

# THE VIEW

The official Newsletter from  
Mersey View Learning Trust  
July 2024



## TRANSITION

Our final issue of the Trust newsletter focuses on the work all of our schools do during transition. At this time of the year our schools will be organising events that support pupils moving from one Key Stage to another. This can be an anxious time for parents/carers and children alike; our schools put tremendous effort into making this as smooth as possible with one-to-one support but also academic and pastoral opportunities to put parents'/carers' and pupils' minds at rest. Transitioning from primary to secondary school is a particularly significant change for children. Learning about change and how to cope with it will help them with this particular transition and prepare them for many other changes and challenges they will face in life.

We know that transitions between classes, year groups and settings will be of significant importance in the lead up to the new academic year. It is challenging to get school transitions right for all pupils, whether they are moving to the classroom next door or to an entirely new setting. A high-achieving learner can struggle if curriculum expectations at their new setting are low. A pupil with SEND can thrive due to a highly bespoke transition with additional visits and scaffolds for new routines. There are differential experiences, and we cannot make sweeping statements about particular groups, as some pupils may struggle with new classroom routines but not friendship networks and vice versa.

And so, how can school leaders best prepare for their new cohorts and plan for successful transitions?

Research evidence that attends transition is largely focused on the move from primary to secondary; however, principles can be learned for other potentially vulnerable transition points. Several studies have shown a dip in attainment coinciding with this time of change, with slippage in literacy and numeracy being especially well evidenced. Reasons cited include:

- lack of curriculum continuity;
- difficulties adapting to academic challenges;
- lack of familiarity with school systems, routines and new expectations; and,
- issues with developing healthy peer networks.
- Though the evidence on how transitions impact upon pupils is varied, it does offer many useful points around the key factors most likely to contribute to a successful transition. There are a trio of challenges.

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One of the major reasons for setting up Mersey View Learning Trust was to collaborate on curriculums and having cohesive curriculums which allow pupils to transition between key stages and schools with very little impact on their learning. Some children are vulnerable to poor academic progression and disengagement during transition. Children who have the necessary academic preparedness and who can work independently are often able to cope with problems and are more likely to be successful. The conversations between teachers on curriculum matters are helping address these issues. We have worked together to design and develop bridging projects and booklets, offering information, encouragement, support and assistance with lessons and homework. Our feedback from parents, carers and pupils have found these useful.

Our schools are research driven in their approaches to school improvement. The Education Endowment Foundation guidance report, Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning, includes recommendations schools can think through to apply in their setting.

Successful transitions, as identified from case studies in the research, are those with close cross-phase links. A variety of opportunities for induction, taster days and visits between schools appear to improve institutional adjustment. For example, help with getting to know the physical school building, school routines, along with the relaxing of rules in the early weeks, to allow time for explanation, practice and reinforcement.

Pupils and parents/carers are often concerned with changes in relationships during transitions, including issues around bullying. Some studies report a positive effect on social adjustment through opportunities for establishing new friendships. Factors that can contribute to positive transitions include looking forward to going to their new school; the friendliness of the older children and those in their class; having moved to the same school with existing friends; having older siblings who could offer them advice and support.

Schools put their efforts into sharing information and making new, positive connections, so that pupils start confidently in their new setting. And yet, we know that schools can find it a challenge to make transition work for all pupils – whether this is transition itself or more to do with sustained issues over time needs to be explored. By anticipating the risk points around times of transition, schools, parents/carers and young people can work together to deliberately build support.



**K. SEXTON CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



## TRANSITION



## FOREFIELD COMMUNITY INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

Although the academic year is drawing to a close, we have been very busy preparing the children for their next stage in their learning journey ready for September. We know that children can be both excited and anxious about starting a new class therefore transition is an integral part of what we do here at Forefield in order to ensure that children are confident, happy and ready to transition.

Transition is a process that takes time, therefore our transition plans started at the beginning of May when Reception teachers attended a Transition Event where they met staff from local nursery settings. Staff shared information about children joining our Forefield family, such as personal interests and likes and dislikes. This helps us to ensure our environments are carefully planned to meet the children's needs and interests ready for September. Our Reception and Nursery teachers have also been out to visit our new children in their current setting so that children have a familiar face when they arrive at school.

