



IThrive School Transition Report

July '25 to June '26



Bolton

Together

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1.0 Summary

This report summarises the impact of the Next Chapter Transition Project, delivered through the partnership between Urban Outreach Bolton, Breaking Barriers, and Bolton Together with funding from Bolton CVS.

The project was developed to support children and young people during the transition from primary to secondary school, recognising this as a key period of change that can significantly affect emotional wellbeing, confidence, and engagement with education.

The transition offer supported a total of 327 young people through a combination of targeted 1:1 support, group work, school-based sessions and wider transition activities. The project provided early intervention for children experiencing transition-related anxiety and additional vulnerabilities, including those with SEND and wider emotional or family challenges.

The report highlights the outcomes achieved, the key themes and needs identified, and the positive difference the project has made in helping children feel more confident, resilient, and prepared for the next stage of their education.

327

YOUNG PEOPLE
SUPPORTED

Several consistent themes emerged from the Next Chapter Transition Project:

- Emotional Wellbeing: Many children experienced anxiety and low confidence about moving to secondary school. Support improved resilience and emotional wellbeing.
- Confidence and Belonging: Children developed confidence, made new friendships, and felt better prepared for the social and academic changes of Year 7.
- Personalised Support: Flexible, tailored support was particularly valuable for children with SEND and those with additional vulnerabilities.
- Partnership Working: Collaboration with schools and families helped secure reasonable adjustments and promote successful transitions, while highlighting ongoing pressures within the education system.

Common concerns were identified throughout the project:

- Transition Anxiety: Worries about starting secondary school, including getting lost, managing new routines, and coping with increased expectations.
- Friendships and Belonging: Concerns about making new friends, fitting in, and building positive relationships.
- Emotional Wellbeing: Many experienced anxiety, low confidence, and uncertainty, with some also facing wider family or personal challenges.
- Need for Additional Support: Children with SEND and other vulnerabilities often required personalised support and reasonable adjustments to help them settle successfully into their new school environment.

The project employed various delivery methods to address different needs:

- School-Based Sessions: workshops for Year 6 students provided practical strategies and boosted confidence regarding transitions.
- Group Support: Small sessions offered peer support, fostering friendships, resilience, and belonging.
- One-to-One Support: Tailored individual interventions helped children with complex emotional needs, enhancing wellbeing and confidence.
- Ongoing Transition Support: Holiday drop-ins and follow-ups after starting secondary school ensured continued assistance, aiding successful adjustment to Year 7.

2.0 What Has Been Delivered

Funding the Bolton CVS Partnership Fund has allowed partner providers to offer targeted wellbeing and early intervention support, detailed below.

Breaking Barriers North West delivered:

- 102 young people supported through personalised transition support, school engagement and follow-up sessions.
- Class-based transition sessions to 75 young people.
- 177 sessions to support children before, during and after their transition into secondary school.
- School visits, one-to-one conversations, emotional wellbeing check-ins, transition journals, holiday drop-ins and social activities to help young people process their experiences and prepare for change.
- Direct support with 3 primary schools to deliver transition sessions for Year 6 pupils, ensuring children with SEND received support in an inclusive way alongside their peers.

Urban Outreach delivered:

- support to 225 young people through a combination of group work, 1:1 support and school-based sessions.
- 155 sessions/engagements delivered across group work, 1:1 support and school-based provision to help children manage worries around transition, friendships, resilience, change and starting secondary school.
- Young people reported increased confidence, improved coping strategies, stronger friendship skills and greater excitement about moving to secondary school.

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**SESSIONS DELIVERED
OVER THE YEAR**

3.0 Case Studies



“Before the support I was really worried about starting high school, but now I feel more confident and know how to manage when I feel anxious.”

Quote provided by YOUNG PERSON

URBAN
OUTREACH (BOLTON)



Building Confidence for the Next Chapter

Support provided by Urban Outreach

A young person was referred to Next Chapter due to anxiety, low mood, and concerns about moving to secondary school, alongside family changes following her parents' separation. She was experiencing low confidence, difficulty sleeping, and panic attacks. Through tailored one-to-one support, she explored her worries in a safe environment, learned practical coping strategies such as breathing and grounding techniques, and developed greater resilience and confidence. By the end of the intervention, she felt significantly more prepared for secondary school, was managing her anxiety more effectively, had adjusted better to her family circumstances, and no longer required additional support.

