



Finding The Lost Years: The MFC Foundation Transition Initiative Evaluation

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Summary

The research evaluation has taken place from May – July 2017. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an assessment of 'The Transition Initiative'. The evaluation has explored the views of selected participants associated with the initiative in order to reflect on what has been achieved. The evaluation also makes recommendations on how to continue to develop the excellent work that is already being carried out by the staff from Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation (MFCF) in the future. The aim of the initiative is to improve the experiences of primary ('year 6') students who are moving into 'year 7' within the Tees Valley region. The initiative involves staff from MFCF who work alongside students in primary and secondary schools in Middlesbrough. The activities that are undertaken occur in the schools and at Middlesbrough Football Club and they are sports-based alongside linking to the formal school curriculum. The relationships that are established between the staff at the Foundation and the students are designed to help the children to settle more effectively into their secondary school. The initiative aims to discover what was referred to by one of the respondents as 'the lost years'. As opposed to seeing children 'drifting through' their initial secondary school years, the project aims at building up the confidence of these students, which will also help them to raise their academic potential. The evaluation has explored the effectiveness of the project. The researcher (Dr Ewan Ingleby) has adopted a mixed-methods methodological approach in gathering the research data. Questionnaire data has been gathered from the students who have been involved with the initiative (n=209) alongside performance data from one of the secondary schools taking part in the project. Alongside this data, a series of 15 loosely structured interviews were completed with key participants from May to June 2017. These interviews were transcribed professionally and they identify key themes about the successes and future development of the project. The evaluation is based on delivering a 'proof of concept', in other words, a reflection on the feasibility of the initiative. This reflection is generated from the data sets that have been gathered about the transition initiative. All the research participants have identified aspects of excellent practice in terms of the effectiveness of the staff from MFCF and the impact that this work is having on young people in Middlesbrough. This represents a key finding of the evaluation.

Introduction

Dr Ewan Ingleby, on behalf of The Social Futures Institute (SoFI) at Teesside University submitted a proposal to evaluate the MFCF Transition Initiative in March 2017. It was acknowledged that this initial evaluation holds the potential to influence the direction of future opportunities for secondary school pupils in Middlesbrough and the Tees Valley. The evaluation has aimed at considering the strengths and developmental aspects of the initiative. Dr Ewan Ingleby was chosen to carry out the evaluation as he has previously completed evaluative work in education as part of a developing pedagogy and practice grant from the HEA (Higher Education Academy) and due to a previous evaluation that was completed for Middlesbrough Council in 2014-2015.

Research Context Background

The research project is framed by a background that draws attention to the pressures and uncertainties that primary and secondary schools in England are facing today (www.academytoday.co.uk; www.ascl.org.uk; www.nao.org.uk; www.insidegovernment.co.uk; www.tes.com). A combined survey by ATL (the Association of Teachers and Lecturers) and the NUT (National Teachers Union) in 2017 identified that funding pressures have forced schools to resort to new ways of raising money. This survey reveals that 44% of schools 'rent out' school buildings and one-sixth of schools now ask parents for money (www.tes.com). In the survey of 1,200 teachers, support staff, and heads, 76% of staff said that their budget had been cut this year. 93% of the respondents said that they were 'pessimistic' about their school's funding over the next three years. 71% of the secondary school respondents said that their school had cut teaching posts and 50% of the total number of respondents revealed that they have had to increase class sizes. The survey also reveals that 41% of schools have had to cut their SEN (Special Educational Needs) provision. The statements by the respondents reveal the challenges that are facing schools in England in 2017. In the survey, a primary teacher from Essex stated that: 'over the last two years, the ethos of the school has changed from being based on a family atmosphere to being driven by cost-cutting' (www.tes.com).

Another teacher referred to having to teach a 'master class' of 64 pupils (www.tes.com). According to the survey, schools are being forced to go to increasing lengths to raise money to cope with funding shortfalls. Nearly half (49%) of the respondents said their school has asked parents to pay for items to help their child's education, including textbooks or art and design materials (www.tes.com). 14 of these respondents said that their school asks for over £20 a month. The survey was published on the first day of ATL's annual conference in Liverpool, in April 2017, where five motions on the subject of funding were debated. Mary Bousted, ATL's general secretary, warned that: 'unless the government finds more money for schools and fast, today's school children will have severely limited choices' (www.tes.com). Kevin Courtney, from the NUT, criticised the government by saying that: 'our government must invest in our country and invest in our children' (www.tes.com). The TES (Times Educational Supplement) noted that a DfE (Department for Education) spokeswoman responded to this particular sector challenge by saying: 'the government has protected the core schools budget in real terms since 2010, with school funding at its highest level on record at almost £41 billion in 2017-18 – and that is set to rise, as pupil numbers rise over the next two years, to £42 billion by 2019-20' (www.tes.com). Despite this statement, the pressure on school budgets appears to be a key educational challenge in 2017.

The challenges to school funding are also part of the broader context of educational challenges in schools in England. This is revealed by Selwyn (2011, cited in Ingleby 2015) who draws attention to some of the ambitious educational policies of the Coalition and Conservative governments in England from 2010. These policies have included reforming the examination system and increasing the number of academy schools (Ingleby 2015). In this background contextualisation of education in England, some of the challenges that are present in the English education system are revealed by exemplifying the consequences of the introduction of academy schools in England.

The academy schools are grounded in what Selwyn (2011, 365, cited in Ingleby 2015) refers to as 'an ambition of absence'. As opposed to championing the merits of aligning schools to local authority control, the academy schools are based on encouraging self-regulation (Machin and Veroit 2011). There is a palpable sense that almost anything is possible within the academy (or 'free' schools). The schools

will ideally regulate their own finances but Machin and Veroit (2011, 2) refer to the 'controversy' surrounding the introduction of academy schools in England since 2002. These schools are 'independent, non-selective, state funded' and 'outside the control of local authorities' (Machin and Veroit 2011, 2). The schools are managed by an independent team of sponsors. The sponsors of the schools ensure that their management is delegated to a largely self-appointed set of governors. Machin and Veroit (2011, 2) note that an academy usually has around 13 governors with seven typically appointed by the sponsor. The 'controversy' surrounding the academy schools can be traced back to this independent arrangement of sponsors. Who are the sponsors? What are they trying to achieve? What sort of curriculum is being introduced? In attempting to promote independence with regards to the curriculum and the financial running of these schools, a number of questions have been asked by academic commentators about these schools. The academics who have explored the consequences of the introduction of these schools in England include Clarke 2014; but also Ball 2010; Caldwell and Harris 2008; Glatter 2013; Greary and Scott 2014; Gunter 2011; Hatcher 2011; Machin and Salvanes 2010; Machin and Veroit 2011; and McCrone, Southcott and George 2011. The 'loose' arrangement of the academy system appears to enable the possibility of the emergence of radical and even threatening curricula (Clarke 2014). As well as a risk of academy schools enabling religious extremism (Clarke 2014), academic researchers have commented on the shifting responsibilities that are made manifest within the academy schools (Gunter 2011). This reveals some of the challenges for us as when are working within the education sector in England. There are pressures on budgets, but some of the policy responses with regards to school education in England appear to have exacerbated the challenges that are being experienced.

