

We as researchers at UCL have been talking to children and teachers about **what it feels like to move from primary to secondary school during the COVID-19** coronavirus pandemic.

Moving Up

Starting Secondary school during the Covid-19 pandemic

We know a **smooth transition to secondary school is very important**, and it means that they do better later on. It is often linked to how well primary school worked and how people feel about their home lives as well as other factors. **Young people need to be prepared carefully** for what to expect. Learning at primary school also needs to be linked to secondary school learning and no key stepping-stones of knowledge missed. The **pandemic has made all this more complicated** than before.

We asked 196 children and 64 teachers **about how children's education had changed**, whether there were any problems with learning and how happy they were. We also **asked if there were useful things we could do** to improve children's transition in the future.



We found out that **no two people's experiences of learning during transition this year were the same**, especially if children came from poorer families and hadn't attended school during lockdowns. We heard that **many people had problems with broadband or having access to laptops**, especially when they had to share devices. Some children were **disappointed when SATs were cancelled**. Some also reported feeling **more anxious than before** about their education, as well as their friendships. Some missed hugging and playing with their friends or seeing friends in other bubbles.



It wasn't all bad though. Everyone got **better at using computers** and learning online, and this happened fast. Many children who went to school during the lockdowns made a lot of progress. Many reported enjoying **more time for their hobbies and interests**.

We have made two main recommendations. One is having a **special Year 7 phase**, to make it easier to move up to secondary school. The other is **improving access to technology and its use** by children and their teachers.

We are carrying on with this research for the rest of 2021. To share your views, **we would love you to take our survey at** <https://redcap.link/55uon3qv> – or email us at ioe.movingup@ucl.ac.uk