



Transition Booklet

Activity Pack to Support Transitions.



For Students and Parents/Carers



Walsall Council



Contents

Introduction

Feeling's Check-in

Worries

Preparation

School Routine

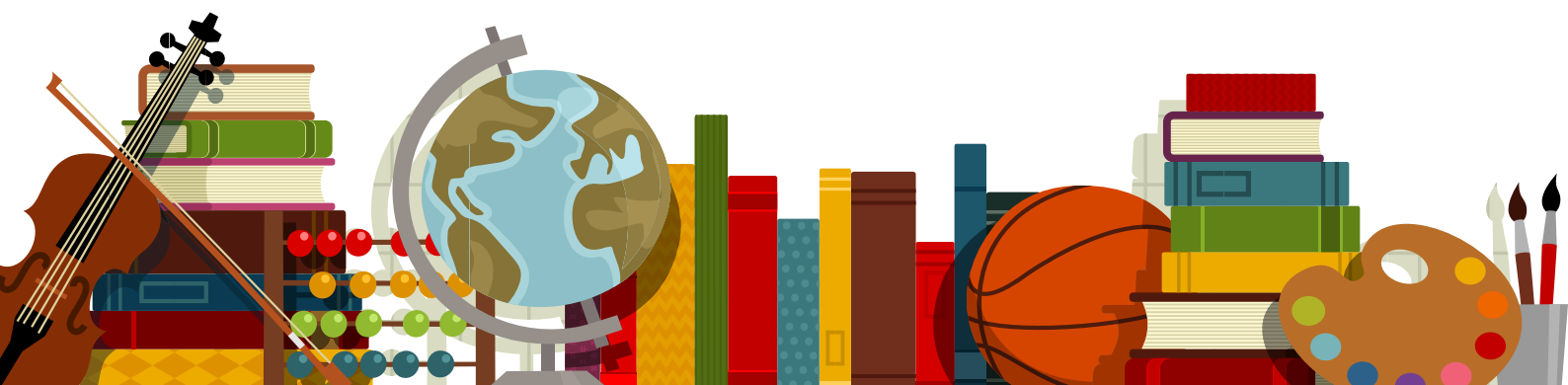
Support Network

Problem Solving

Prepare Goodbyes

Skills Toolbox

Questions



School Move Workbook – Activity Pack to Support Transitions For Students and Parents/Carers

Introduction

This booklet has been developed to support children and young people to navigate the transition to a new school. Transitions can be emotionally overwhelming and can be particularly difficult for children with complex histories. Preparation is key in reducing anxiety and creating a positive mind-set towards the move.

This booklet contains 10 activities preparing children and young people for a school move. These can be completed independently but we would encourage parents/carers to get as involved as possible. There is a parent/carer section following each activity, explaining how to support the young person to complete the activity, as well as other fun suggestions.

The activities are underpinned by Psychological Theory including:

Attachment	Nurture	SWAN (Safe, Welcoming, All together, Nurture)	Emotion Coaching	PACE	Restorative Approaches
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The booklet is designed to be a bridge between the child and the new school, enabling the young person to communicate their own perspective around issues including their needs, identity, and aspirations. After completing the booklet the child should be encouraged to share it with key staff from the new school in order to develop relationships. The booklet covers a number of important factors for the new school to consider, including:

- Emotions
- Identity
- Environment
- Relationships
- Routine

The new school will also be encouraged to complete a similar booklet giving specific details about the school, including timetables, after school activities and the layout of the school building. The young person should receive this prior to the move.

School Move Workbook – Feeling's Check-in

My name:

.....

Tick the emotions that you feel about moving school.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nervous	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excited
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	Relaxed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Angry
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confused	<input type="checkbox"/>	Optimistic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hopeful
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sad	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Worried

Moving schools can make you feel many different emotions.
How are you feeling?

Circle the face that shows how you feel.



Think about your school, what parts of it do you like? What would your dream school be like?

Draw or describe your dream school below.

What subjects would you study in your dream school?

Look at the examples on the right and mind map your ideas below.



Dream Subjects

Information for Parents and Carers

Initial conversations about a school move can be tricky to navigate but are a very important part of the process. These conversations should be calm, clear and supportive. Prior to the discussion try to gather as much information about the new school as you can. You may not have to share all of this with the young person immediately but it can help to answer any questions that come up. If the young person feels that you are prepared, they too will feel better prepared.

It is vital that you acknowledge and validate their feelings, try not use phrases such as “don’t worry” or “There’s no need to be upset”. Instead help them to identify their feelings and normalise their emotions. “Moving schools can feel scary, I wonder if you feel scared?”

