



St Mary's Primary School Banbridge

Transition and Induction Policy

Supporting Smooth and Successful Transitions



Our Vision

Safe. Valued. Empowered to Thrive.

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Our Mission

We are dedicated to creating a **safe**, nurturing, and inclusive environment where every individual feels **valued**, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential.

We inspire a love of learning, foster a sense of belonging, and cultivate the skills, values and resilience needed to **thrive** in a diverse and ever-changing world.

Core Values

Family
Community
Respect
Resilience
Kindness
Tolerance
Perseverance
Responsibility

Induction is the process by which children are introduced to their educational environment in a pre-school setting and/or the first year of the Foundation Stage in primary school. It is defined as, the process where policy and practice has been adapted to support children, in settling into their new learning environment, in preparation for future learning and development.

The purpose of induction is to develop a positive relationship between the staff in the education setting, the parents/carers, and the child. It is important that parents/carers and staff work together to support the child during the settling in process.

Understanding Transition in Education

Transition simply means change, and change is a natural part of every child's life. When managed effectively, transitions can help children and young people build confidence and develop the skills they need to navigate future changes successfully. Many children look forward to new experiences in learning and life. However, while resilience and adaptability are essential life skills, it's important to remain sensitive to children's emotional wellbeing during times of change. Transitions can place significant demands on children—socially,

emotionally, linguistically, academically, and practically. Some children may find these changes more challenging than others. A well-supported transition can make a profound difference, helping children not just to cope, but to thrive.

Starting or leaving primary school can be an exciting time for children, but it can also come with challenges. By preparing children and their families for this transition in advance and being aware of any anxieties that may arise during the transition period, school staff can ensure that pupils and parents and carers can take this next step with confidence. If children are starting at primary school, it may take some time for them to adjust and for the change to feel normal. If they are leaving primary education to start at secondary school, they may feel anxious about a new school environment and new classmates.

Supporting Transitions Through Parental Involvement

Thoughtful preparation for transitions can empower parents to better support their children, helping them navigate change with confidence and care. When parents understand what to expect and how to respond, they can play a vital role in ensuring that transitions are managed in a sensitive, reassuring, and effective way.

At St Mary's Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all children experience smooth, happy, and effective transitions—from pre-school into the Foundation Stage, from one year group to the next, through each key stage, and finally as they move on to secondary education.

Our goal is to maintain the pace and quality of learning throughout each transition, ensuring that every child continues to make the very best progress in a nurturing and supportive environment.

The Aim of this Policy is to:

- Support a smooth and confident start for children as they transition into each new setting.
- Minimise stress and anxiety by creating a calm, reassuring environment and clear routines.
- Ensure continuity in learning and development by building on prior knowledge and maintaining consistent teaching approaches.

How Parents and Staff Can Support Transitions

Working together, parents and school staff can help children feel confident and secure during times of change. Here are some key ways to support your child:

- **Have Open Conversations:** Talk to your child about upcoming changes in a positive and age-appropriate way. Help them understand what to expect and reassure them that change is a normal part of growing up.
- **Encourage Expression:** Invite your child to share their feelings, including any worries or questions. Let them know it's okay to feel nervous or unsure.
- **Listen with Empathy:** Be attentive and understanding. If concerns arise, don't hesitate to share them with your child's teacher or a member of the support staff—they're here to help.
- **Familiarise Your Child with the New Setting:** Visit the school, meet the new teacher, or look at photos and stories about the new classroom or school environment. Familiarity helps reduce anxiety and builds confidence.

Policy Principles

- Approaches to teaching and learning are disseminated at the point of transition
- Planning is based upon assessment information from the previous class / setting
- Styles of teaching and learning meet the needs of the children and not pre-conceived notions of what is appropriate for the next phase / key stage
- There is a professional regard for the information from the previous setting/phase
- Children can enjoy new approaches at transition
- Transition motivates and challenges children
- Staff allocation gives attention to the needs of the children

Information Sharing and Transition Planning

At St Mary's Primary School, we believe that effective transitions are built on strong partnerships and open communication. The collection of information prior to a child starting in a new setting is carried out in cooperation with parents/carers, current staff, receiving staff, and, where age-appropriate, with the child themselves.