In exemplifying this argument, the research that has been completed on academy schools in England outlines that this form of school does allow more autonomy and flexible governance, owing to the changed school structure (Ball 2010; Caldwell and Harris 2008; Glatter 2013; Greary and Scott 2014; Gunter 2011; Hatcher 2011; Machin and Salvanes 2010; Machin and Veroit 2011; and McCrone, Southcott and George 2011). The gradual emergence of academy schools in England since 2002 has, however proved controversial. Their autonomy enables them to have the potential to influence areas of the curriculum such as developing employability skills in young people (Machin and Veroit 2011). On the other side of the debate are the

critics of the academy schools who outline that autonomy can exacerbate segregation in society (Ball 2010; Clarke 2014). Machin and Veroit (2011) reveal some of the educational consequences of the autonomy of the academy schools in England. It is argued that academy schools are able to 'sharply increase the quality of their pupil intake' because of this autonomy (Machin and Veroit 2011, 45). This is particularly pronounced in schools that converted to academy status in the early years following their introduction in England in 2002. The consequences for the schools that are not academies are not however, necessarily 'obvious'. The presence of a new form of school can actually provide 'significant beneficial effects' for the schools that are not academies (Machin and Veroit 2011, 46). The argument runs that a new form of competitor school provides incentives for the schools that are not academies. This can lead to improvements in their educational performance. Machin and Veroit's (2011) findings help to explain why academy schools in England have increased in number since their introduction in 2002. Their autonomy is perceived to be beneficial by some of the educational policymakers in England. In a wider critique of the forces influencing education in England, Urban (2009) argues that there is an absence of educational philosophy across the sector. There is neither a Rudolf Steiner nor a Maria Montessori informing English educational contexts. Instead, a void is filled with initiatives that are based on political and socio-economic imperatives. The academy schools are one such example of an educational initiative that is influenced by political philosophy. This reveals some of the challenges existing within schools in England today and the financial pressures on schools that have been revealed in 2017 draw attention to a sector of education that is in need of help and support. The research in this project is based on this principle of seeking to be helpful and developmental to the schools that have been involved with the Transition Initiative.

Alongside the challenges that are facing schools in England in 2017, Day et al. (2016) have identified a number of profound socio-economic problems that are affecting children and families. There are over 120,000 'troubled families' in England. The characteristics of these families include the following: no parent is in work; the family live in poor quality or overcrowded housing; the parents do not have academic or professional qualifications; the mother has mental health problems; at least one parent has a long-standing, limiting illness, disability or infirmity; the family live on an income that is below 60% of the median; and the family are unable to afford items of

food and clothing. Day et al. (2016) estimate that these 'troubled families' cost the public purse £9 billion during 2010-2015. A key recommendation from Day et al. (2016, 25) is for professionals who are able to work effectively 'in partnership' so that 'silo working' does not occur. These 'troubled families' who have 'slipped through the net' are a characteristic of regions with challenging socio-economic circumstances such as the Tees Valley. The families in the report by Day et al. (2016) are characterized by complex social problems including domestic violence/abuse; safeguarding issues; drugs/substance/alcohol abuse; mental health needs; criminality; housing issues; gang activities; teenage pregnancy; police call-outs and low educational attainment. Alongside the wider structural pressures on schools in England, these social problems exacerbate the challenging circumstances that are being faced by significant numbers of children. These combined pressures form the background to the research evaluation.

Project Evaluation

Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation is currently running a pilot project that is funded through Middlesbrough Council Public Health and Supporting Communities Department and Middlesbrough Achievement Partnership. At present the partnership works with three secondary schools and 4 primary feeder schools per secondary school (12 primary schools in total). New funding received from 'The Premier League/Players Football Association Fund' will allow MFC Foundation to expand the reach of the model in order to work with an additional 6 primary schools.

Evaluation Methodology

The research evaluation process has been based on the following:

1. A rapid review of published and grey literature.
2. Quantitative data (descriptive statistics) from questionnaire data (n=209).
3. Quantitative performance data from a school participating in the initiative.
4. Qualitative fieldwork with key informants and reflections in a fieldwork diary.
5. Systematic evaluation of the Stepping Up pilot project.
6. Data synthesis and reporting.

The overall aim of the study has been to provide a formative, process evaluation of the stepping up pilot project. The evaluation has:

- Identified that the model is fit for purpose and that it is achieving its outcomes.
- Identified developmental opportunities in order to maintain best practice.
- Improved understanding of the ways of maintaining best practice with planning, implementation and delivery in the future.
- Highlighted key issues in the transition pathway from year 6 to year 7 for pupils in Middlesbrough.

The Principal Investigator has liaised with key partners who have been involved with the initiative on a regular basis via face-to-face meetings, telephone calls and e-mails. The research approach is based on previous evaluative research completed by Jarvis (2014a; 2014b) and has comprised the following main elements:

- Brief review of existing evidence and recent research outputs.
- Evaluation of the support for schools programme.
- Interviews with key participants involved with the project (n=15)

These elements are have been informed by the following:

Research question/issue	Proposed method/s
Briefly establish the current evidence base for providing improved advice, information and support for transition from KS2 to KS3	Brief desk based review of existing evidence regarding the pressures that are facing schools in England in 2017.
Assess the effectiveness of the pilot activity	Completion of interviews with key participants and analysis of questionnaire data.
Identify - and aim to achieve consensus on - the 'theory of change' for implementation of the intervention	Completion of interviews with key participants and analysis of questionnaire data.
Understand the issues / challenges / opportunities of new way(s) of working	Completion of interviews with key participants and analysis of questionnaire data.
Establish the 'acceptability' of intervention for stakeholders	Completion of interviews with key participants and analysis of questionnaire data.

leading to improved impact	
Assess information-sharing processes and make suggestions for improvement	Completion of interviews with key participants and analysis of questionnaire data.
Consider how staff can be supported to work differently	Completion of interviews with key participants and analysis of questionnaire data.
Identify lessons for good practice going forward	Completion of interviews with key participants and analysis of questionnaire data.
Identify recommendations for 'scaling up' going forward	Synthesise key findings to inform plans for future delivery, as part of the future transition from KS2 to KS3.
Overall evaluation of proof of concept and process	Synthesis of all the above

Ethical Considerations, Confidentiality, Data Protection

The researcher ensured that the work was completed according to the highest ethical standards. The research project was approved by the research ethics committee of the School of Social Science Business and Law at Teesside University in May 2017. The ethical protocols associated with the research were outlined to all the participants. Information given by the research respondents has been kept strictly confidential by following the ethical protocols of the school of social sciences business and law at Teesside University (please see the ethical approval form in Appendix 1). All the participants were asked to sign the consent forms ahead of being interviewed.

All the interview recordings have been kept securely during the course of the research. The tapes, transcripts and data in other forms derived from these will be kept for 5 years in a secure archive leased by Teesside University and then destroyed. All participants will be asked to give their consent to participate prior to taking part in the study. The anonymity of all participants is guaranteed. However, it is recognised that because of the nature of the project, the situation may arise that readers of the report may be able to identify the participant as the sole person performing that role. As part of the ethical approval process the researcher will inform participants of this potential eventuality which will enable individuals to decide whether or not they wish to participate.

Outputs

The final outputs are this evaluative report and an academic paper that will be written through 2017-2018 and submitted to the academic journal *Professional Development in Education*. The evaluative report presents:

- Qualitative and quantitative data that identifies the strengths and developmental areas of the initiative.
- Reflections on how to develop the project in the future.

This final report represents the key findings of the formal evaluation.

Key Findings

These findings are based on the questionnaire data (please too, see appendices 4, 5, and 6), the transcribed interviews and reflections in a fieldwork diary. The key themes are as follows:

- There are a number of significant benefits within the initiative in terms of the impact of the project on young people in Middlesbrough that come from the excellent practice of the staff from MFCF.
- There is the potential to maintain this positive impact on young people in Middlesbrough and across the Tees Valley if the staff from MFCF receive continued support in the initiative.
- There are challenges in implementing the initiative, but these challenges are being negotiated effectively by the staff from MFCF, alongside the excellent work from the school staff as they demonstrate best practice.
- The pedagogical approach within the initiative is highly successful and holds the potential for being developed even more effectively in the future as long as the project is supported.
- Although wider socio-economic problems have a significant impact on the students who are associated with the project, the staff at MFCF are offering an important curriculum initiative that is helping and supporting the students despite these challenges. All the school staff support the continuation of the

programme and the initial year 7 performance data that was provided suggests that the students' attainment levels will improve as school attendance is being influenced positively (see Appendix 6).