Use the Feeling’s Check- in activity to further explore how the young person feels.

Important! Make a note of any questions that the child asks – this will be useful later!

Other Activities

- **Create an Emotion Fan –**

This can be a great way to check in on how the child is feeling, particularly if they usually have difficulty expressing themselves or have a limited emotional vocabulary. It’s also an insightful and entertaining task to complete with the child. Simply cut out the pieces, write the emotion and ask the child to draw a corresponding emoji. Then attach them together using a split pin. If possible, make this part of your daily routine.



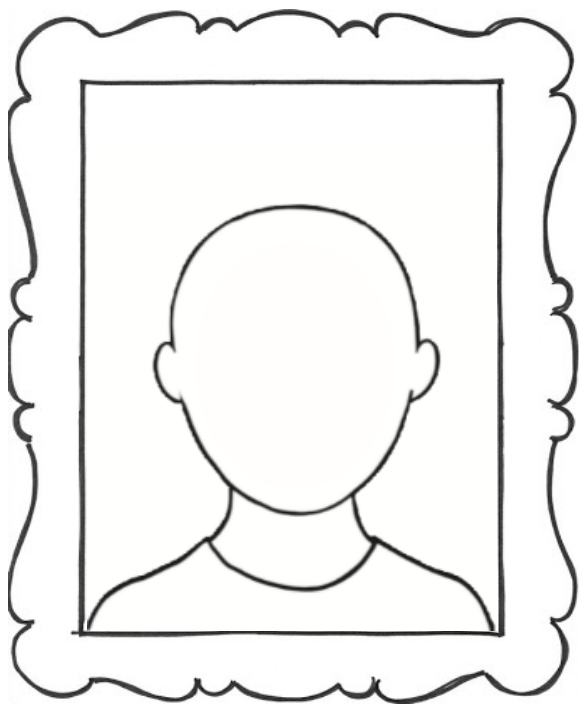
- **Memory Book or Time Capsule –**

Moving schools often causes mixed emotions, which are not easily understood or explained, by working on project together over a few weeks the young person may get the time and space required to start discussing these thoughts. Perhaps you could start making a memory book or time capsule together. Simply use an empty work book or box and add photos, drawings, descriptions, objects – anything that relates to the old school.



School Move Workbook – Introductions

Complete this sheet about yourself to give to your new teacher.



My name:

.....

My family:

.....

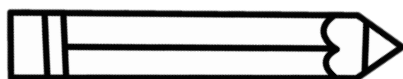
I am good at:

Things that i like:

I need more help with:

When I grow up I want to be:

Things I dislike:



My Favourite Colour:

.....

Think about important information that you would like your new teacher to know.

Favourite
subject:

Happiest when:

Worried about:

Something that makes me unique:

Things I want my teacher to know about me:

Words that describe me:

Things that help me to learn:

**Think about the things
that help you to focus.**

When do you do your
best work? Consider
the sounds, sights,
and equipment.

Information for Parents and Carers

School moves often require a great deal of collaboration between the current and new school. Ideally information about the child is shared and a transition plan developed. Whilst this usually covers vital aspects about the child's needs it can miss insightful information about the child's personality, preferences, identity, and aspirations. It may also unintentionally exclude the young person from the transition process, and prevent them from sharing information they deem important.

In order to ensure that the young person feels involved, ask them to consider the information that they want the new school to know about themselves. Add this information to the Introductions activity.

When supporting the young person to complete this, emphasise that this work can be given to key staff at the new school to develop relationships and ease the transition. Ask the young person to think carefully about the support or resources that help them to learn, consider sensory toys, writing aids, group work, even the use of play or drama to facilitate learning.

Other Activities

- **About Me** –

Create an 'About Me' booklet using photos or support the young person to record a video introducing themselves.

- **Support Network** –

This is a great way to introduce the new school to key people in the child's life, and also reminds the child about the support that they have. Put a photo of the child in the centre of a page and make a web of the important people in their life around them.

- **I am a Wonderful Person** –

Work with the young person to consider factors that make them a wonderful person, write these qualities on paper and decorate. This allows the young person to highlight the fantastic aspects of themselves that might have been missed in the transition discussion, and is great for their self-esteem.

- **What Others Think About Me** –

Ask teachers and peers to describe the young person and display these quotes in a creative way.



School Move Workbook – Worries

Moving to a new school can feel overwhelming. You may feel nervous and a little scared about this change. These feelings are normal and healthy, they help you prepare for the move!

Worries

Colour in the things that you are worried about.



Worry Jar

In the jar write a list of the things that you are most worried about. If you can think of any more add them too.

