into suitable tutor groups and teaching classes and allows the SENCO to distribute TA support into classes prior to the year beginning.

Transition for students with ASD

Smoothing a Bumpy Passage



Description

Transition to secondary school can be a time of great anxiety for any student but for those with a diagnosis of ASD, it can be especially unsettling. Our school has an Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) for autistic students and is the only one in the borough attached to a mainstream secondary school. Transition starts very early because, for these students and their families, it has to. In years 5 and 6 parents and students are invited in for 1:1 tours, as often as necessary, to help familiarise them with the school environment. SEND Leadership also visit primary schools to discuss individual students' needs in greater depth and to observe the child in the classroom setting. An informal ASD transition event is then held for children only and led by the SEND team. The Headteacher and Deputy visit the group, along with the Head of Year to meet the children and to welcome them to the school. Students are given the opportunity to complete questionnaires about their concerns, their hobbies and what is important to them. This information is helpful in getting to know students and finding common interests with their peers. There is plenty of opportunity for Q & A with the SEND team and a tour of school with current year 7 students from the ARP. Students are provided with a transition booklet to take away which includes photos of the school and key members of staff they will be dealing with. When the students then attend the main transition event a week later, with the rest of the cohort, they feel that they have a 'head start' and some inside knowledge! Students are discreetly supported during the transition event by support staff who are on-hand to offer extra help as necessary. Communication between the school and home continues in the coming months. Details such as meeting their TA 'Key Worker' before term starts, discussing their timetable, learning about extra-curricular clubs and forthcoming trips etc. in advance ensure that students know what to expect. This is so vital for these students.

These successful approaches are modified for other key moments of transition: selecting GCSE options in Year 9, moving into the Sixth Form at



the end of Year 11, or applying for college if that is the more appropriate route, and getting ready for work or university in Year 13. Techniques which work at Year 6/7 are adapted for older year groups with great success: meetings, tours, booklets, meeting other students with ASD who are successfully experiencing what is soon to be in store for them.

Comment on Impact

Ultimately, the success of the work we do in this area can be measured in the ways that our most vulnerable students manage these key transitions. Moving from a small primary school to a comprehensive school with over 1700 students is a daunting task for students who struggle to manage their responses to sensory stimuli. The low levels of 'bumps on the road' is testament to a team effort which puts students and their families at the heart of the process and puts them at ease from the earliest opportunity.



Transition into Key Stage 4

Description

After an initial meeting in December to decide on the curriculum offer we then meet with the SENCO to talk through an appropriate pathway for a small number of students for who may struggle with the challenges of our traditional offer. Heads of department then put together an information page containing key information. This is standardised in terms of the font, style and information and includes: course content, how this will be assessed and future careers links. The information pages along with general information about the process are collated to form the options booklet which is both printed and put onto the school website. Parents and pupils are then invited into school for a GCSE options information event. We run three separate targeted events as students follow one of three pathways depending on their prior attainment and future ambitions. Within a week of the parent information evenings each department leads their own options assembly and this a great opportunity for them to sell their subject. Then in the two week period leading up to the deadline pupils have one to one careers interviews with a specialist who guides their decision making. Finally, in the penultimate week before the deadline the Deputy Principal (Curriculum) and Head of Year run a question and answer open event for parents on Microsoft Teams. Students submit their choices over Microsoft Teams and we also record any assemblies and upload these to Teams so that parents can watch these in their own time. Students submit their options choices in the penultimate week of half-term 3. Once they have made their choices the Deputy Principal (Curriculum), Head of Year and SENCO review these together. We then meet with parents and students on an individual basis if we have any concerns.

Comment on Impact

Ensuring students are studying the right courses has a significant impact on outcomes. It is critical to give students targeted advice so that they make decisions which are right for them both in terms of their passion, career ambitions and academic attainment. Furthermore, linking the options process to careers pathways leads to better engagement in school life from both students and parents.

Music and how to harness talent



Description

When students arrive at the school we do a survey with them to find out what they do, what they are interested in outside of school and what they did at Primary School as enrichment and extra learning. We identify the students who play an instrument and put them in the same Tutor group so that we have a musical group straight away.

Comment on impact

It is a way of identifying talent and keeps the nurturing of the talent going. Also musical like-minded students are together and an automatic 'band' or musical showcase group who can perform together is formed quite quickly.