New to Nursery and Reception meetings took place at the beginning of June, when parents and carers of our newest starters were invited into school to meet their child's teachers and spend some time in what will be their classroom. Following these visits, children have since attended transition visits in small groups, where they were able to explore and play in their new classrooms and our Learning Garden, chat to their teachers and take part in a storytime session. They are all very excited about starting school in September.

Meanwhile, our current Reception and Year 1 children have been preparing for their moves too. New class teachers have been popping in to say hello to the children and on Thursday 27th and Friday 28th June children spent both days in their new classrooms with their new teachers. During these days the children had lots of opportunities to get to know their new teachers and completed some fun activities in their new classes.

Unlike most schools, our transition from Year 2 to Year 3 is a significant milestone for our children as they move on to Forefield Juniors. Classes are mixed up when children move to Year 3, so the children have been completing team building activities, in their new Year 3 classes, whilst in the comfort of their familiar surroundings at the Infant School. Mr Swift then came to the Infants and led a 'PROUD' assembly for the Year 2 children, during which he shared lots of information about the Junior School as well as some exciting things to look forward to. The Year 2 children have also been popping over the road, to spend playtimes getting to know the Juniors' playground and exploring all of the different areas to play before visiting the Junior School and meeting up with their Year 4 buddies. Children in Year 2 are paired up with buddies from the Juniors', and during transition visits, they are given the opportunity to ask their buddies lots of questions about life in the Juniors. On Thursday 27th and Friday 28th June, like the rest of the school, our Year 2 children spent both days over at the Juniors, in their new classrooms, meeting their new teachers and getting to know some new friends. They had a wonderful time and came back very excited about their new adventure in the Juniors. We know our extended transition programme will really support and prepare the children for next year so they can get off to a flying start in September.



# YEAR 6 ELEVATE & PEEL PORTS WORKSHOPS



**WATERLOO  
PRIMARY**

During the week of 17th June, Year 6 were lucky enough to receive a week of workshops from Elevate and Peel Ports. We learned so much during the week and have gained many life skills that will help us as we move into secondary school.

We started the week with a hands-on workshop based around money and budgeting. We were all given a job and wage and had to calculate what we could afford to buy. It was really interesting to learn about how much everyday items cost; it was a lot more expensive than we thought! We know this will help us manage our budgets as we become more responsible with money.

Our second day was spent carrying out some team-building activities ranging from geography challenges to building the tallest tower. We used a variety of skills and there was even a prize for the winning team!

Day three was where we learnt about Peel Ports and all of the interesting jobs that they do. There were so many to learn about and we found it really interesting to learn about what each person did each day. We were surprised to know that they even have their own section of the Police!

On Thursday, we were so lucky to have 10 different professionals come in to complete a careers carousel. We were able to ask them questions about their jobs and what experience they needed. The range of careers was amazing including a podcast host, an environmental advisor and an accountant. We especially loved getting to dress up in the Asda uniforms and learning about all of the different roles available within retail! This opened our eyes to the endless possibilities of jobs available to us when we grow up and the fact that there are many routes into them.

Friday allowed us to reflect on what we had learned during the week and what skills we had gained. We also thought about what jobs we would like to have and created our own aspiration board.

Overall, we had an incredible week and we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved. It was inspirational to see all of the different career paths available to us and made us think about the skills we will need in the future. Next step - Year 7.





## MOVING ON...



**FOREFIELD  
JUNIORS**

It's always daunting to start a new school (even as an adult!) but when you are only six or seven, the thought of leaving the familiarity of the Infants and joining the Juniors is a big deal. As one of only two Junior schools in Sefton, transition is very important at Forefield, as every year we wave goodbye to 90 pupils and say 'hello' to another 90 new-starters. Definitely a time for mixed emotions! Fortunately, we have a great relationship and many links with both Forefield Infants and the various high schools that receive our Year 6 children. May, June and July are key months for transition and over the years we have developed several projects that help to ease the move from one school to another.

Sometimes, it's the little things that matter the most: where will I hang my coat? Where are the toilets? Which door will I use? Where will I eat? To alleviate these worries we have lots of strategies.

By far the most important is the 'buddy' system that we set up between Year 4 and Year 2. This involves the careful selection of an appropriate older buddy, who will carefully guide their new friend around the building, months before they are due to start! In a series of visits, junior buddies will get to know the prospective Year 3s and then invite them over to our school to show them around. A hunt for aliens, map skills and lots of excitement then follow as the children complete tasks around the school, subtly getting used to new rooms and corridors along the way.

