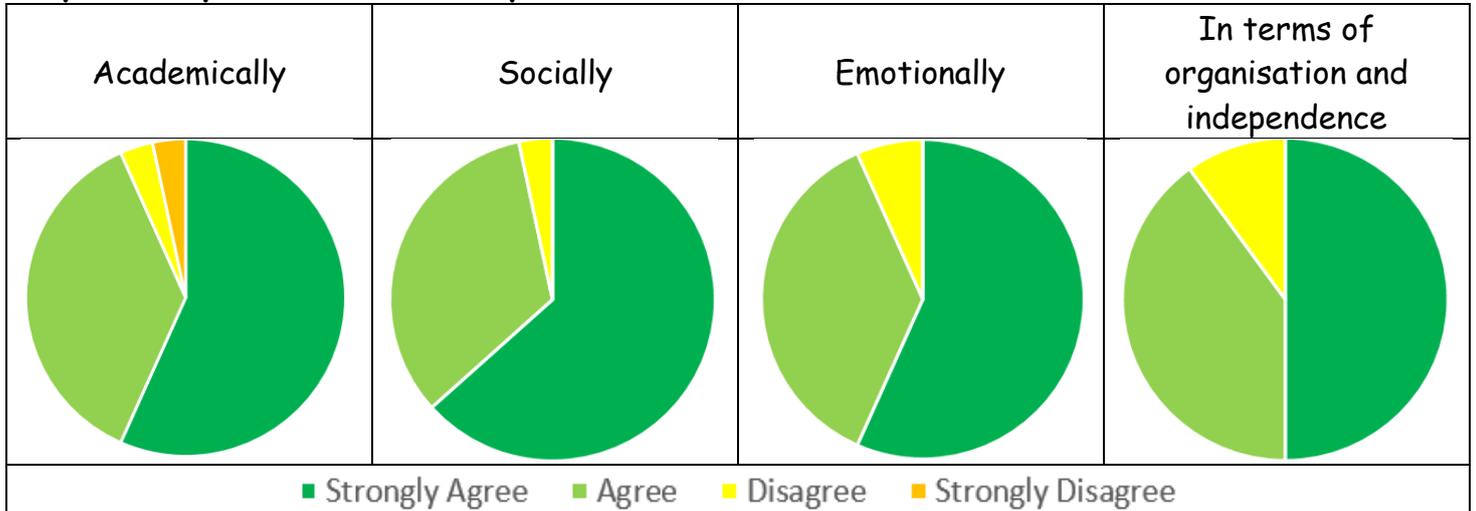


Thomas Russell Junior School

Y2-3 Transition Questionnaire Feedback

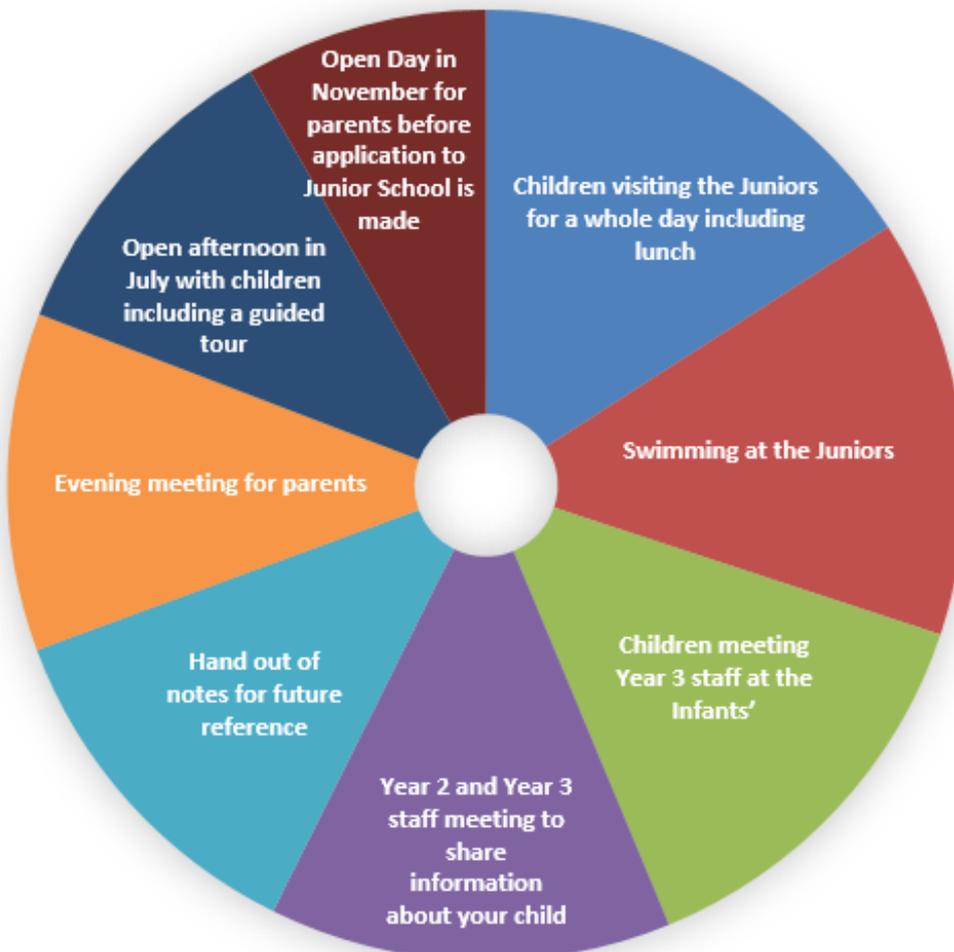
From September 2017 joiners (30 responses from 59 pupils)

Do you feel your child was ready for the Junior School at the end of Year 2?



- *There is a big jump in expectations with regard to independence*
- *The Infants and Juniors did a good job of transitioning the children*
- *Before starting Juniors I obviously had a few worries about transition, but looking back now, she was definitely ready and all went so smoothly.*
- *He was more than ready for the next step*

In your opinion as parents were the following preparation activities useful?



- *It was good to get the children familiar with the new teachers and school setting it definitely made it less scary for them*
- *My daughter enjoyed all the days and they settled any nerves she had about moving.*
- *My daughter really enjoyed her visits to the Juniors, this made her less anxious and more excited.*
- *All great opportunities for us and pupils to feel better about the whole experience of moving up.*
- *Felt it was very thorough for both parents and children.*
- *Guided tour with pupil very good. Children asked pupil lots of questions.*

Were the following arrangements supportive / useful / informative?

Top 3 arrangements that parents Strongly Agreed helped:

Attending Parent Consultations
83%

Bringing the children to
the classroom or
playground in the
morning
59%

Collecting children
from the playground at
the end of the day
59%

- Lots of opportunities raised to ease transition.
- The communication and support has been excellent.

Is there anything else that could have been useful to aid transition?

- No – I think it is perfect.
- More information for parents of what you expect of our kids in the new school.
- Better communication for parents about school dinners, ParentPay and Before / After School Club. I had to contact the office on a few occasions because I wasn't clear on how to set these up.

Thank you for this tip – we'll make sure we tie all of the information on bookings and payments on to one page in the information pack for next year. It is possible to book Early Birds and Night Owls before children join us, but we can't register parents for Parent Pay until children have officially enrolled on their first day. We'll make sure we communicate this better to parents next year to avoid confusion.

- In my opinion, it couldn't have gone better – my daughter has never looked back and loves Juniors.
- Individual meetings with parents if required. I feel a meeting before September on a 1-2-1 would have been useful.
- It might be helpful if the Year 2 children have the chance to talk to some of the older children already at Juniors – to ask questions and get a feel for what life is like at junior school.