An Holistic Approach

Information gathering focuses on the **whole child**, not solely on academic achievement or developmental milestones. We aim to build a comprehensive profile that includes:

- Daily routines and learning preferences
- Interests and strengths
- Family background and dynamics
- Relevant medical information
- Any additional or special educational needs

Flexible and Individualised Timelines: We recognise that transition timelines must be flexible to meet the unique needs of each child. Some children may require extended or phased transitions to ensure they feel secure and confident in their new environment.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding: All information shared is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act and our Child Protection Policy. Sensitive information—such as social care involvement, special educational needs, or Children Looked After status—is shared on a strictly need-to-know basis to ensure appropriate support while maintaining confidentiality.

Our Commitment: The Board of Governors, Principal, and Staff are fully committed to providing a high standard of child-centred education in a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment where every pupil feels valued, respected, and empowered to succeed.

Building Positive Relationships and Supporting Transition into Nursery

We fully appreciate how privileged we are to have our own Nursery Unit within St Mary's Primary School. We realise that providing the highest quality 'first steps' in the educational journey of our pupils is reliant on us developing welcoming, nurturing, and supportive relationships with the parents and other significant adults in the lives of the children. We want to learn all about these young children so that we can do our very best to help them settle into the exciting, loving world of Nursery and experience the optimum start to their education. Children's experiences prior to starting pre-school will vary and this should be considered when planning the induction process.

Guidance on Induction and Transition - Pre-school Education Department of Education 2021

Generally, it is expected that most children should be settled into the pre-school setting within the first two to three weeks of September (dependent on the number of classes per setting, class size and staff ratio), with all children attending daily, for their full session, no later than the end of September.

For full time sessions, it is expected that most children should be staying for meals within four weeks of their start date. It is particularly important that children entitled to free school meals are settled in and staying for their meals as soon as possible.

The arrangements for settling in are flexible rather than fixed, to ensure every child's individual needs are met. This is particularly important for those children who may find it difficult to settle and may require a shorter session at the beginning with the aim of building up to the full session time.

The following steps are taken to ensure that both the child and parents/carers are confident, informed, happy and relaxed about the school:

The Nursery Team is committed to establishing strong, positive relationships with both children and their parents/carers from the outset. These early connections help build trust and give families confidence in the setting. To support this, the Nursery Teacher initiates contact with parents/carers in June, ahead of the child starting nursery in September. Parents/carers are invited to an induction afternoon, which provides an opportunity to share important information about their child—such as key family members, health needs, dietary requirements, sleep routines, and any additional support that may be required.

This face-to-face meeting also allows parents to express any concerns or anxieties, while giving the teacher insight into the child's strengths and potential areas of need. Communication is further supported through Seesaw for Schools, a digital platform that enables ongoing engagement between teachers, parents/carers, and children. A unique Seesaw code is issued during

the induction to facilitate access. The teacher also explains the staggered intake process, which is designed to ensure that each child receives individual attention and support during the important settling-in period.

Tigger's Nursery Adventure: Supporting Transition Through Storytelling

To help children feel more comfortable and excited about starting nursery, the Nursery Teacher has created an interactive eBook featuring Tigger, the nursery mascot, who is also beginning his journey at St Mary's Nursery Unit. This delightful story is sent electronically to each child before they start. Through Tigger's eyes, children are taken on a fun and reassuring adventure around the nursery.

Tigger openly shares his feelings about starting nursery—helping children relate to and understand their own emotions. He introduces the layout of the classroom, including play areas, quiet zones, toilets, and the outdoor learning space. The story also explains important routines such as drop-off and collection, toileting, playtime, and the structure of a typical nursery day.