An online portal for incoming year 7 students

Description

The school is developing a two-way online platform to facilitate the sharing of information between the school and our incoming year 6 students and their parents. The aim will be to support the smooth transition of these students from primary to secondary.

The platform will provide parents and students with all they need to know about the school ahead of September to get them fully prepared for a confident start. Unlike a website, the portal has the added ability to gather important information from the students. Students can share their likes and dislikes, their favourite subjects, and what they are most looking forward to about starting at their new school. It also provides the opportunity for students to share examples of their best pieces of work from primary e.g. their best piece of extended writing, their best piece of maths work, their best creative work. We also want to encourage as much as possible the sharing of 'fun stuff'; enrichment opportunities for students, trips, activities, all with links to our school's house system.

Comment on impact

Our online Year 6 portal will allow us to build up a complete profile of each student so that key staff and department teams can plan effectively for the students' arrival. Sharing examples of students' best work will help ensure our schemes of learning are pitched correctly and cater to needs of the specific students that will be joining us, allowing us to avoid problem of the 'secondary slip back' or 'KS3 coasting'. The information gathered from the portal on both sides will mean we start the year knowing as much as we can about each other, and can all hit the ground running in September.



Latin for all



Description

At Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, we believe in opportunities for all, where students are empowered to become independent learners through enjoyment, interest and engagement in the curriculum. That is why we make sure all students have the opportunity to study Latin at KS3, an engaging and challenging language that enables insights far beyond merely learning the language itself.

Comment on impact

Over 60% of words in the English language derive from Latin; by learning Latin, therefore, students deepen their understanding of English both through expanding vocabulary and a better understanding of the grammatical structures of language. This is equally true for Latin-derived modern foreign languages where, as well as expanding vocabulary and understanding of grammar, knowledge of the Latin origins of words can also assist with translation.

The ancient, Roman world also offers a window into many other subjects, enabling greater appreciation of the foundations of today's society and the literature that has influenced thinkers across the ages. As the lingua franca of much of Europe, the Middle East and north Africa for many centuries, many critical historical, cultural, philosophical, religious and scientific texts were originally written in Latin. Making these texts more accessible and linking to other subjects such as history and geography, helps students to understand how language shapes society and vice versa.

We are confident that including Latin for all in our curriculum has a positive impact on progression and raising aspirations through increasing student inquisitiveness and exploration of new potential. We see that students are very receptive to what Latin has to offer and that it is providing students with new ways of thinking about issues across a range of subjects, providing skills for life and work, as well as supporting increased attainment in other languages and English.

A Thematic approach to Transition Day

Description

All alternative approach to the transition day is to base the day on a theme or a play and to use the arts to link activities together. Drama, Music and Art play a key role in building self-esteem and confidence. An example of such a day is to base the day around a Shakespeare play. Students watch a 20 – 30-minute extract of a Shakespeare play at the start of the day. Students are then split into small groups and rotate around a number of different workshops that range from story-telling, mask making to performing in a small group. These groups are carefully thought out based on the information from primary schools. Students with additional needs have a teaching assistant to support them. Students share their work with others in their group. At the end of the day, students are brought back to the main hall where all students receive a certificate for their participation in the day. It is like a day like no other, a day to remember where the experience of all students is linked together by a Shakespeare Play.

Comment on impact

The purpose of our transition day is to ensure that all our Year 6 students leave the school on that day feeling confident and excited about starting school in September. Student surveys reflect this with 98% of students feeling confident about starting school in September.

<http://www.mulberryacademymyshoreditch.org/photo-gallery/#shakespeareaday>





All the World is a Stage

William Shakespeare

As you like it



The purpose of our transition day is to ensure that all our Year 6 students leave the school on that day feeling confident and excited about starting school in September. Drama, Music and Art play a key role in this, building self-esteem and confidence. The day is based around a Shakespeare day, whereby all students watch a 20 – 30-minute extract of a Shakespeare play at the start of the day. Students are split into small groups and rotate around a number of different workshops that range from story-telling, mask making to performing in a small group. These groups are carefully thought out based on the information from primary schools. Students with additional needs have a teaching assistant to support them. Students share their work with others in their group and at the end of the day, they are brought back to the main hall where all students receive a certificate for their participation in the day. It is like a day like no other, a day to remember where the experience of all students is linked by a Shakespeare Play.



