

Key Stage 3: the wasted years?

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector commissioned this survey to get an accurate picture of whether Key Stage 3 is providing pupils with sufficient breadth and challenge, and helping them to make the best possible start to their secondary education.

A collection of Key Stage 3 good practice case studies has been published alongside this report: www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-key-stage-3-curriculum-survey-2015-8-good-practice-case-studies.

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Executive summary

The importance of a good start to a pupil's secondary school education cannot be overemphasised. Leaders of successful schools set the right culture for learning that is embraced by their pupils from the outset. They ensure that pupils are well aware of their school's high expectations for behaviour and conduct, and they have a clear understanding of pupils' achievements in primary school and build on them from day one. These leaders ensure that their schools embed the learning habits that will stand their pupils in good stead for their future academic studies, for example in stressing the importance of reading often and widely.

In his Annual Report 2013/14, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector reported that primary schools had continued to improve but the performance of secondary schools had stalled.¹ The report noted that one of the major contributory factors to this was that, too often, the transition from primary to secondary school was poorly handled. Consequently, the gains made by pupils at primary school were not embedded and developed at Key Stage 3.

As a result, the Chief Inspector commissioned this survey to look at the effectiveness of Key Stage 3 in more detail. It takes into account the findings from:

- approximately 1,600 routine section 5 inspections carried out between September 2013 and March 2015
- 318 monitoring inspections carried out between September 2014 and March 2015
- 55 routine section 5 inspections in June and July 2015 that provided additional evidence on teaching and learning in modern foreign languages (MFL), history and geography at Key Stage 3 – the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects with the fewest number of pupils entered^{2,3}
- 100 interviews with senior leaders
- 10,942 questionnaire responses from pupils in Years 7 to 9
- 14 good practice visits.

¹ The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2013/14, Ofsted, December 2014; www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-annual-report-201314

²The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a secondary school performance measure that shows the proportion of pupils who achieve grades A* to C in English, mathematics, two sciences, a foreign language and history or geography at GCSE level; www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc. Data source Department for Education (2014). Statistical first release: Provisional GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2013 to 2014. Retrieved from: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provisional-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2013-to-2014.

³ Lesson observation was derived from 51 of the 55 inspections and student responses from 39 of the 55.

Overall, the survey found that, while pupils generally had the opportunity to study a broad range of subjects throughout Key Stage 3, in too many schools **the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress and achievement were not good enough.**

Inspectors reported concerns about Key Stage 3 in one in five of the routine inspections analysed, particularly in relation to the **slow progress made in English and mathematics** and the **lack of challenge for the most able pupils.**

Inspectors observed MFL, history and geography lessons at Key Stage 3 in 51 routine inspections carried out during June and July 2015. Inspectors reported significant weaknesses in all three subjects. Too often, inspectors found teaching that failed to challenge and engage pupils. Additionally, low-level disruption in some of these lessons, particularly in MFL, had a detrimental impact on the pupils' learning. **Achievement was not good enough in just under half of the MFL classes observed, two-fifths of the history classes and one third of the geography classes.**

It is no surprise, therefore, that there is low take-up in these subjects at GCSE. Some pupils told inspectors that they were not taking these EBacc subjects at Key Stage 4 because they did not enjoy them or had found them difficult at Key Stage 3, particularly MFL. A small number made an explicit link between their choices and the quality of teaching that they had received at Key Stage 3. **This is a serious concern given the government's ambition for all pupils starting Year 7 in September 2015 to take the EBacc subjects when they reach their GCSEs in 2020.**⁴ Improving the Key Stage 3 provision in these subjects will be crucial to raising the EBacc success rate in the coming years.

The weaknesses in teaching and pupil progress identified by inspectors reflect **the lack of priority given to Key Stage 3 by many secondary school leaders.** The majority of leaders spoken to as part of this survey said that they **staffed Key Stages 4 and 5 before Key Stage 3.** As a result, some Key Stage 3 classes were split between more than one teacher or were taught by non-specialists.⁵

The status of Key Stage 3 as the poor relation to other key stages was exemplified in the way schools monitored and assessed pupils' progress. Inspectors found that **too many secondary schools did not work effectively with partner primary schools to understand pupils' prior learning and ensure that they built on this during Key Stage 3.** Worryingly, some secondary leaders simply accepted that pupils would repeat what they had already done in primary school during the early part of Key Stage 3, particularly in Year 7.

⁴ Policy paper: English Baccalaureate (EBacc), Department for Education, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc/english-baccalaureate-ebacc

⁵ A 'non-specialist' is defined as a teacher who does not have that subject as part of their undergraduate or teaching qualification.

In addition, half of the pupils surveyed said that their homework never, or only some of the time, helped them to make progress. Inspectors found that, too often, homework did not consolidate or extend pupils' learning.

It was evident that some school leaders did not use **the pupil premium effectively in Key Stage 3 to ensure that gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers continued to close on transition to secondary school**. Instead, any additional support was typically focused on intervention activities in Key Stage 4, which often sought to compensate for ineffective practice in the earlier years of secondary education.

In general, careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) was particularly sparse in Year 8 and improved only slightly in Year 9. In schools that offered it, CEIAG typically focused on option choices for Key Stage 4 but lacked any advice on the GCSEs required for different careers.

Nevertheless, inspectors also found examples of good practice. In the best secondary schools, leaders set the right culture and ethos to create the kind of orderly, purposeful learning environment that is the bedrock for successful learning. Teachers had a comprehensive understanding of pupils' prior learning, gained through well-established ways of working with their partner primary schools. As a result, they were able to ensure that they built on this at Key Stage 3. The headteachers in these schools made Key Stage 3 a high priority for all staff, pupils and parents. In order for secondary schools to continue to improve, this good practice needs to become the norm.