To make the experience even more personal and welcoming, the eBook includes audio greetings from each member of the nursery team, helping children begin to recognise familiar voices and feel connected before they even arrive.

Parent/Carer Guidelines Booklet: Preparing for Nursery

Following the initial contact, parents and carers receive a digital guidelines booklet designed to support them in preparing their child for nursery. This practical resource offers helpful tips on key areas such as weaning off dummies, toilet training, and establishing a consistent personal hygiene routine. It also highlights the importance of a regular bedtime schedule and the powerful role of storytelling and shared reading in developing children's speech, language, and communication skills.

The booklet serves as a supportive reference point, offering reassurance and guidance as families navigate this important transition. It is emailed directly to parents/carers to ensure easy access and ongoing support. Here's a refined version of your message, suitable for inclusion in a parent communication or digital welcome pack:

Stay Connected with Our School Texting System: Parents and carers are encouraged to download and register with our school's texting system; <https://cloud2s.eprintinguk.com/app/administrator/login.php>

This service ensures parents/carers stay informed and up to date with important notifications, including:

- Emergency procedures
- School events and updates
- School closures
- PTA fundraising activities
- Local community news

Registering helps us maintain strong communication and ensures you never miss key information about your child's school life.

Welcome Pack for Parents/Carers: All parents and carers receive a comprehensive Welcome Pack upon their child's enrolment. This pack includes essential information about the nursery and outlines key policies to ensure transparency, safety, and shared understanding. The Core Policies Pack contains summaries of the following:

- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints and Suggestions Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy

These documents are designed to support families in understanding the nursery's values, expectations, and procedures, helping to build a strong partnership between home and school from the very beginning.

Stay and Play: Small Group Induction Sessions: In June, before formal admission, children are invited to attend Stay and Play sessions in small groups. These relaxed and informal visits give children the opportunity to explore their new classroom environment, meet their teacher and classroom assistant, and begin forming connections with their future peers. This gentle introduction helps to ease anxieties, build familiarity, and lay the foundation for a confident and positive start to nursery life.

Staggered Intake and Mealtime Arrangements: To support a calm and positive start to nursery, a staggered intake approach is used. This allows the teacher or key worker to spend dedicated time with each child, helping them settle in at their own pace and become familiar with daily routines and

expectations. This personalised support fosters a sense of security and belonging from the very beginning.

School meals are available to all children upon request. Parents and carers can choose this option based on their child's needs and preferences.

Curriculum Information for Parents: In early October, once most children are attending nursery full-time, parents and carers are provided with an overview of the Pre-School Curriculum. This information helps families understand the learning experiences their child will engage in and how they can support their development at home.

Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs: There is a strong and collaborative relationship between the Nursery Coordinator and the school SENCO, ensuring that the needs of children with special educational needs (SEN) are identified early and supported effectively.

The Nursery Class Teacher also works closely with a range of professionals—such as previous care or education providers, health visitors, speech and language therapists, social workers, and educational psychologists—where possible. This collaboration helps gather comprehensive information about each child's needs and prior experiences, enabling the planning of a tailored and supportive learning programme within the nursery setting.

Strengthening Transition from Nursery to Primary One

The Nursery Unit is fully integrated into the life of the school, reinforcing the message that it is an important and valued part of the wider school community. Throughout the year, the nursery class is invited to participate in a range of whole-school events, including assemblies, the Christmas Nativity performance, the Book Fair, and PTA activities. These shared experiences help children feel connected and familiar with the primary school environment.

In **Term 3**, the transition process is further supported through a series of structured activities:

- The nursery class connects digitally with the Primary One classrooms via Zoom, offering a virtual introduction to the new environment and daily routines.
- Children spend a morning in each Primary One classroom, accompanied by nursery staff, giving them a chance to explore the space and interact with future teachers and peers.