We try to build in a balance of activities for Y2 children to meet older children during their transition. For example, during the whole day visit when they spent time with Y3s completing a treasure hunt to help with familiarisation. We also had Y5 children conducting tours on Open Morning as in the past parents have been concerned that some children think the older pupils are 'scary', so this is a nice way to show how polite, kind and caring the older children are. Finally, we had a joint playtime where loads of the children were keen to re-connect with friends they remembered from Infants – this was a great chance to spot siblings and see some old friendships rekindled.

- It was a great transition – perfect balance of excitement and information.
- No, my child was completely ready and excited. He was relaxed and ready to take the next step.
- A video on the website that children could watch in the summer holiday walking through arrival at school and the end of the day.
- No – it is very well planned

This is a great idea. We are currently looking to upgrade our website to make it more mobile and tablet friendly. If anyone has a link to a person or company who would have the technology to put together a 360° view of classrooms or walk through school, particularly that pupils could help with, that would be marvellous.

Is there anything else the Infants' School could have done to prepare the children further for their transition?



- They did a brilliant job.
- No – I think what you do is just right.
- More tough love
- Can't think of anything.
- I do not feel the Infants did anything for transition – it all appeared to be TRJS, even on Open Evening
- The Infants School did not complete my child's last IEP in the last term before they moved.
- I feel they could have started to increase the amount of homework during the last term to get them used to sitting and working for more than a few minutes each week at home.
- Nothing – an exceptional school experience for child and parent.
- Encourage independence earlier and explain why more to avoid it seeming such a big step.

Mrs Farmer says, "Both schools work very closely together to plan and deliver all the transition activities. Infants' staff prepare the children for the move throughout the summer term and are always very conscious of any concerns and questions the children might have."

Is there anything else the Junior School could have done to support the children further during their transition?

- *No. My daughter enjoyed all sessions and it was good to have an evening meeting as day time meetings when working full time are not possible to attend.*
- *I think that staff are all super and helpful but experience with my daughter and some other kids that they felt a lot of pressure in the first few weeks before they slowly adjusted.*
- *I feel the approach and policy on discipline was too harsh from day one. Children and adults should not be doing things because of 'fear' which I personally feel has happened and heard many parents saying the same.*



We are really sorry to hear comments relating to 'fear' or 'pressure' with regard to transition. We understand this can be an anxious time for parents and children, so always try our best to ensure a smooth move to Juniors. We do set high standards in terms of academic achievements and behaviour, but take on board your comments and will be mindful of this.

- *Feel that the transition is in depth and offers many opportunities for parents and children alike.*
- *Not moved pupils into higher / lower classes until actually sorted as moving down is not a great start to a new school.*
- *Initially information by letter or text would be good e.g. for Harvest a verbal message only got passed on via a friend rather than our son.*
- *Not for us.*

Is there anything that you are still unsure of about the Junior School that you would like to know?

- *What they are taught by which teachers. Seems to have lessons by other teacher as well as Mrs David.*
- *No.*
- *How children are selected to attend events such as athletics, swim galas, football etc.*

Children were all given a timetable in the first week which is stuck inside their Reading Record to show when they have each lesson and who will be teaching them. We are fortunate to have specialist teachers for some subjects such as music (keyboards) and swimming, as well as a very experienced teaching team in Y3.

Mrs Vardy is our PE Leader - she has worked really hard, together with all staff, to ensure that competitions and sporting events are widely available to as many children as possible. Events are announced in classrooms or assembly, then children are asked to sign up on the Sports Noticeboard if they are interested. A team will then be selected based on skill, availability and desire.

Some teams are selected based on performance - such as Dove Valley athletics which is centred on Sports Day positions. Swimming Gala is based on swim trials completed during lessons. Other teams are deliberately picked based on meeting given criteria - such as Inclusive Sports - picked from children who had never represented school in a sporting event before.

