



# MEET IN THE MIDDLE, A GUIDE TO MOVING TO MIDDLE SCHOOL



Hello and welcome to your transition booklet.

Transition is just another way of saying 'moving on', you'll hear your teachers and other adults using it.

As you know due to the Coronavirus things are a little bit different at the moment. You would have been having transition visits soon, going to visit your new school, doing activities and getting to know the building and some of the staff. This year we are going to have to do things a little bit differently. Your new designated teacher still needs to know all about you, what you like to do, your favourite subjects, subjects you think you might need help with and also any questions about your new school that you would like answers to.

This booklet will help you to do this. There is a section for you to fill in that we can send to your new school so they can get to know you a bit better. There is also a section for you to keep, this gives you information about how to manage any worries you might have and activities you can do to help you prepare for your new school.

When you do go back to school, your new school will put things in place to support you so that you can settle in and get to know the new routines and rules you will need to follow.

If you have any questions you can contact ESLAC at [vspupil@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:vspupil@northumberland.gov.uk) and we will try and answer them for you. You could also send your questions to your ESLAC worker through the Mind of My Own app, if you don't have an account then you can contact ESLAC or your Social Worker and we will help you set one up.

We hope you enjoy completing your transition booklet.  
The ESLAC Team



## Section One

Information about me for  
my new designated  
teacher





## About Me

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I like to be called: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Favourite Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Least favourite Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Favourite book/s: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Favourite games: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Hobbies:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Favourite place/s:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Pet/s:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Friends:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**My carer is:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Achievements

Have you ever received a certificate? (e.g. ESLAC attendance, good work, star of the week)

What do you think you are really good at?

Have you ever won a prize? (e.g. ESLAC expert learner, Sports day, a competition)



What would you like to be able to do at the end of your first year in middle school that you can't do now? (e.g. have joined a club and learnt a new skill, chess, art. Be on one of the sports teams, have done your very best in all lessons)

## Memories

Can you think of three things you'll miss **most** about first school? Write or draw about them here:

Can you think of three things you'll miss **least** about first school? Write or draw about them here:

**How do you feel about starting your new school? Circle all the feelings you have.**



**Worried**



**Excited**



**Scared**



**Happy**



**I don't know**

**What things would you like to know about starting middle school that will make you feel better, tick the numbers of the questions you would like answered:**

1. Where do I line up in the mornings?
2. Where do I play?
3. Who will I speak to if I'm happy or sad?
4. Where do I get my dinner?
5. How do I get my dinner - what happens in the dinner hall?
6. How do I know when my year group is in for lunch?
7. Where are the toilets?
8. What clubs are there?
9. Will I be in a class with my friends?

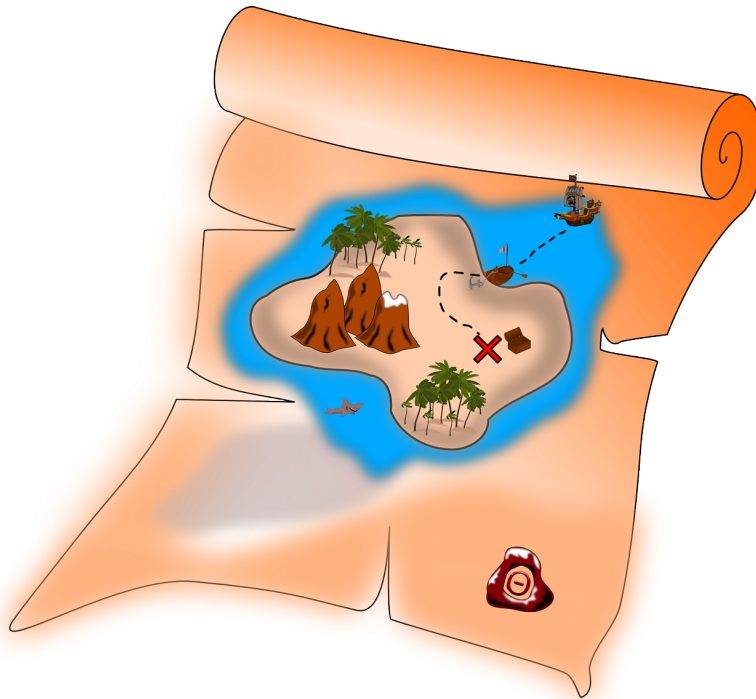
**Can you think of any other questions you would like answered? Write them below:**



