

Headline:

How HEP has used SixIntoSeven to deliver transition across schools with improved efficiency and GDPR-compliance, enabling enhanced support for SEND and vulnerable pupils

Background

In 2020 Hounslow Education Partnership (HEP) were looking for a GDPR-compliant solution to sharing pupil data for transition. Their existing system entailed data being shared in a variety of formats, from spreadsheets sent by email to phone calls and face-to-face meetings where printed reports were passed over, which did not meet new data protection requirements.

When the pandemic struck, and face-to-face meetings were no longer possible, the need for a purely digital solution was heightened. HEP's priorities now included ensuring that transition remained a key focus in the borough and that schools had the means to make transition as smooth as possible for pupils who had already experienced so much disruption.

HEP Partnerships Director Cormac Bourne recalled an ASCL presentation by Duncan Baldwin, who was ASCL's Deputy Policy Director at the time, talking about the importance of GDPR-compliant data-sharing for transition and the platform SixIntoSeven. Cormac reached out to the Pupil Pathways team to discuss HEP's transition challenges and found that SixIntoSeven could offer a solution to these problems. This was the start of a successful ongoing partnership between HEP and Pupil Pathways.

A transition platform that adapts and grows with HEP's needs

At the start of the onboarding process it was important to Cormac and the HEP team that there was some continuity between the previous transition system and SixIntoSeven, to make it as straightforward as possible for schools to adopt the new process.

This request was easily met by Pupil Pathways and the spreadsheet template previously used by HEP, with agreed information to share for transition, was replicated in the SixIntoSeven platform. Alongside training for key users, this provided schools with the consistency and familiarity needed to adapt to the new system.

Initially HEP used the platform to transfer academic attainment levels to the destination secondary schools, which had been more difficult due to the pandemic. However, the

flexibility, compliance and capabilities of the platform showed HEP that there was potential for much wider opportunities to use the platform for the benefit of their pupils and schools, in particular SEND and vulnerable pupils.

Supporting SEND pupils through transition

Having used the product for a year SENDCOs in HEP fed back via their networks that they wanted to renew the product and explore its potential for supporting SEND pupils through transition. The SENDCOs had previously struggled with the range of data and formats that they needed to share, such as spreadsheets and documents, and could see the opportunity SixIntoSeven offered for making their process more streamlined. Working in partnership with HEP and their working group (*Heads of primary and secondary associations, transition leads, and SENDCOs*), the SixIntoSeven platform was adapted to enable the sharing of detailed data for SEND and vulnerable pupils for transition.

The SEND category transition format for data sharing was developed as part of this process, which has been adopted as a common format across all other LA groups using the platform. This has resulted in increased work efficiency, allowing for more time to discuss the pupil and their needs rather than just data collection during online or face-to-face meetings for a smooth transition of their pupils.

Following years of successful transfer of detailed transition information for those who were SEND and vulnerable, HEP decided in 2024 to introduce a separate deadline for these pupils. Following consultation, it was agreed that secondary schools should receive this information in March rather than June providing more time to review the data and then plan and provide support for incoming pupils.

This worked so well that HEP will work with SENDCOs to bring forward the date for the 2025 transition even earlier. This earlier deadline is easily accommodated by the SixIntoSeven platform, with features including reminder notifications and a countdown clock helping to ensure awareness of key dates for all features.

“We’ve learned over the years, the earlier we talk about transition the better, because we can highlight transition needs to all the different users.” Cormac Bourne

An ongoing relationship

Cormac highlighted that the customer support offered by Pupil Pathways paired with the flexibility and agility of the platform to adapt to new requirements has been invaluable when getting schools to use and engage with the platform.

Transition poses a challenge each year as new people take on roles and responsibilities within schools and HEP has focused on ensuring there is an education and communications process around the platform and new developments. Alongside Pupil Pathways' own guidance and learning resources within the platform, HEP are creating their own resources such as user personas that show how different roles such as DSLs and data managers can use the platform effectively.

For HEP, as with all our users, the GDPR-compliance of SixIntoSeven and the streamlined process for sharing information are still at the core of its effectiveness as a platform.

"I would say that [in terms of GDPR-compliance] we are light years ahead of where we were" Cormac Bourne

As schools are increasingly required to provide more and more data for reporting and monitoring, Pupil Pathways continue to work with our partners such as HEP to find ways to help schools automate their data processes. For example, our partnership with Wonde enables automatic synching of attendance data into the platform via a school's MIS along with core pupil information. This improves efficiency and accuracy and can be used to inform features such as the [Transition Watch List](#).

What's next? - increased collaboration and early years transition

The borough of Hounslow is in a densely populated area of west London and intersects with a number of other boroughs. This presents a challenge for HEP during transition as around 40% of pupils can move into or out of the area. Strengthening connections between neighbouring LAs is therefore a key focus in our ongoing partnership with HEP. Central to this is our free [SixIntoSeven Lite](#) service to support HEP to increase collaboration with neighbours when tracking and monitoring the movement of SEND and vulnerable pupils during transition.

Following its successful use for the primary to secondary transition, HEP is now piloting a scheme to use the platform for early years transition to primary schools. This pilot will particularly focus on SEND and vulnerable pupils, with the aim of ensuring primary schools are aware of the needs of incoming pupils and able to put support measures in place ahead of September.