Key findings

- **The Key Stage 3 curriculum in the schools surveyed is generally broad and balanced.** Almost all schools offer the full range of Key Stage 3 national curriculum subjects. Most senior leaders reported that they allocate around two fifths of curriculum time to core subjects.
- **Inspection evidence highlights weaknesses in Key Stage 3.** From September 2014 to March 2015, one in five inspection reports identified Key Stage 3 as an area for improvement. Where weaknesses are identified, these concerns are typically around the leadership, challenge for pupils and quality of teaching.
- **Too frequently, teaching in MFL, history and geography at Key Stage 3 does not lead to good levels of achievement.** Evidence from 51 routine inspections chosen randomly in the summer term 2015 indicates that in just under half of the classes observed in MFL, approximately two fifths in history and one third in geography, achievement was not good enough. In these lessons, pupils were not challenged or engaged sufficiently. Low-level disruption was a key detractor from the pupils' learning, particularly in MFL.
- **Key Stage 3 is not a high priority for many secondary school leaders in timetabling, assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress.** Eighty five per cent of senior leaders interviewed said that they staff Key Stages 4 and 5

before Key Stage 3. Key Stage 3 is given lower priority, where classes are more often split between more than one teacher or where pupils are taught by non-specialists.

- **Leaders prioritise the pastoral over the academic needs of pupils during transition from primary school.** While this affects all pupils, it can have a particularly detrimental effect on the progress and engagement of the most able.
- **Many secondary schools do not build sufficiently on pupils' prior learning.** Many of the senior leaders interviewed said that they do not do this well enough and accepted that some pupils would repeat some of what they had done in Key Stage 2.⁶ Pupil responses indicate that repeating work is more of an issue in mathematics and English than in the foundation subjects.
- **Some school leaders are not using the pupil premium funding effectively to close gaps quickly in Key Stage 3.** Inspection evidence and senior leaders' comments indicate that this is another area where Key Stage 4 often takes priority.
- **Developing pupils' literacy skills in Key Stage 3 is a high priority in many schools. This same level of priority is not evident for numeracy.** The headteachers we spoke to were able to explain how they were improving literacy at Key Stage 3 but only a quarter could do the same for numeracy. This is reflected in inspection evidence, for example from monitoring inspections, where Her Majesty's Inspectors reported improvements in literacy nearly three times more than they did numeracy.
- **Homework is not consistently providing the opportunities for pupils to consolidate or extend their learning in Key Stage 3.** Approximately half of the pupils who responded to the online questionnaire said that their homework never, or only some of the time, helps them to make progress.
- **Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in Key Stage 3 is not good enough.** In the Year 8 questionnaire, 45% of pupils said that they either received no CEIAG or that what they had received was insufficient. In Year 9, 37% of pupils responded in the same way.

⁶ This type of repetition is distinct from the 'mastery' approach, which is studying the same topic or concept but in greater depth. It develops deep and comprehensive knowledge, skills and understanding; a command of a subject.

Recommendations

Secondary school leaders should:

- make Key Stage 3 a higher priority in all aspects of school planning, monitoring and evaluation
- ensure that not only is the curriculum offer at Key Stage 3 broad and balanced, but that teaching is of high quality and prepares pupils for more challenging subsequent study at Key Stages 4 and 5
- ensure that transition from Key Stage 2 to 3 focuses as much on pupils' academic needs as it does on their pastoral needs
- create better cross-phase partnerships with primary schools to ensure that Key Stage 3 teachers build on pupils' prior knowledge, understanding and skills
- make sure that systems and procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress in Key Stage 3 are robust
- focus on the needs of disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 3, including the most able, in order to close the achievement gap as quickly as possible
- evaluate the quality and effectiveness of homework in Key Stage 3 to ensure that it helps pupils to make good progress
- guarantee that pupils have access to timely and high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance from Year 8 onwards⁷
- have literacy and numeracy strategies that ensure that pupils build on their prior attainment in Key Stage 2 in these crucial areas.

Ofsted will:

- make sure that inspections focus even more sharply on the progress made by Key Stage 3 pupils
- report more robustly on how schools ensure that all pupils make the best possible start to their secondary education.

⁷ Schools have a legal duty to secure independent careers guidance for all pupils in Years 8 to 13. The statutory guidance that underpins this duty can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools.

Introduction

1. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector commissioned this survey to get an accurate picture of whether Key Stage 3 is providing pupils with sufficient breadth and challenge, helping them to make the best possible start to their secondary education.
2. In conducting the survey, Her Majesty's Inspectors aimed to:
 - identify any weaknesses in how the Key Stage 3 curriculum is being developed and delivered
 - provide a baseline from which any future improvement can be measured and make recommendations as to changes required
 - identify and share examples of good practice.

Methodology

3. Evidence for this survey was collected from a number of complementary sources, as outlined below.
4. Her Majesty's Inspectors scrutinised the findings of approximately 1,600 routine section 5 secondary school inspections from September 2013 to March 2015.⁸ In addition, the findings of 318 monitoring inspections from September 2014 to March 2015 were analysed.⁹
5. Her Majesty's Inspectors looked closely at evidence relating to the teaching and learning of MFL, history and geography in Key Stage 3 from 55 secondary school section 5 inspections conducted in June and July 2015. During these inspections, inspectors observed 70 MFL lessons, 67 history lessons and 64 geography lessons. They also asked groups of pupils who had chosen their Key Stage 4 subjects about the reasons for their choices, specifically around MFL, history and geography.¹⁰

⁸ Schools that have previously been judged as requiring improvement and those where risk assessments have raised concerns feature more frequently in section 5 inspection than schools previously judged good or outstanding.

⁹ Monitoring inspections are carried out in schools that have previously been judged as requires improvement or to require special measures or to have serious weaknesses.

¹⁰ In some inspections, it was not possible to collect both the lesson observation evidence and the responses to the pupil questions. Lesson observation information was derived from 51 of the 55 schools and pupil voice responses from 39 of the 55. The sample of schools was not fully representative of all schools nationally but was a snapshot of inspection activity taking place in June and July 2015.

6. Inspectors conducted telephone interviews with senior leaders from a selection of 100 secondary schools. The sample was approximately representative of the wider population of schools in terms of:
 - previous overall effectiveness¹¹
 - geographic region
 - urban, rural and coastal locations
 - pupil numbers on roll
 - maintained schools and academies
 - proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and with English as an additional language
 - the proportion of pupils who were eligible for free school meals
 - the proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

The sample excluded special schools, pupil referral units and middle schools.

