

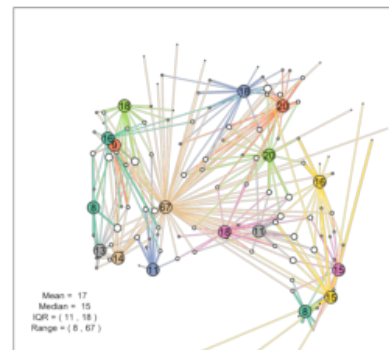
Research Briefing No. 25

Supporting learning in the transition from primary to secondary schools

Key findings and implications for Policy Makers

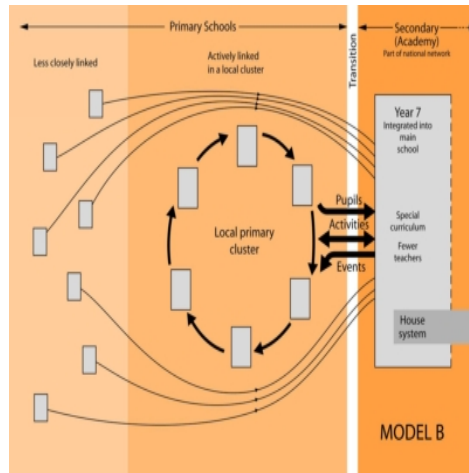
- Differences in culture and organisation between primary and secondary schools add to pupils' fear and uncertainty as they transfer. There is a need to pay particular attention to the social, emotional, curricular and pedagogical needs of pupils for successful transfer
- There is an unhelpful polarisation of skills-based and subject-based curricula in the discourse about KS2 and KS3 curricula. Very little attention is paid to issues of teaching, learning and assessment with respect to transition
- A typical secondary school receives the majority of its pupils from 5 or 6 local primary schools. It makes sense for schools to operate within geographical and community based partnerships, provided those partnerships do not create unintended barriers or perpetuate social divisions across the local authority
- Changing patterns of school governance have injected new energy and ideas into issues of transition from Y6 to Y7 but have reduced the ability of children's services authorities to have direct control over transition. The appointment of a governor with responsibility for transition would ensure that transition remains a focal point within the governing body
- Schools are making extensive efforts to increase parental involvement and there is increasing use of ICT to give parents opportunities to take a more active role in children's learning but little evidence of its systematic evaluation

Flows to Bristol secondary schools (90 %)



The research

The aim of this project was to identify models of good practice that positively support the transition from primary to secondary school from the perspective of pupil learning. Particular attention was paid to new models of school partnership, such as all-through schools, federations and joint headship and the culture and ethos of learning within schools which were effective in engaging parents, children, teachers, governors and the wider community.



A typical model of transition from primary to secondary school

Research design

The research was comparative, drawing on perceptions and experiences within Bristol and other local authorities. The research was primarily qualitative, supported by quantitative analysis of educational micro-data. Case studies were developed of 17 secondary schools and their linked primary schools, 12 of these being within Bristol. The sample included local authority, Trust, Academy, Faith, and fee-charging schools. Teachers, pupils and key members of local authority personnel were consulted.

Further information

The full report including policy recommendations is available at:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/news/2010/transition-bristoluniversity.pdf>

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