A highly effective House System

Description

A highly effective House System is a house system that adds another layer of pastoral care and further strengthens the opportunities and experiences available to students. Its strengths include:

- a rich and diverse range of enrichment opportunities comprising of inter-House and House competitions, clubs and trips;
- a vertical tutor group system, allowing students to engage with a range of students from across different year groups;
- a student leadership programme, which includes positions such as House Captain, Vice House Captain, Sports Captain, Fundraising Captain and Community Leaders;
- a team of highly committed Heads of House, whose vision, passion and initiative keep the energy and enthusiasm of the house system alive; and
- a supportive staff body, who view the House System as a positive reflection of the culture and ethos of the school

Comment on impact

A highly effective House System enhances the positive relationships between students across year groups and between staff and students, creating a cohesive and community-oriented culture in a school. All staff are attached to a House and this further promotes a shared vision. There is an increase in student participation in the uptake of extra-curricular activities and charitable drives. A student leadership programme creates more opportunities within a school for students to develop their leadership skills.

Academic Resilience Champions (ARC)



There are many new rules, routines and initiatives for students to get their heads around when they transition to secondary school, which can feel daunting and overwhelming for students embarking on this adventure. For our students, one of these whole school initiatives is that of developing Academic Resilience which was broken down into five strands: being curious to learn, taking responsibility for your learning, putting knowledge into your long term memory, expressing your knowledge verbally and in writing and using feedback to improve. Whilst these ideas were embedded into lessons by teaching staff, the Academic Resilience Champions (ARC) initiative was established to empower students to deepen their peers' understanding of Academic Resilience and how these skills would help them to be successful at secondary school.

Initially, the small group of students involved, selected to develop their confidence, organisational and leadership skills, took part in a series of workshops to develop their own understanding of each strand of the Academic Resilience framework. They then brainstormed ideas of how they could share what they had learnt with the rest of their year group. This was done through delivering assemblies, planning and delivering interactive sessions during AM registration and organising revision workshops for their peers after school. The Academic Resilience Champions really rose to the challenge and planned and delivered some highly impactful sessions for their year group, boosting their confidence and allowing them to develop a range of leadership skills and qualities. Students across the year group found the sessions to be very useful and said that they helped to ease their anxieties about starting secondary school by giving them practical tools to help them to be organised and successful over the coming years.



Transition Trip and Project



Description

To support transition to secondary school, we brought together all children from all primary feeder schools, via a Transition Trip to Kingston University Art and design department in Summer term 2 of their Year 6. Middle leaders, school staff university staff and undergraduates were involved in the planning. This has run for 3 years.

The Head of Year gave careful consideration to small groupings of 8 (liaising with primary colleagues as part of transition information gathering), Tutors, Attached Tutors and their new Head of Year and other key staff (SENCo) attended the transition trip. The Head of ADT led the planning of the transition project which started as a visit to the University Campus, where Kingston Undergraduate Ambassadors gave the children a tour of their annual Art show in a variety of disciplines, including fashion, 3D Design and installations. In their first week in secondary school the children spent a day with the Ambassadors, to produce art work based on the theme of their tutor group – our 'Pioneers' (eg David Bowie, Frida Kahlo, Mo Farah, Katherine Johnson). See link to photos and captions here [xxxx](#).

After the University visit the Head of Year led the review of groupings and built tutor groups from the groups of 8 so that children were starting Sept with familiar faces (pupils and staff). The photos of the 2019 Transition Trip are in our brand new school, on a display board as a great reminder!

Comment on impact

The University transition trip was a great opportunity for the pupils to spend a day together, getting to know staff and pupils and reduced anxiety about 'Day 1' for many pupils.

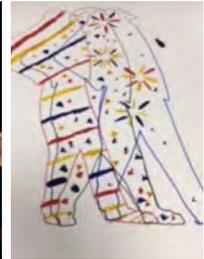
University Undergraduates made great role-models for the children, emphasising the importance of team work and hard work! Their tour of the University provided a context for future discussions about further education. In September, in school, the day of planning and creating was led by the Ambassadors and the children worked together in their brand new tutor groups. The 'show-case' at the end of the day gave the Ambassadors the opportunity to highlight pupils skills in terms of team-building, design and creativity.

For the SEND and Inclusion team, the University trip was a valuable opportunity to meet the children and observe them to support planning for September.



Designers at work!
Our Year 7 pioneers have made a fantastic start to Woodmansterne. Here are just some of the things that have kept them busy since our new school opened...