7. Before conducting the interviews, Her Majesty's Inspectors analysed the type and quality of information about the Key Stage 3 curriculum available on the schools' websites.
8. Based on the interviews and website evaluations, Her Majesty's Inspectors identified 14 schools that give high priority to certain aspects of the Key Stage 3 curriculum. Her Majesty's Inspectors visited these schools to look in more detail at their approach. Evidence from these visits contributes to the findings of the report and provides examples of good practice. During the visits, Her Majesty's Inspectors held discussions with headteachers, senior leaders and staff responsible for pupil transition from Key Stage 2. They spoke to groups of Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils and scrutinised samples of work. In 13 of the visits, inspectors also spoke to headteachers from some of the partner primary schools.¹²
9. Schools involved in the headteacher interviews were asked to allow at least one class of their Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils to complete an online questionnaire. Of these, pupils from 80 schools provided responses from at least one year group.¹³ Participation was limited to pupils who had been at their school since the beginning of Key Stage 3. This report draws on evidence from 10,942 online questionnaire responses of Year 7 (3,911 responses), Year 8 (3,931 responses) and Year 9 (3,100 responses) pupils. The questions asked are provided in Annex B.

¹¹ Inadequate schools were not included to avoid putting any additional burden on these schools.

¹² In one of the visits, it was not possible to arrange a meeting with partner primary headteachers.

¹³ For some schools, pupil responses were only provided by one or two of the year groups. Of the 80 schools represented in the pupil questionnaire, 55 of these had responses from Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils.

10. In order to expand further on the findings of the headteacher interviews, during 16 section 8 monitoring inspections that took place in April 2015, Her Majesty's Inspectors asked school leaders specific questions about their Key Stage 3 curriculum and transition arrangements.
11. Inspectors asked four short additional questions about the Key Stage 3 curriculum in 69 section 5 routine inspections of secondary schools in March 2015. These questions were also asked in the headteacher interviews.
12. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors held a telephone interview with a representative from the Department for Education to gain their views on the purpose and effectiveness of the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

Findings from the survey

The Key Stage 3 curriculum offer is generally broad and balanced

13. Her Majesty's Inspectors found that the Key Stage 3 curriculum offer at the schools spoken to as part of this survey was generally broad and balanced. Almost all schools offered the full range of Key Stage 3 national curriculum subjects.
14. The amount of curriculum time allocated to core subjects varied across the schools. Typically, senior leaders indicated that around two fifths of curriculum time was allocated to core subjects, although this was more in some cases. Senior leaders in those schools that allocated a higher proportion of time to the core subjects of English and mathematics said that they did so to reflect the importance they put on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. A small number of schools said that they allocated more time to the core subjects for low-ability pupils.
15. The type of school did not influence the curriculum offer or models of delivery, suggesting that academies were not using their freedoms in a way distinct from maintained schools. Of the 100 schools in the sample and the 69 that were asked additional questions during routine inspections, around two thirds delivered Key Stage 3 over three years. Of the schools taking part in the headteacher interviews, nine out of 10 delivered the curriculum as traditionally discrete subjects. Within the tenth of schools using other models of delivery, the majority offered some form of integrated humanities. Only one example from the sample of 100 schools had a radically different curriculum model in Key Stage 3.
16. Over half of the senior leaders interviewed said that recent changes to examination entry, such as the move to linear assessment, had not affected their Key Stage 3 curriculum. Where changes had been made, a number of leaders said that the linear nature of GCSE examinations had led to the introduction of more formal testing during Key Stage 3, in order to prepare

pupils for this type of assessment. In addition, others commented that the increase in the level of challenge offered by the GCSE specifications in the core subjects in particular had led to a review of the schemes of work for Key Stage 3. Some schools, as a consequence, had increased the amount of curriculum time allocated to English and mathematics.

17. When asked to consider the impact of the advent of Progress 8, well over half of those surveyed said that the new accountability measure had not affected their Key Stage 3 offer.¹⁴ Where changes had been made, some leaders said that they had increased the time allocated to English and mathematics and some explained that there was now a stronger focus on the English Baccalaureate subjects, in particular humanities and MFL. A small number commented that the measure had prompted the move away from integrated humanities to a discrete subject approach. One headteacher expressed the view that the introduction of Progress 8 had validated the decision not to do a thematic curriculum.

Inspections found weaknesses in Key Stage 3

18. During routine inspections in the academic year 2013/14, inspectors identified areas for improvement related to Key Stage 3 in around one in ten inspection reports. From September 2014 to March 2015, as a result of an increased focus on the curriculum in the section 5 inspection framework, this had increased to around one in five reports.
19. The most common area for improvement that inspectors reported on relates to the progress and achievement of pupils in this key stage, particularly in English and mathematics. Inspectors also found that schools need to do more to ensure that the curriculum provides sufficient challenge for the most able and that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed effectively.
20. During 51 of the routine section 5 inspections carried out in June and July 2015, inspectors assessed the level of achievement to be less than good in just under half of MFL classes observed, approximately two-fifths of the history classes and a third of the geography classes.¹⁵ Variation in levels of achievement was also noted within individual schools between the different subject areas.
21. During monitoring inspections from September 2014 to March 2015, inspectors reported on aspects of the Key Stage 3 curriculum on about 200 occasions (in around two out of three reports). Where Key Stage 3 was mentioned, about

¹⁴ Progress 8 is a type of value-added measure that means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievement of other pupils with the same prior attainment. Progress 8 measure in 2016 2017 – Guide for maintained secondary schools, academies and free schools DfE March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure.

half of the monitoring reports identified continuing weaknesses relating to this key stage. The most common concerns related to the progress and achievement of pupils, and the assessment and monitoring of their progress. Other weaknesses related to the development of literacy and numeracy skills and providing appropriately challenging work for the most able.