- Regular walk-throughs of the Primary One resource area allow children to observe the learning environment and engage informally with Primary One staff and pupils.
 - Here's a polished version of your sentence, suitable for inclusion in a transition or induction document:
 - **Shared Dining Experience:** As part of the transition process, the nursery children and staff enjoy a shared meal in the school canteen. This experience helps children become familiar with the dining environment, routines, and staff, supporting a smooth and confident move into the wider school setting.
- These carefully planned experiences help to reduce anxiety, build confidence, and ensure a smooth and positive transition into Primary One.

Stay Informed via Our School Website: Parents and carers are encouraged to visit our school website regularly to stay up to date with all aspects of school life. The website features:

- News and announcements
- Galleries showcasing children's learning indoors and outdoors
- School policies and procedures
- Curriculum support and guidance for home learning

Regular visits ensure parents/carers remain connected and informed about their child's educational journey and the wider school community.

Access to School Facilities: Pre-school children benefit from regular opportunities to explore and use a variety of school facilities, helping them feel part of the wider school community. These include:

- The assembly hall for whole-school events and physical activities
- The breakfast club, offering a welcoming start to the day
- The school garden area, encouraging outdoor learning and exploration
- The school library, fostering a love of books and storytelling

These experiences also provide valuable opportunities for children to socialise with older peers, supporting their confidence and sense of belonging as they prepare for the transition to Primary One.

Transition from Pre-School to Primary One in the Foundation Stage

School Tours and Virtual Induction Resources: To help families feel confident and informed ahead of starting Primary One, we offer a range of opportunities to explore our school:

- Individual tours of the school are available for all incoming parents, carers, and children. These personalised visits provide a chance to see the learning environment, ask questions, and begin building familiarity with the school setting.
- A virtual tour of the school is available on our website: www.stmarysprimaryschoolbanbridge
- You can also view our Foundation Stage – Primary One Induction Video on the same website, under the *Primary One* section. This video introduces key staff, routines, and learning spaces, helping children and families prepare for a smooth and confident start.

Supporting a Smooth Start to Primary One: By the time they begin Primary One, most children will have had the benefit of a pre-school experience. The aim of our transition process is to minimise the settling-in period and ensure that all children are supported to engage confidently with the full school day as early as possible. This process is flexible and responsive, with adjustments made to suit each child's individual needs, ensuring a positive and nurturing start to their primary school journey.

Transition planning should begin at the start of the child's final term in nursery, allowing sufficient time to prepare for a smooth and supportive move into Primary One. For children

with more complex needs, early and detailed planning is essential to ensure appropriate support is in place. Each child is recognised as an individual, and therefore, transition strategies are tailored to meet their unique strengths, needs, and circumstances.

To support families in this process, a Primary One Induction Video is available to view on the school website, offering a helpful introduction to the classroom environment, routines, and staff.

Liaison Between Nursery/Preschool Settings and Primary One

There is strong collaboration between local nursery and preschool settings and the Primary One teaching team. As part of the transition process, Primary One teachers visit local pre-schools in the Banbridge community area during May. These visits allow teachers to meet the children who will be joining the school in September, observe them at play in familiar surroundings, and begin building positive relationships. Teachers also stay for dinner with the children, helping to create a sense of familiarity and trust ahead of the new school year.

Induction Evening and Transition Information: An Induction Evening is held in early June, where parents and carers are invited to attend a session led by the Foundation Stage Coordinator. During this meeting, the induction and transition process into Primary One is clearly explained. Practical tips and strategies are shared to help families support their child's smooth and confident start to school life.