We visited Kingston University for the day, worked with undergraduates to develop our skills and accessed their resources.



Engaging pupils in the design process – from initial decisions and mood boards to final designs!

Mini- 'Freshers' meet and greet! Getting to know each other at Kingston University – 9th June 2017



Thumbs up for our pioneers at the end of their first day at Woodmansterne!



Proud of our fabulous science projects.
20th September 2017

Design and production with Kingston undergraduates 7th and 8th September 2017



Did you hear us?
World No Car Day – drumming in Stockport Road.
22nd September 2017
6th September 2017

SEND Transition Philosophy

Description

As a school with 27% SEND and rising, it is imperative that students receive a seamless transition into their secondary education.

At George Green's School, we believe in pedagogy not provision. Quality First Teaching is the primary intervention for students with SEND. We understand that 'knowing your learner' is key to ensuring achievement for all; therefore, the process of knowing our learners begins in Year 5. In collaboration with our feeder primary schools, we have created a programme that ensures student needs are identified far in advance of their first day of secondary school.

A primary/secondary transition meeting is arranged with each feeder school to discuss specific needs of students wishing to attend GGS; this is led by our SENDCO. In cases of high levels of need, additional multi-agency meetings are held to create a more detailed transition plan.

At GGS, every student with SEND has a Learning Plan, written by a member of the Learning Support Team. The Learning Plan details the student's strengths and areas for development (linked to the EHCP, where applicable) and helps staff to support the student in their learning.

Year 7 Learning Plans are written in collaboration with Year 6 teachers prior to student starting in September. Our Learning Support Team attend Year 6 Annual Reviews to garner detailed information about need, which is then transferred onto the Learning Plan.

To support the transition process, we invest time in an extended Year 6 programme during the summer term. Students who have been identified with additional needs participate in a 6-week programme. Students attend GGS once a week and take part in a variety of personalised lessons led by subject specialists and the Higher Level Teaching Assistant attached to Year 7.





Building relationships with parents and carers is key to the success of the transition phase. We hold a Coffee Morning for Year 6 SEND parents, hosted by the Learning Support Team. SLT, the Year Leader for Year 7 plus members of the SEND Parent Forum also are in attendance to answer any questions or concerns they may have.

For a small number of SEND students, mainstream lessons are not appropriate at the start of their time with us. For this group, a smaller environment is required. We call this The Hub.

The Hub is staffed by subject specialists and most lessons are timetabled at the same time as mainstream lessons. This means that if a child is ready to move back into the mainstream, they can because they have been studying the same content, albeit heavily adapted, at the same times. Similarly, if we become aware of a child who is not coping in the mainstream because of their SEND, they can move seamlessly into The Hub because they are at the same point in their learning. All of this is driven by the child's Learning Plan.

Through this approach, the transition of our SEND students is managed from year 5 right into year 7 and beyond. This has had a significant impact on the learning of this group and has further embedded into our practice our vision of being a fully inclusive school.



Best Learning Exemplification

Description

To support transition between year groups staff and pupils work hard to retain a strong sense of shared high expectations in all elements of their learning. To help provide a visual reminder of just what pupils have achieved in English or maths, each year, the best examples of a pupils' learning in books are photographed and placed at the front of pupils' new books at the start of a next academic year. For example, in maths, we photograph a piece of learning which exemplifies the very best of what a pupil can do as a starting point for new learning. This provides a visual reminder to both pupils and staff of individual and collective expectations.

Comment on Impact

The best learning exemplification has created a sense of collective high expectations amongst pupils in every classroom. Pupils and teachers can refer to the examples of best learning as a reference point which also helps identify and celebrate progress over the year. Pupils also like to look back to their best learning from the previous year as a way of celebrating achievements.





Section 4

Into Sixth Form



A HeadStart to Year 12

Description

Most students joining Mulberry UTC in Year 12 have attended other schools in Year 11 and many study subjects they have not previously encountered, such as Digital Media, Film Studies, Psychology and Health and Social Care. To help students with the transition into Sixth Form, the school created 'HeadStart', which involved each department setting up a mini website for students to engage with before they join the school.

The HeadStart micro-sites provide students with a range of relevant resources including links to videos, news, competitions and a pre-course reading list. They also give students specific tasks to complete before the start of Year 12. These are not compulsory, but if students complete them they are given feedback by subject teachers and outstanding work is showcased on the website. In technical and vocational subjects, these pre-course tasks are often used as the starting point for pieces of coursework which students then go on to complete in Year 12.

