

ECYP Panel Scrutiny Panel - Wednesday 22nd February 2023 at 5pm

School Improvement update, Debbie Anderson.

Transition from Year 6 to Year 7

- Geographically, as a densely populated city within a small mileage distance, young people from a Year 6 cohort attending their local primary school may move on to a number of different secondary schools despite there being catchment areas and notional feeder schools. Some pupils in the north of the city who live in Portsmouth, also move on to nearby secondary schools in Hampshire which impacts on any Portsmouth co-ordinated transition activities. This is not necessarily the case in all local authorities across the country.
- Historically, transition days have been mutually suggested by schools across the city as the first one or two days of the first week in July annually. However, reaching agreement and consistency of sign up to this has been somewhat challenging in past years with individual schools having their own planned events, activities, and transition programmes, in addition to the different transition dates for schools in other nearby local authorities.
- Not only is there a transition from the primary Key Stage 2 curriculum to the Key Stage 3 curriculum when pupils transfer from primary to secondary school but there are considerable differences in pastoral and organisational arrangements. Pupils in Year 6 who may have just one class teacher for all subjects across the curriculum and remain in one classroom for most lessons can then move to a form tutor and separate subject teachers in many different learning spaces across a secondary campus. This is a considerable change, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils who need safe and secure relationships and environments.
- To mitigate and minimise the disruption of transfer from Year 6 to Year 7, secondary schools and their feeder primaries will usually plan transition activities to provide some continuity e.g. Year 7 teachers visiting local primaries to see Year 6 pupils in their own Key Stage 2 classes, planned learning projects which start in Key Stage 2 and continue into Key Stage 3, summer holiday programmes in the receiving secondary school.
- Additionally, the Year 6 Big City Read project which has really gained pace and engagement over the last 2 years now has a transition literacy unit of learning written collaboratively by Year 6 and Year 7 teachers annually. The aim is for all Year 6 pupils across the city to receive a free copy of a chosen book which they read together in their primary school, attend a virtual Q and A webinar hosted by the Schools' Library Service and the relevant author, and then for them to take this home and have at least one thing in common with other pupils new to Year 7 from different primary schools. Whilst there is not an overwhelming base of evidence that this has been a successful outcome, one parent has reported *'Taking part in the Year 6 Big City Read was a fantastic experience for my daughter in Year 6 and she thoroughly enjoyed hearing the author answer their questions and talk about the book they had all read. It also had a big impact on her settling into her*

Secondary School at the start of Year 7, as it meant that despite all the pupils in her English class being from various feeder schools in the city, they all had something in common. They were able to discuss the shared experience of the Year 6 Big City Read as well as the book itself.'

- Information regarding data, learning, behaviour and vulnerability/safeguarding are transferred securely between the relevant staff in primary and secondary schools e.g. Senco, DSL. Equally, after secondary allocation responses have been finalised, a year six data set is produced highlighting any factors that could be cause for concern or closer scrutiny (attendance, suspensions, pastoral support, Educational Psychology involvement etc). These spreadsheets with potential flags are then distributed to the secondary schools for those children allocated to them via the Schools Secure Environment (SSE). This exercise is repeated just before the summer break to ensure that any allocation or data changes are captured as well as they can be.