In addition, induction information for children starting in September is distributed before the summer break. This includes:

- Start dates and the expected duration of sessions in September
- A welcome letter addressed to the child and their parent/carer
- A photograph of the child's new teacher and classroom assistant, helping to build familiarity and reassurance ahead of the new school year
- Here's a refined version of your statement, ideal for inclusion in a transition guide or welcome pack:

Primary One Resource Pack: Each child starting Primary One receives a specially prepared Resource Pack designed to support a smooth and confident transition from pre-school. This pack is a helpful tool for both parents/carers and pre-school staff, offering a variety of engaging activities that encourage discussion and exploration of the child's new school environment. The activities are designed to build familiarity, reduce anxiety, and spark excitement about starting Primary One.

Induction Afternoons: Stay and Play Sessions: A series of induction afternoons are planned in June for both parents/carers and children who will be starting Primary One. These 'Stay and Play' sessions allow children to visit their new classrooms in small groups, offering a relaxed and informal opportunity to:

- Meet their new teacher and classroom assistant
- Interact with future classmates
- Explore and become familiar with their new learning environment

These sessions are designed to ease anxieties, build confidence, and help children feel excited and prepared for their transition into Primary One.

Sharing Information to Support a Smooth Transition: To ensure that each child's transition into Primary One is well-supported, visits and meetings are organised to facilitate the effective sharing of relevant information. This includes verbal and written reports, observations, and personal insights about each child's development, needs, and experiences.

Primary One teachers meet with staff from the nursery unit and other preschool settings during a dedicated Pupil Progress Meeting. During this meeting, end-of-year data and developmental reports are shared and discussed. This collaborative approach enables Primary One staff to plan appropriately for each child, ensuring that the early weeks of school are nurturing, manageable, and tailored to individual needs.

Primary One Staggered Intake Policy: To support a smooth transition into school life, we operate a staggered intake policy for our new Primary One pupils during the first two weeks of the academic year. This approach gradually builds up to a full attendance schedule by the third week of September for most children.

Where necessary, alternative arrangements will be made to accommodate the individual needs and circumstances of a child. In such cases, parents or carers will be fully informed of the reasons for these tailored arrangements, which are designed to help their child settle into school life as comfortably and confidently as possible.

Primary One Attendance Schedule – September

Weeks 1–3 (September):

During the first three weeks of term, children will go home at 12.00 p.m. Children who are entitled to free school meals can receive a school lunch during this period, if requested.

Week 3 Onwards:

From the third week in September, most children will begin attending for the full school day (8:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.).

At this stage, school meals will be available to all children.

Continuity from Nursery to Primary One: a consistent approach to learning, behaviour expectations, and daily routines between the nursery unit (or other pre-school settings) and Primary One helps children transition with greater confidence. The familiar play-based approach to learning continues in Primary One, providing a sense of continuity and comfort.

The Primary One curriculum is carefully designed to build on each child's existing knowledge, skills, and experiences, ensuring a smooth and supportive progression in their learning journey.

Assessment and Early Support: During the phased settling-in period, a baseline assessment is carried out for each child. This process includes careful observations to gain insight into their development, learning styles, and individual needs. These observations help identify any areas where early intervention may be beneficial, ensuring that appropriate support can be provided promptly to help each child thrive from the outset.

Parental Engagement and Communication

- **Stay Connected:** Parents and carers are encouraged to visit our school website regularly at www.stmarysprimaryschoolbanbridge.com to stay up to date with all aspects of school life. The website features galleries of children learning indoors and outdoors, school policies, curriculum support, and guidance.
- **Curriculum Sharing:** Topic planners are shared with parents in advance to support meaningful discussions between parent/carers and child at home.
- **School Texting System:** We recommend that all parents/carers download and register with our school texting system to receive important updates and reminders.
- **Open Communication:** Foundation Stage staff are available for informal chats with parents before and after school. They are proactive in addressing any concerns or issues that may arise.
- **Labelling Belongings:** To help prevent lost property, we kindly ask that all your child's belongings—including school bag, coat, jumper, and lunchbox—are clearly labelled with their name.