Questionnaire Data Summary

The quantitative data from the completed questionnaires reveals that the initiative is making a significant impact on the educational experiences of year 6 and 7 students. Two key findings from this data reveal that **88%** of the year 7 students who have experienced the work in the project are 'not worried about starting secondary school' and that **93%** of the year 7 students think that they are 'well prepared for secondary school'. There are key aspects of school readiness that are being addressed by the project. The year 6 students who completed the questionnaires identified that 'making new friends' is particularly important in settling in to secondary school. The 'fun' activities that are experienced in the project appear to help in this regard. **64%** of the year 6 students identify that 'visits to the secondary school before they begin to study there' and 'help and support from family and friends' are especially important in helping them to experience a smooth transition from primary to secondary school. The project enables these children to have both of these beneficial experiences. There are scheduled visits to the secondary schools within the initiative and this is a 'community project'. The project appears to generate a sense of community and this supportive pastoral ethos is helping the children to settle into their secondary school successfully. **70%** of year 7 students think that they have become more confident as a result of being involved with the project. This reveals a massive achievement of the initiative. Children in schools in England in 2017 appear to be experiencing significant pressures. **82%** of the year 6 students are particularly worried about 'exams' so it appears to be particularly important to provide an initiative that is making the children feel more confident about starting secondary school.

Key Theme 1: There are a number of significant benefits within the initiative in terms of the impact of the project on young people in Middlesbrough that come from the excellent practice of the staff from MFCE.

The students who have been involved with the initiative appear to be more confident. Appendix 6 reveals that the students are in general either 'not worried' or only 'slightly worried' about starting year 7. The initiative appears to make the students feel either 'very prepared' or at least 'quite prepared' for year 7. Appendix 6 reveals that the students who are involved with the project attend school well (the majority had an average attendance of over 95%). Appendix 4 identifies that the two most important considerations that impact on successful transition from year 6 to year 7 ('exams worry' and 'making friends') are being addressed by the initiative. The 15 interviewees all made reference to the benefits that are provided by the staff from MFCF and the positive impact that this is having on young people in Middlesbrough. The following section presents a selection of the views that have been reported by the research respondents about the benefits of the initiative.

The respondents draw attention to the importance of the staff from MFCF 'supporting the students through the initiative' (Respondent 1). The project is regarded as providing opportunities for the students 'to make friends' so that they are no longer 'vulnerable' (Respondent 1). This is highly beneficial for the young people who are involved with the programme. The importance of 'friends' is revealed within the questionnaire data. The initiative appears to enable 'children from different backgrounds to mix' (Respondent 2) so that 'primary and secondary children are enabled to come together and work together' (Respondent 2). Respondent 3 makes reference to the opportunities for 'mentoring' that are provided within the initiative. An 'immersive environment coupled with the chance to talk about emotional health has been provided by the project' (Respondent 3). The mentoring opportunities are a result of the best practice that is being demonstrated by the staff from MFCF who are working closely with the school staff to make the project a success. The 'beneficial, enabling pastoral focus of the project' is also regarded as a strength of the Transition Initiative (Respondent 4). The interviewees refer to the 'confidence that is given to the students' in a mutually supportive environment 'that is familiar and friendly' (Respondent 4). The consequence appears to ensure that the students 'are not as worried about the next step' (Respondent 7). Those students who are 'vulnerable' are helped as they move from year 6 to year 7 and this is having a vital impact on the successful transition of the students as they move from year 6 to year 7 (Respondent 4). The respondents consider that the involvement of Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation with the initiative is a massive benefit. Respondent 5 refers

to this 'ingredient' as being a particularly important 'benefit' of the project. 'The staff wear the MFC (Middlesbrough Football Club) badge and this is a symbolic link with the local community' (Respondent 5). The project is considered to have 'established a balanced way of working, allowing the children to respond in a highly positive way' (Respondent 5). The staff who are 'beyond the schools' appear to work in highly effective ways so that 'expectations have been reinforced' (Respondent 6). Positive adjectives were used by the respondents in describing the transition initiative ('excellent' [Respondent 4]; 'powerful' [Respondent 8]; 'helpful' [Respondent 9]; 'passionate' [Respondent 10]; 'lively' [Respondent 11]; and 'effective' [Respondent 12]. The positioning of the initiative as 'beyond the rigours and routines of school' was noted too (Respondent 13).

My overall impression of the initiative is that it has provided the children with a means of entering the secondary school with a mind-set to learn and this occurs because they are not there with fear. It is a fear of learning that reveals itself in behavioural issues and mental health problems in my experience' (Respondent 13).

The 'power' of the football club was also commented on by the respondents. Football appears to be particularly important to the community and the involvement of MFCF appears to complement the work of the teachers in the schools.

'The football club has a very powerful reputation within the local community and it is a way of demonstrating the pastoral work that is important in education. The staff appear to be very good people who are involved with the welfare of the wider area. If you have ever watched 'Match Of The Day' there is usually part of the programme where there is a feature on what is happening within the local community and how the football clubs are trying to develop talents and skills. This initiative is a bit like this because of the way that the football club are being involved. The facilities are also second to none and what happens is reinforced by the family and the friends of the children' (Respondent 14)

The project appears to be particularly beneficial for 'children who are considered as being on the fringes' (Respondent 15).

'I go down to the hall and I see children who are happy. They are engaging in activities that they like and they are really enjoying what is happening to them. It's really interesting because MFC is beyond the school. It will always be there and this is the glue that holds this project together. It doesn't seem to matter that the children are leaving

their primary school so much because they have made a connection with the football club and the staff who are working with them will still be there in the future. This is a major benefit of the project. In my view, it should be provided to as many children as possible' (Respondent 15).

Key Theme 2: There is the potential to maintain this positive impact on young people in Middlesbrough and across the Tees Valley if the staff from MFCF receive continued support in the initiative.

As well as the massive benefits of the project as it currently stands, there are also ways in which this initiative can continue to be progressed in the future. Appendix 4 reveals some of the factors that the students consider to be either 'important' or 'not important' as they are progressing from year 6 to year 7. I have already noted that 'exams worry' and 'making friends' appear as two important factors that the students think about as they are moving from year 6 to year 7. 'Help from family and friends' and 'visits to the school' are also identified as being important factors that affect transition and these factors are informing the current delivery of the project sessions by the staff from MFCF. Appendix 4 also reveals that school accommodation, the travel from home to school, extra study sessions and being involved with former primary school pupils are not regarded as being significant factors that influence the transition from year 6 to year 7. The fact that the majority of the students are not worried about the move from year 6 to year 7 reveals that the initiative is working and this practice needs to be continued to be supported for the future development of the programme. All the respondents made a number of recommendations on how the initiative could be supported in the future.