Understandably, competition is about balancing a desire to achieve and win, with offering an opportunity to every child to experience the pride of representing the school. Our overarching philosophy on sport is based on the belief that there is a sport for every child to enjoy, and we offer a huge range of opportunities both in school and as extra-curricular activities to support them in finding theirs.

- *No. If we have had any questions they have been answered straight away.*
- *Things crop up...like booking parent consultations, clubs, paying for things via ParentPay...just getting used to a different way of doing it all - people are helpful when I've asked for help.*
- *I would have appreciated a simple checklist of uniform, things to do, explanation of ParentPay etc. as because I couldn't attend open days I felt I missed valuable info.*
- *When is best to approach teachers about worries or queries and by what means?*
- *How much discussion about emotional / behavioural concerns there is between Infant and Junior teachers? Not only academic.*

You can pop onto the playground, ask at the gate, e-mail questions@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk or phone at any time and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Any further comments?

- *The two schools work extremely well together. My child felt ready and excited for the change.*
- *We both think that the Infant and Junior School in this village are brilliant and our daughter clearly thrives in the new environment after a few struggles at the beginning.*
- *I would have liked the opportunity to discuss the issues we had at Infants with Miss Murfin before my child started Juniors.*

We are sorry if we didn't make it clear during transition that it was possible to have a 1-2-1 meeting if you wished. We try to make ourselves available to meet with parents whenever they need, so do not be afraid to shout up if you need a 1-2-1 meeting in the future.

- *My daughter enjoyed the transition and the 6 weeks holiday was a long wait for her. She has settled into beautifully.*
- *My son did find the transition a little overwhelming but we think has settled now.*
- *Mix the groups in Y3? My elder son made loads more friends once the classes changed every year.*
- *I would have been happy for you to mix the classes at Y2/3, but even happier if they were mixed at Y1/2 in Infants.*

We have talked with parents at Open Morning this year and with the Infant School to outline our plans to mix the two Infant classes on the move up to Junior School - this has been very well received as a positive move. We will continue to work closely with the Infant School regarding ability groups and hope to maintain our 3 class structure for Maths and English next academic year if funds allow.

- *The transition was fantastic – plenty to ensure the children were ready and the parents were made to feel at ease about it too.*
- *I am also concerned when my child refers to the teacher as ‘shouting a lot’.*
- *Could have been clearer on homework expectations.*

We always try to strike a balance between ensuring parents have enough information to feel confident about expectation, without giving too much information which can overload parents and either feel overwhelming or patronising. Any questions can be jotted into children's homework books and staff will do their best to answer, or pop to the classroom at any time to ask if more information is required.

- *The recent SENCO meeting was brilliant and thank you to Mrs Jones and Miss Murfin.*
- *There was a number of frightened Y3s at the start of the year – very strict enforcement of rules and pressure to perform in sets from day 1. Almost a fear culture – greater balance of rewards / praise would have been nice – not that dissimilar to Reception e.g. “I did my first week in Year 3” or e-mail home have you seen “marvellous me?”*

We pride ourselves on having a huge selection of praise and reward incentives at Junior School. We hope parents who joined us for the Merit Assembly were able to see a whole host of achievements being celebrated. Stickers, house points and Headteacher's Awards are also a great motivator. Golden Time is a widely anticipated and enjoyed time of the week, with a wide range of engaging activities offered. We gave out 210 certificates last term to children who kept all of their GT for the term. Last summer we had over 30% of our Y6 children who kept 100% of GT throughout their whole time in Junior School.

- *All great – love the school. My son is very happy.*
- *Since joining my child has really enjoyed every minute! The variety of lessons, along with smaller class sizes have really suited. Very happy.*
- *I think the two schools work exceptionally well together to ensure a seamless transition 😊*

Thank you very much for your feedback - please do not hesitate to ask if you have any further questions, or would like further clarification on points raised in this questionnaire feedback.

Best wishes

Mrs Sharpe
Headteacher at TRJS

Mrs Farmer and Mrs Burton
Co-Headteachers at TRIS