““The sessions gave her a safe space to breathe, understand what was changing and build the confidence she needed for such a big step.”

Quote provided by PARENT

BB Breaking Barriers NW

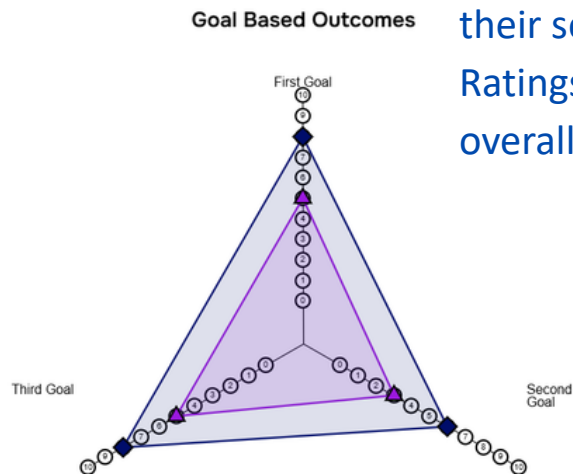
Supporting a Successful Transition to High School

Support provided by Breaking Barriers Northwest

Child K, a young person with autism and selective mutism, faced challenges in mainstream primary school due to sensory overload and anxiety, impacting her attendance. As high school approached, her parent was concerned about her transition. Breaking Barriers NW created a personalised transition plan combining one-to-one support and small group sessions. K used visual supports, social stories and sensory breaks to explore feelings, practise routines and build confidence. Small group sessions helped her become familiar with the new school environment, journey and key staff. By the time she started high school, K felt more prepared, confident and reassured.

4.0 Quantitative Data

As part of our IThrive model, children are encouraged to set goals at the onset of support. 100% of those completing support within the transition project successfully achieved their set goals. Among children who completed an Outcome Ratings Scale Questionnaire, 66% exhibited improvement overall.



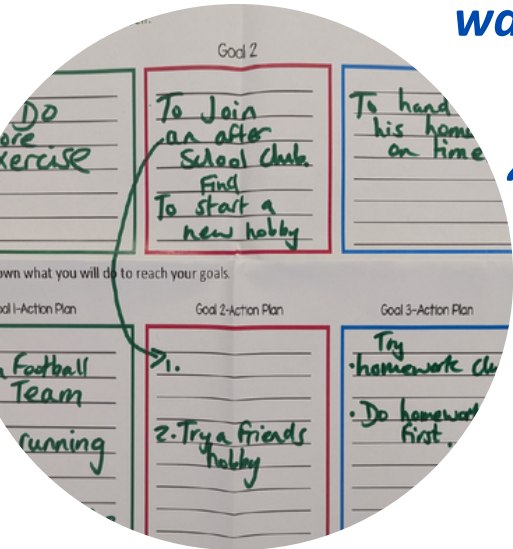
90%
OF SCHOOL
DISCUSSIONS LED
TO REASONABLE
ADJUSTMENTS

Within the 1:1 support offer, engagement was higher among boys, with 62.7% male participation compared to 37.3% female participation. This suggests that boys may have been more likely to be identified or referred when transition difficulties were linked to emotional wellbeing, anxiety, behavioural changes, or wider vulnerabilities.

5.0 What Young People Tell Us

“Before the workshop I was quite worried but now I feel more confident.”

“I enjoyed how interactive everything was.”



“Thank you for the support. My idea about high school has changed.”

“I made new friends in the session so can make new friends in school.”

6.0 How We Met Our Outcomes

The project successfully delivered against and exceeded its original proposal commitments, supporting 327 children and young people through a comprehensive transition offer focused on building confidence, resilience, social skills and emotional readiness for the move from primary to secondary school.

The delivery model reflected the planned approach of combining group support, targeted individual interventions and partnership working with schools and families. This included 75 young people accessing group transition support, providing opportunities to explore worries, develop resilience, build friendships and prepare positively for change. In addition, 150 young people received targeted 1:1 support, exceeding the original commitment to provide individual support for at least 20 young people requiring more tailored intervention. 193 young people were reached through school-based transition sessions, supporting children to develop confidence, understand change and prepare for the social and emotional challenges of secondary school.

