



The Bridge

Building Bridges to Better Learning in Numeracy & Literacy

Issue 1

KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project



Hundreds of Literacy and Numeracy resources on our Fronter website

The project is also utilising ICT within schools, particularly through the C2K network, to facilitate on-going sharing of effective practice and to support the teacher professional learning programme. Almost 44,000 teachers and educationalists in Northern Ireland have access to the project's Fronter website, (see above) which contains hundreds of literacy and numeracy resources designed to complement the training programme and to enhance transition practice. Teachers are also contributing to the site by forwarding examples of best practice to members of the Project Team.



Watch the team demonstrate the CPD strategies from last year's training on ESAGStv.

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Back by Demand to Build Transition Bridges for Another Year



The KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project in Literacy and Numeracy has been extended for at least another academic year until June 2017 by the Department of Education.

Following on from the success of last year's programme, the KS2-KS3 Literacy and Numeracy CPD Transition Project will continue to deliver teacher professional learning with a literacy and numeracy focus, enabling schools to enhance and improve transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3.

Next year's programme, in response to teachers' requests, will provide the opportunity for cross-phase colleagues from KS2 and KS3 to come together for teacher professional learning. An exciting assortment of training options has been drawn up, based on the needs identified by schools attending the training last year and working in cross-phase partnerships to improve transition from KS2-KS3 in Northern Ireland. The training options will be closely aligned with the recently released *Learning Leaders Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning* (Please see back cover for training options).

Last year uptake for the training programme was significant with over 75% of schools sending their teachers out to the training sessions. Over 200 schools that were unable to participate in the project last year due to their commitment to other initiatives have expressed an interest in getting involved in the project for 2016-2017.

To date, cross-phase collaboration between teachers of KS2 and KS3 has yielded many positive outcomes, including joint staff development days, joint marking codes, team teaching, bridging units and classroom observation. Examples of good transition partnership practice are featured in this newsletter.

The CPD Transition Project will continue to utilise the growing significance of the Area Learning Communities as vehicles for the sharing of good practice, co-ordination of teacher CPD and facilitation of communication between schools. It is envisioned that primary clusters will join with the post-primary ALCs to optimise the opportunity to engage in bespoke training and support which will be offered by the CPD Project Team.





Tandragee Partnership Implements Transition Changes

Building on existing literacy links, the schools in this Tandragee cross-phase partnership focused initial discussion on writing, joint planning and marking codes.

The partnership was guided by a booklet produced by Craigavon ALC schools in April 2015 which recommends areas of focus for schools working cross-phase.

Refining writing cross-phase has been one of the main foci of the Tandragee partnership which includes Tandragee Junior High School, Tandragee Primary School and Clare Primary School.

The Tandragee partnership carried out a cross-phase audit of writing skills to help develop this area at transition. They looked at spelling, punctuation, grammar, and the marking of written work. After discussion common marking codes have been agreed, shared and are now operational in all three schools.

“It was beneficial to look at the Year 8 Schemes in terms of progression as it helps us as Year 7 teachers see how it all fits in. It has given us the opportunity to establish relationships which we can now build on,” said Cathryn Donaldson of Tandragee Primary School.

Tandragee Junior High School Literacy Co-ordinator, Mrs Sarah Steele described the partnership’s collaboration as a very worthwhile and very positive experience as the partnership teachers are now more knowledgeable about what happens in P7 and Year 8 in terms of what is covered in Units of Work.

“It was extremely useful to be given the opportunity to talk with other co-ordinators and to evaluate what is going on in each school in terms of Literacy,” Mrs Steele said.

Relationships have been developed further between primary and post-primary schools and a network has now been established with dates already being discussed to continue work next year in August 2016.

Challenge

One of the challenges that emerged for the partnership was identifying a suitable topic for a bridging unit if the primary schools have composite KS2 classes.

Samples of reading and writing tasks have been shared which has clarified standards. Information on standardised tests has also been shared, e.g. PIE.

Belfast Special Schools’ Partnership Adopts Bespoke Approach To Transition Tracking

The initial intention of this partnership which includes Mitchell House, Cedar Lodge, Fleming Fulton and the Belfast Hospital School was to develop a common approach to assessment and tracking in literacy and numeracy for all four schools, using SIMS to record and track pupil progress.

School principals and all co-ordinators of KS2 and KS3 Literacy and Numeracy met to discuss and share the types of tests they currently use but they could not identify an assessment that would match the needs of all four schools.

“While one size fits all doesn’t work, collaboration is very useful in raising and discussing issues and sharing practice, which can then be tailored to suit individual schools,” Miss Laura Matchett the Principal of Mitchell House explained.