Primary 1 Class Compilation: The allocation of children into Primary 1 classes is the responsibility of the school's teaching staff. In forming these classes, careful consideration is given to a range of factors, including:

- Gender balance
- Age
- Small friendship groupings
- Special educational needs

Where children are transferring from the same pre-school setting outside of the school, they will generally be placed in the same Primary 1 class—unless a parent/carer requests otherwise.

Supporting Newcomer Pupils at St Mary's Primary School

At St Mary's Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that every child has the right to a high-quality education, as enshrined in the Human Rights Act (1998). In recent years, we have welcomed an increasing number of children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, enriching our school community.

A newcomer pupil is defined as a child or young person who has recently enrolled in school and does not yet have sufficient language skills to fully access the curriculum or communicate effectively with staff (as defined by *Every School a Good School* – ESaGS). These pupils may require additional support to overcome language barriers and other challenges, enabling them to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

We are dedicated to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment for all newcomer pupils. Our approach includes:

- Warm Welcome and Induction: Newcomer children and their families are welcomed into the school community through a structured induction process, including school tours, buddy systems, and introductory meetings.
- Language Support: Targeted English as an Additional Language (EAL) support is provided to help children develop the language skills needed to access the curriculum and participate fully in school life.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Staff are trained to be culturally responsive and to celebrate the diverse backgrounds of our pupils. We encourage the sharing of languages, traditions, and experiences within the classroom.

- **Parental Engagement:** We work closely with parents and carers, providing translated materials where possible and using interpreters when needed to ensure clear communication and strong home-school partnerships.
- **Monitoring and Early Intervention:** Regular assessments and observations help us identify any additional learning needs early on, allowing us to put tailored support in place promptly.

At St Mary's, we believe that diversity is a strength, and we are proud to support every child in reaching their full potential, regardless of their starting point.

Transition from Class to Class

At St Mary's Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that each child experiences a smooth and positive transition as they progress from one class to the next. This is achieved through a range of supportive practices, including:

- **Consistent Routines and Expectations:** Children benefit from familiar routines, behavioural expectations, and learning approaches that are consistent across year groups.
- **Collaborative Planning Between Staff:** Teachers work closely together to share information about each child's progress, strengths, and areas for development, ensuring continuity in learning and support.
- **Pupil Voice and Involvement:** Children are encouraged to reflect on their learning journey and share their thoughts and feelings about moving to a new class, helping to build confidence and a sense of ownership.
- **Classroom Visits and Familiarisation:** Prior to moving up, pupils have opportunities to visit their new classroom, meet their new teacher, and engage in transition activities to ease any anxieties.
- **Parental Communication:** Parents are kept informed about the transition process and are encouraged to support their child at home through positive conversations and reassurance.
- **Support for Individual Needs:** Additional transition support is provided for children who may find change more challenging, including those with special educational needs or social/emotional difficulties.

Familiarisation Across the School: At St Mary's Primary School, we place great importance on helping children feel confident and comfortable within the wider school environment. We support familiarisation through the following practices:

- Whole-School Participation: All children regularly attend whole-school events such as assemblies, musical performances, Christmas concerts, and the Book Fair, fostering a sense of community and belonging.
- Cross-Year Group Interaction: Pupils are encouraged to visit other year groups to share achievements and celebrate positive behaviour, promoting peer recognition and school-wide connection.
- Access to School Facilities: Children have regular opportunities to use shared spaces such as the assembly hall, breakfast club, school garden, and library, and to socialise with peers from other classes.
- Staff Transition Meetings: Teachers meet during the summer term to share key information about each child with the next class teacher, ensuring continuity in learning and support.
- Transition Visits: P1 and P2: Two planned visits in June allow children to meet their new teacher and classroom assistant, and to explore their new classroom environment. P3 to P6: Pupils visit their new classrooms in June to meet staff and become familiar with their new learning space.
- Establishing Class Culture: In September, each class works with their teacher to establish behaviour expectations and co-create class rules, giving children a sense of ownership and responsibility.
- Leadership and Peer Support: Children are introduced to key pupil leadership roles—such as Playground Buddies, Digital Leaders, School Council Members, and Eco Council Members—through assemblies and class visits, helping them understand the support systems available throughout the school.