Meeting my teacher

Making friends

School rules

Getting to school

Missing my friends

Break times

Finding my way around

Homework

Feeling unsafe



Information for Parents and Carers

The young person is likely to experience feelings of worry about the school move. It can be difficult for them to pinpoint exactly why they are worried or to express these concerns. However, by sharing this information with an adult the young person will be able to start thinking critically about the issues, and can begin to find solutions.

Encourage the young person to complete the Worry activity and work with them to explore their concerns. Use reflective language e.g. “When I go to a new place sometimes I feel nervous, is that how you feel? “

If the young person is comfortable, this information can be shared with the new school.

Other Activities

- **Worry Jar** –

Why not use a real jar for this? Together, decorate the jar and put it somewhere accessible, ensuring that the young person can add to it whenever they experience a worried thought. They may feel some reassurance from writing the worry down and securing it in the jar. These can then be explored at a later time.

- **Circle of Control** –

It may be helpful to explore the child’s role in these concerns; which factors can they control (inside the circle) and which are not possible to control (outside the circle). For example, the young person cannot control that they will be leaving friends but they are able to decide how they say goodbye and whether they continue these relationships.

- **Worry Wall** –

Worries can sometimes create a barrier between us and others. It can help to visualise this by creating a worry wall. Draw a brick wall on both sides of a piece of paper, on one side ask the young person to write their worries, and on the other, list coping strategies.

- **Worry Doll** –

Worries can impact on our health and wellbeing, particularly affecting sleep. If so, consider making a worry doll. Twist pipe cleaners into the shape of a person, and use yarn to decorate. Tell the young person that when they place the doll under the pillow it will take their bad thoughts away. Instruction videos can be found online.



School Move Workbook – Preparation

It is useful to think about what you might need to do to prepare for your school move.

Which items will you need to bring in to school, and which ones will already be there?

Circle the items that you will need to bring in.



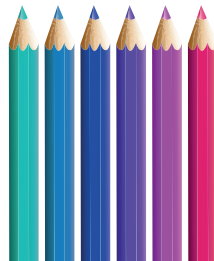
☐ Ruler



☐ Desk



☐ Calculator



☐ Pencils



☐ House Keys



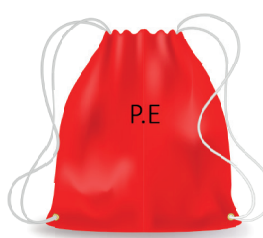
☐ Money



☐ Bag



☐ Pen



☐ P.E Kit



☐ Sweets

Consider the items that you already have.

Can these be used in your new school?

Will you need a bigger bag?

What will your new school uniform be?

Some subjects might require special items of kit.

Think about what you might need for the following subjects.

Technology:

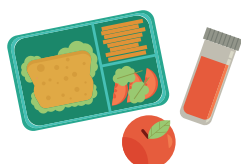
Science:

P.E:

What will you do for lunch?

Will you have a school meal or a packed lunch?

Circle the one you will have.



Favourite lunch meals:

School Move Workbook – Preparation

Information for Parents and Carers

As the school move gets closer the young person may start to ask about the practical side of the transition. Practical preparations can seem overwhelming for the young person, and they may become distracted by this. The young person may be particularly caught up on issues about school uniform, equipment, lunch options etc. These factors might be related to the young person's desire to fit in at school, they often do not want to stand out as the new child.

Whilst these concerns can seem arbitrary, try to consider them seriously. This is an important step in a transition, and helps the child to visualise themselves at the new school. Validate their concerns, support them to prioritise, and together make a plan about how this preparation will be completed.

Complete the preparation task to initiate conversations about this and identify areas of worry.

Other Activities

- **Checklist** –

Support the young person to make a checklist of tasks, put these in order of priority and tick them off as they are completed. This will make the preparations seem more manageable and should help order some of the young person's thoughts.

- **Create a Menu** –

Support the young person to create a menu of possible packed lunch options. Allow them to decide on three foods that they do and do not want in their lunch (within reason!). This should reduce anxiety about the lunchtime routine, and also give them a sense of control.

- **I am Independent** –

It might be beneficial to remind the young person of their skills, and also practice these qualities in the run up to the move. Introduce opportunities for them to practice their independence, perhaps allow them to cook a meal for the family, shop for items, and use cash or a card for this purchase. This is particularly important for young people who will need to purchase their own lunch whilst at school, something they may not have done previously!

School Move Workbook – School Routine

Think about your new school routine. What will change and what will be the same?

What will your new daily routine be?