Paul enjoys Art.

Capturing the Pupil Voice on Video to Improve Transition

A video created by the KS2-KS3 CPD Transition team will be available soon to all schools on the project's Fronter website to assist with the continuing improvement of transition cross-phase.

The team captured the views of 21 pupils, first filmed last year in P7 and then followed into Year 8 in January. In the video the pupils share their learning experiences in literacy and numeracy alongside their aspirations and concerns during this transition phase.

The video entitled: "Looking Forward: the Pupil Voice" will be accompanied with a guide which recommends how to incorporate the video into staff training on transition.

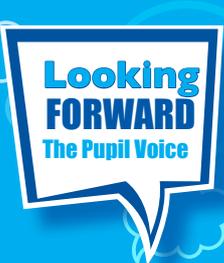
Divya Jindal Snape, Professor of Education, Inclusion and Life Transitions at the University of Dundee has endorsed the KS2-KS3 Transition Project's video. She believes that the video will have a positive impact in relation to improving transition when capturing the pupil voice.

"The creators of this video should be congratulated for capturing rich voices about the various aspects of transitions, which must have been empowering for the children who participated in it, and should be extremely helpful for children as they prepare and make this move, and for the professionals and families supporting them," Professor Snape commented.

"Transition is an ongoing process that involves moving from one educational context and set of interpersonal relationships to another. Therefore, it is important to capture children's experiences over time and in a holistic manner in the context of the physical, educational and interpersonal aspects, which this video has successfully accomplished," the Professor added.

Professor Snape is very eager that the transition video is also shared with Scottish schools.

"For other children watching the video this will be extremely useful information, especially as the participants go on to explain ways of accessing support."
Professor Snape.



Katie concentrates on fractions.

The most appropriate tests have now been identified for each school which dovetail with training received from St Mary's and Stranmillis through the SEN literacy project.

Following the identification of need as reflected in the results of literacy and numeracy tests, the Belfast Special Schools' Partnership is developing the type of additional support programme which may complement the existing practice of all four schools. The schools will meet again to explore best practice and this will culminate in individual schools planning their own bespoke programme.

The staff involved agree that this project has been a great driving force for schools to focus on transition. "There is now good contact between the schools with reference to transition and communication with colleagues at principal and co-ordinator levels," Miss Matchett added.

C2K supported the Belfast Special Schools Partnership by providing training for all principals and co-ordinators to demonstrate SIMS assessment manager. They visited each school individually to help them to set up their own tracking system.

"C2K were very helpful at a whole group and individual school level. Their support was much appreciated and helped us to get the system working the way we wanted, not just using a standard form," Miss Matchett explained.



Pupil Voice Informs Change in County Antrim

The use of a pupil-teacher questionnaire has provided a County Antrim partnership of schools working cross-phase, with the impetus to identify how to enhance their transition practice.

St Killian's well-established transition programme involving the Science Department and forensic analysis activity: "Who Stole Mr Brady's Chair" has certainly ignited the imaginations of new Year 8 pupils, helping them to navigate the campus and to identify staff (from photographs of a list of chief suspects accused of spiriting the chair away!)

A partnership of schools including St John's, Carnlough, St Mary's, Cushendall, St Ciaran's, Cushendun, St MacNissi's, Larne and St Killian's College are improving transition further with a focus on literacy and numeracy cross-phase.

The partnership schools attended the KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project Principals' Conference in Dunadry on the same day and the collaboration between the schools has since been ongoing. Discussions have taken place between the Senior staff and teachers as part of the KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project.

They have been engaged in a number of initiatives following meetings and a shared staff development day which has resulted in an audit of literacy and numeracy in their schools cross-phase.

As a result of the audit of literacy and numeracy provision, the schools' partnership has decided on a focus on times tables and the adoption of common terminology for routine functions in maths. Sharing sessions were also held on Izak 9 which resulted in new lessons being planned on problem solving cross-phase. As not all of the partner schools have access to Izak 9, St. Killian's will host a competition for those partner schools involved in the project.

The discussion of poetry provision in Year 8 has led to plans for a post primary teacher to deliver poetry sessions in the primary schools in



The KS3 Learning Journey from St Killian's College was inspired by last year's CPD Programme.

June. The P7 pupils will respond to a poem entitled "Word Party" which will be filmed on iPads and then screened when the pupils join St Killian's in September.

Other literacy initiatives include a novel to bridge P7 and Year 8 and valuable discussions ensuring novels were not duplicated between P7 and Year 8. Teachers from the partnership will also soon team-teach Shakespeare together. Plans are also being made to re-visit schemes of work in light of the discussions and a pupil questionnaire.