Transfer of Records: To support a smooth and informed transition between classes, teaching staff ensure that all relevant pupil information is passed on to the next teacher. This process allows for continuity in learning, targeted support, and a clear understanding of each child's progress and needs. The following key documents and data are transferred:

- Pupil Profile Information, including any Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- SIMS Data, such as Progress Test in Maths (PTM) and Progress Test in English (PTE) results
- Class-Based Assessments (CBAs)
- Assessment Folder, containing samples of work and assessment records
- Profile Folder, documenting the child's learning journey
- Literacy Record of Achievement
- End-of-Year Pupil Report

- Teacher Records, including ability groupings in Literacy, Mathematics, and Spelling

This comprehensive handover ensures that each child's learning continues seamlessly and that their individual needs are recognised and supported from the outset of the new school year.

SEN Class File: Each class teacher has access to a digital SEN Class File, which is securely stored on the school's server. This file contains essential information to support the planning, monitoring, and delivery of appropriate provision for pupils with additional needs. The SEN Class File includes:

- Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Pupil Passports for children with Statements of Special Educational Needs
- Risk Assessments and Behaviour Support Plans, where applicable
- Current Attainment Data in Literacy and Mathematics
- SEN Advice and Guidance relevant to individual pupils or general classroom strategies

All documents are maintained electronically to ensure they are easily accessible, up to date, and securely stored, enabling staff to respond promptly and effectively to the needs of each learner.

Welcoming New Pupils and Families

At St Mary's Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that every new pupil and their family feels welcomed, supported, and well-informed from the outset. Our induction process includes the following key steps:

- Individual Tours: Personalised tours are offered to all incoming parents and children, providing an opportunity to explore the school environment and ask questions.
- Induction Sessions: Children are invited to attend induction sessions to help them become familiar with their new classroom, staff, and daily routines.
- Parent Information Pack: All new families receive a comprehensive Parents' Pack, containing essential information about school life, routines, policies, and support services.
- Initial Assessment: New pupils are assessed promptly by the class teacher and/or SENCO to identify any learning needs and ensure appropriate support is in place from the beginning.

- Buddy System: A peer 'buddy' is assigned to each new child to help them settle in, navigate the school day, and feel part of the school community.
- Transfer of Records: Records from the child's previous school are obtained and reviewed by the class teacher and SENCO. This includes academic, pastoral, and safeguarding information.
- Confirmation of Records: The school ensures that all necessary documentation has been received, including confidential files and any safeguarding concerns, to support a safe and informed transition.

Supporting the transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1

We recognise that for some children this stage of transfer can be problematic, so to ensure a smooth transition we have looked at several areas: familiarisation, approaches to teaching and learning and transfer of information. **Familiarisation:** Children can:

- Attend phase assemblies
- Attend whole school assemblies- music, concerts etc.
- Foundation Stage joins in with Key Stage 1 Christmas production.
- Children are encouraged to visit other year groups to share achievements.
- Experience child-initiated play sessions, which provides an element of consistency to the pupils' routine.
- Foundation Stage children have opportunities to use the school facilities; Breakfast Club, After School Club, Soccer Coaching sessions, Fun Fit Classes, and Irish Dancing classes, allow younger children to interact with older children.
- Children share playtime in the playground and interact socially.

Supporting the transition from Primary School to Secondary School (Key Stage 3)

- Transfer meeting for Year 7 pupils in the Autumn Term to explain Transfer Procedure to parents.
- Parents are assisted with the completion of Transfer Forms, if required.
- Transition work completed in 2nd half of summer term.
- Parents and pupils are encouraged to attend Open Nights in schools of interest.