22. In about 100 of the 200 monitoring inspection reports, inspectors identified that leaders were beginning to drive improvements at Key Stage 3. Evidence shows that the development of pupils' literacy skills was the most common area of improvement.

Too frequently, teaching in MFL, history and geography at Key Stage 3 does not lead to good levels of achievement

23. During routine inspections in June and July 2015, inspectors saw some evidence of effective teaching over time leading to strong levels of achievement in MFL, history and geography. However, this was too often not the case. Low levels of achievement were a particular concern in MFL, where it was not good enough for just under half of the classes observed.
24. Where achievement was less than good, inspectors commented on a number of key aspects, including the lack of pupils' engagement and the negative impact that this was having on their progress in a fifth of the classes. Low-level disruption, particularly in MFL lessons, also detracted from pupils' learning.
25. A small number of pupils made an explicit link between the quality of teaching at Key Stage 3 and their option choices for Key Stage 4. Where they had not chosen to continue to study a subject, reasons most frequently given included finding the subject difficult or dull. This was more often the case for MFL than for history or geography.
26. When asked about what had influenced their options choices for Key Stage 4 study, pupils were aware of the EBacc and, specifically in the case of MFL, recognised the value of studying a foreign language as a useful pathway to university. In approximately a quarter of instances where questions relating to modern language choices were asked, pupils referred to the importance of having a foreign language in their suite of qualifications for higher education. However, one group of pupils commented specifically that they did not enjoy MFL and success in the EBacc did not take precedence over this.
27. Most frequently, pupils cited their enjoyment of a subject as being the factor that had influenced them most in their option choices. Enjoyment featured most prominently for pupils who had chosen history, with the majority of those spoken to citing their interest in the subject as the reason for their choice.

Key Stage 3 is not a high priority for many secondary school leaders

28. The weaknesses in teaching and pupil progress identified by inspectors reflect the lack of priority given to Key Stage 3 by many of the secondary school leaders in the sample.
29. Only a small number of the senior leaders spoken to were able to articulate a clear vision and rationale for their Key Stage 3 curriculum. In the vast majority of schools, Key Stage 3 was not a high priority and was not given high status within the school.
30. Eighty five per cent of the leaders interviewed prioritised the staffing of Key Stages 4 and 5 before Key Stage 3. This has meant that in the survey schools around one in six Key Stage 3 classes have been split between more than one teacher and one in 12 classes have been taught by a non-specialist.
31. This low priority was reflected in the schools' websites, where information about Key Stage 3 was often not explicit. In almost half of these secondary schools' websites viewed, there was not a dedicated section giving details about the Key Stage 3 curriculum. Where websites did mention the Key Stage 3 curriculum, the quality of the information, and subsequently its usefulness to parents, varied enormously.
32. Evidence from monitoring inspections also raised concerns about the lack of focus on Key Stage 3. In 11 reports, inspectors said specifically that the sharper focus on Years 10 and 11 was at the expense of younger pupils.
33. In four of the good practice visits carried out during the survey, senior leaders acknowledged that there had historically been a lack of focus on Key Stage 3 in their schools. One headteacher explained that, up until recently, all of their focus had been on Year 11. They were now taking a longer-term view, recognising that what happens in the early stages of secondary education impacts significantly on future outcomes.
34. In another of the visits, the headteacher had changed the philosophy and culture in his school to have a greater focus on Key Stage 3. He believed this was the 'bedrock' of future success, commenting 'If you get Year 6 to Year 10 right then Year 11 looks after itself.'

Batley Girls' High School Visual Arts College, West Yorkshire

Senior leaders in this school have a clear vision and rationale for Key Stage 3. They have established a specific identity for the key stage by marking and recognising it through a formal 'graduation'.

To graduate, pupils must meet their personal targets set in English, mathematics, science and two other subjects, show a good attitude to learning and attend well. Academic gowns, hats and photographs form

part of the graduation ceremony and parents are invited to the celebration. The graduation praises and recognises good progress and effort and celebrates the end of Key Stage 3. The ceremony also promotes future aspiration to higher education.

The graduation motivates pupils. This is evident in the comments that older pupils make to their younger peers, including 'start working hard as you won't want to miss out', 'I revised harder than usual because I didn't want my form to graduate without me' and 'sometimes you won't feel like revising for assessments but believe me, it is worth it'.

In establishing a graduation ceremony to celebrate success in Key Stage 3, leaders explicitly mark and recognise the importance of this period in a pupil's education.

Assessment and progress tracking is not well developed in Key Stage 3

35. In routine inspections and telephone interviews, inspectors found that systems and procedures to assess and monitor pupils' progress are not as well developed or robust in Key Stage 3 as they are in Key Stages 4 and 5. Intervention is often focused on pupils in Years 10 and 11 who are not making enough progress. These older pupils are given much higher priority than those in the lower years.
36. In 22 of the 40 secondary schools visited for our recent report on the most able, leaders had not prioritised assessment at Key Stage 3.¹⁶ Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and pupils' work tended to be focused on Key Stage 4 in these schools. Schools are, of course, in a transition period as they take on the new national curriculum requirements. Nevertheless, the needs of pupils in Key Stage 3 were not being met effectively in the majority of this sample.
37. Further evidence of this lack of rigour came from the senior leaders interviewed as part of this survey. They acknowledged that working with Year 10 and 11 pupils who were not making enough progress had been a higher priority than intervening in the lower years.
38. While the majority of senior leaders spoken to said that they use the Key Stage 2 levels to set pupils' targets, 91% also do some form of their own baseline testing when pupils enter the school.¹⁷ Some of the senior leaders spoken to

¹⁶ *The most able students: an update on progress since June 2013*, Ofsted, March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-most-able-students-an-update-on-progress-since-june-2013.

¹⁷ Findings based on headteacher interviews and additional questions during section 5 inspections.

were clear that their main reason for baseline testing was that they did not think the Key Stage 2 results were reliable.