The pupil questionnaire was compiled by Louise Cuning, a KS1 teacher currently, with wide experience of KS2, as part of her PQH preparation. She also took charge of the cross-phase audit of literacy and numeracy provision with the guidance of Mrs Eileen McKay, Vice Principal of St Killian's College.

Mrs Cuning's questionnaire was designed to highlight the overlap between P7 and Y8 in Literacy and Numeracy and incorporated some questions on the views of teachers working with year 8 pupils. She feels that giving the pupils an opportunity to communicate their experiences in Year 8 is seen by pupils as investing in them and that it encourages greater commitment from pupils, as they feel they are being listened to. The teachers participating in the questionnaire highlighted the difficulties in identifying gaps in pupil

knowledge because of the limited information available about each child.

Mrs Cuning was impressed by the maturity of the respondents to the questionnaire. "The pupils admitted that in maths they preferred group work but confessed that more learning took place independently." One of the most simple ideas suggested by the pupils was the creation of a maths dictionary with a list of all the new terms being encountered between P7 and Year 8, an idea that is being followed up currently.

Both Mrs McKay and Mrs Cuning stressed the importance of listening and sensitivity to each other in the partnership discussions and the importance of not trying to force your practice on another school.

Surprising recommendations from the numeracy pupil questionnaire included that maths task boards used in Year 8 be part of the P7 experience and the retention in Year 8 of the colourful materials and carousel numeracy activity which are more common in P7. A discussion on preparing pupils in P7 to take brief notes when the occasion arises has also caused a re-think. Some primary schools have moved away from this practice entirely but many subjects post-primary will incorporate some note-taking into lessons.

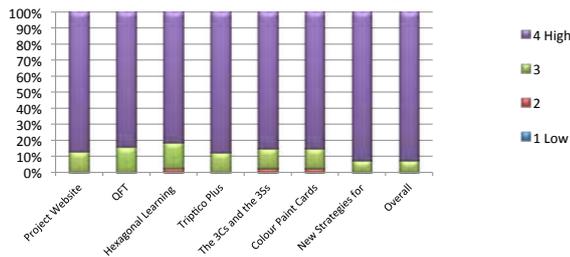
How Teachers Evaluated the Training



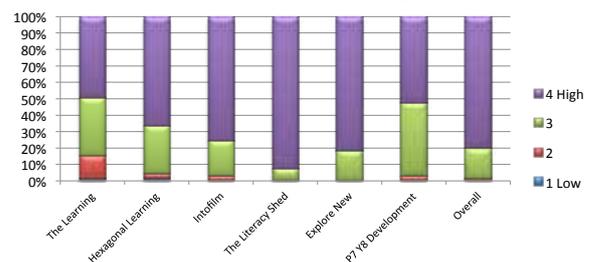
“Improving Learning and Teaching in KS2 English/Literacy”

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS FOR KS2 TRAINING

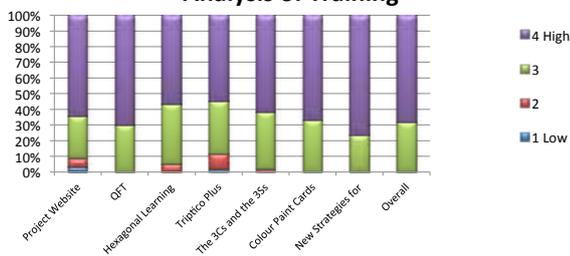
**KS2 Literacy Belfast Region
Analysis of Training**



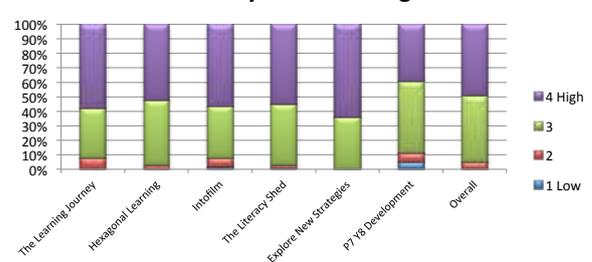
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Analysis of Training**



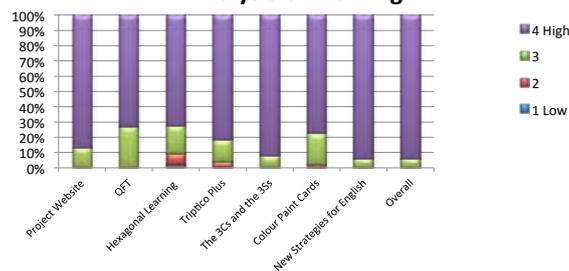
**KS2 Literacy North East Region
Analysis of Training**