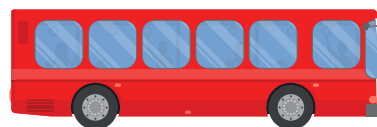
Complete the daily routine timetable below.

Task	Time
Alarm	
Shower or bath	
Get dressed	
Breakfast	
Brush teeth	
Leave for school	
Arrive at school	
End of school	
After school clubs/sports	
Arrive home	
Homework	
Evening meal	
Leisure/family time	
Get bag ready for next day	
Brush teeth	
Bed time	

How will you get to and from school?

Will you travel by car or bus? Will you walk? Will you use a different method?

Tick the correct options


☐

☐

☐

☐

What can you do to stay safe on your journey?

Write your rules for safety in the box below.

Think about:

- Crossing roads.
- Being visible to cars.
- What time you'll arrive home.
- Who will be at home.
- Contacting a family member.
- Going to shops or other places on the way home

School Move Workbook – School Routine

Information for Parents and Carers

The transition to a new school is likely to change routines within the home. It is important to consider how this new routine will work and ensure that the young person has enough time to prepare for these changes. When planning routines try to structure the day as much as possible or as much as they need. Help them to think through their morning routine and how this might change based on the new school.

A school move might also mean a greater sense of independence or responsibility for the young person, particularly if they are moving to secondary school. Will they be responsible for getting to and from school? Will they need to set their own alarm? Will they be in charge of packing the right equipment each day?

Support the young person to complete the School Routine activity, and use this to help them prepare for the changes in their routine.

Ideally the new school should provide an idea of how the young person's new timetable will look. Use this information to support conversations about routine.

Other Activities

- **Morning Schedule** –

Create a Morning Schedule and display this somewhere easily accessible for the young person. The schedule can be as detailed as required, some individuals struggle with time keeping and therefore may need this information to be included. You can even decorate a large clock face with stages of the morning routine to help the young person keep a track of time.



- **Visual Timetable** –

The young person may have already used a visual timetable at school but these can also be useful at home. This timetable can include information about particular lessons (P.E) or afterschool plans, such as clubs or collection arrangements. You or the young person might be responsible for updating the timetable everyday.

- **Make a Journey** –

Prior to the move, practice the journey to school with the young person, perhaps you could use the form of transport that they will be using. Discuss the landmarks and sights that you see along the way.

School Move Workbook – Support Network

A school move can feel overwhelming, it is important to remember who you can talk to.

How to Manage Conflicts

Look at the scenarios below. What would you do in these situations?

Write your answers in the boxes below.



You have a big argument with your best friend. You've been friends since Primary School.



Some of your classmates make fun of your school bag.

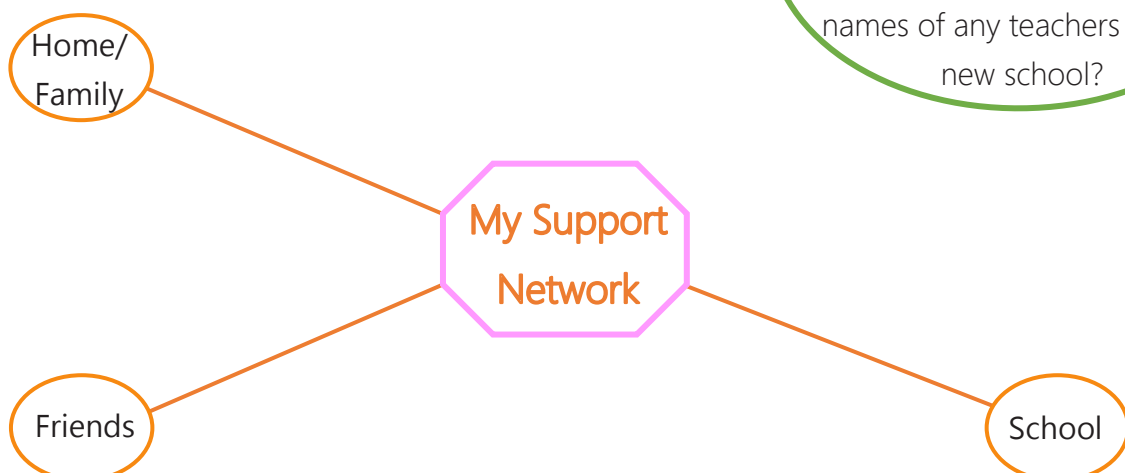


A student begins to send unkind messages to you on social media.

Who can you talk to?

Conflicts with friends and classmates can be difficult to manage. You may feel upset, angry and lonely. It can be helpful to talk to someone about the situation.

Complete the diagram below to show who you could talk to.



Think about the important people in your life.