The Y2 pupils have access to our playground in the last few weeks of term so they can get a 'feel' for junior life and staff begin the important process of sharing key information. Headteachers, SEN(D)Cos and Learning Mentors meet regularly to identify any pupils who would benefit from enhanced transition and extra visits and meetings with parents are arranged. Smaller group visits at quieter times allow those pupils to become more familiar with the layout of the school and meet staff informally. As headteacher, I look forward to leading a Y2 assembly to share photographs and stories of FJS and I'm always amazed by how much they already know. It's fantastic to hear children, who haven't even started your school, recite your Mission Statement with confidence!

By the time we get to the official 'Transition Days' at the end of June, the vast majority of pupils have already started to feel a sense of belonging, but it's great to be able to spend time in their new classrooms with their new teachers. This year, we are utilizing the two days that our Y6 pupils will be visiting their new high schools to enable every child to spend quality time in their new classes.

Following all of these experiences, parents are invited into school to meet staff and then (by far the most enjoyable part of the evening) they have a guided tour with a Year 6 pupil – where they really get to see everything! Armed with the school prospectus and directed to further information on the website, they then have to navigate the emotional roller-coaster of attending their child's Leavers' Assembly before handing them over in September for the next phase of their school career.



## Graduation Day

Rowan Park School was a nostalgic journey for the school leavers as they attended the special assembly. With emotions running high, they took a walk down memory lane, reminiscing about all the special moments that had defined their years at Rowan Park.

From first day nerves to triumphant victories, each memory held a special place in their hearts. As they looked back on their time at the school, they felt a sense of pride and gratitude for the friendships made, the lessons learned, and the experiences shared. The graduation assembly served as a fitting tribute to their journey at Rowan Park, marking the end of one chapter and the beginning of the next.

# NOSTALGIC JOURNEY



## ROWAN PARK



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# LIFE LONG MEMORIES



ROWAN PARK

## Rowan Park Residential

Students from Rowan High School made some life long memories last week on their residential enjoying a two night trip away to London.

Due to a broken air con system they were fortunate enough to end up in First Class on the Avanti West Coast trainline which was very lucky. Students managed to fit a lot into the trip from experiencing Wicked the Musical at London's West End Theatre district. The second day was spent sight seeing visiting places such as Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, Downing Street, Buckingham Palace, The Tower of London and they also fitted in a cruise on the river Thames.

For some students this was their last trip with Rowan High as they are currently preparing to transition to further education in colleges across Merseyside. For the majority of the students, it was their first visit to the capital and the trip was the perfect send off for students as they had the opportunity to spend some quality time with their peers and experience London before ending their Rowan High journey.

This was Rowan's first visit to London as a residential and after the feedback from students and staff, we all cannot wait to do it again!





## Y6 TO Y7 TRANSITION COFFEE MORNING



**VALEWOOD  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

This half term's Coffee Morning at Valewood had a focus on Transition. We invited all of our Team 6 families to hear from the Transition Leads and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENDCos) from our receiving high schools. The morning was well attended by parents and carers, with key personnel attending from Chesterfield High School and St. Michael's High School.

Our Team 6 children had previously had a workshop to focus on what they are looking forward to, as they move from Year 6 to Year 7. They jotted down their hopes and wishes for transition to high school and shared their ideas with each other in class. They also workshoped what they are worried about and shared questions and queries with Team 6 staff.

Once all the parents and carers had a chance to share their comments and questions with our high school visitors, we invited some of our Team 6 children to the session so they could also share, first hand, the comments and queries they had already shared amongst themselves.

This was a really productive morning with many myths 'busted' for the children. For example, Mrs Allen, Chesterfield's Transition Lead, was able to share with the children how excited the older children are when the 'newbies' start; they very much look forward to taking the Team 7s 'under their wing.'

During the Coffee Morning, parents, carers and professionals focused their attention on attendance and behaviour expectations, also talking about expectations of homework. We all understand that when children move to high school it can be a very exciting time but it can also cause some anxiety. As our Team 6 staff and high school personnel articulated, we only want to make that transition as smooth as possible.

As well as 1:1 discussions between key personnel at Valewood and staff at receiving high schools, there are also Transition Days (of which there have been two in Crosby schools, this year) and additional workshops/enhanced transition opportunities for children who have SEND/additional needs. Our receiving high schools are also committed to providing a Summer School for which our children and families are very grateful.