**KS2 Literacy Western Region
Analysis of Training**



**KS2 Literacy South East Region
Analysis of Training**



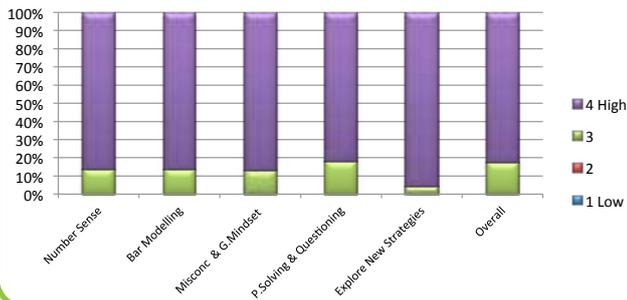


How Teachers Evaluated the Training

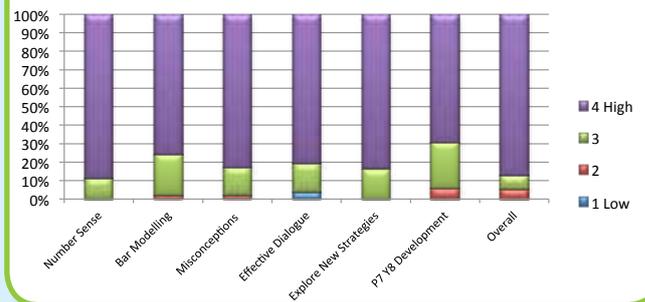
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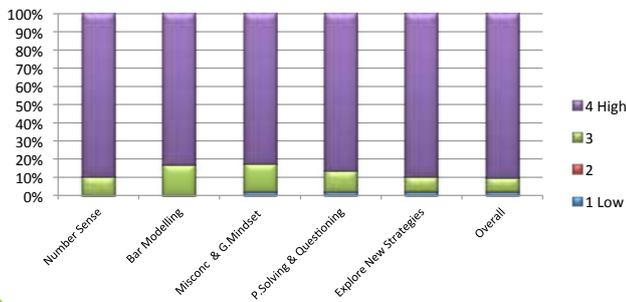
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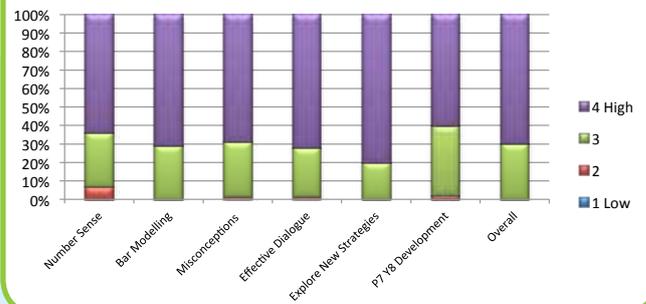
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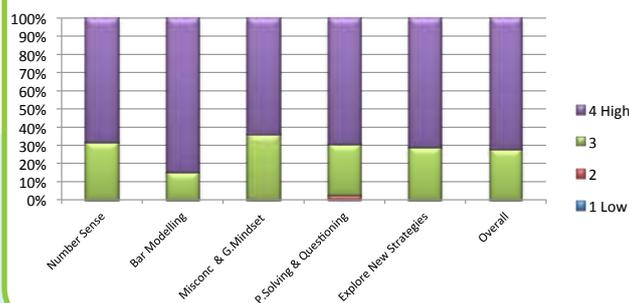
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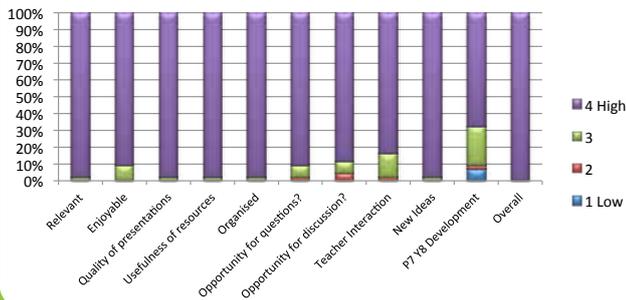
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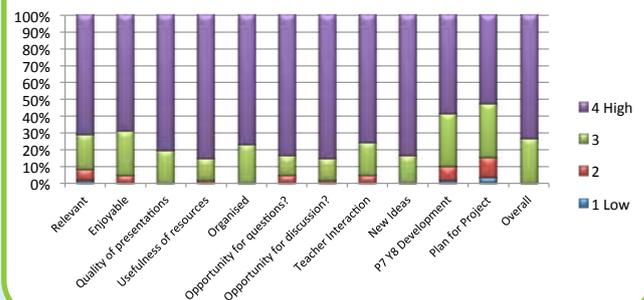
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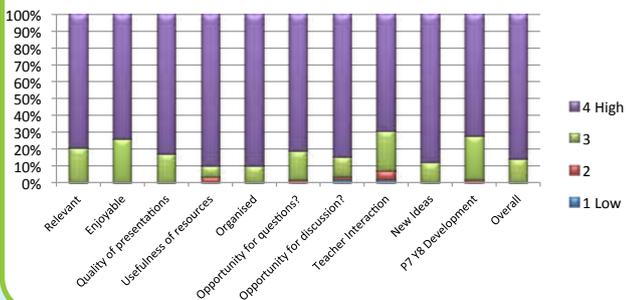
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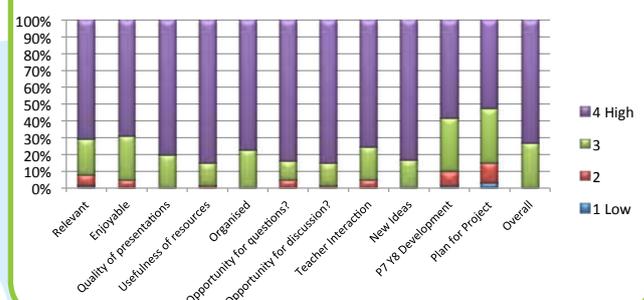
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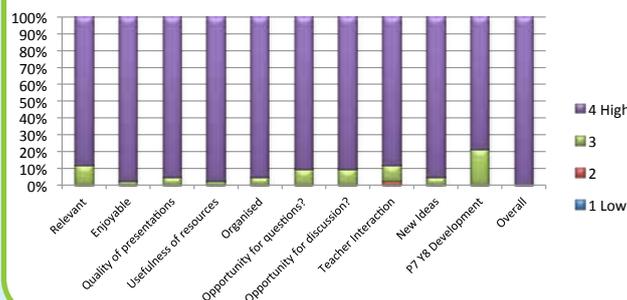
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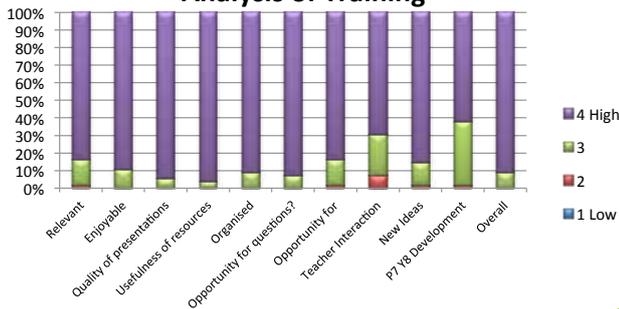


