The West Partnership presents:
Renfrewshire Council's Transition Team
Digital Flip Books for Effective Transitions

GLASGOW CITY REGION Education

Transitions WEST PARTNERSHIP

This storyboard details how the transitions team in Renfrewshire used digital flipbooks as a way of ensuring effective transitions. We hear how the team responded to the COVID19 pandemic by changing their practice to meet the needs of their pupils, parents, and carers.

What was the problem?

Over a number of years the transitions team in Renfrewshire had adapted their transitions practices to engage families and embed positive relations between establishments. The COVID19 pandemic meant that in-person transitions activities were no longer appropriate. A digital solution was required.

Why is this important?

Positive transitions has been positively linked to wellbeing, attainment and also appears to be correlated with reduced pupil and parental anxiety. Just under 4000 pupils per year engage in vertical transitions between organisations in Renfrewshire. Irrespective of the pandemic, getting transitions right is of great importance.

Aims of the change to practice

The project had a number of aims:

1) To identify a resource that could overcome social distancing measures and replicate the positive work done in transitions prior to COVID19.

2) To ensure that parental engagement and family learning, especially around transitions, continued.

3) To continue embedding positive discourses around transitions
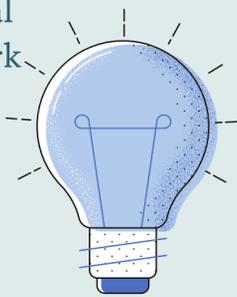
What did you do?

The team completed an audit with target families to understand their needs around transition, as well as accessibility issues relating to technology. Perhaps unsurprisingly, anxieties that usually occur around transitions (moving establishments, pedagogical differences etc) were identified. The discovery of the flipbooks hosted by Flipsnack provided a digital tool that could be used to disseminate information and family learning activities. Findings from the audit informed the content that was presented within the flipbooks. Content relating to literacy, numeracy, wellbeing and transition was developed before the team used a range of channels to communicate their flipbooks. A number of establishments; early years, primary and secondary schools, were given the tool with guidance on how to adapt the flipbooks. The team relied upon the support of establishments to disseminate the flipbook resources - shortening the distance between creator and end user.

What happened?

The flipbooks were initially given to several target schools. After initial praise, the flipbooks were given to other schools within the local authority and subsequently used. Promotion of the tool occurred via social media channels which generated awareness. The team received praise from a number of users, with the simplicity and 1-click accessibility of the flipbooks congratulated. The flipbooks gained the attention of the local regional improvement collaborative and the case was presented in a disseminated research paper that explored how educational establishments had used digital technology to engage parents during social distancing.

What are the key points you have learnt?

A number of key points have been learnt from the project. Firstly, it is clear that the project benefitted from the initial research that revealed the underlying needs of pupils and their families. Secondly, the anecdotal responses from practitioners and families suggests that flipbooks are a useful tool to engage families in learning whilst also addressing transitions needs. Thirdly, it was clear that the 1-click accessibility of the flipbooks, and their usability across devices, facilitated the effectiveness of the tool. Fourthly, the buy in of surrounding agencies was key in legitmising the tool to further its use.

What next for the project?

In 2021 the transitions team aim to systematically gather feedback from users to evaluate the impact of the flipbooks. This evaluation will inform the development of the flipbooks - what remains and what is changed. It will also establish whether or not the flipbooks need to be joined by other resources or events in order to ensure socially distanced transitions programmes remain family centred.

You can find examples of the flipbooks at: https://www.westpartnership.co.uk/download/2746/

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