



European Schools

Office of the Secretary-General

Pedagogical Development Unit

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**Framework for school-specific guidelines for transition
nursery/primary/secondary¹**

**APPROVED BY THE JOINT TEACHING COMMITTEE ON 8 AND 9 OCTOBER 2015
IN BRUSSELS**

Immediate entry into force

¹ Cancels and replaces document 2007-D-4210-en-3 "Guidelines for nursery/primary/secondary transition".

Introduction

The transition from Nursery to Primary and from Primary to Secondary level is of major importance in the school life of the pupils of the European Schools and, in a more general sense, for the system of the European Schools. It does not only involve the issue of transfer and assessment of pupils at the end of Nursery and Primary but it also implies the educational organisation, curricula, teaching aims and methods, the welfare and guidance of the pupils, especially during their first year in Secondary.

Parties involved in the transition process are first of all the pupils and their parents, but also teachers. Furthermore cycle coordinators, support specialists, administrative staff, educational counsellors, management and inspectors have each their own responsibility to ensure a smooth transition from one cycle to another.

The WSI-reports of the European Schools show that schools are very well aware of the importance of transition. All schools have documents on this topic. To support and improve the current practices and to guarantee their future quality and attention, this document presents a framework for school-specific guidelines for transition. It tries to take into account the need of both clarity and harmonisation amongst European Schools (common expectations) and the autonomy of individual schools. It offers the hooks (each of the 5 chapters in this document is dedicated to one 'hook') on which schools can hang their own activities and procedures, taking into account their own context.

Content:

- I Domains
- II Parties
- III Activities
- IV Organisation
- V Quality assurance

I. Domains

A first 'hook' is that of the **domains**. In the context of transition the school should take the following domains into account:

- Pedagogical climate: transfer of information on pupils' social and personal needs;
- Didactic principles: exchange of approaches, methodologies;
- Assessment: transfer of learning outcomes, such as marks, portfolio's, observations, special needs;
- Curriculum: alignment of learning objectives for at least L1, L2 and mathematics;
- Organisation: transfer of information of how things are organised in the next cycle, for example composition of groups/classes, teachers (class teachers, mentors, ...), homework, lunches, breaks, buildings.
- Administration: transfer of relevant information between Nursery, Primary and Secondary cycle.

For each domain the key activities and procedures should be listed.

II. Parties

A second 'hook' is that of the **parties** involved. All parties to be addressed and all responsible actors in the school should be included in the guidelines:

- Pupils
Pupils need to get acquainted with the next cycle; the building, the teachers, the organisation etcetera in order to guarantee a safe transition. Special attention is necessary for newcomers, as relatively a large number of pupils enters the European School System somewhere along the line.
- Groups/classes
Even though a focus lies in Nursery 2/Primary 1 and Primary 5/Secondary 1, transition is not only a topic in these groups. In the case of newcomers or transition from S3 to S4 or S5 to S6 changes also ask for support.
- Parents
Parents need to be well-informed about all the above-mentioned domains and the organisation of the next cycle.
- Teachers involved, including support teachers, cycle coordinators and pedagogical advisors
Teachers need to have knowledge of the curriculum, approaches and results of the previous (and next) cycle.
- Administrative staff
- (Deputy) Directors
The management of the school is responsible for the (implementation, improvement, evaluation, facilitation of the) guidelines as such.
- Inspectors
Inspectors should comment on the guidelines if necessary and should support and monitor the processes of transition in each school.

For each party involved the key activities, planning and procedures should be listed.

III. Activities

A third 'hook' is that of the **activities**. How, with what kind of activities, does the school support transition?

Domains	Activities	Parties
Pedagogical climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Specific projects are set up to familiarize Nursery pupils with the Primary Cycle or P5-pupils with the Secondary Cycle · Transfer of information on pupils' social and personal needs · Exchange of information on classroom rules for social behavior and communication, autonomy of pupils · ... 	<p>Who is/are responsible for the organization? Who are involved?</p>

Domains	Activities	Parties
Didactic principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers of the different cycles discuss their approach (differentiation including different learning strategies, active learning, cooperative learning etc.) Teachers pay reciprocal visits to each other's class (M2 « P1, P5 « S1) Primary and Secondary teachers explain to pupils of M2 and P5 the common daily didactic practice in Primary and Secondary In p5 and S1 explicit attention is paid to study skills ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is/are responsible for the organization? Who are involved?
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers of different cycles inform their colleagues about their assessment practices Nursery teachers inform their colleagues in Primary and Primary teachers their colleagues in Secondary on the learning outcomes of their pupils in M2 or P5 P1-teachers provide N2-teachers with feedback, S1-teachers provide P5-teachers with feedback Teachers of Nursery and Primary use the portfolio to illustrate the performances of their pupils ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is/are responsible for the organization? Who are involved?
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers of Nursery, Primary and Secondary exchange information on the learning objectives for N2/P5/S1 Teachers are involved in the development of new curricula (Inspectors involve Secondary Teachers in Primary Curriculum Development, Primary in Nursery, and vice versa) Teachers inform each other on the methods and textbooks used in the respective cycles ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycle coordinators are responsible for organization. Relevant teachers of the schools are involved. Inspectors are responsible for organization. Several teachers in the system are involved. Class Teachers P5, L1, Math teachers S1

Domains	Activities	Parties
Organisation of the next cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Pupils get used to the organization of the next cycle by paying visits to the building, the classes, the teachers · Pupils are informed by buddies on topics such as homework, change of classes, lunch · ... 	Who is/are responsible for the organization? Who are involved?
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Transmission of names and relevant information on the pupils' progress to teachers of next cycle · Transmission of information of pupils needing support · ... 	

IV. Organisation

A fourth column in the above overview could be that of organisation of transition:

- Planning
Transition doesn't start on the 1st of July or end on the 1st of September, but is a process that extends a longer period of time. Activities should be planned beforehand.
- Time-allocation
Teachers or other staff members involved need time to organise things and of course also transition activities as such take time. This involves time.
- Materials, space
For some activities specific materials or space (rooms, ICT) are requested.

The management of the school should facilitate transition activities.

V. Quality assurance

A fourth 'hook' is that of **quality assurance**. In order to keep school guidelines up to date and be able to improve them, it is necessary to evaluate them regularly in a systematic way. The guidelines should describe how the school takes care of monitoring and evaluation of the transition process.

DECISION OF THE JOINT TEACHING COMMITTEE (JTC)

The Joint Teaching Committee approved the document and sent it forward to the Board of Governors for its information.

Once approved, the document will cancel and replace document 2007-D-4210-en-3 "*Guidelines for nursery/primary/secondary transition*".