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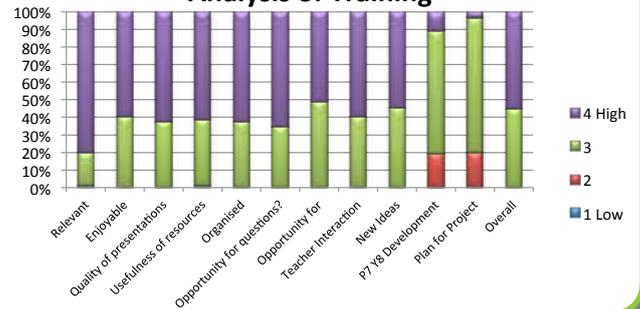
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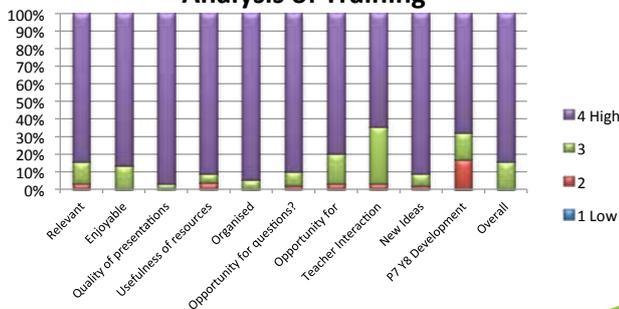
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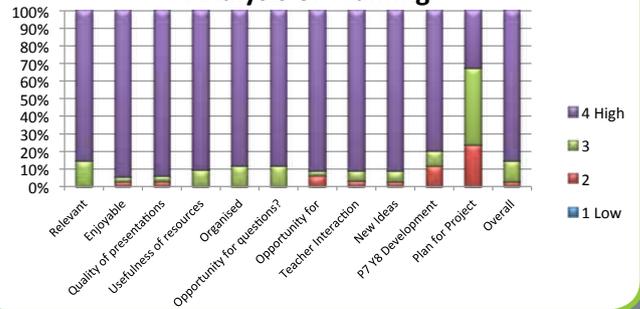
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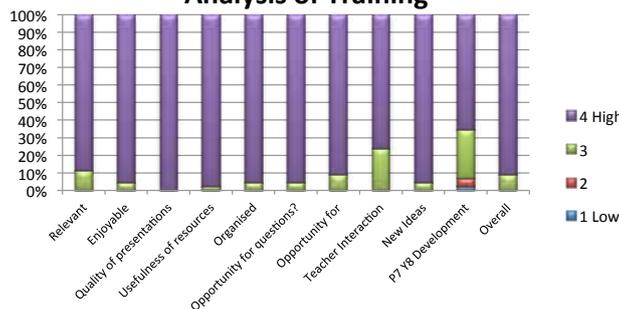
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**KS3 Numeracy Western Region
Analysis of Training**