It is considered to be important to continue to develop 'the capacity of the programme' (Respondent 1). Respondent 7 refers to the importance 'of including as many vulnerable children as possible within the initiative'. It is argued by this respondent that 'so many children are vulnerable and they can benefit so much from the staff who are working in the initiative'. Respondent 7 notes that 'the staff from MFC have had a really profound impact on vulnerable children and this needs to be supported in the future development of the programme'. There are also practical issues that need to be considered if the programme is to continue to be developed successfully. Respondent 8 makes reference to the importance of 'continuing to resource the initiative as effectively as possible if this best practice is to continue to

have an impact on children in Middlesbrough'. These logistical issues (in other words, the future resourcing of the programme) are regarded as needing to be addressed if the programme is to continue to have a positive impact on children in Middlesbrough in the future. The importance of 'widening the reach of the project' is also commented on by Respondent 3 so that 'as many schools as possible are included. The advantage of involving as many schools as possible was considered important because 'this will reveal the full spectrum of factors influencing the transition from year 6 to year 7' (Respondent 3). The respondents made reference to the 'skills needed' in working with children 'who are vulnerable' (Respondent 4). The challenges that children can have 'in verbalising their needs' was commented on and the importance of addressing this need was noted (Respondent 4). Communicating 'what is available' to help and support the children is regarded as being important if the initiative is to continue to develop (Respondent 4). Respondent 5 claimed that 'if this was a national initiative this would also help'. It is argued that in making the project 'a norm as opposed to an exception', the opportunities for children and families will be maximised (Respondent 5). This recommendation is important, although it is beyond the remit of the staff from MFCF. Continuing to develop the mentoring opportunities within the programme is also considered to be 'important' (Respondent 6). The staff from MFCF are having a massive impact on the children in Middlesbrough and 'the future enrichment by involving these children as mentors' is regarded as being an important way of maintaining and nurturing this best practice. In order to maintain and develop the initiative in the future, the following phrases were used by the respondents. There is a need of 'support' (Respondent 1); 'widening' (Respondent 2); 'enlarging' (Respondent 9); 'increasing' (Respondent 10); and 'maximising' the remit of the project if it is to continue to grow become successful in the future. Respondents 11 and 12 describe the initiative as resembling 'a sleeping giant' and respondent 13 refers to 'just wishing that the project had happened sooner'. There is also reference made to what is perceived to be 'the potential fragility of the programme if it does not receive continued support' (Respondent 1). One of the respondents referred to the importance of appreciating what has been achieved already so that this excellent practice can continue to be developed (Respondent 7).

'I have noticed a really positive impact on the young people of Middlesbrough. The benefits, however, are wider than this as the staff from MFC are also involved with other

projects that are not just educational for young people, but they are more centred on health care needs and social care needs. The football club have an absolutely inspirational chairman in my view and much of this excellent practice is due to him. And the sport theme in the initiative, well this was one of my suggestions. But it's so important to make sure that we have continued support for this. What we have here is unique. It is something that should be happening at a national level and it would be really good to think that this could be developed in the future' (Respondent 7).

Key Theme 3: There are challenges in implementing the initiative, but these challenges are being negotiated effectively by the staff from MFCF as they demonstrate excellent practice.

Although there are inevitable challenges in implementing any curriculum initiative, the challenges are being negotiated effectively by the staff from MFCF. I have previously noted that the majority of the students in the progression data provided by one of the schools are attending school above 95% of the time as a consequence of the initiative (this data was provided for children who have been involved in the project). Although there are educational challenges that are present within the students, the staff of MFCF and the school staff are making a difference in spite of these challenges. Respondent 7 referred to the 'consistent presence that the staff from MFC offer to the schools'. The 'freshness' that is offered by the staff from MFCF is understandable as the staff are complementing the work of primary and secondary school teachers. Although the children may only 'reveal what they are really like when they are within the primary school environment' (Respondent 1), the 'constant presence of the link worker from MFC enables a further layer of support to be provided' (Respondent 7). Respondent 8 made reference to the 'importance of partnership working that is provided by the staff from MFC'. As opposed to 'working in individual schools' there is a means of 'communicating together effectively' (Respondent 8). This can provide a means of dealing with the challenges in the initiative. The presence of 'young and vibrant staff who are enthusiastic' is also a way of ensuring that the challenges to the initiative are negotiated (Respondent 10). This can produce examples of 'excellent practice and profound impact' (Respondent 7). The staff from MFCF also appear to have had a positive impact on the behaviour of the children although as Respondent 6 notes, 'just because we are addressing the difficult issues that are present within the children, this doesn't mean that these challenges go away'. This reveals the importance of continuing to support the

initiative. Upon being asked to think of a phrase to describe the challenges facing the programme, the following descriptors were provided: 'complexities' (Respondent 1); 'entrenched' (Respondent 2); 'significant' (Respondent 3); and 'omnipresent' (Respondent 5). The skills that are necessary for effective teaching were also highlighted as a particular challenge by Respondent 7.

'Teaching is a complex profession and I have been really impressed with the impact that the staff from MFC have had in general. The staff seem young, they are relaxed and they make a connection with the young people. Many of the children are facing all sorts of inconsistencies in their lives and it's great that there is someone who is not only there for them in year 6, but also links to what they are doing in year 7. This pastoral side is a key skill of teaching. All the staff from MFC have offered something really special to the children because of this' (Respondent 7).

Respondents 8 and 9 drew attention to the excellent practice that is part of the initiative in terms of the attitude of the staff from MFCF:

'I think that if you are to do well as a teacher you need to have a positive attitude towards the children. You have to have a commitment to a vocation. I have noticed this with the staff from MFC. They believe in what they are doing and this transmits itself to the children. So much teaching is like this. If you do believe in what you are doing you get your message over to the children even if this is a challenging profession' (Respondent 8).

'I think that the staff have been received well because the initiative is pastoral. We're trying to help some very vulnerable young people settle from year 6 into year 7. There can be other agendas that are at work in the schools. We do, of course, have an emphasis on achieving level 6 scores for maths and English etc., but this initiative isn't like that. It's about what most of us believe is the purpose of being a teacher' (Respondent 9).

The complex agendas that operate within the schools are indeed a potential challenge but the respondents make very positive comments about the professionalism of the staff from MFCF within a project that staff and students are 'buying into' (Respondent 10).

'It's a shame what happened to the football club, you know with their relegation from the premier league last season, but they have such an impact on not only the boys, but also

the girls in the school. Because of this I think that they have been able to cope with the challenges that we experience in the schools. I was just thinking, it would have been different if the University tried a similar initiative. I know that a lot of the sports staff working on the project have studied sport at the University, but I don't think the University would have the same impact as the football club' (Respondent 10).

Key Theme 4: The pedagogical approach within the initiative is highly successful and holds the potential for being developed even more effectively in the future as long as the project is supported.

The respondents reflected on the pedagogical approach within the programme and claimed that the successes of the initiative occurred 'because of a freshness and vitality within the programme activities' (Respondent 1). The 'great opportunity that is present within the initiative' has its successes 'built on effective pedagogy' (Respondent 1). This 'achievement' is significant as 'we need to have a clear idea about pedagogy' (Respondent 2). It is important to consider 'who exactly experiences these missing years? We need to ensure that we have the correct pedagogical approach if we are going to reach these individuals' (Respondent 2). The necessary 'structuring to make this successful' is noted as being 'vital' (Respondent 3). The respondents do reflect on why the initiative has been a success and it is regarded as being important for the future success of the project that it is based 'on a sound philosophy of pedagogy' (Respondent 4).

'In my experience, each of the sessions has two parts to it and this works really well. The first part is the taught session in the classroom and the second part is the coaching session on the football field outside. Now the two are not separate, they are interlinked. So, any areas of literacy development for example that are used in the classroom are being reinforced by what happens in the coaching session. If the session in the classroom is about 'imperative verbs' these will then be used in the practical coaching session. This works really well as it is an example of a joined-up curriculum' (Respondent 4).

The planning of the programme is based 'on a successful pedagogical strategy' according to Respondent 5. 'For this to be successful, we have to be involved at the planning stage' (Respondent 5). This respondent notes that 'although it's clear that the activities are planned well, we need to think through why they work so well'. Respondent 7 observes that 'the good work in the project from the staff at MFC

deserves to be supported in the future'. This respondent also notes 'we have come together and we work together very well'. It is noted that 'there is a nice balance because the programme has its structure alongside being flexible' (Respondent 6). When the respondents were asked think of an adjective to describe the pedagogy in the initiative the following phrases were provided: 'practical' (Respondent 7); 'multi-layered' (Respondent 8); 'engaging' (Respondent 10); and 'sublime' (Respondent 11). Respondent 12 referred to 'the craft of pedagogy' that is present within the initiative. 'This craft of pedagogy is based on reflecting on what is working well now and what then needs to be added in the future, This is the skill of developing a pedagogy that works' (Respondent 12).