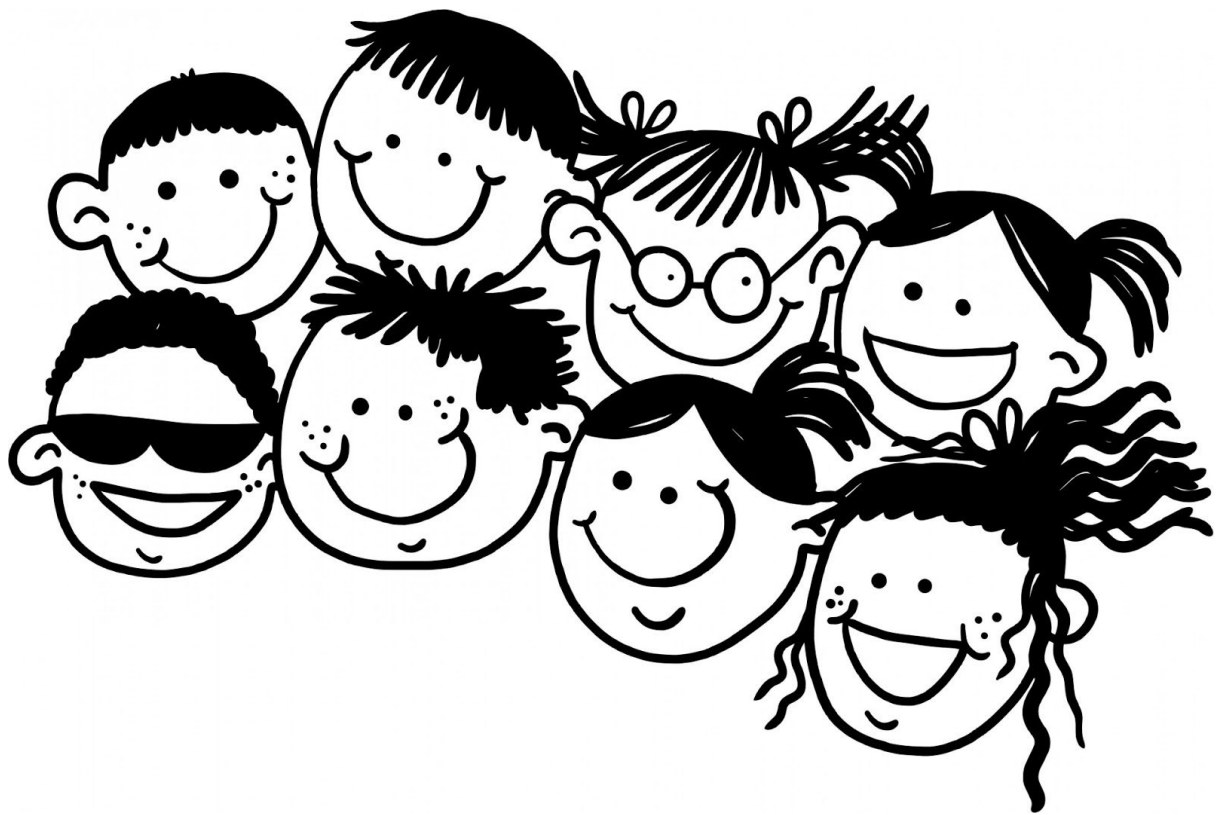
**Below is a short activity. Have a look on your new school's website see if you can find the answers to these questions:**