Each HeadStart site is hosted within Sharepoint, which the school uses as part its virtual learning environment. The sites then connect to a range of services, such as OneDrive to provide cloud file storage, so that students can upload and download materials from any internet connected device. They also use MS Forms to gather information about students' interests that can be used by teachers to inform lesson planning. The sites are all managed and displayed through Teams, meaning students can post questions to their teachers about the course in a chat-style forum from their phones or laptops. HeadStart sites are also fully accessible to students with a range of needs, thanks to Microsoft's immersive reader and 'alternative text' functionality.

Once students have accepted a place at the school, they receive a link to join the HeadStart site relating to their learning area. They can then use it as much as they like during the spring and summer term. Engagement with HeadStart is not compulsory, and students are not disadvantaged if they haven't engaged with it, but all have access if they want it.



Comment on impact

As a result of using HeadStart, students are able to settle in more quickly to Sixth Form because they join Year 12 better prepared for their courses and with enhanced digital skills. In Digital Media, for example, the Year 12 HeadStart site involves students using Adobe's photo and video editing software. This not only enhances their subject knowledge and skills but also gives them access to professional-standard software which most students would not otherwise have the chance to use. Having already engaged with learning materials, key concepts and relevant software packages in their chosen subject areas, students are then able to make more rapid progress when they start Sixth Form. This was particularly impactful in September 2020, when Year 11 students joined Year 12 after a period of lockdown. Their engagement with HeadStart helped to bridge what would otherwise have been significant gaps in learning during that time.

Link: <http://mulberryutc.org/hsgallery>



Offering a personalised curriculum at KS5



Description

Our curriculum offer is student led. We always speak to our year 11 students about what they want to study in the Sixth Form. We do this early in term 1 in the form of surveys and one to one interviews and the information this provides allows us to identify patterns in subject choices. This has led us to offering courses such as A Level RE and Law and BTEC Health and Social Care because the students have wanted to study them. These courses have gone on to become established, popular and successful subjects in the Sixth Form.

In addition, our curriculum offer intends to provide a pathway for every student. A pathway that offers challenge and progression. Examples of this include a level 3 vocational pathway where students also have an option to do an A Level and a STEM pathway where students can study four A Levels that complement each other (Maths, Further Maths, Computer Science and Physics).

It is important that the quality of teaching remain consistently high across all subjects. One way in which we ensure is to make sure our Sixth teachers teach both A Level and Vocational courses; this has contributed to improved outcomes across the board.

Impact

This approach shows our students that we are listening to them. Additionally, subject offers play an important part as to why a student decides to stay in the Sixth Form and this approach has improved the numbers in the Sixth Form. We have also found that student interest in a particular subject from an early stage means that they are invested in it and are likely to do well.

Transitional Teaching



Description

When students joined the sixth form in their professional dress, a foot taller and stationary popping out of a brief case it was easy to assume they could walk into lectures and start churning out essays. However without teaching the basics of how to work independently at sixth form, students were unable to utilise independent learning time and teachers were frustrated at a passive behaviours. We soon realised students were in the midst of transition, which needed to be carefully managed. A learning and teaching group of sixth form teaching specialists was formed to par down the skills of essay writing, note taking, research, revision and even folder ordering. From this, a series of checklists for students was produced and a standardised way of delivering these skills through the curriculum was adopted

Comment on impact

Student's confidence has been significantly improved by these checklists and overt teaching of these skills, within the context of their lessons. Students are producing work of a higher standard across subjects.

Independent learning study periods are characterised by students working in a more purposeful way. The learning and teaching group has continued as a forum to develop best practice. This standardised approach has been used to maximise our virtual learning platform which now holds a range of enrichment and how to videos to support students learning.



Sixth Form Transition to Russell Group Universities

The transition to Sixth form at Oaklands School starts in year 11!

Students are given a two-week taster of post-16 study, in their chosen subjects, which focuses on skills and gives a perspective on the rigour and demand that is to come. Students are given a Transition Booklet which they complete over the summer, which focuses their minds on the skill development required for more challenging academic study e.g. independent reading, research skills summarising.

In the first half-term of year 12, weekly tutorial sessions focus on routines and academic study skill development, especially in supervised/ independent study times. This is followed up by morning registration/ tutorial reminders of how routines can be embedded by good organisation. Towards the end of the first half-term an Assessment Point focused on Attitudes to Learning and Learning Skill development enables us to target students who require more support via sessions with an academic mentor.

