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Chapter 2

Transfer and transition in English schools: reviewing the evidence

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Abstract

The study of the transfer of pupils from primary to secondary schools in England and Wales has been a continuing pre-occupation of administrators, teachers, and researchers during the past three decades. Much of this research, however, has focused on the social adjustment of pupils to the change of school, rather than the impact of the school change on academic performance. What evidence there is on the latter issue suggests that around 40% of pupils experience a hiatus in progress during school transfer. This has been mainly attributed to a lack of curriculum continuity between the primary and secondary stages of schooling. Recent work suggests that even more important may be the variations in teaching approach and the consequent failure of pupils to take account of these differences in their efforts at learning to become 'professional pupils.'



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Keywords

Transfer; Transition

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Maurice Galton is a former Dean of Education at Leicester University and is now Associate Director of Research at Homerton College, Cambridge. He has published widely on various aspects of classroom practice in primary schools including the effects of class size, a topic on which he recently edited a series of papers for this journal. His latest book, *Inside the Primary Classroom:20 Years On*, replicates research carried out two decades ago as part of the ORACLE project.

Ian Morrison is Director of undergraduate programmes at Homerton College, Cambridge and contributed to the pilot stage of the Department for Education and Employment pilot study of Transfer and Transition. His research interests include pupil perspectives on transfer and peer mentoring.

Anthony Pell completed his doctorate at the University of Leicester having previously undertaken a masters course on Research Methods at Lancaster University. A former physics teacher, he now specialises in research methods and statistical analysis. He is currently a member of a project team on transfer and transition co-directed by Professor Galton for the Department for Education and Employment.

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