



*Research in East Renfrewshire Psychological Service
Summary Report No. 9*

The Transition Passport Pilot

A useful tool to support individuals during times of transition

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 outlined a statutory function for local authorities to undertake transition planning for young people with additional support needs and to identify the agencies which will provide that support. It highlighted a need to have agreed practices to communicate, refer, share information and work together.

One way in which many authorities have addressed this issue is through the development of transition passports; a vehicle to promote information sharing between the individual and post school learning providers.

Present Study

In light of feedback from partner agencies a transition passport was developed by psychological service, adapted and expanded from previous passports that had been used and evaluated within other local authorities. The passport had a uniform design for all young people included in the pilot.

Two high schools were identified to pilot the transition passport in East Renfrewshire. The pilot ran over 2 terms; firstly with the activate winter leavers in Nov 2009 and secondly the activate summer leavers in June 2010. A total of 38 young people were supported to complete the passport during their allocated activate time; 22 of these young people took part in the post evaluation and it is their information that is reported in this evaluation. All pupils involved in the pilot had previously indicated that they intended to leave school at the end of that current term.

Research aims:

1. To develop a document that would present the person positively as an individual, not as a set of 'problems' or disabilities.
2. Describe the person's most effective means of communication and how others can best communicate with, and support that person.
3. Help the individual build a realistic picture of their strengths, needs and experiences.
4. To record specific goals to empower the individual to be in charge of their future plans and ultimately allow a retrospective measure of distance travelled.

Research Method

Psychological services evaluated the passport with the aid of the school's depute head teacher and the schools Skills Development Scotland (SDS) activate advisor. Qualitative feedback was sought from all pupils who had started or completed the passport in the form of a short questionnaire. The questionnaire asked pupils to rate how useful they had found each section in the passport on a scale of 1 to 4; 1 being not useful at all to 4 being very useful. In addition they were asked to rate how useful they had found the passport overall on a scale of 1 to 10; 1 being not useful at all to 10 being very useful. In addition, an individual interview was carried out with the activate advisor who supported the pupils to complete the passport. The following section summarizes the key findings.

Key Findings

- Pupil's ratings indicated that the sections found to be most useful included noting their own personal qualities and planning their short and long term goals (Ratings for both sections were 3.3).
- Pupil's ratings further suggested that the sections asking them to note their achievements as well as the section asking them what helped them to learn were also useful (Rating for both sections were 3.2)
- Pupil's ratings indicated that the sections they found least useful involved asking them to write down what helps them if they are upset and what things had

happened in the last year that were good and what things had happened that were bad (Ratings for these two sections were 2.8 and 2.3 respectively)

- Encouragingly pupils overall rating of how useful they had found the passport was 6. Additional feedback indicated that the pupils felt that the passport would be better if it had been online, more colorful and or used with groups of pupils prior to the transition from primary to secondary school.

Staff feedback

Qualitative feedback received from the staff involved in supporting the young people to fill out the passport was mixed. Encouragingly feedback suggested that the passport could be a useful document which had the potential to address the issue of the type of information being passed to post school providers. Feedback also highlighted the potential of the document to support the young people through transition and address any issues they may have prior to leaving. On the other hand comments included the need to “jazz” up the document and make it more appealing to young people, possibly by making it electronic. It was also highlighted that documents such as this have been used before and young people, once they have left school, no longer use them.

Recommendations

- Involve a group of young people in developing an online passport.
- Pilot the passport as an online document that can be amended to include information that the young person considers relevant and that they wish to share with post school providers.
- Consider an alternative client group that would benefit the most from the passport, for example those with additional support needs, those moving from primary to secondary or those going through a difficult transition in their, e.g. moving schools or home.
- Investigate what happens when the young person leaves school and why documents such as this have been disregarded once leaving school.

Further information

Please contact the Psychological Service for further information.