Respondents 13 and 14 emphasise the importance of learning from what has worked well during the teaching sessions. 'We have to build on our successes' (Respondent 13). For this to happen it is necessary to do the following:

'I think that the pedagogy has been a success. It is something that is happening in the school, but it's also a bit like establishing a youth club. There is a lot of laughter and a lot of informality. And there is also the link to MFC. The children can go there and have a really good time. But we need the time and space to think about all of this so that we can reflect on why it has worked well. It would be good if we could think about the professional development that could develop from this. We would need to have somewhere to go and reflect on what has worked and why this has been a successful form of pedagogy. I mean, is this because a behaviourist approach has been adopted or is this a humanist type of pedagogy? We need to have the answers to these questions' (Respondent 14).

Respondent 7 claimed that the initiative and its pedagogy was 'a triumph of best practice':

'I don't want to sound boastful, but a lot of this was my idea! I've worked as a head in a primary school and we got Ofsted outstanding. I just believe in this project so much. I am a great believer in studying effective pedagogy. I see this with my staff who work on some complex teaching and learning in the primary school. And I know it was a great achievement to get an Ofsted outstanding. But what I see here really excites me. We have this great link with MFC. Not only in primary but in the secondary schools. I just hope the momentum continues to develop in the future' (Respondent 7).

Key Theme 5: Although wider socio-economic problems have a significant impact on the students who are associated with the project, the staff at MFCF are offering an important curriculum initiative that is helping and supporting the students despite these challenges. All the school staff support the continuation of the programme and the initial year 7 performance data that was provided suggests that the students' attainment levels will improve as school attendance is being influenced positively (see Appendix 6).

All of the respondents reflected on the wider socio-economic factors that impact on children and families in the Tees Valley. These reflections draw attention to the importance of maintaining and developing a project that is designed to help year 6 students to settle into year 7. Respondent 1 emphasises the prevalence of 'mental health needs' and claims that 'the initiative helps children to settle into secondary school more effectively in spite of these huge challenges'. The pastoral side of meeting the needs of these students, as much as possible is regarded as being important.

'The children may live in a house that is in absolute chaos as they do not know who is going to be there when they get home. They don't know if dad's gone and left or if mum's left dad or if somebody is going to be lying there drunk' (Respondent 2).

Respondent 3 draws attention to the complex factors that influence working with children and families by reflecting that:

'I was off yesterday and I came in today to see that there were 50 incidents that I needed to read about that are affecting our children and families. This could range from domestic violence to family separation. I've had in the region of 4,000 incidents that I have become aware of this year'.

A strength of the programme appears to rest in its pastoral focus. 'The social and emotional welfare of the children is really important. The children find that it is difficult to cope with change in general' (Respondent 4). A further strength of the programme rests in the provision of 'a supporting anchor of certainty' (Respondent 5). This respondent goes on to reflect that:

'There are big pressures on the schools and this can mean that the pastoral side is not emphasised as much as it should be. A strength of the programme is that it is making the children feel happier in their school environment' (Respondent 5).

The teachers who work with the students all acknowledge that these wider socio-economic factors influence the successful transition from year 6 to year 7. 'Family background, family issues and socio-economic factors all have an influence on transition' (Respondent 6). Respondent 7 applies the phrase 'profound' to describe the socio-economic factors influencing children and families in the region. This descriptor is complemented with 'significant' (Respondent 8); 'persistent' (Respondent 9) and 'inter-generational' (Respondent 10). Respondent 11 draws attention to the complexity of these wider socio-economic challenges.

'It's different to how you think it's going to be. There are celebrated cases of adversity up here, but the consequences are more complex than you might initially think. For a number of families, school is really expensive. There is always something that needs to be bought: shoes for sport or ingredients for cooking activities. This makes these families reluctant to get on board with the school agendas. Lots of absence is down to all sorts of complex factors that you wouldn't initially expect. And it's difficult to do anything about it because the parents can just say 'oh, so and so isn't in because they are sick.'

(Respondent 12).

The complex consequences of these wider socio-economic factors are explained by Respondent 13.

'I know who will struggle with transition as I get to know the family circumstances. There is one boy who is very vulnerable. I know this, because for this child, he isn't that bothered about playing with toys as such. For him, things like toys and play are not that important. Because spending time with his mum is what he wants and being separated from his mum makes him incredibly anxious. The notion of leaving school makes him even more anxious as he is one of the first children to move on. These children could be quite bright academically and not struggle, but it's these personal circumstances that influence their transition.' (Respondent 13).

Respondent 14 referred to the Ofsted (2015) report 'Key stage 3: the wasted years' and claimed that the 'resilience and self-esteem of children is challenged because disadvantaged children don't really like to be seen to be pushing the boundaries for learning because they lack confidence'. A key advantage of the Transition Initiative

appears to be that the confidence of the students is being raised by this project and this is having an impact on the lives of children in Middlesbrough. The complexity of this theme is developed in the following reflection:

'It is more complex than you might think because I think you can just fall into a trap of assuming that those children with challenging socio-economic circumstances just don't like going to school. I can think of a pupil I know who can't wait for the summer school to start in the secondary school. And this is simply because it gives her a chance to spend a bit of time with her sister. Isn't it incredible to think that this child is actually looking forward to going to school, not so much to learn, but so that she can be with her sister?
(Respondent 15)

Conclusion and Forward Looking Recommendations

This evaluative research has identified 5 key themes. If the positive aspects of the project are retained and the work progresses with support the excellent practice can be maintained. In conclusion there are the following key findings and forward looking recommendations:

1. There are significant benefits within this project that come from the staff at MFCF working closely with the school staff as this is having a positive impact on children in Middlesbrough. The children are more likely to have a successful transition from year 6 to year 7 as they have grown in confidence. **70%** of year 7 students report that they have experienced an increase in their confidence so this evaluative report recommends that the project is continued and broadened to include as many children as possible.
2. The project can continue to make progress in the future. The teachers, the staff from MFCF and the children have the opportunity to come together to reflect on what is working well and how this can be developed to be of benefit to future cohorts of children. The questionnaire data reveals that key aspects of successful school transition are being addressed by the project. **80%** of year 6 students identify that the importance of making new friends is especially important in moving from year 6 to year 7. **64%** of the year 6 students think that visiting secondary schools and help from friends and family are

important if the move from primary to secondary school is to be successful. The project considers all these aspects of readiness for school so the report recommends the continued nurturing of the initiative.

3. Although there are challenges to the success of the project, the staff from MFCF are negotiating these challenges effectively. These challenges can rest in the complex nature of the schools, the professionals and the children who are associated with the project. **80%** of the year 6 students identified that they are 'worried about exams'. In view of the pressures facing children in schools in England in 2017, the report recommends the continued support of this initiative.

4. The pedagogy within the project is successful. This pedagogy is making a positive impact on the lives of young people in Middlesbrough. **88%** of the students who have experienced the project are not worried about starting secondary school. The report recommends that this successful pedagogy continues to be supported and nurtured.

5. The students in the schools can experience profound socio-economic challenges. A massive achievement of the Transition Initiative is that is helping children to move from year 6 to year 7 in spite of these wider challenging socio-economic circumstances. **93%** of the students think that they have been well prepared for secondary school. This strengthens the case for continuing to support the project in the future.

