

**Flannery, Jane, 2007, *The Transition from Primary to Post-primary school: A Study of Pupils from Small Primary Schools.***

### **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

A landmark event in the lives of Irish school children is the formal transition from primary to post-primary school. Experiences at the time of transition can influence subsequent social and academic development. Transition brings change and change triggers anxiety. That which causes anxiety and unease, however, can also generate excitement and expectation. School transition brings changes on so many fronts: location, school size, teachers, building, friends, subjects, time usage, clothing, transport, school lay-out, homework, text-books, etc. Students say goodbye to eight formative years spent at primary school, engaged actively in learning how to learn. Together with their families, they look forward to a new beginning, a fresh start, a clean slate, growing up, more freedom and more responsibility.

This dissertation, while concerned with the subject of school transition in general, explores, in particular, the case of students transferring from small primary schools to post-primary school. The students at the centre of this study have spent eight formative years in a sheltered, family-like environment exposed to and taught by a tiny cohort of teachers. Does the experience of such students advantage them or disadvantage them at the time of transition?

The findings indicated that pupils from small primary schools are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged at transfer to post-primary school. The findings, however, show there are few formal procedures in place in small primary schools to ease the pressures of transfer.