39. Evidence from monitoring visits, routine inspections and telephone interviews with senior leaders indicated that this testing at the start of Year 7 was not being used effectively as a baseline from which pupils' progress could be accurately tracked. A number of headteachers interviewed expressed misgivings about the robustness of their own assessment procedures in Key Stage 3.
40. Just over a quarter of senior leaders spoken to said that they conducted internal moderation during Key Stage 3, with a smaller number using external moderation with other schools to ensure the accuracy of assessment.
41. Over half of the senior leaders interviewed said that they were currently using national curriculum levels to monitor the progress of pupils in Key Stage 3. The removal of levels provoked a range of views from senior leaders. Eleven of those interviewed said that the removal of levels was a big challenge for them, causing uncertainty. They were concerned that this would lead to a loss of consistency. Five senior leaders were more positive: they spoke of the opportunities it would bring and welcomed the freedom to develop their own assessment and monitoring procedures.

Ansford Academy, Somerset

This academy has worked with seven of its partner primary schools in the Ansford Learning Partnership (ALP) to establish a shared system for making valid and reliable judgements about pupils' performance in Key Stages 2 and 3. In so doing, they have enhanced understanding among teachers in the partnership about the curriculum on offer across the primary and secondary phases.

When reviewing the Key Stage 3 curriculum in the light of recent changes, leaders at the academy recognised that the review process would be strengthened by working closely with their partner primary schools. They identified that, in working together, they would develop a shared understanding of the curriculum across the key stages. As a result, they would be better placed to establish a shared system of assessing pupils' performance.

Leaders across the partnership are committed to the joint work. As one senior leader explains: 'Assessing without levels presents us with a wonderful opportunity to work more closely together – primary and secondary – in the best interests of the children.'

Leaders prioritise the pastoral over the academic needs of pupils during transition from primary school

42. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's Annual Report 2013/14 found that:

‘too often, the move from primary to secondary is not handled well enough and gains made in primary schools are not capitalised on in Key Stage 3.’¹⁸

43. When inspectors asked senior leaders how they ensured that transition arrangements from Key Stage 2 to 3 enabled pupils to make the best possible start to secondary school, almost all of them listed what they referred to as ‘standard activities’. These included contact with primary schools, taster and induction days and opportunities for pupils and parents to meet with form tutors. The majority said that the information they gathered from primary schools focused on pupils’ pastoral rather than academic learning needs.
44. Ensuring effective support during transition for pupils who were vulnerable or had special educational needs was a high priority for many of the senior leaders interviewed. About half of the 100 senior leaders interviewed gave specific information about more personalised transition arrangements for these pupils.

The Deepings School, Lincolnshire

In this school, primary to secondary transition arrangements have evolved over the last few years, building on what has worked well and making improvements so that every pupil is ready to make the best possible start to their secondary education.

For the last few years, there has been a system where the most vulnerable primary pupils would spend time in the school during the latter part of the summer term. This arrangement has been so successful that it has grown from only six pupils to about 40 who have some kind of personalised arrangements to visit the school for up to four sessions before the actual transition day.

These include disabled pupils and those that have special educational needs, vulnerable pupils, those who have any other additional needs or those who are just very nervous about transition. During these sessions they meet with key people including the first aider and canteen staff, as well as their college leader and senior leaders. They do small group work that is focused on building confidence. These arrangements concentrate on the whole family rather than just the pupil. In the words of one senior

¹⁸ *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2013/14*, Ofsted, December 2014; www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-annual-report-201314

leader, 'as soon as they step through the door, everything is ready for them'. During this time, appropriate secondary staff attend relevant meetings for vulnerable children, ensuring that there is a smooth transition of all external support.

45. When asked about their transition arrangements with partner primary schools, about a third of the senior leaders interviewed referred to their summer schools, with the majority saying that these were targeted at vulnerable, disadvantaged and low-ability pupils. Primary headteachers spoken to during the survey visits supported the view that pastoral transition for the most vulnerable was an area of strength, with secondary schools providing bespoke arrangements tailored to the needs of individual children.

Cross-phase partnerships with primary schools are crucial

46. The importance of secondary schools working closely with their partner primary schools was clear from the good practice visits carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors. In 13 of the 14 schools visited, there was evidence of effective work between the two phases. Where they worked closely together, the results were powerful.

Egglecliffe School, Stockton-on-Tees

Senior leaders in this secondary school have formed highly effective relationships with their counterparts in their partner primaries. They work together to ensure that all pupils have a seamless transition into Key Stage 3. This enables the young people to build on their previous learning and make the best possible start to their secondary education.

Underpinning the success of this work is the professional trust that exists between the senior leaders of the respective phases. The starting point for the cross-phase work was to gain the views of primary headteachers as to what they felt would make transition more effective for learners.

In English, the secondary head of department has mapped the schemes of work for content and skills cross-phase from Year 4. Key Stage 3 schemes of work are now informed by what is happening at Key Stage 2 in order to accelerate progress in Year 7. A teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) appointment in the department leads on all aspects of the Years 6, 7 and 8 curriculum. This reflects the school's philosophy that the secondary learning journey starts in Year 6.

In mathematics, every week the head of department from the secondary school goes to one of the primary schools to teach Level 6 pupils. The group is made up of pupils from all the main partners. The head of department also goes into primary lessons to find out what pupils are learning at Key Stage 2. This helps him to reflect and ensure that there is effective progression when planning for the new curriculum.

47. Four of the schools visited were doing joint curriculum planning and mapping of schemes of work across Key Stages 2 and 3 with their partner primary schools. This was enabling these secondary leaders to plan their Key Stage 3 curriculum more effectively and build on pupils' prior learning.
48. In two of the schools, staff had taken part in cross-phase training activities. In one case, this involved staff from the different phases teaching their counterparts aspects of the Key Stage 2 and 3 curriculum. A primary headteacher from one of the schools taking part said:
- 'The buzz was phenomenal. It went some way to blowing away the myths ... about the standard of work in Key Stage 2.'
49. In another example of good practice, primary leaders in one multi-academy trust had evaluated the secondary curriculum with a view to identifying repetition. One of the primary headteachers involved confirmed that the evaluation process was 'bruising' for secondary colleagues but that the mapping of the Key Stages 2 and 3 curriculum had been a revelation for both secondary and primary colleagues.
50. However, only 35 of the senior leaders interviewed said that they were involved in any cross-phase curriculum work with their partner primaries and, where they were, some acknowledged that this was at an early stage of development.
51. The most successful examples of cross-phase work seen during the visits were based on mutual respect and trust between primary and secondary practitioners. However, during the telephone interviews, some senior leaders acknowledged that this trust did not always exist. One described a group of staff in his secondary school as being in 'denial' about the level of Key Stage 2 results achieved by pupils in primary schools. Another headteacher expressed the view that negative attitudes occurred because secondary teachers were not aware of the standard of work that pupils were producing in Key Stage 2.