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Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance Form

REQUEST FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL EthAppV8 - CONFIDENTIAL

Before completing this form, read Section 1.3 of 'Policy Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics'

You must answer every question. Incomplete forms will be rejected

Please return completed form to:
The Secretary,
Research Ethics Committee
School of Social Sciences and Law
Academic Year 2016-2017

By using this form you are requesting a Research Ethics Committee to review your proposed research for ethical issues. To answer these questions appropriately, you should understand the University's six Principles for Research Ethics. The ethical issues underlying these principles are laid out in detail in the Guidelines section of 'Policy Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics' on pages 23-48.

It is recommended that you consult the Guidelines in order to answer specific questions on:
risk (pp 23-28); consent (pp 29-36); confidentiality (pp 37-44); regulated materials (p 45); conflicts of interest (p 46).
Researchers' liabilities in the conduct of research are laid out on page 48.

1) **Project title:** *Transition Project Evaluation*

2) **Discipline(s) or area(s) of research:** *Education*

3a) **Name, position and address of project supervisor/Director of Studies:**

Dr Ewan Ingleby, Senior Lecturer in Education

3b) **Name(s) and position of other Supervisor(s):**

N/A

3c) **Names of other collaborators on project:**

N/A

4) **Name(s) of researcher(s)/student(s) working on this project:**

N/A

Please indicate type of
Researcher:

Taught Postgraduate	<input type="checkbox"/>	PG Research Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff - higher degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff - other research	<input type="checkbox"/>	* Final Year Undergrad Student	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5) **Expected duration of project from:** *June 2017 to: August 2018*

Note: projects can be audited at any point during the length of the project following ethical clearance

6) **Basic aim(s) of project:**

Middlesbrough Football Club have been funded by Middlesbrough Council to work with the local community in the 'Transition Project'. The staff on the project have worked with 23 primary schools in the Middlesbrough area to boost children's confidence as they move from primary to secondary school. The project requires a funded formal evaluation.

7) Does this project involve the recruitment of human participants for data collection or the collection of samples from human subjects? YES

If NO, then go to SECTION B (question 16a on)

If YES, then complete SECTION A followed by SECTION B

If you will be recruiting human participants who are patients in NHS facilities, inmates of HM Prisons, or who are legally defined as being without mental capacity under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, as well as gaining ethical approval from Teesside University, you must make an application through the National Research Ethics Service (NRES) using an electronic Integrated Research Application System (IRAS) form.

See Section 1.3.3 (pages 12-13) and pages 35-36 of 'Policy Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics'
Also refer to <https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/>

SECTION A

8) Will the recruited participants be:	Teesside University students?		Teesside University staff?
<i>indicate as appropriate</i>			<i>If YES, then read Section 1.4.5 of 'Policy, Procedures, and Guidelines for Research Ethics'</i>

*Other: (Please indicate all that apply):**

- i) Members of the public over the age of 18**
- ii) Members of the public between 16-18 years of age*
- iii) Children, under the age of 16*
- iv) Elderly people*
- v) Vulnerable adults*
- vi) Patients of drug or alcohol rehabilitation clinics*
- vii) Persons engaged in criminal activity*

9a) How many participants will be involved?

15 research participants

9b) What are the criteria for selection? How will participants will be selected?

The project leader is to select 15 key individuals involved with the project (teaching staff from the 23 schools) who will complete a 40 minute interview with Dr Ewan Ingleby between June and the middle of July.

9c) Will participants be given monetary or other inducements to participate?

NO

If YES, please describe the inducement/incentive and how this will be administered:

10a) Describe the design of your project (e.g., observational, controlled trial, cross-over, case study).

The project is based on a qualitative inductive methodology. I will be exploring the perceptions of the participants about the benefits of the initiative via loosely structured interviews (the benefits, the developmental aspects of the project).

10b) Provide a description of the full range of topic(s) that participants will be asked about and the methods employed within the study (e.g., use of interviews, surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, case studies, observations or other forms of surveillance etc).

The 15 participants will be asked to reflect on how the initiative has boosted children's confidence as they move from primary to secondary school.

10c) Provide a description of the full range of any physical interventions or methods, such as participants ingesting substances, being asked to undertake physical treatments, or performing physically demanding activities. Include the specific treatments and activities to be undertaken (both intervention and outcome measures) such as the dosage of ingested substances, the frequency, duration and intensity of any physical interventions.

N/A

11) What are the risks to participants because of the research design and/or methods? (indicate all that apply): Please explain the nature of the risks identified and the procedures in place to minimise risk.

- i) **physical injury**
- ii) **side effects due to ingestion of substances or other invasive procedures**
- iii) **psychological or emotional distress**
- iv) **significant discomfort or inconvenience, whether physical or emotional**
- v) **damage to a participant's personal reputation due to disclosure of personal details**
- vi) **other (describe):**

There are no foreseeable risks in the research process.

**12a) Will informed consent be obtained from all participants? YES – please see Appendix 1.
(If written, attach a copy of the consent form to be given participants to gain consent)**

12b) If NO, why not? (Provide rationale.) If the project involves covert observation or surveillance then please justify why such covert methods are being used:

12c) What information will be given to subject(s)?

(Attach copies of letters or information sheets to be given to participants.)

The participants will be given a series of open-ended questions during the interviews- please see Appendix 2.

12d) What steps (if any) will be taken if previously unknown factors become known to the researcher(s) during the course of questioning which may require disclosure to i) the participant: (i.e.: previously undiscovered medical condition); ii) disclosure to another professional (i.e.: very serious psychological problems); or iii) disclosure to the police or other authorities (i.e.: criminal confession or intention to commit crime):

I will make sure I liaise with the chair of the research ethics committee over this matter.

13a) If there is doubt as to a subject's ability to give consent, what steps will be taken to ensure that the subject is willing to participate

NOTE: If participant(s) would be defined as being "without mental capacity" under the conditions set by the Mental Capacity Act 2005, then approval for your project cannot be granted by the University. Please see pages 35-36 of 'Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics'. If you are unsure whether your proposed participants fall under the jurisdiction of the MCA2005, you should discuss your research with the Chair of your School's Research Ethics Committee.

I will use a consent/withdrawal form and a participant information sheet during the research process.

13b) If children under the age of 16 are to be involved, how will consent be obtained from parents/guardians and assent from the children?

N/A

14) How and where will consent be recorded?

Please state the method you will use to record consent (e.g. written consent forms, recorded at the beginning of interviews), how this will be stored (e.g. kept in locked cabinet in researcher's office) and when it will be destroyed.

Written consent forms will be kept in a filing cabinet in a locked office.

15): Will participants be informed of their right to withdraw? YES

If NO, why not?

If YES, will there be a limit on the period of time in which withdrawal will be allowed?

YES

If YES, give length of time limit and rationale for time limit on withdrawal:

The project ends in July 2017, participants have until then to withdraw.

SECTION B

16a) What risks are there to the researcher(s)/student(s) conducting the project?

If NONE, write NONE

None

16b) What risks are there to property, facilities, or the environment during conduct of the project? If none, write 'NONE'

None

17a) What steps and procedures will be taken to preserve the confidentiality of participants' identities, information, or data of any kind used in the project? See pages 37-41 of 'Policy, Procedures, and Guidelines for Research Ethics' for guidance on confidentiality

Participants will be given pseudonyms in the research outputs.

17b) Do you foresee any circumstances under which confidentiality may need to be breached? NO (delete as appropriate) (See pages 42-44 of 'Policy, Procedures, and Guidelines for Research Ethics' for guidance on possible required breaches of confidentiality.)

If YES, what circumstances are possible and what steps would be followed to deal with breach of confidentiality?

