Saint Michael Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Transition Policy

Mission Statement:

Excellence • Enrichment • Enjoyment

Updated: July 2026
Date for review: July 2027

Rationale:
In this policy the term 'transition' describes the movement that takes place from one familiar setting, including home, to another, for example from one year group to another. It is defined as the process where policy and practice has been adapted to support children in settling in to their new learning environment in preparation for future learning and developing.

Aims and Objectives
At St. Michael Primary School and Nursery we want our children to experience a positive, smooth transition throughout their learning, so that the pace and quality of learning are maintained to ensure that children continue to make the very best progress throughout the school and beyond. We want to ensure that the children's emotional well-being is priority as well as their academic attainment. We strive to support parents' awareness of school readiness, school routines and whole school expectations. This policy addresses issues of planning and assessment, as well as classroom organisation and teaching styles, all of which have been carefully considered to ensure a smooth transition for every pupil.

Policy Principles

The principles of the policy clearly outline:

- That the approaches to learning and teaching should be harmonised to ensure effective transition through each of the primary phases.
- That the styles of learning and teaching should meet the needs of each pupil
- That future planning is based upon assessment information from the previous class or setting
- That there is a professional regard and respect for the information from the previous setting or phase
- That the children are able to enjoy a positive approach to transition which should motivate and challenge them
- That the staff allocation to year groups gives particular attention to the particular needs of the children
- That a successful transition is the result of effective communication including a planned induction to EYFS, Year 1, Year 3 and Year 7.

Implementation
Parents and children are given the opportunity to visit the school and nursery before their child begins attending our school and are invited to visit consistently throughout the academic year once they are a pupil. We believe in embracing and utilising the families of our pupils, who are the primary educators for our pupils. The school and nursery have annual open days in the Summer Term in order to promote the facilities to families within the parish. During the Summer Term prior to a child starting school the school also holds further open mornings for parents to meet with the Head teacher, Head of Early Years and Class Teachers. EYFS teachers and TAs complete home visits or visits to previous settings before a child begins their time at St. Michael to liaise with parents and care givers in the setting which a child is comfortable and secure. We always ensure that parents are made to feel supported particularly if they too are anxious about the transition process. We welcome them to our school and community and actively encourage them to become members of the PTA and to attend coffee mornings.

To help existing pupils overcome common anxieties about change which transition between year groups and key stages can prompt, the Head Teacher holds an assembly in the Summer Term specifically about moving up and what to look forward to, as well as recapping on what will remain the same. A lot of time is often spent worrying about what might happen and this helps focus on the routines and factors which will remain the same – which can often provide comfort.

Question and Answer sessions are held between year groups for the whole school so that children have an opportunity to ask questions to the children of the next year group. This allows them the platform to ask questions they might not ask an adult and also to learn about the curriculum through the experiences and words of their peers.

Teachers and TAs sit together to hand over the files and summer reports of their current children to their new teachers and TAs. This allows the opportunity for any medical or emotional needs to be discusses as well as academic status. These hand over meetings also allow the opportunity for any interventions which might have been taking place for a child to be discussed and passed along to ensure these supports continue. The school SENDCo can also be available for these hand over meetings to discuss specific SEND needs of children, such as EHCPs or targets set for ISPs by outside agencies.

The children and their parents are informed of their new teachers in the second half of the Summer Term. This allows for a whole school transition morning to take place whereby the children spend a morning in their new classroom with their new teacher. Staffing changes can effect this morning which is why we strive to keep it to a date when most new class teachers are in school. Children in Reception Class will have Year 1 teachers visit Reception Class frequently to play games or read books with the children in the Reception Class setting to become familiar with who they are. SEND children will have more transitional meetings during assembly times with their new teachers to ensure bonding can begin and interventions can be modelled and practised.

Each key stage leader will have overall responsibility to ensure that the process of transition is a smooth, effective and happy process. They will report to the Senior Leadership Team on the effectiveness of the transition for their phase and any changes or new initiatives on the process of transition which may become relevant to our children at St. Michaels.

Transition to our School Nursery

Prospective children are invited to a stay and play session when their parents apply to attend the nursery. Once their place and start date have been confirmed the nursery staff complete a home visit to meet with the child in a familiar and secure setting. They also liaise with previous settings the child has attended to receive an academic and emotional background briefing. The child is given a picture of their class teacher before they begin and the name of their key person once they have settled in and bonded with a particular adult. The child also is given a booklet which contains photographs of the areas of the classroom for them to refer to before they begin to discuss with their parents. The children have a coat hook for their belongings prepared for them before their first day. The parents are asked to read and sign our Tapestry policy before their child begins nursery and are talked through how to use it. This helps aid communication between home and school and develop the relationship between teachers, children and parents further. Parents also complete a One Page Profile for their child which is brought into nursery on their first day to help inform the class teacher and TAs how best to support their child. Alongside this key information parents are also asked to use the Development Matters document to highlight where they

believe their child is attaining on the EYFS curriculum. Such information allows the teachers to support each and every individual child's learning to the best of their ability as a unique learner.