**KS3 Numeracy South Eastern Region
Analysis of Training**



“Open, Productive and Helping us to do the Best for the Children.”



Dan Freedman reads to pupils in the Ballymoney partnership of schools.

This is how Ballymoney High School Principal, Mrs Cynthia Currie summed up the experience of the transition partnership with the nearby Leaney Primary School.

Miss Vivien Moorhouse, Principal of the Leaney Primary School explained how the schools met initially to identify where overlap was occurring in English and maths between Year 7 and Year 8 and ideas for collaboration grew from that point. Children in Year 7 have a pupil passport to complete, agreed by both schools, to let the receiving school learn about them. They also study a typical post-primary timetable during maths as this was an area Year 8 children reported finding difficult.

The Year 7 teacher Mr Gary Magee commented on how the partnership had really helped with breaking down barriers. Maths teacher Mrs Maurina Barr agrees, she spent part of the cross-phase collaboration days with Mr Magee, which resulted in the Leaney Primary School adopting the use of MyMaths. “This has created fluidity between Year 7 and Year 8 as older children in the family have used or are using MyMaths in Ballymoney High School currently,” Mrs Barr explained.

Both teachers agreed that the contact they have had has made a huge difference in their joint approach to maths cross-phase, with increased confidence in maths and greater enthusiasm among the pupils in evidence.

Mr Magee added that he really enjoyed meeting his past pupils again, now in the secondary school and discovering just how they have progressed through the years.

The schools have established good relationships and share governors but the Principals agree that working on

transition has had a meaningful impact on pupils and teachers cross-phase.

“We now have knowledge of each other’s content and practice,” Mrs Currie commented.

At the initial planning meeting to exchange schemes of works and to discuss resources, a Maths Fun Puzzle Day was outlined and has since been successfully executed which added to making the primary school children feel comfortable in secondary school maths classes, regardless of where the pupils will attend following transition.

The schools are currently running weekly After School Clubs in Literacy and Numeracy in the Post Primary school where the primary school pupils are taught by Year 8 teachers. These clubs provide an opportunity to target pupils who need extra support. The Post Primary maths teachers report this experience to be a “breath of fresh air” and that it has had a positive impact on the teaching of all Year 8 classes. Building confidence has been a central focus of the English Department. “Confidence has improved greatly,” Mrs Tracey Woodall, Head of English said. Both she and Mrs Julie-Ann Logan, Literacy Co-ordinator, have used the collaboration time to discover what happens in the Year 7 classroom throughout the year and to identify where repetition can occur. Teachers in both schools have shared the main novels used in Year 7 and Year 8 to ensure there is no replication.

The English Department has focused on drama surrounding the Titanic, news writing and author visits, the first author visit was from Dan Freedman. His books have inspired children, who are sometimes reluctant readers. Local writer Colin Bateman also paid a visit to the schools. His book “Titanic 2000” is a popular read with pupils in transition from KS2-KS3.

Armagh iPad Partnership Aids Digital Progression Cross-Phase

The literacy focus of an Armagh schools' partnership has been complemented by the innovative lead taken on digital literacy through the use of iPads.