- Taster Day - one full school day visit to new secondary school, so children become familiar with the school location, departments and meet the Principal, Vice-principal, Year Tutor, Year 8 form teachers and other peers from various schools. Children participate in Sport /PE / Cookery / Design and Technology sessions.
- Formal meeting between the Primary 7 teacher and the Year 8 tutor of the receiving secondary school.
- Transfer of records to secondary school – statements of needs, medical information.
- Information including pupil standardised scores, family background, individual interests and needs, medical conditions, behavioural issues, pastoral concerns, of each child is passed onto secondary school to build a generic pupil profile of the child.
- Identified children, (SEN, LAC) receive additional support before and after transition. Transition reviews completed on time.
- Teachers, parents/carers, and pupils are advised to openly discuss this transition and identify potential worries or concerns associated with starting secondary school.
- Pupils are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult or friend. Taking care of children's mental health and emotional well-being is a priority.

Useful Tips to Support Induction into Secondary School

- Better Future Brighter Hope – Be Awesome Go Big 2020 The PiXL Club Ltd and Hachette UK: A resource to enhance transition work with pupils.
- Practical tips provided to students on travelling to secondary school - Practice the route during the summer holidays if walking, or the route to where you catch the bus. Practice your Highway Code for crossing roads. Walk with a friend when starting school. Allow extra time than you think to arrive in time to catch the bus.
- Label/name everything, including PE kit and have a list of what should be in the bag that day.
- Choose a school bag with comfortable shoulder straps, and one with some side or front compartments that can be labelled and used for specific items, for example, pencil case, lunch. This makes it easier to find items rather than one compartment with everything mixed up together.

- Have a different bag for PE/swimming kit that is always for this function (maybe different colour).
- Sit in class facing the teacher or board and near to them. Don't sit sideways to teacher and sit up with your arms resting on the desk.
- Always look back and double-check your work.
- Establish a homework routine. Always complete the homework diary properly. Break homework down into small steps and set small goals. Do one piece of homework and check, before moving on to the next. Getting stuck with homework – have a class buddy that can be contacted about it.
- School uniform - Keep school clothes separate in a cupboard or drawer. If you need to wear a tie, practice at home.
- Feeling worried? - Establish who to go to if there are any problems/concerns. Exercise generally helps with anxiety or anger and frustration, so do something that is not necessarily competitive with others, for example, bike riding, swimming, horse-riding, trampolining, walking.
- Parents/carers should talk to their children about any concerns/worries.

Inclusive and Supportive Transitions: At St Mary's Primary School, we recognise that transition periods can be challenging for some children and may impact their emotional wellbeing and academic progress. We are committed to identifying pupils who may require individualised support at an early stage and ensuring that their new teacher is fully informed and prepared to meet their needs.

Child- and Family-Centred Approach: We actively involve both children and parents in all transition processes. Their experiences, insights, and concerns are listened to, valued, and used to shape our approach. This collaborative process helps build trust and ensures that transitions are positive and empowering for every child.

Equity in Transition: We take specific measures to ensure that pupils with learning or access difficulties experience the same ease of transition as their peers. This includes tailored support, adapted resources, and close collaboration with families and support staff.

Commitment to Inclusion and Accessibility: We are firmly committed to ensuring that no member of our school community experiences discrimination or less favourable treatment based on:

- Age
- Disability
- Culture
- Ethnicity
- Language
- Gender
- Religion/beliefs

We celebrate the diversity of our school community and are proud to foster an environment where all children and families are respected, included, and supported. We consider the wide range of life experiences our pupils bring with them when developing school policies and practices.

Our goal is to empower every child to thrive in a safe, nurturing, and inclusive learning environment—one where they feel valued, respected, and confident to be themselves.

Policy Review This policy will be regularly reviewed by the Governing Body and updated May 2028, in line with St Mary's Primary School's Policy Schedule.