18a) Will any secondary analysis of data occur during the project (i.e.: data previously collected by research not as part of the current project)? YES

18b) If YES (i.e. secondary analysis of data will occur during the project) – will this data previously have been anonymised? YES

If the data was not previously anonymised what steps will be taken to ensure that consent for the uses to which unanonymised data will be put in secondary analysis do not contravene the Data Protection Act 1998? (See pages 40-41 of 'Policy Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics')

N/A

19) Will the research make use of any of the following:

a) human blood, semen, saliva, urine, bodily fluids or human tissue of any kind?

NO

If YES, what steps will be taken to ensure that the research is not in contravention of the Human Tissue Act 2004? (See page 45 of 'Policy Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics')

b) radioactive materials?

NO

If YES, what steps will be taken to ensure that the research is not in contravention of relevant legislation regulating radioactive materials?

c) other potentially dangerous materials, such as chemicals or other agents?

NO

20a) Will the project receive financial support from outside Teesside University?

YES

20b): If YES, specify the nature and source of the support:

The evaluation is funded to a value of £5,000 via Middlesbrough Council.

20c) If YES, have any restrictions/conditions been imposed upon the conduct of research?

NO

21) Will any restrictions be placed on the publication or use of research results?

YES (delete as appropriate) - **If YES, please state the nature of the restrictions:**

The views of the participants will be anonymised. I anticipate using the data for a forthcoming publication in education.

22) Are there any other points you wish to make in support of the proposed study?

No

23) I confirm that have read the University's 'Policy Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics', and confirm that my project will conform to the University's six Principles for Research Ethics contained therein. I am aware of University procedures on Health & Safety. I understand that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the School's Research Ethics sub-Committee and that my project may be audited by the University Research Ethics Committee *at any time during the course of the project.*

<i>(Please complete the following <u>as appropriate</u>)</i>	<i>Please Tick</i>
▪ I have appropriate experience of the research area of the project	*
▪ I have undertaken any research ethics training <i>required</i> by my School. <i>Note: having undertaken training is not a condition of application for ethical Approval unless a School requires that training be completed.</i>	*
▪ I confirm that as Supervisor I will monitor progress of the project.	*
• I confirm that the project complies with the Code of Practice of the following Professional Body- BERA (British Educational Research Association)	*

24:

Dr Ewan Ingloby

Signature of Staff Researcher: _____

Date: 17th May 2017

OR: Signature of Project Supervisor/Director of Studies _____ Date: _____

SECTION C

SCHOOL APPROVAL or REFERRAL

To be completed by Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee

EITHER:

a) *Following consideration by the School Research Ethics Committee, I now authorise the above project.*

Signature of Chair of School Research Ethics Committee: _____ Date: _____

OR:

- b) **The School Research Ethics Committee is unable to reach a conclusion, and the case is referred to the University Research Ethics Committee.**

Signature of Chair of School Research Ethics Committee: _____ Date: _____

The Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee must send a copy of an APPROVED Request for Ethical Approval Form to: The Secretary, University Research Ethics Committee, Research & Development Office, University of Teesside. The original of the form should be kept in the School. The ORIGINAL of a REFERRED Request must be sent to the above address for action and the Director of the School notified.

APPROVAL / REJECTION by University Research Ethics Committee

EITHER:

- a) **On behalf of the University Research Ethics Committee, I now authorise the above project:**

Signature of Chair of University Research Ethics Committee: _____ Date: _____

OR:

- b) **The University Research Ethics Committee is UNABLE TO APPROVE the project for the following reasons:**

Signature of Chair of University Research Ethics Committee: _____ Date: _____

Dr Ewan
Ingleby

INFORMATION SHEET

TITLE OF STUDY: Transition Project Evaluation

Dear

Recently you have been given the opportunity to participate in a research project. The research is evaluating the Transition Project. The research is being gathered via interview. You can access a copy of any transcripts that are taken during the data gathering.

I am asking you to give me your permission to store your responses to the research focus. If you give your consent to cooperate with me, I will ask you to help me to collect this information. If you are prepared to cooperate with me in this way, I will be extremely grateful and I will take great care with your data so that it is not used for any inappropriate purpose or by people beyond the research. I may use the data as the basis for further research, or in academic publications, but the identity of individuals and the location in which you are working will never be revealed.

If you have any questions about the project, or how we may use or store your data if you give your consent, please contact me by email at:

e.ingleby@tees.ac.uk

or on **01642 738161**

Interview Questions

What are the main benefits of the Transition initiative?

How can the programme be developed further?

What have been the main challenges in implementing the initiative?

What has been the pedagogical approach during the programme?

How have the staff and children responded to the programme?

What wider challenges are faced by the staff and students who have been involved with the initiative?

Appendix 2: Year 6 Questionnaire

Transition Initiative Year 6 Questionnaire

1. What are you now looking forward to when you are moving to your new secondary school (put '1' as most important through to '5' as least important)?

The subjects I will study	
The friends I will make	
The sports I will play	
The teachers I will meet	
A new school building	

2. What are you worried about as you prepare to move into Y7 at secondary school (have '1' as most important through to '5' as least important)?

The journey to school	
Getting lost in a big school	
The exams	
The other children	
The new teachers	

3. What will help as you move to your secondary school (have '1' as most important through to '5' as least important)?

Being helped in making new friends	
Visits to the school before I leave primary school	
Staying with my current friends	
Doing extra study after school	
Keeping in touch with the primary school	

4. What do you think is going to be most helpful in moving from primary to secondary school ('1' is most important and '5' is least important)

Help from my family and friends	
Keeping with my previous school friends	
Having an easy timetable	
Doing lots of fun activities	
Being involved with other students who have previously been at the primary school	

Appendix 3: Year 7 Questionnaire

Transition Initiative Year 7 Questionnaire

1. What primary school did you attend?

2. What transition events did you attend (please tick)?

- Full day
- Two days
- Three days
- Four days
- One week
- Extended transition
- Sports Day
- Summer school

