

In the summer term, Secondary Schools invite prospective Primary School pupils to an induction day so they can experience the Secondary School environment and meet other pupils who will be in their class. In order to make a smooth transition, children with ADHD and other specific learning difficulties may need more than a single induction visit. Rather than running a standard induction day in which pupils experience different classes and meet teachers, many schools are now taking the time to create good Primary-Secondary links throughout the year and are making induction days and visits more active for pupils. By introducing interactive elements to an induction day, children have the opportunity to learn essential information whilst having fun. Some schools are also increasing pupil visits to schools from a very young age.

The following activity ideas may be useful for teachers interested in creating good Primary – Secondary links and making induction days or visits more interactive for pupils.

Introductory video

Pupils may benefit from having clear expectations of the Secondary School environment before an induction day. As part of suitable lessons or a school club, Year 10 or 11 pupils could make a video about the Secondary School to send to all feeder primaries. This will help introduce prospective pupils to key places, provide some familiar faces and should help settle any pre-induction day worries.

Video Conferencing

Rather than including many sample lessons on induction days, some schools are now using video conferencing technology to display sample lessons to pupils. This method has many benefits; Secondary School teachers don't have to spend time visiting many feeder primaries, pupils have the benefit of experiencing a Secondary School classroom from the safety of their Primary School class and many primaries can join in the conference call thus fostering good primary - primary links. See our 'Video conferencing guide' for further information on how to facilitate calls.

Team building activities

Team building activities are a great way for pupils to make new friends and for teachers to see how different pupils work together. Consider developing a team building activity as part of your standard induction day. Pupils will enjoy tasks such as bridge building or making large collages. You could even judge the results at the end with the best team winning a prize.

E-buddies

An E-buddy system provides an opportunity for year 6 pupils to forge friendships with year 7 pupils. Year 7 pupils write to pupils at their old Primary School to tell them a little about Secondary School. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to respond and talk about concerns and what they're looking forward to. This information can be sent in emails, posted on a school website forum. By providing this opportunity pre-induction day, year 6 pupils have the chance to meet their e-buddies during the induction day. See our 'your views on school' activity for a template.

Worries in a hat

During an induction day, year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to anonymously write down anything that concerns them about secondary school (e.g. I'm worried about....; is it true that....). All concerns are put into a 'hat' and are then picked and responded to by teachers/older pupils. To make it even more fun, teachers could be placed in a 'hot seat' and answer as many concerns as possible under a time limit.

Treasure hunt

Treasure hunts are a fun way to familiarise year 6 pupils with the Secondary School environment. By incorporating subjects and map reading skills into clues, pupils will also learn a little along the way. For example:

- How many steps is it to your Maths classroom? $392 \div 7 = ?$
- Go to the room opposite E11 to find your next clue.
- You must be hungry now! Where can you go for a hot meal or snack?

Classroom quizzes

Classroom quizzes are a useful way to check for child understanding. They can be easily made to address a number of topics such as school uniform policy, equipment lists, teachers and subjects or school rules. They are useful as individual class activities or could form a whole year activity with classrooms/ teams competing to win a prize.

Sporting events

From years 3 or 4 until year 6, Primary School pupils may be invited to the Secondary School for fun activities. This allows pupils to be gradually be introduced to the Secondary School environment, older pupils and teachers. Secondary Schools could invite Primary Schools to mini Olympics days, dance shows, Sports Days or Netball/ Football tournaments. Even better if teachers form teams too!

Themed days/evenings

Inviting Primary School pupils to help hold a themed day such as a Hawaiian Day or an Olde England Day is a useful way to introduce pupils to new subjects in a fun way. Pupils must work hard to make the day possible; making the food in the cookery suites, designing posters as an induction to ICT, making and painting signs or banners as part of resistant materials and art lessons and translating materials into other languages. Inviting parents to the day provides an opportunity to introduce them to the school and boosts pupil self-esteem.

Teacher Bingo

This is a good class activity to help pupils learn teacher names and subjects in a fun, interactive way. Teacher bingo can easily be created using our template.

Words of wisdom from Year 7s

Listening to Year 7 pupils may be very important as they have recently experienced the transition process. Their feelings about transition, what Secondary School was like at first, after a week, after the first term, after the first year may be valuable information for prospective year 6 pupils. Seek their thoughts throughout the year and allow year 7 pupils to help display their views to year 6 pupils during their induction day. This can be achieved in a variety of fun, subject-involving ways. For example, ICT lessons could be used to make an information booklet, drama lessons could be used to make a short play or art lessons could be used to design comic strips.

Newsletters

It's just as important that parents feel involved in induction days. Secondary Schools can keep new parents informed by sending out regular school newsletters.

School trips to School

Secondary Schools with a free science laboratory could invite Primary Schools to bring their pupils on half-day school trips. These are useful in introducing pupils to science lessons, the school environment and science teachers.

Interactive Competitions

Interactive competitions are a good way to create good Primary - Secondary links and introduce pupils to Secondary School subjects. The Secondary School provides specialist equipment and invites all feeder primaries to compete against one another in a fun competition. The competition could involve solving a science challenge, creating an interactive powerpoint presentation, creating and painting a newly designed object or filming an advert. Involving year 7s on the judging panel and holding the awards ceremony at the Secondary School provides a further opportunity to introduce Primary School pupils to Secondary School.

Solving the school mystery

A cluedo style game is an excellent way to help year 6 pupils to find their way around the school and use new learning tools. Prior to an induction day, the Secondary School informs Primary Schools that a crime has recently been committed and they must solve it. Before visiting the Secondary School, Primary pupils must sift through the evidence (subject materials); decide on their suspects (teachers), interviewing schedule and rooms they must investigate for further evidence. Subsequently, pupils must submit their prime suspect information to the Secondary School by email. This activity is useful in introducing new teachers, helping pupils find their way around and encouraging them to utilize research and problem solving skills.

Extra visits for pupils with Special Education Needs

Pupils with Special Education Needs may benefit from visiting the Secondary School on several occasions both before and after the induction day. Visiting the Secondary School in small groups during a standard school day provides a realistic outlook of the noise, crowds and teaching atmosphere. Pupils could be encouraged to take photographs of key areas, eat in the canteen, interview a key teacher or create their own map of the school. These materials could all be placed in a project which may later act as an essential revision tool during the summer holidays. This book provides an excellent, photocopiable project template:

Al-Ghani & Kenward (2009) Making the move: A guide for schools and parents on the transfer of pupils with Autistic Spectrum disorders from Primary to Secondary School. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.