Many secondary schools do not build sufficiently on pupils' prior learning

52. During the monitoring inspections, Her Majesty's Inspectors focused on how leaders ensured that teachers built on pupils' prior knowledge and skills. They found that duplication of work between the primary and secondary phases was an issue and required improvement in two of the schools. In one example, the lead inspector reported that 'there is no attempt made to build on learning from Key Stage 2'.
53. In 13 of the 14 good practice visits, Her Majesty's Inspectors interviewed headteachers from partner primary schools. All made positive comments about the general transition arrangements and the communication between the two phases. However, one primary headteacher said:

‘More could be done to identify how the Key Stage 3 curriculum builds on the skills and content taught at Key Stage 2.’

54. While the majority of senior leaders interviewed said that building on Key Stage 2 learning was a key aspect of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, about a quarter recognised that this needed improvement in their schools. Worryingly, some headteachers said that some Years 7 and 8 pupils would simply be repeating aspects of what they had already learnt at Key Stage 2. They recognised that this could result in a dip or plateau in progress.
55. Further evidence that some schools were not building effectively on pupils’ prior knowledge and skills came from the pupils themselves. Only about half said that their Year 7 teachers built on what they had learnt in primary school most or all of the time. For example, one Year 9 pupil said,
- ‘When I began Year 7, it was as if I had started my education again; nothing from primary school continued.’
56. The issue of repeating the same work was of particular concern in mathematics and English. In Year 7, 39% of pupils surveyed said that in mathematics they were doing the same work as in primary school most or all of the time. For English, this figure was 29%. For science and foundation subjects, this figure was lower, ranging from 9% to 17%. Although not directly assessed, in only a very small number of schools did Year 7 pupils provide comments to suggest that they were benefiting from a ‘mastery’ approach to the curriculum.

There is often a lack of challenge for the most able in Key Stage 3

57. Evidence from the inspections, monitoring visits and telephone interviews indicated that it was the most able whose progress was particularly affected when secondary schools did not build on prior learning.
58. This reflects our 2015 report on the most able pupils, which highlighted that teaching was insufficiently focused on the most able at Key Stage 3.¹⁹ The survey found that the quality of the work and tasks that teachers set for most able pupils across different subjects was patchy, particularly outside the core subjects. The work given to individual pupils varied, for example, from challenging algebraic equations in mathematics to undemanding comprehension tasks in citizenship, which one pupil described as ‘ridiculously easy’. In just under half of the schools visited for the most able survey, work in English and mathematics was not challenging enough in Key Stage 3 and this increased to two thirds in other subjects.

¹⁹ *The most able students: an update on progress since June 2013*, Ofsted, March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-most-able-students-an-update-on-progress-since-june-2013.

59. About two thirds of the senior leaders interviewed for this Key Stage 3 survey talked about how they met the needs of low-ability pupils, particularly to help them to make progress with literacy. However, only one in 10 focused on how the most able could make the best possible progress.

60. Some Year 7 pupil responses to the online questionnaire provided further evidence of this lack of challenge:

'If you are already Level 6/7 – the school does not bother to stretch you ... Aimed at the lowest performing – I get bored with stuff I did in Year 4 or 5.'

'Sometimes the teachers don't push you enough and if you finish the work they don't have an extension.'

'I think that the work that [I] am being given is too easy and not challenging for me and I finish it very quickly.'

'The work is easy as you can whizz through it.'

61. Once again, mathematics was the area of most concern, as reflected in the comments from the Year 7 pupils below:

'I find the maths that I do doesn't challenge me at all. It is too easy.'

'In maths I did Level 6 so some of the work is much easier than primary was...'

'I sometimes find the maths easy and can do it really quickly, then I don't have anything to do.'

'Maths – I don't think they know what we did in primary, so we just do it again.'

'I find maths 10x easier than I did in primary.'

62. Evidence from section 5 inspections in June and July 2015 indicated that, in a number of cases, the most able were not being sufficiently challenged in MFL, history and geography.

63. However, there was some good practice. For example, one of the schools had 'excel' teaching groups throughout Key Stage 3, as well as a specific cross-phase programme for the most able, as set out below:

The Deepings School, Lincolnshire

The 'Rising Stars' programme starts in Year 5 and continues all the way through secondary school. The most able pupils from Years 5 and 6 from the partner primary schools are invited in for a series of subject-based activities, designed for fun and challenge. During these sessions, the most able from Years 7 and 8 act as mentors.

From Year 7 onwards, the most able 20 pupils in all academic subjects in the year group are part of the Rising Stars programme. These pupils are given the opportunity to be challenged and widen their horizons, for example by doing a mini-extended project qualification (EPQ), based on the UCAS EPQ.²⁰ The programme helps them to achieve the best results they can and to leave as confident, skilled, open-minded young adults. Each 'rising star' is mentored by an older rising star. There are also 'excel' teaching groups for the most able throughout Key Stage 3.

This focus given to the most able as they progress through the Key Stages has seen the number of A and A* grades attained at A level double over recent years.