Saint Catherine's Principal, Mrs Noeleen Tiffney has been driving the adoption of iPads into teaching and learning since she acquired her own iPad and began to realise how digital technology could enhance learning in the school. Keen to continue to build strong links with her partner primaries, Mrs Tiffney was delighted to share her school's expertise with their literacy partner in the KS2-KS3 Transition project.

Saint Patrick's Primary School staff were eager to incorporate the use of spelling and reading apps on their iPads into lessons but they required some guidance. A chance to share best practice across the sectors was agreed at a Cross-Phase meeting and this led to Mr Herron facilitating staff training and the demonstration of iPad usage at a shared CPD session in Saint Catherine's College.

The training module developed by Mr Herron for Saint Catherine's staff, in the form of an online iTunes U course including an iPad competency ladder, meant staff could start with the basics or build on pre-existing knowledge. The ICT co-ordinator at Saint Patrick's, Mrs Cathy Thornton has been working alongside Mr Herron.

Mr John Monaghan the Principal of Saint Patrick's is delighted that Saint Catherine's are sharing their iPad expertise with his staff and pupils. "We had just started to look at iPads, now Ronan has taken sessions with the whole staff right from beginner stage of how to incorporate use in the classroom."

Mr Monaghan explained that the schools were planning to do more in terms of iPad use in the classroom. Mr Herron will meet with Mrs Thornton at the end of this academic year to determine where staff are in terms of their practice and begin to strategically plan future training.

Saint Catherine's pupils worked with a P7 class to complete an iPad project in

the AmmA Centre, Armagh which involved presenting their experiences of iPad learning to other pupils in Saint Patrick's.

Mrs Tiffney has seen iPads change pedagogy: "Our focus has been on upskilling teachers to use iPads to enhance learning and teaching." The Principal added that teachers can leave a homework brief open and pupils use apps and research to develop it in ways best suited to their interest and learning style.

Digital literacy audits across all staff have enabled a technology-rich curriculum to be planned around pupil need.

"We are not interested in technology for the sake of it but as a way of making lessons more engaging, innovative and effective. Before pupil impact can be assessed, staff upskilling was essential and has formed the first stage of the CPD project, hand-in-hand with an eSafety drive," Mrs Tiffney added.



"In a world that is becoming increasingly reliant on technology, young people need to be given the opportunity to learn ICT skills in an interesting, challenging and relevant way. Schools should provide a range of ICT courses that are suitably matched to students' needs, support them with their learning and prepare them for higher education and for skilled work in a technological age."

HM Chief Inspector, Miriam Rosen
Ofsted, ICT in Schools 2008-11 (2011)

Izak9 Transition Pilot Highlights Pupils' Determination to Succeed in Maths

A small-scale pilot of ten schools has been established as part of the KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project, to explore the use of Izak9 with pupils and to promote discussion and sharing of practice between primary and post-primary teachers.

The Diamond Primary School in Cullybackey, one of the pilot schools is focusing on problem solving in the School Development Plan, and has introduced Izak9 from P1 right through to P7, with great success in engaging pupils in mathematical discussions and problem solving, while promoting the use of the correct mathematical language.

Barbara McKibben, the Numeracy Co-ordinator, says the whole staff had a brilliant staff development day exploring how they could use Izak9, and discovering that they employed a wide range of different methods to explain their thinking around a maths problem. This has been demonstrated in



Elmgrove P7 pupils start to incorporate Algebra.

“Getting the Best out of the Children.”

Hollywood Schools Agree Standards & Expectations



P7 pupils in Forthill Integrated PS are engrossed in their learning.

classes, as pupils in all the pilot schools listen to each other’s thinking, and develop flexibility in their approaches.

Stephen Weatherall, Vice Principal of Forthill Integrated Primary School, also involved in the pilot commented that he has been very impressed with the pupils determination to succeed. Karen Harvey, Maths teacher in Cullybackey College, added: “I have observed pupils try Izak9 solutions several ways rather than giving up.”

Across both primary and post-primary there have been significant improvements in pupils’ skills in working with others, problem solving and decision making. Communicating mathematically and thinking flexibly have also been enhanced. Across both phases, using Izak9 has raised pupils’ enthusiasm towards maths.

Maureen Keeley, P7 teacher in Elmgrove Primary School added: “The pupils are more prepared to try to use reasoning to justify answers, realising that there is more than one way to solve problems.” Mrs Keeley commented that she felt that she had benefitted professionally in terms of her own CPD from talking to post-primary maths teachers as part of the pilot.

Building on existing good relationships, partnership schools in the Hollywood area have used the Transition Project to crystallise the standards and expectations of pupils during transition from P7 to Year 8. The schools involved are Glencraig Integrated Primary School, Hollywood Primary School, Priory Integrated College, Rockport School (Junior and Senior), St Patrick’s Primary School, Sullivan Upper School and Sullivan Preparatory Department.