We are very fortunate to work alongside such a strong team of committed transition leads – we all have the same goals in mind: to share important information with new staff; to enable staff to understand our children; for staff and families to support the transition of our children so that the children have a positive mental attitude to new beginnings. We also work hard to support our children and families to understand the new routines and practices at high school and to support them to not feel too overwhelmed. By communicating expectations, as early as possible and by having open communication, we know we are doing all we can to support the next secondary generation settle in as positively as possible.

We wish all our Team 6 leavers, across all of our Mersey View Learning Trust schools, all the very best as they move to their new high schools. We also thank all of our hardworking staff, across all of our primary schools and (in particular) our secondary schools, who cut their holidays short to run Summer School for their new Team 7 intakes.

**Happy holidays to you all and here's to a great start to Autumn Term 1, 2024!**



# TRANSITION 2024



**CHESTERFIELD  
HIGH SCHOOL**

It's been another busy summer term for the Transition Team at Chesterfield again this year. After receiving our allocation list for the new Year 7 intake in March, the team have been eagerly preparing the children and their families for the exciting move up to high school

Children eagerly awaited the annual email that we send prior to Induction Day revealing each persons' new form and introducing them to their Form Tutor. This was followed this year with two Induction Days for the new Year 7 students. During the days, students took part in a range of lessons including English, maths, PHSE and PE as well as watching a performance by the Merseyside Youth Association looking at the challenges facing students as they progress through school. The children had a busy two days meeting new teachers and getting to know new friends and we aim to continue this during our Summer School at the end of the holidays. Already 180 students have booked on to Summer School where staff have arranged trips to Manley Mere Country Park, The World Museum, Liverpool, Liverpool Watersports Centre, Ninja Warrior and Hollywood Bowl. The week will conclude with our annual Family Fun Day and barbeque on Friday 30th August. There is also the opportunity during the morning of the Family Fun day for parents and carers to attend a workshop delivered by the Mental Health Support Team addressing "how to support an anxious child in their transition to high school." If you still wish to book a place on our Summer School please head to our website for information.

In addition to welcoming our new students for September, we also welcomed over 580 Year 5 students to our annual Taster Days. The team arranged a busy timetable for the days keeping the children engaged in maths, Languages, PE and Art activities. A huge thank you to all of the children who engaged in the days so enthusiastically and to the school staff who accompanied them.

Our Open Event goes live in September with the opportunity for families to book personal tours of the school. If you wish to book a tour please sign into the Open Event using this link [theopenevent.co.uk](https://www.theopenevent.co.uk)

Open Evening for Year 5 and 6 students will take place on Thursday 19th September 2024 from 5pm.

**Chesterfield High School**  
for everyone the best

**READY FOR THE JOURNEY?**  
[www.theopenevent.co.uk](https://www.theopenevent.co.uk)

**OPEN EVENT 2024** BOOK YOUR PERSONAL VISIT  
ONLINE EVENT: 7 SEP - 22 OCT  
OPEN EVENING: 19 SEP





## 33 YEARS OF SERVICE



CHESTERFIELD  
HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs Moorcroft leaves us this summer after 33 years of service. Presently the longest serving teacher at school, Mrs Moorcroft is planning a long and active retirement.

She has been a bedrock within the PE department during her time, she is and always has been a child-centred practitioner leading various curricular and extra-curricular developments. Thousands of Chesterfield students have benefited from her unwavering commitment to sport, she has led netball, athletics and the countless gymnastics displays at school demonstrating her ability to help students reach outstanding levels of performance.

Latterly her role has been to develop PE & school sport as School Games organiser. She has led 39 schools in the locality, from primary and secondary to deliver high quality PE and access regular competitions developing relationships across the partnership. Again thousands of young people and their families have benefitted from healthy competition, leadership opportunities and personal development through these opportunities.

I am sure the whole trust, many of whom know Mrs Moorcroft, join us in wishing her and her husband, a long, happy and fulfilling retirement.

## OUR VISION STATEMENT

- **MERSEY VIEW LEARNING TRUST DELIVERS LEADING QUALITY LEARNING IN A SAFE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT.**
- **WE EMPOWER PEOPLE TO BE READY FOR THE FUTURE, MEETING NEEDS AND RAISING ASPIRATIONS.**
- **WE ARE VISIBLE, ACCOUNTABLE AND TRUSTED.**
- **WE COLLABORATE, CARE AND INSPIRE TO ENRICH LIFE FOR ALL.**