Who comforts you when you are feeling down? Do you know the names of any teachers at your new school?

School Move Workbook – Friendships

Information for Parents and Carers

When moving schools, a major worry for the young person might be making new friends. This will be particularly worrying for children who have social interaction difficulties, or who have struggled to initiate and maintain friendships previously. It is important to remind the young person of the friendship skills that they already have and offer some reassurance.

Try not to dismiss feelings of anxiety about friendships, instead accept these feelings, validate and normalise them before thinking about possible solutions. For example:

“If I were moving to a new school I might be a little worried about making new friends, is that how you feel?” or “I wonder if you might be worried about leaving your friends and making new ones?”.

Complete the Friendships activity to explore this theme further and support the young person to identify their friendship skills. Consider the importance of kindness, humour, acceptance, inclusion, politeness, sharing, trust, taking turns, and listen in relationships.

Other Activities

- **What I Want in a Friend –**

Asking the young person to consider what qualities they would want in a friend can be a good way for them to explore their own friendship skills. It is also a good way to develop their understanding of healthy relationships, outlining positive friendship qualities.

- **Connect with Other Students –**

If possible it might be beneficial for the young person to connect with a few other children who will also be or are already attending the new school. Speak to the current and new school about this, and see if they can facilitate contact. This could be through social media, over the phone, or in person. Ensure that these interactions are supervised and well managed.

- **Interests and Hobbies –**

A great way for young people to make new friends is by joining clubs. Encourage the young person to consider their hobbies and interests, and ask the school if there are any suitable clubs. This will allow the young person to share interests and build relationships.

School Move Workbook – Problem Solving

Have a look at the worries below, can you turn them into positive thoughts and find possible solutions?

Negative Thought

I might get lost in my new school and get in trouble with my teacher.

How does it feel?

Scary



Positive Thought

It will be exciting to be in a new school, I am looking forward to exploring!

Who can help?

My new class teacher, any adult that I see in the school, someone from my class.

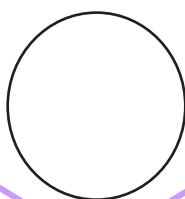
Problem Solving

I can ask any teacher for help if I am lost in the school. They will be able to guide me to where I should be.

Negative Thought

I am not good at maths because I only got 6 out of 10 correct in the quiz.

How does it feel?



Positive Thought

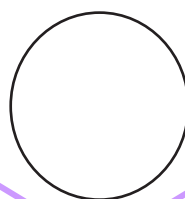
Who can help?

Problem Solving

Negative Thought

I won't make any new friends and I will be lonely.

How does it feel?



Positive Thought

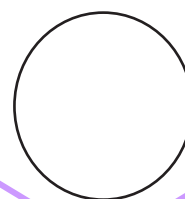
Who can help?

Problem Solving

Negative Thought

My old friends will forget me and won't want to be my friend anymore.

How does it feel?



Positive Thought

Who can help?

Problem Solving

School Move Workbook – Problem Solving

Information for Parents and Carers

During a transition young people are almost certainly going to experience a spectrum of emotions and are likely to have worries and concerns about the move. These are normal and healthy responses and can help the young person to prepare. However, sometimes these thoughts can escalate and become damaging. These negative thought patterns can cause seemingly manageable worries to grow into intimidating barriers. For example, the young person may feel anxious about interacting with a new teacher, they may ruminate over this worry causing the anxiety to grow. This may lead to withdrawal and reluctance to engage with teaching staff. It is important to support the young person to work through their negative thoughts before they become ingrained.

Work with the young person to complete the Problem Solving activity to explore this further. Encourage them to come up with possible solutions and guide them to the most appropriate choice.

Other Activities

- **Body Mapping** –

Some young people have difficulty identifying feelings, or noticing the symptoms of emotions. It can be hugely beneficial to develop a young person's emotional literacy by exploring this further by creating a body map. Draw the outline of the body and ask the young person to reflect back on experiences of emotion to identify their own symptoms. If they are able to notice intense feelings, they will be more able to problem solve!

- **Ask for Help** –

Whilst young people generally understand that they can ask a teacher for help, they may not know how to do this. Practice this process with them, think of scenarios and rehearse how they could talk to a teacher to receive support. This activity should develop their communication and problem solving skills, whilst also encouraging the young person to trust school staff.

- **Problem Solving Diary** –

This will help the young person notice triggers or common themes in their anxieties. This information can be used to consider an alternative approach.

School Move Workbook – Prepare Goodbyes

Saying goodbye to teachers and friends can be an important step in a school move.

Who do you want to say a special goodbye to?

Think about the teachers and friends who are most important to you.