The journey began six years ago when Mrs Millar held a transition conference focussing on sharing transition ‘Best Practice’. She invited all of the partner primary schools, in her area to Sullivan where discussions took place on book choices and schemes of work. Mrs Millar explained that the schemes of work were revised in light of these discussions.

“We have shared our novel resources and looked at our curricula to avoid overlap,” Mrs Millar said.

Mrs Millar was encouraged by the District School Inspector, Mr John McCusker. He suggested a variety of ways to ensure transition was manageable and varied each year. Thereby ascertaining what was happening in literacy lessons in P7 to avoid overlap and a disconnection in learning when pupils started Year 8.

Mrs Shaunagh McKirgan, Principal of Glencraig Integrated Primary School explained that an area such as report writing introduced in literacy in Primary 7, could be revised briefly in Year 8 and built upon to ensure pupil engagement did not lapse by re-introducing the topic again.



The KS2-KS3 CPD Transition Project has helped the schools to share and benefit further from their transition experience.

“Sharing our work has been prompted by our desire to get the best out of the children,” Mrs Debbie Crookshanks, Principal of Hollywood Primary School added.

The Hollywood Schools’ Partnership members agree that they are building their transition practice and constantly learning over the years.

The schools found that bringing examples of pupils’ work to their meetings has created a clearer understanding between them so that expectations of pupils can be altered accordingly. “We stepped back from pro-forma transition forms as we found conversation to be more useful,” Mrs McKirgan added.

Mrs Crookshanks related the experience of working with Priory College, Hollywood on looking at the standards of pupils’ work. “We looked at a sample of pupil work dating from P7 into Year 8. The difference in application evident from P7 to Year 8 in some subjects was revealing and offered teachers an opportunity to share the differences with pupils and parents.”

Mrs Jacqui Argument, Principal of Priory Integrated College added: “We have valued the opportunity to learn from our primary school colleagues. It has been really enriching for our staff and has given us the opportunity to begin work on a model that will ultimately be of long term benefit to all of the young people who make the transition from KS2 to KS3.”

John Stevenson, former Principal of Sullivan Upper School, author of transition text ‘Moving Up’, spoke to staff and pupils recently on transition. At this meeting Year 8 pupils answered questions from P7 pupils curious about the next stage in their educational experience.

“This is a hugely successful exchange, as no one could answer the questions more clearly than pupils who recently made the transition to Year 8,” Mrs McKirgan added.

Professional Support Programme offered by the CPD Team 2016-17

Teacher Professional Learning - Joint Primary and Post-Primary CPD

Teacher Professional Learning Units (Teacher CPD)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluating Learning and Teaching - Upskilling the Middle Leaders. 2. Thinking Skills, Personal Capabilities and Oracy 3. Approaches to Gender: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Boys' Underachievement and Girls' Resilience (Literacy) b. Engagement and Perseverance in Maths 4. Differentiation 	<p>To include sharing, discussion and debate between KS2 and KS3</p>
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Professional Support for ALC School Partnerships offered by the CPD Project Team

All support sessions will include sharing, discussion and debate between KS2 and KS3

Teacher Professional Learning Units (Teacher CPD)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning and Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Role of Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinator • Evaluating Learning and Teaching - Upskilling the Middle Leaders • Progression in Literacy KS2 to KS3 • Progression in Numeracy KS2 to KS3 • Developing TS and PCs in the English Classroom/Literacy • Developing TS and PCs in the Maths Classroom/Numeracy • Raising Attainment: - Reading - Writing • Developing Oracy Across the Curriculum (Literacy Co-ordinator) • Developing Oracy in Maths • Engagement in English through Digital Literacy • Approaches to Gender: Boys' Underachievement and Girls' Resilience • Engagement and Perseverance in Maths • Differentiation in English • Differentiation in Maths • Marking for Improvement in English and Maths Classrooms
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Role of Transition Co-ordinator • Facilitating Primary and Post Primary school partnerships and clusters • Developing action plans • Joint CPD • Effective use of data KS2 to KS3 • Bridging Units • Work Shadowing • Reciprocal Visits • Planning for Progression KS2 to KS3 • Pupil and parent surveys • Subject specialist teaching eg Primary teacher demonstrating phonics teaching to Post Primary English teachers • Developing a transition booklet • Getting Ready for Year 8 Pack • Pupil passports • Engagement with parents before and after transition • Induction Days/Activities