Transition from Nursery to Reception Class

All children who are new to the school will receive an appointment for a home visit to allow the child and parents to become familiar with the Reception teaching team. Topics such as development and medical needs will be discussed at the home visits. Children are given a picture of their class teacher and a booklet of the areas of the classroom to refer to during the summer break.

Children who are in our nursery setting will have the opportunity to complete transition visits into the Reception outside areas and classrooms accompanied by their Key Person. St. Michael Nursery children will have the opportunity to eat in the school dining hall to familiarise themselves with lunchtimes and also attend an assembly if their class teacher feels they are able to.

Reception class teachers also visit the nursery to read stories and familiarise themselves with future pupils.

All Reception class pupils are invited to an induction morning during which their parents attend an information giving session by the Head Teacher and the children are cared for in the Reception classrooms by their prospective teachers.

When a child begins their career at St. Michael in Reception Class they are given a buddy in the form of a Year 5 pupil. Their buddy is responsible for providing pastoral care for the Reception class pupil during whole school assemblies, break and play times, as well as being a 'go to' for children to share their thoughts and questions about the school.

Transition from Reception Class to Year 1

When a pupil completes their time in Reception class their ELG information is passed to their Year 1 teacher – this allows vital information about areas of the EYFS curriculum which may not have been met to be shared with their new class teacher who can allow for this in their future planning. If as a cohort they have underperformed in one of the areas of the EYFS curriculum that can be targeted by the Year 1 teachers. Transitional teaching in Year 1 during Autumn 1 allows the children to continue to learn in a free flow child initiated style environment but with a clear learning objective defined focus and intensive teaching to small group formats. Transitional teaching may continue into Autumn 2 depending on the need of the cohort. Classroom routines such as using a book to record work, having the day and date recorded and discussed on the class board and having a Learning Objective written on the board are implemented in Reception Class in Summer 2. Year 1 teachers visit Reception classes in Summer 2 to allow the children to become familiar with them in their current classroom. The Reception children begin to enter school in the morning via the main entrance, as opposed the nursery entrance, to prepare them for the start of the school day in Year 1 their Year 5 buddies are on hand to help with this. The Reception Class teachers will support the children to use the main playground for play times after an initial period of time only playing in the EYFS outside areas. From Summer 2 the Reception Class children will have a morning break time as well as their lunch time play ground with the whole school as part of the OPAL play project.

Transition in subsequent years

Teachers consider the organisation of classes for September each year with the aim of creating the best organisation for all of our children. At times this may involve mixing the class list of the two classes in each year group. The hand over discussion between teachers are dedicated to making and sharing information and creating the best combinations possible. All classes are mixed gender, ability and age range.

We believe that as a school with two classes per year group, having the chance to mix classes is an opportunity that should be considered at the end of each year. By mixing classes we believe we can achieve the following:

- Creating opportunities for children to learn and play with a wider variety of peers
- Enabling greater social interaction between children as they move through the school
- Ensuring that each of the classes remains balanced in response to pupil development
- Promoting a greater sense of community

When we make such decisions, we follow a clear set of principles:

- The arrangements for class mixing are based on the professional judgements of Class Teachers with support from the Senior Leadership Team.
- We will always consider what is in the best interests of individual children and classes as a whole when making decisions.
- We will always consider the happiness and welfare of the children and will take into consideration existing friendship groups when we create new class organisations.
- We take parent feedback on board.

After consideration of the above principles and our aims we follow the following process:

- Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants observe the children's friendships at work and play
- Class teachers talk to the children about their friendships and ask them to complete a simple task outlining their closest friendships
- Class Teachers meet to ensure a good balance of friendships, range of educational, social and personal needs, and gender representation in each class
- Class Teachers discuss and finalise groupings with support from the Senior Leadership Team
- The class each child is in will be shared with parents and children in the Summer Term when the end of year reports are published

Friendships

Over the course of their school years children will have a range of friendship experiences. We find that some friendships can be very fluid, whilst others can stand the test of time. With that in mind and as we prepare to draw up the class lists we will use observations of the children in the classroom and at play to inform our decision making as well as what the children share with adults.