How will you say goodbye?

There are many ways to say goodbye, you could have a conversation, write a letter or make something creative. Look at the suggestions and make a list of how you will say goodbye.



Saying Goodbye

Saying goodbye to important people can be difficult. You might feel nervous or upset but the steps below will help you.

- 1. Tell them that you are moving schools.** If you know the date of your last day you can tell them this too.
- 2. Tell them how you feel about moving.** Are you feeling sad, excited, worried? Why are you feeling this way?
- 3. Tell them what you will miss about them.** Why are they important to you, what will you miss doing with them?
- 4. Remind them of a memory.** Have you done anything special together? What is your favourite thing to do with them?
- 5. Thank them!** Say thank you for their support, kindness, or friendship.

Who: Who will you say a special goodbye to?	How: How will you say goodbye?	Completed: Tick once you have said goodbye.

Fill in the gaps!

Hello!

I wanted to tell you that I am going to be moving to a new

..... I'm feeling a little but also excited.

I'm going to our long chats about our pets. I really

enjoyed playing snap with you at lunch time. Thank you for being a

great

nervous friend school miss

School Move Workbook – Prepare Goodbyes

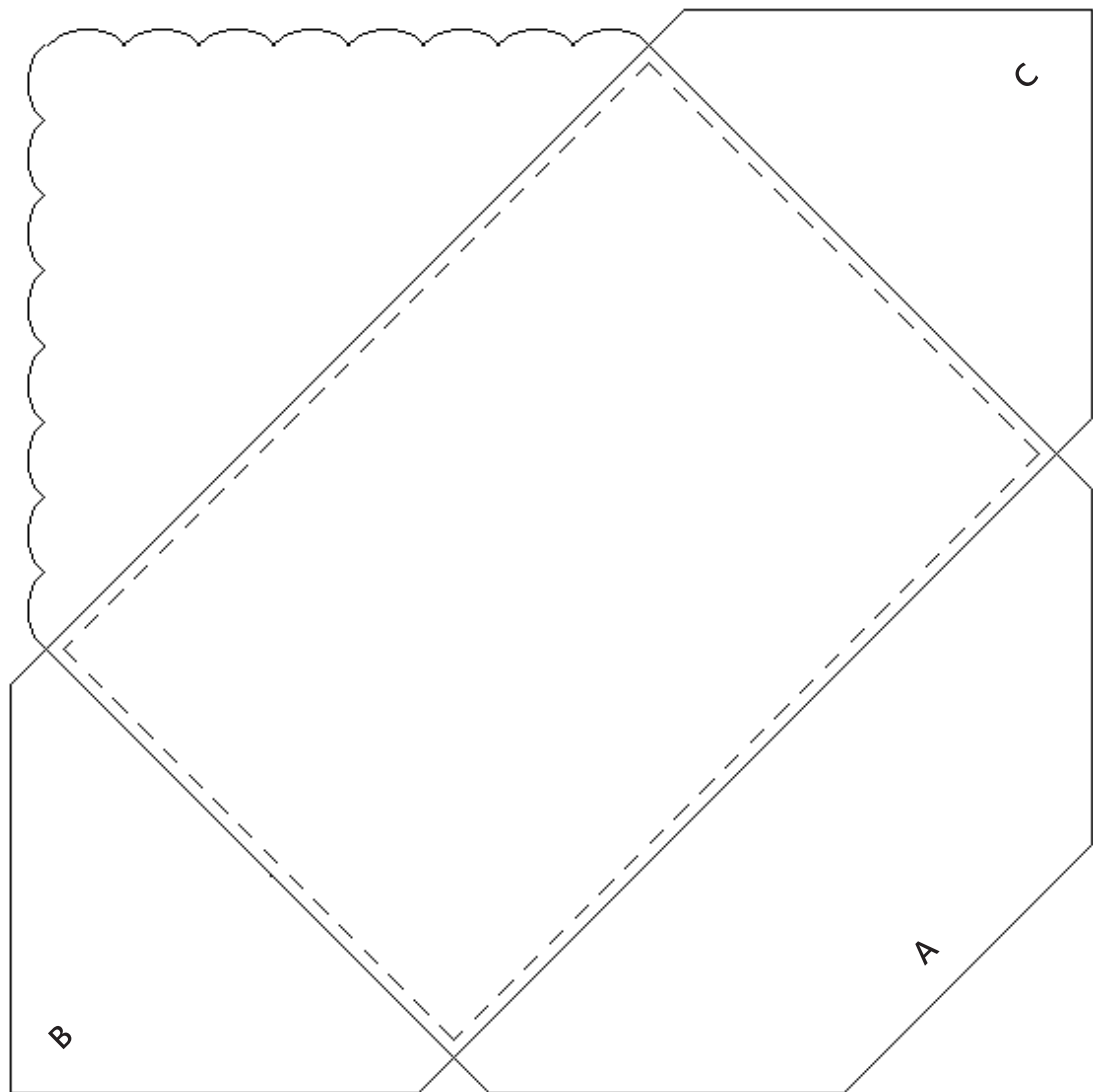
A card is a fun and thoughtful way to say goodbye. You can even make your own envelope!