4. How worried were you about joining secondary school (please tick 1 box)?

Very worried	
Quite worried	
Slightly worried	
Not at all worried	

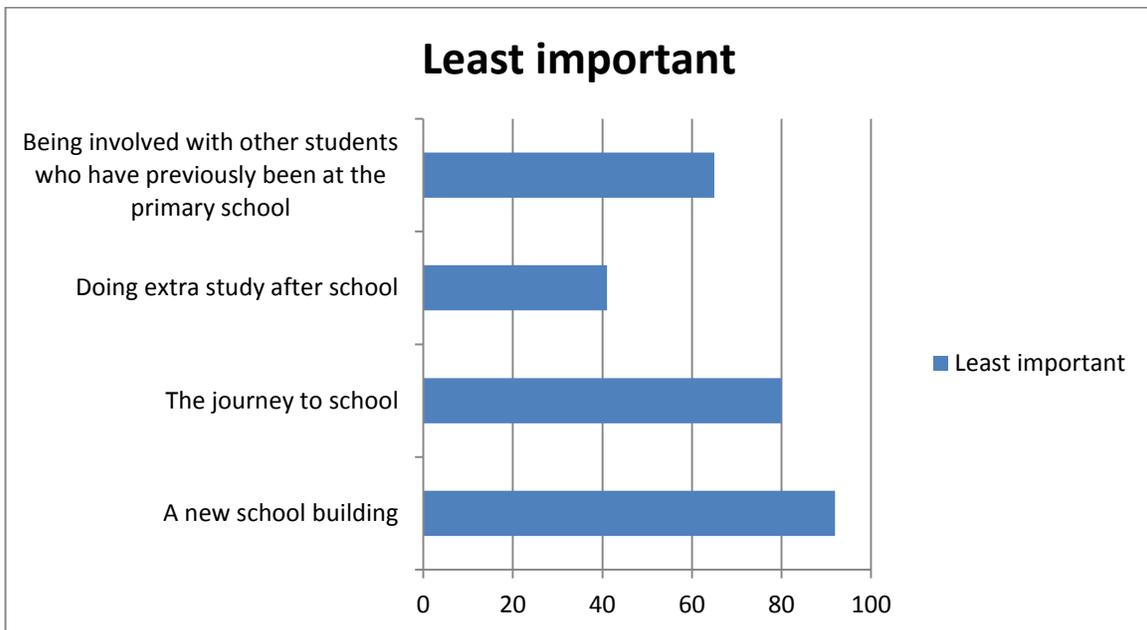
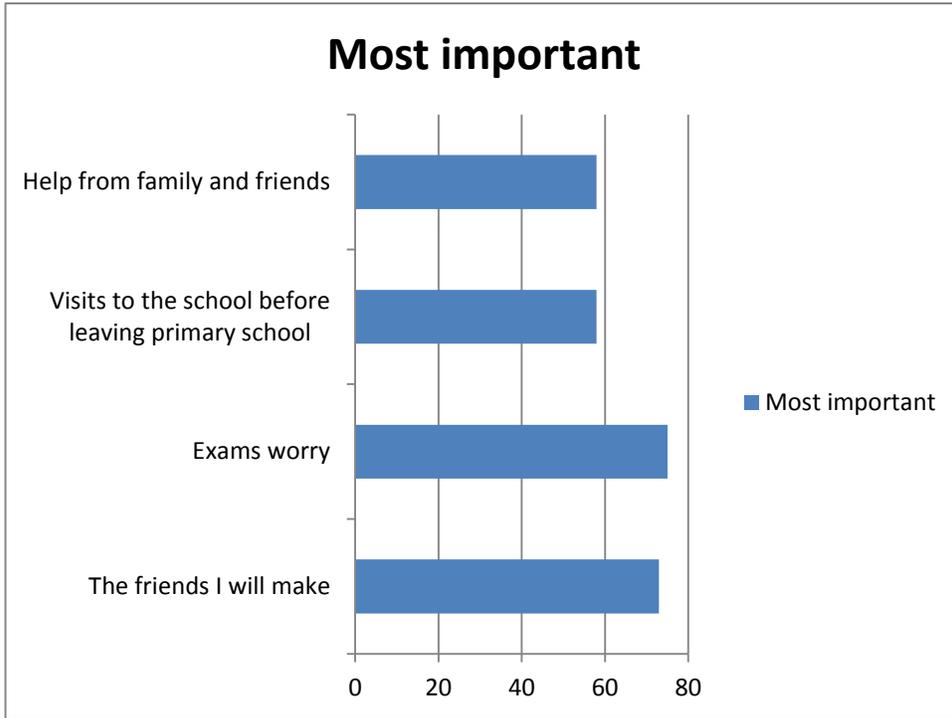
4. How well prepared were you before joining secondary school (please tick 1 box)?

Very well prepared	
Quite well prepared	
Slightly unprepared	
Not at all well prepared	

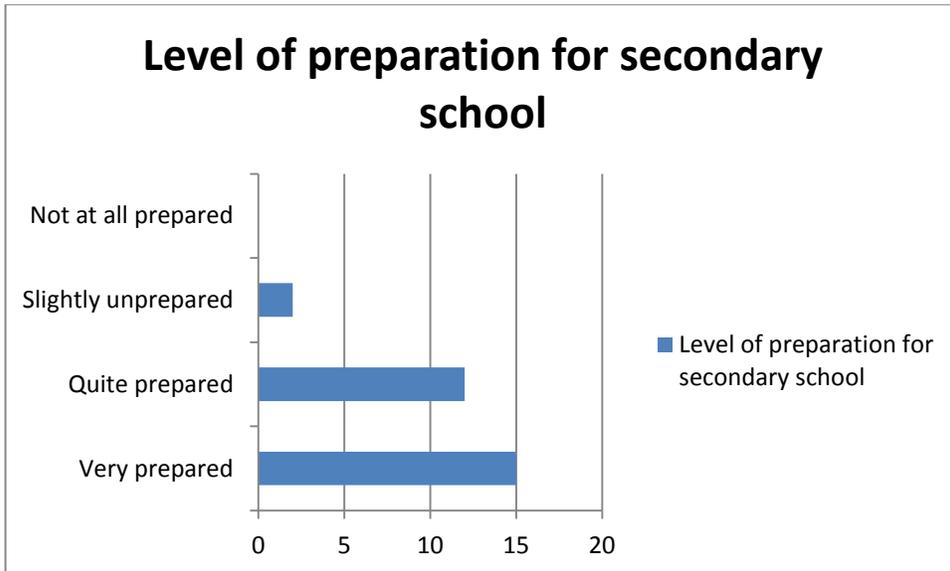
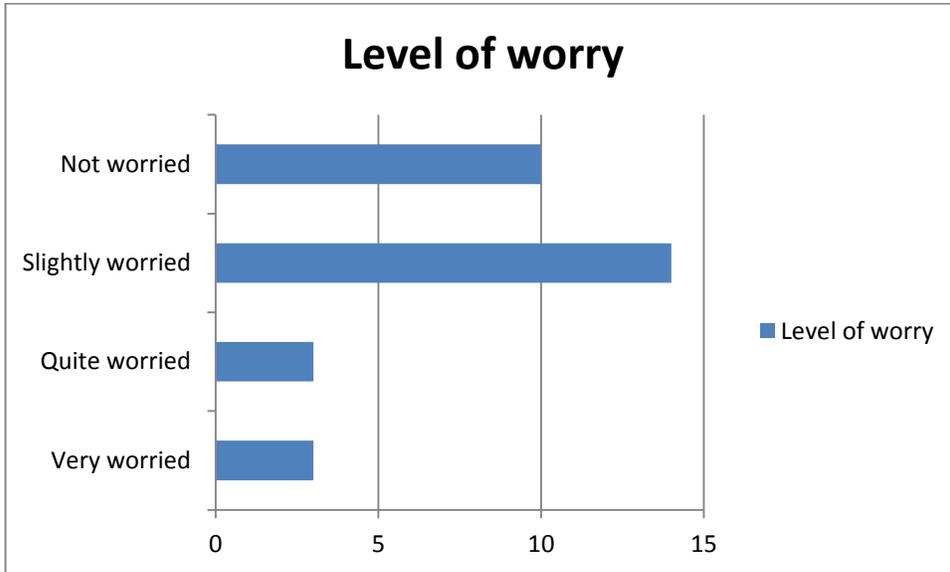
5. What was helpful about the Transition Initiative (put '1' as most important through to '5' as least important)?

I became more confident	
I became less afraid of moving to 'big school'	
It made me realise learning is fun	
It made me realise I am part of a great community	
I was made to think in new and exciting ways	

Appendix 4: Year 6 Questionnaire Key Findings



Appendix 5: Year 7 Questionnaire Key Findings



Appendix 6: Year 7 Performance Data

Year 7 Student	Gender	NC Year	Working Toward + in English AND Maths	On Target + in English AND Maths	Above Target + in English AND Maths	Attendance
Student 1	M	7	N	N	N	98.8
Student 2	M	7	N	N	N	96.1
Student 3	M	7	Y	N	N	90.7
Student 4	M	7				84.5
Student 5	M	7	Y	N	N	83.3
Student 6	M	7	N	N	N	98.1
Student 7	M	7	N	N	N	99.2
Student 8	M	7	Y	N	N	90.7
Student 9	M	7	Y	N	N	90.3
Student 10	M	7	Y	N	N	98.8
Student 11	M	7	Y	Y	N	89.9
Student 12	M	7	Y	N	N	97.7
Student 13	M	7	N	N	N	100.0
Student 14	M	7	Y	N	N	93.0
Student 15	M	7	N	N	N	100.0
Student 16	F	7	Y	N	N	99.2