Alongside direct support for young people, the project strengthened the wider transition network around children and families. This included transition packs, parent/carers engagement, EHCP guidance, referrals to additional services, school liaison and approximately 10 accepted reasonable adjustment requests, helping ensure children's individual needs were recognised and supported.

The project achieved strong outcomes aligned with its original aims:

- 80% of young people reported feeling more confident about starting their new school.
- 84.4% reported having new strategies to support themselves when feeling worried.
- 80.7% felt more confident about making new friendships.
- 75.2% felt more excited about the opportunities available at secondary school.

The project demonstrated the value of early, personalised transition support and effective partnership working between young people, families, primary schools and secondary schools. Feedback highlighted reduced anxiety, increased confidence and improved readiness for transition, particularly for children requiring additional emotional wellbeing or SEND-related support.

Area	Original Proposal Commitment	Delivered Outcome	Impact / Achievement
Overall Reach	Support a minimum of 200 children and young people	327 young people supported	Exceeded target by 127 young people (64% above target) through 1:1 support, group work, school sessions and wider transition activity
Targeted 1:1 Support	Provide 1:1 support for at least 20 young people requiring more tailored support	150 young people received targeted 1:1 support	Exceeded target by 130 young people (7.5 times the original commitment), supporting children with transition concerns, emotional wellbeing needs and additional barriers
Group Transition Support	Deliver small nurture groups (approximately 12 children per group) focused on resilience, confidence and social skills	75 young people accessed group transition support	Supported children to explore worries, build confidence, develop friendships and prepare positively for secondary school
School-Based Transition Support	Deliver school-based sessions to develop resilience, confidence and readiness for secondary school	193 young people reached through school-based sessions	Sessions focused on managing change, embracing opportunities, building relationships and developing coping strategies
Family and School Partnership Support	Work with families and schools to support effective transition planning, particularly for children requiring additional support	Transition packs, parent sessions, EHCP guidance, referrals and school liaison delivered	Strengthened collaboration between families, primary schools and secondary schools to support individual needs
SEND Support and Reasonable Adjustments	Support children with additional needs through transition planning and collaboration with schools	10 reasonable adjustment requests accepted by schools	Helped ensure children’s individual needs were recognised and appropriate support was in place for secondary transition
Confidence and Readiness Outcomes	Improve confidence, resilience and emotional readiness for secondary school	80% felt more confident starting their new school	Demonstrated improved emotional preparedness and reduced anxiety around transition
Coping Strategies	Help young people develop resilience and strategies to manage challenges	84.4% developed new strategies to support themselves when worried	Young people gained practical tools to manage emotions and uncertainty
Friendship and Social Skills	Develop interpersonal skills and confidence to build relationships	80.7% felt more confident making new friendships	Supported positive peer relationships and social confidence
Positive Attitudes Towards Secondary School	Support children to view transition as a positive opportunity	75.2% felt more excited about secondary school opportunities	Demonstrated a shift from worry towards confidence and optimism about the next stage of education

7.0 Next Steps

Although dedicated funding for the Next Chapter project has now concluded, the learning and outcomes from the programme will continue to inform and strengthen Bolton Together's wider work with children and young people.

The project has provided valuable insight into the challenges children face during the transition from primary to secondary school, particularly around anxiety, confidence, friendships, emotional wellbeing and the additional barriers experienced by children with SEND. These learning points will be embedded into existing programmes and future youth support offers, ensuring that transition-related needs continue to be recognised and addressed.

Key approaches, including resilience-building activities, emotional wellbeing support, practical coping strategies, relationship-building work and partnership approaches with schools, will be incorporated into current provision where appropriate. The relationships developed with schools, families and partners will also continue to support earlier identification of children who may need additional help.

The project has demonstrated the value of early, preventative transition support, and the learning gathered will help shape future practice to ensure children are better supported to navigate significant changes in their education and personal development.

8.0 Acknowledgements

We sincerely thank Bolton CVS for their funding, which supported the school transition project, providing transition assistance to children and young people in Bolton. We also appreciate our partners, Breaking Barriers and Urban Outreach, for their dedication and expertise. Their collaboration, along with support from schools, families, and communities, has been crucial in helping children build confidence and skills for a successful transition to secondary school. Thank you to all who contributed to the project's success and invested in the wellbeing of our youth.



**We extend our thanks to our providers, funders, and partners
for their support and collaboration in working towards our
shared goal to improve mental health for children and young
people in Bolton.**

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