Some school leaders are not using the pupil premium funding effectively to close gaps quickly in Key Stage 3

64. The gap in attainment between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers has been closing at Key Stage 2 but has remained stagnant at Key Stage 4 over the last decade.²¹ Secondary schools are clearly not building on the improvements made in the primary phase.
65. In just under half of the schools in the sample of monitoring inspections, Her Majesty's Inspectors found the impact of pupil premium funding in Key Stage 3 to be weak. In one example, it was clear that no steps had been taken to adapt provision for the most able disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 3. The findings replicated those of the interviews, with the majority of the schools giving greater emphasis to closing gaps at Key Stage 4 rather than Key Stage 3.

²⁰ Undergraduate Courses at University and College (UCAS); www.ucas.com/

²¹ National curriculum assessments at key stage 2, 2014 (revised), Statistical first release, Department for Education, May 2015; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-curriculum-assessments-at-key-stage-2-2014-revised.

GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics: 2014, Statistical first release, Department for Education, February 2015; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-and-equivalent-attainment-by-pupil-characteristics-2014.

66. Her Majesty's Inspectors asked senior leaders what action they took to continue to close the attainment gap on transition and throughout Key Stage 3. While the majority could list various actions such as small group intervention sessions and increased staffing for English and mathematics, very few could identify any impact. The majority talked generally about actions across the school and only a very small number spoke specifically about what they were doing in Key Stage 3 to ensure that achievement gaps closed as quickly as possible when pupils started secondary school.
67. Of the senior leaders interviewed, around one in 10 said that they had a pupil premium champion in their school, but only one of these spent time in the partner primary schools. Only two senior leaders mentioned any governor involvement with the use of pupil premium funding in Key Stage 3.
68. Only six senior leaders in the interviews talked specifically about actions that focused on the most able disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 3. A similar number acknowledged that this was an area that needed to be improved in their schools. There were only two examples from the 100 interviews where disadvantaged Key Stage 3 pupils were involved in links with universities. It is of particular concern that many of the senior leaders' responses indicated that they associated disadvantage with low ability.

During Key Stage 3, developing pupils' literacy skills is a high priority in many schools. This same level of priority is not evident for numeracy.

69. Outcomes from routine and monitoring inspections between September 2014 and March 2015 indicate that the development of both literacy and numeracy skills required improvement in many schools, particularly in numeracy. In monitoring inspections from the same period, Her Majesty's Inspectors reported that improvements had been made in literacy nearly three times more than in numeracy.
70. This need to improve numeracy at Key Stage 3 was reflected in the interviews with senior leaders. One in five said that the development of pupils' numeracy skills was much weaker than the development of literacy skills. All of the senior leaders interviewed could give examples of what they were doing to ensure that pupils have the necessary literacy skills to be successful. Only a quarter could do the same for the development of numeracy skills.
71. The strong focus on literacy was exemplified in two of the good practice visits. Senior leaders in these schools had taken action to ensure that pupils had the high levels of literacy at Key Stage 3 needed to achieve the very best standards at GCSE and A level.

Bristol Metropolitan Academy, Bristol

In this academy, senior leaders have created a Key Stage 3 curriculum that is responsive to their pupils' needs. At the heart of this curriculum is the development of literacy skills, which prepare pupils for the demands of Key Stages 4, 5 and beyond. Through the 'Met Learning' curriculum, subjects are taught discretely, but with planned literacy development opportunities and assessment running throughout.

As the Principal states, 'We build our curriculum around those who come through the door.' Poor literacy skills are the biggest barrier to pupils making progress at Bristol Metropolitan Academy so the development of these skills runs through the Key Stage 3 curriculum 'like a stick of rock'.

The grounding that they receive in Key Stage 3 is enabling pupils to make excellent progress. The academy has one of the best value-added scores in the country.

72. A quarter of the senior leaders interviewed gave examples of what they were doing to raise the profile of reading for pleasure in Key Stage 3. Approaches taken included: timetabled reading lessons; library sessions; book clubs; visits from authors. A headteacher of one of the 14 schools visited explained that they had focused intensively on reading as they believed that the development of writing stems from the love of reading.

The quality of homework in Key Stage 3 is too variable and does not effectively enable pupils to consolidate or extend their learning

73. When the 100 senior leaders were asked how they monitored and evaluated the quality of homework in Key Stage 3, approximately a fifth acknowledged that this was an area that needed to improve in their schools. One headteacher acknowledged that, sometimes, teachers just set homework for the sake of it. Over a third of them described homework in Key Stage 3 as variable across subject areas and teaching groups.
74. A small number of senior leaders questioned the value and impact of homework in Key Stage 3. One headteacher commented that he was unsure whether homework was making a huge amount of difference to pupil outcomes.
75. Pupils' responses to the online questionnaire gave further evidence that, too often, homework is not helping them to consolidate or extend their learning. Approximately half of the Key Stage 3 pupils said that their homework either never, or only some of the time, helped them to make progress. They felt that sometimes it was given for the sake of it, was not useful and not linked to the learning in the lesson. The comments below reflect the opinions of some Year 7 pupils:

‘The homework is often what we did in class and it is not very challenging in my view.’

‘To be honest homework is not very useful because I learn nothing new ... Homework is only really good for revision and tests.’

76. Pupils’ comments made during the 14 survey visits present a more mixed picture. In five of the schools, pupils felt that their homework helped them with their learning. However, in four of the schools, pupils said that everyone got the same homework, regardless of their ability.

Careers education, information, advice and guidance in Key Stage 3 is not good enough

77. Ofsted’s report ‘Going in the right direction?’ found that most of the 60 schools visited as part of that survey were not making good-quality careers advice a priority for their pupils.²² In the telephone interviews in this recent Key Stage 3 survey, inspectors asked senior leaders how they ensured that pupils from Year 8 onwards had access to high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). The majority of responses indicated that this happens predominantly in Year 9 and a great deal of time is solely focused on subject choices at Key Stage 4. Approximately a quarter of senior leaders referred specifically to what they do in Year 8, but the majority of these delivered Key Stage 3 over two years, so this was again focused on option guidance rather than broader CEIAG.

78. Responding to the online questionnaire, 45% of Year 8 pupils said that they had either received no CEIAG, or that what they had received was not enough for them. This figure only reduces by eight percentage points in Year 9, with 37% of pupils saying that they had received either no or not enough CEIAG. This is reflected in the comments below:

‘...I would like to know more about jobs and what you need for different ones.’