Design a fun picture for the front!

Write a message on the inside!

Don't forget to sign your name!



Make an envelope!

Use scissors carefully!

Trace over the template if you want to make more than one envelope.

1. Cut along the solid outside lines.
2. Fold flap B and C down and glue flap A on top of them.
3. Create a card to fit inside!

School Move Workbook – Prepare Goodbyes

Information for Parents and Carers

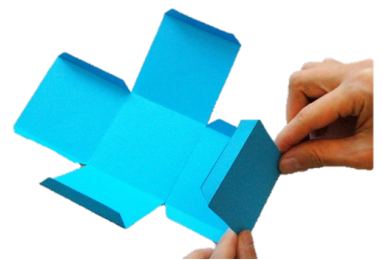
Following initial conversations about the school move, the young person may begin to think about the final day at their current school, and how to prepare for this. Saying goodbye to important people is an essential part of this preparation, and some children may become preoccupied with this. It can be beneficial to support the young person with these plans, helping them to have satisfying and meaningful goodbyes with their peers and teachers.

Support the young person to complete the Prepare Goodbyes activity, and if necessary assist them in the making of goodbye gifts. Whilst working through the activity try to emphasise the impact of goodbye conversations and practice these with the young person. It is important that they do not feel overwhelmed by goodbyes and therefore encourage them to engage in meaningful interactions rather than creating many gifts.

Other Activities

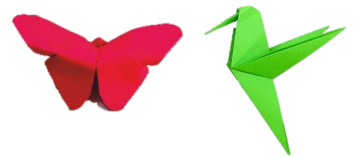
- **Memories Cube** –

Support the young person to create a Memories Cube for important people, or even for themselves. Make a cube and decorate the sides with photos, drawings or descriptions of memories.



- **Origami Creations** –

Work together to make origami creations for important people. Using online instruction videos help the young person to create an origami animal or flower. This activity requires patience and focus but results in a beautiful creation.



- **Goodbye Book** –

Decorate a blank book and then ask important people to write goodbye messages or draw pictures inside. This is a fantastic way to record memories and should help the young person see how valued they are.



School Move Workbook – Skills Toolbox

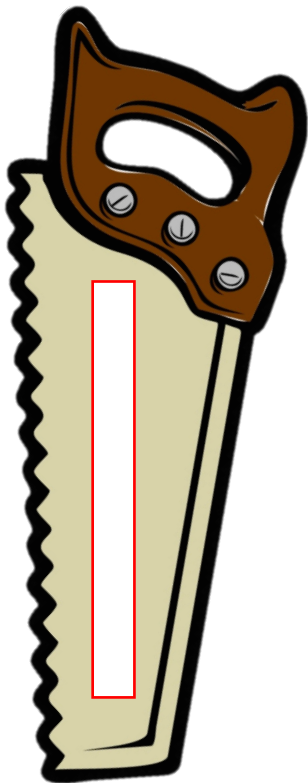
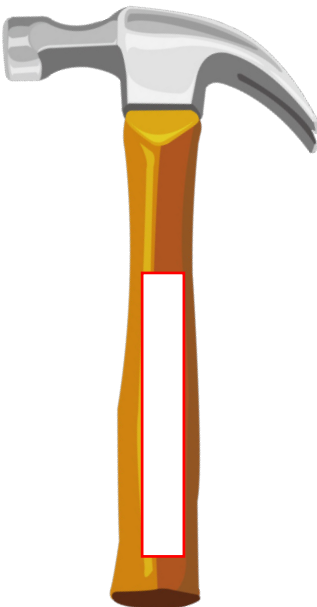
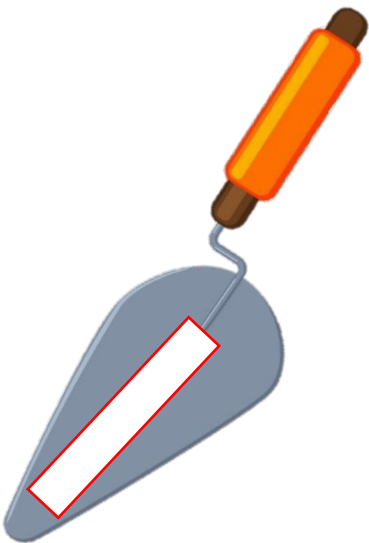
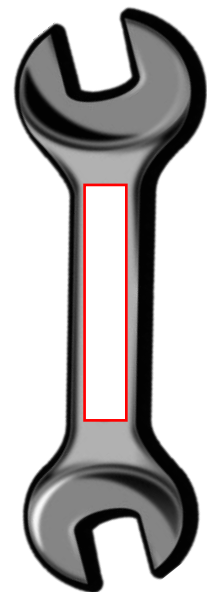
Moving to a new school can be challenging but you have many skills to help you manage.