Once the children know their new classes and their new teachers we start transition activities. The aim of this is to support the children with making the step to a new year group with a new teacher. The following will happen during the summer term:

- A detailed handover will take place between the current class teacher and the new class teacher
- Children will visit their new classroom and spend time with their new teacher (s)
- Children have the opportunity to meet with children in the year above to ask them questions about what is to come

As children move from Year 2, Key Stage 1, to Year 3, Key Stage 2, they often find it challenging to get used to the pace of work, expectations from home learning, personal organisation and responsibility associated with becoming a Key Stage 2 pupil. To make this

specific transition easier children will have opportunities to visit the existing Year 3 classrooms and pupils to ask them questions. Year 3 teachers will meet with and moderate with Year 2 teachers to ensure consistent understanding of Age Related Expectations. This also ensures Year 3 staff are able to take the learning forward as appropriate for the children.

All parents will have the opportunity to attend 'Tea with the Teacher' in the Autumn Term. At this event the class teachers will present a brief over view of the curriculum for their year group as well as mention trips and homework schedules. The parents will have an opportunity to ask relevant questions too.

Transition from Year 6 to year 7

Research indicates that the transition from primary to post primary school is significant and can be a stressful time for children and their parents too. Children have to adjust to the changes involved in moving from primary to post primary school. Parents are naturally anxious about their child's ability to cope with change. Most pupils adjust well to their new situation, but some struggle to cope. For some, the transition can have a negative impact on their learning and social and emotional wellbeing. Therefore, it is essential for primary and secondary schools to work collaboratively to ensure that all children benefit from the transition. Sharing information helps provide a smooth transition. Some of the challenges faced by pupils making the transition to Key Stage 3 can be:

- Going from being the oldest in a school to the youngest
- Meeting new children from different backgrounds and traditions
- Having to move around a school to different classrooms for different subjects
- Subjects being departmentalised and a wider timetable to digest and navigate
- Getting used to a wider range of teachers as there is one per curriculum department
- A greater value being placed on ability rather than effort – setting
- Being grouped and streamed by ability
- Getting used to a different pastoral system and support network
- Modern social media pressures

To ensure that our Year 6 pupils have a smooth transition into their secondary schools the Year 6 teachers attend a market place event where children with specific needs can be discussed with their new heads of year. Year 6 teachers also meet with secondary schools on a specific child's needs basis. Teachers also complete transition forms for all children. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to spend a day in their new secondary schools once they have been confirmed. Feeder secondary schools visit the children and explain a little about the school day of a Year 7 pupil. Previous pupils who have completed their first year in secondary school also return and complete a question and answer session with the Year 6 children discussing topics such as commuting to school and managing lunch money. The Year 6 pupils follow the Smart Move programme implemented by their class teachers with the Black Sheep Press resource being used by the SENDCo for SEN children in Year 6.

Children joining the school

Children sometimes join the school mid academic year. To ensure that they also have a smooth transition to our school they accompany their parents and meet with the Head teacher and class teacher before they begin school. They are given a class buddy to help them make friendships and learn the routines of the school too.

Inclusion

St. Michael Primary School and Nursery prides itself on being an inclusive school, catering to the learning needs of all children. Measures are taken to ensure that pupils with learning or access difficulties experience a similar ease of transfer as other pupils. At St. Michael we aim to ensure that no member of the school community experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination within the learning environment because of their age, any disability they may have, their ethnicity, national origin or their gender. We value the diversity of individual pupils within our school and do not discriminate against anyone because of difference. We believe that our pupils matter and we value their families too. We give our pupils every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when devising and implementing school policies and procedures.

We have a dedicated ELSA in school working with existing pupils who may struggle with transition, meeting with them regularly to help ease their anxieties. Children with SEND, EAL or social and behaviour issues are recognised by class teachers and raised with our highly qualified SENDCo who then works with class teachers, pupils and their parents to put in place support for the children to help them with transition.
SEND children have the opportunity to have more days to visit their new secondary schools to help with their transition. All SEND pupils have a SEND Pupil Transition Form completed by their current class teacher which is then used to hand over important information about that child to their new class teacher. The current class teacher and TA pass along all relevant resources used for interventions too.

A sensory profile of Autistic Spectrum Condition, ASC, children is drawn up when needed using Occupational Therapy based targets to feed information to the new class teacher. A booklet is produced by our ASC specialist teacher for each individual child to be presented to their new class teacher as part of their hand over. This works as top tips for how best to work with that child. Social stories are also written and used with ASC when necessary to help ease the anxiety of change in routine.

The school SENDCo meets with parents of particularly high need pupils in July to liaise about transition and the needs of their child and assess EHCP requirements.

Policy Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the governing body and updated annually in line with St. Michael Primary School and Nursery policy schedule.