‘...we have not received enough information about the jobs that are out there, we need to learn what subjects to take at GCSE according to the job we want to do, rather than what we are enjoying at school as it might be useless in the future.’

‘I feel we should be told more about how to get into the career you want...’

²² *Going in the right direction? – careers guidance in schools from September 2012*, Ofsted, September 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-in-schools-going-in-the-right-direction.

79. Schools visited for the monitoring visits showed what is possible. Her Majesty's Inspectors found that in half of these schools the quality of CEIAG in Key Stage 3 was strong. The leaders were taking a range of interesting approaches, including a careers fair for pupils and parents in Years 7 and 8, and working with a university to engage with parents of disadvantaged pupils
80. Two of the 14 schools visited during the survey provided particularly strong evidence of quality CEIAG from Year 7. This was having a positive impact on pupils' aspirations, as demonstrated in the case study below.

Batley Girls' High School Visual Arts College, West Yorkshire

School leaders at Batley Girls' High School carefully analyse the needs of pupils in order to prepare them well for their future lives. Leaders identified that a focus on careers education towards the start of secondary school promoted aspiration and supported pupils' achievement. They recognised that they also needed to involve parents to raise parental expectations.

The school uses the following strategies:

- The provision for CEIAG is mapped across all year groups in the school.
- A lead colleague is in place for CEIAG. This colleague also leads the 'Parents' Forum', which all parents are invited to attend.
- Pupils in all year groups from Year 7 to 13 take part in a 'careers convention'. Representatives from a range of professions and industries attend and pupils visit each provider to find out key information. During their tutor time, pupils develop questions to ask the representatives. They also cover work on gender stereotypes, pressures, skills, personality traits linked to careers and their own likes and dislikes.
- Parents are invited to the careers convention at lunchtime.
- The school delivers Key Stage 3 over two years. The careers convention takes place in the autumn term and leads into work on options for pupils in Year 8 in the spring term. Pupils' responses to the convention are extremely positive and they feel that the event raises their awareness of possible career routes. A student in Year 7 commented that 'even though we are only in Year 7, we can still start to think about what job we would like and about the future.'
- In Key Stage 3, the school hosts a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) event with a range of companies and visiting speakers. Pupils and their parents are invited to this and complete a carousel of practical activities to raise awareness of STEM-related careers.
- Older pupils take on roles as 'STEM ambassadors' and run clubs for younger pupils.

- The school takes parents on university visits so they can experience a typical university day and to find out about funding study at higher education. Parents commented that the visits 'opened their eyes' and gave them an insight into opportunities for their daughters. They value the chance to be involved in the careers conventions and the STEM events and say that the events give them a discussion point with their daughters about their futures.

Conclusion

81. Overall, the findings of this survey indicate that too many secondary school leaders are not using Key Stage 3 effectively enough to develop pupils' learning.
82. In these schools, insufficient attention is paid to the academic needs of pupils at the point of transition from primary. From the start of Year 7, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are often too low. This can have a detrimental effect on the rate at which they make progress during the first years of their secondary education.
83. Key Stage 3 must become a higher priority for secondary school leaders. They must not allow Key Stage 3 to become a lost opportunity. Instead, they need to ensure that high quality teaching and assessment enables pupils to make the best possible progress.

Research publications feedback

We are interested in finding out how useful you have found this publication.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or are you just interested? We would welcome your views and ideas. Complete our survey [here](#).

Annex A. Schools involved in good practice visits

Provider	Local authority
Egglescliffe School	Stockton-on-Tees
Batley Girls' High School Visual Arts College	Kirklees
Ansford Academy	Somerset
The Deepings School	Lincolnshire
Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy	Lancashire
Queensbridge School	Birmingham
Bristol Metropolitan Academy	Bristol
Greenshaw High School	Sutton
All Saints Catholic College Specialist in Humanities	Kirklees
St Benedict's Catholic College	Essex
Harris Boys' Academy East Dulwich	Southwark
Barr Beacon School	Walsall
Epsom and Ewell High School	Surrey
The East Manchester Academy	Manchester

Annex B. Questions in the online student questionnaire

All pupils

84. When I started Year 7, my teachers built on what I had learnt in primary school (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
85. Thinking about building on what you had learnt in primary school, are there any differences across your subjects {in Year 7} that you would like to tell us about?
86. My work in Year {7/8/9} is too easy (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
87. Thinking about your work being too easy, are there any differences across your subjects that you would like to tell us about?
88. My Year {7/8/9} teachers give me clear feedback on how to improve my work (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
89. Thinking about the feedback you receive on your work, are there any differences across your subjects that you would like to tell us about?
90. The homework I am given helps me to make progress in my subjects. (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
91. Thinking about how your homework helps your progress, are there any differences across your subjects that you would like to tell us about?
92. Overall, I feel that I am learning a lot in Year {7/8/9}. (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)
93. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the work you {do in Year 7/have been doing since starting Year 7}?

Year 7 only

94. The work I am doing in Year 7 is the same as the work I was doing in primary school, for:
 - English (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
 - Maths (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
 - Science (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
 - History (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
 - Geography (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
 - Modern foreign language (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)

- Music (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
- Art & Design (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
- Design & Technology (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
- Other: _____

Year 8 and 9 only

95. My work in Year 7 was too easy. (Never; Some of the time; Most of the time; All of the time)
96. Thinking about your work being too easy, were there any differences across your subjects in Year 7 that you would like to tell us about?
97. Overall, I felt that I learnt a lot during Year 7. (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)
98. During Year {8/9}, have you received information, advice or guidance from your school about your future? (Yes, I received the right amount; Yes, but it was too much; Yes, but it was not enough; No, I haven't received any information, advice or guidance)
99. Overall, my Year {8/9} teachers keep me up-to-date on the progress I am making in my work. (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)
100. Overall, I feel I am making good progress in my work since starting Year 7. (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

Year 9 only

101. I feel prepared to start my Key Stage 4 courses. (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)