The second half-term begins to focus the students on their futures. A survey is taken which details their aspirations for their post-18 careers, whether it be Higher Education study or apprenticeships. Students are grouped into 'subject pathways' according to their choices and a tutorial programme of preparing for the next stage prepared and delivered by our experienced Tutor Team. This year, we have the following pathways: maths and engineering, sciences, social sciences, Allied Health Professions, medicine and apprenticeships. Each pathway tutorial programme consists of researching courses and their requirements, outside speakers, wider reading/podcasts/webinars, personal statement writing and interview practice, all subject specific.





Sitting side by side with the above curriculum offer, we have a co-curricular offer for students who we think have the opportunity to apply to competitive universities and/or courses, called the Scholars Programme. This starts with a launch meeting with parents and students and a visit to an Oxbridge partner college. Students are matched with members of the Sixth Form leadership team to do further enrichment work around their future applications. Enrichment activities are also planned to develop the skills required for competitive applications i.e. admissions testing and interview preparation.

In the summer term students are encouraged to visit university open events, with funds set aside for free travel for universities out of London - this also includes if students are called for an interview - subsequent to UCAS application, if required.

We end year 12 with a bespoke 3-day residential visit to a university; in the past this has been: Leeds, York and Wolverhampton. The universities provide an experience for students to take part in lectures and tutorials, as well as use common room facilities, speak with current students and sample university accommodation - learning that they will need to look after themselves as well as study.



The Subject Canon: making students great scholars!

Idea

Go further than a recommended reading list... produce a canon to inculcate in your students the greatest of what has been thought and said your subject.

Implement

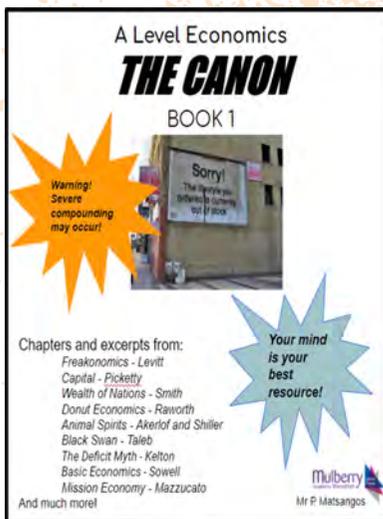
- Take a differentiated approach... the canon can be a short compilation of great concepts and excerpts, or the full selection of books selected for your subject
- Purchase the entire canon in book form and issue the first book during induction. (Purchasing loanable e-readers and preloading the canons is also a good option!)
- Encourage students to annotate, ask questions, maintain a journal of their ideas, read together in lessons and discuss! (Useful as a starter, plenary and challenge task in lessons)
- Ask students to write and present a synopsis of the book
- Have expectations for students to read during their timetabled independent study time, or once a week during tutorials
- Provide bookmarks so teachers and tutors can start conversations about reading progress
- Make it part of an enrichment book club
- Be inclusive and look for examples beyond DWM!



Impact:

- Enthuse, bring passion and life to the subject, compound knowledge
- Improve reading fluency, confidence and language acquisition
- Improve essay writing with scholarly insights
- Great for personal statement and university interview prep
- Great for helping students engage with the EPQ and formulating coursework project titles

Example below front cover: A Level Economics Canon



Buddies boost grades

Description

After identifying that year 13 A level students found year 12 content more difficult to recall,. We created a buddy system strategically pairing up year 13 students with a 'buddy ' in year 12. The students were then given some exam questions covering year 12 content. Students then used their independent study time to work on the content together.

Comment on impact

Not only does this significantly boost grades in year 13, it also creates learning communities in the sixth form. Year 13 students benefited from recapping year 12 content and the year 12 students had a mentor that they could go to for support. The students also really enjoy this collaborative approach.









Section 5

Transition into the wider world



Sixth Form students fulfilling their ambitions: Where do you want to be in 2/3 years' time?

Description

In September of year 12, we always ask our students, "where do you want to be in two years' time?" The response to this question forms the basis of the personalised support we give to them in order for them to fulfil their ambitions. This happens in tutor groups, in subject classes and outside of school (holidays, online); we make the most of every medium to offer support. The first phase is personalised with programmes like our Pathways to Medicine Group or our STEM Academy but we also offer general provision with University trips, workshops and career information, all on a weekly basis so that students have access at all times. These all designed to support students with their choices, especially if they are unsure of what they want to do. All students have at least one interview with a careers advisor.