A Skills Toolbox contains important information about you. It shows your personality and qualities, and is unique to you. The tools in your Skills Toolbox help you cope with tricky situations.

What is in your Skills Toolbox?

Write your skills into the blank spaces on the tools. Look at the suggestions below or come up with your own ideas.



- Kind
- Hardworking
- Creative
- Confident
- Honest
- Good Listener
- Organised
- Positive

School Move Workbook – Skills Toolbox

Moving to a new school can be challenging but you have many skills to help you manage.

Talk to your friends
Relax
Use kind hands
Talk to an adult
Breathe slowly
Take a break
Say sorry
Do something you enjoy

A Skills Toolbox also holds all of the coping skills that you have learnt. You face many challenges every day from difficult classwork to friends falling out, but you are able to get through these hard times using your coping skills.

What are your coping skills?

What do you do to deal with challenges? Write your coping skills onto the front of the toolbox.

Look at the suggestions above or come up with your own ideas.



School Move Workbook – Skills Toolbox

Information for Parents and Carers

As the school move approaches the young person may experience moments of low self-esteem and issues with confidence. They may question their ability to manage the transition to the new school and express negative thoughts about themselves. Try to discuss these thoughts with the young person, and most importantly remind them of their skills. They have many qualities that have helped them cope in stressful times but sometimes these skills are forgotten.

Complete the Skills Toolbox activity to explore this topic further. Support the young person to consider the skills that help them manage complex tasks, challenging situations, even class activities that they don't enjoy. Ask them to think about how they get through these moments. Be prepared to help them label these skills, are they describing being hardworking? Committed? Diligent?

Follow this with the Coping Skills task. Support the young person to consider the strategies they use to manage a difficult situation. If they have specific coping strategy (sensory strategy) include this on the toolbox.

Other Activities

- **Skills Cloud** –

In order to develop the young person's vocabulary of skills why not create a Skills Cloud together? You can do this by hand or on the computer. Ask the young person to think of skills and make a note of these, add your own ideas too. After it has been completed put it on display somewhere, and occasionally explore which skills the young person has used that day.



- **Coping Cards** –

Using the information gathered in the task support the young person to create a collection of Coping Cards. Cut an A4 paper into 6 and write one coping skill onto each piece, then decorate! This is a great way of rehearsing coping skills. Perhaps even make an envelope to store them.

School Move Workbook – Questions

It's important to think about any questions you might have about your new school.

What questions do you have?

What would you like to know about your new school?

Is there anything that you are worried about?

Write your questions in the hexagons.

Think about:

- After school clubs
- School trips
- Lunch meals

How can you get the answers?

- Who can you ask?
- Can you look on the school website?

Write your answers in the hexagons.

School Move Workbook – Questions

Information for Parents and Carers

On the lead up to the transition it might be beneficial to reflect on some of the questions and concerns raised by the young person. Think back to conversations that you've had with the young person and make a list of the questions asked, even if these queries have been answered. Notice themes within the questions, which aspects of the transition seem particularly troubling for the young person? Which topics were they most curious about?

Complete the Questions activity and encourage the young person to consider the information they now have and the information they require. Where possible, support the young person to find the answers to questions themselves, is this information on the school website? Can they ask a peer or teacher?

Other Activities

- **Question checklist** –
Create a checklist of the questions that the young person has previously asked and tick off those that have been answered. This may give the young person a sense of control and preparedness.
- **Ask a Professional** –
Why not arrange contact between the young person and a key staff member at the new school? This could be achieved through a video call, phone call, email, or letter. Encourage the young person to introduce themselves and ask any questions.
- **Question Box** –
Support the young person to create a Question Box. Find an empty box and cut a slit into the top (like a post box!), decorate and put it somewhere accessible. Encourage the young person to add questions to the box as they arise, even if they are answered! Then look back at these questions together.

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