The second phase, at the end of year 12/ beginning of year 13, involves a more bespoke approach and depends on the position of each student. This could be tutors for Oxbridge applications and interviews, careers meeting for those who have not applied to University, support with CV writing for those who want to go straight into work, specific mock interview practice for those applying to an apprenticeship or a University course.

Tracking students along the way is vital for this to work. What are their aspirations? Can you update programmes based on these aspirations? What support have they accessed? Is anyone who is missing out? We track and update this regularly and this always drives our next steps along the way.

Impact

Every student has access to specific support based on aspirations. This reduces the number of NEET and feeds in to successful outcomes for every student. If they have a vision of where they want to go and have support to achieve it, they will do well.

Upskillme



Description

Upskillme.io is a new digital platform which supports students to reflect on their achievements and experiences and build up a digital employability profile. Use of the platform is launched through a year group assembly and momentum is maintained through a weekly tutor time focus. Tutors track and praise student engagement, model the different functions of the platform (logging achievements and reflections, finding new opportunities and accessing careers guidance) and oversee students' use of the platform on their mobile phones.

Impact

Students are supported to keep a record of their experiences and achievements. They improve their ability to reflect on the employability skills they have developed and they have access to new opportunities and quality guidance in one place. All of these factors contribute towards making students more prepared for the process of UCAS and job applications and for competency questions in job interviews. Reports generated by the platform also support the school to track student engagement in extracurricular activities and progress towards the Gatsby Benchmarks.





Padlet to promote independent exploration of careers

Description

Padlet is a digital tool which enables you to make a visual map of internet links. You can use this to create a handy and aesthetically pleasing menu of digital careers guidance and skills building opportunities that students can browse in their own time. This can be shared on your school's careers page, on internal learning portals and in digital communications with parents. You can promote independent engagement with the resources by hosting a 'Careers Explorer Champion' competition, whereby students can submit the evidence of their explorations (videos, presentations, posters, notes, certificates) for judgement. Winners and their work can be published in the school newsletter.

Impact



Students are encouraged to explore careers guidance and skills building opportunities outside of school. This reinforces the importance of the key employability skills of independence and proactivity. The highly visual means of display is much more enticing for students than a list of websites and it is easier for them to determine immediately which sites might be interesting or useful to them.



National Careers Week: Getting started with careers in the curriculum



Description

For schools who have not yet begun to embed Gatsby Benchmark 4 in their curriculums, National Careers Week provides a great opportunity for linking curriculum learning to careers and further education. The careers leader can provide a staff training which signposts staff to sites and resources, including perhaps a menu of suggested classroom activities. Department time can be set aside to support the co-planning of short 'careers learning' segments to be delivered in the final 15 minutes of every lesson for every student during National Careers Week. All staff can be asked to peer observe just one other lesson in this week, to capture and celebrate best practice. A summary celebration report can be compiled from student voice and peer feedback.

Impact

Getting the Benchmark 4 ball rolling in this way helps staff to feel supported to try something new together. The whole school focus helps to raise the profile of the importance of Benchmark 4 but also supports in making it highly visible for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation so that best practice can be captured and training needs can be identified. The celebration report is a great way to positively reinforce teachers' hard work. It also serves as an example of good practice and of what is possible, so that the programme can be built up further in future years.



Continued Support for Alumni

Description

Description: Capture email addresses of your Y13 students before they leave. At this time, introduce them to the idea that they are becoming alumni. Survey them to determine their interest in continued engagements like: a reunion event, tutoring students applying to university, returning to share their experiences and inspire the next generation of students. A designated member of staff can email the cohort monthly with opportunities- like those from the Princes Trust's weekly 16-25 emails, work experience opportunities, training programmes and local youth events. Invite all alumni to a yearly reunion event and invite all school staff to attend. Publish alumni news stories in your newsletter to celebrate their successes and inspire younger students.

Impact

Staying in touch with alumni benefits both former and current students. When disadvantaged students leave school, they need continued support to break into the world of work where they are often so under-represented. Students will reply to the opportunity emails to thank you and let you know about their achievements. They will return for reunion events and offer to talk to and tutor current students. Successful alumni are the greatest community role models for your students- they prove to them what is possible.