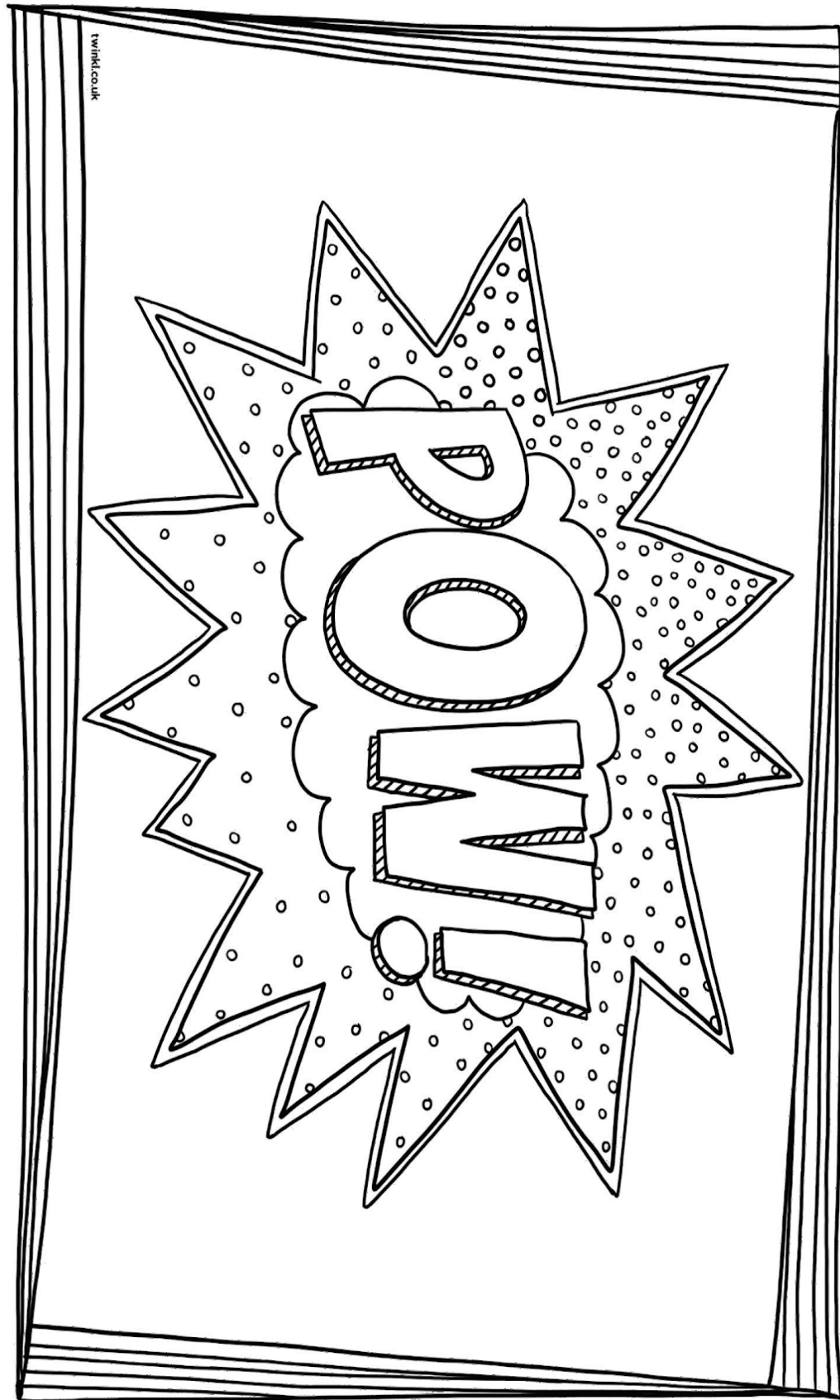
1	Who is the Headteacher of your school?
2	Who is the Head of year 5. Who are the year 5 teachers?
3	What new subjects will you study in year 5?
4	What clubs can you join during school time and after school?
5	Can you find a school dinner menu? What is your favourite meal on it?

Section two  
Information about  
starting my new school  
for me to keep



The next section of this booklet is for you to keep. It contains information you might find helpful. You can keep it at home and look at it when you want to. Have a look on the schools website, see what you can find out about year 5. Don't forget if you have any questions or are worried about anything, you can talk to your carer, social worker or ESLAC worker either on the phone or by putting your thoughts and questions down in writing using the Mind of My Own app. We're here to help you enjoy your new school!





Here is a little activity for you to do, it's called mindfulness colouring, have a

go.

## **Top tips for making a good first impression and meeting people like you**

Here are some ideas and thoughts to help you in your new school:

- Be you - people want honesty from their friends!
- Don't be afraid to make conversation
- Be nice- smile and look up!
- Go to clubs that are to do with your interests - you'll bond with people there
- Give it time - it takes time to make friendships
- Don't force it - some things are not meant to be
- Be Comfortable - meet people where you'll both be comfortable and can properly chat
- Use your lessons - if you're sitting next to someone, use it as a chance to chat (BUT NOT WHEN THE TEACHER IS!)



# **BULLYING**

- No one deserves to be bullied.
- Always tell someone if you are being bullied. Get help from your carer, a teacher, the school nurse.
- If you see someone being bullied, get help - don't be a bystander.
- Walk tall, pretend you are confident even if you aren't. Smile.
- Stay with a crowd - bullies pick on those who are alone.
- All bullying comes from somewhere, maybe that person needs help too
- Bullying is always cruel, whether it is name-calling or hitting or getting other people to ignore the victim.
- Bullying can happen by text message or Instant Messaging (IM).
- Don't give out your mobile number or IM identity unless you know the people and trust them.





## **Managing Worries**

Many of you will have worries about moving on to middle school. It is natural to be a little worried, as it is a new experience, and you may have lots of questions. It is important that we know how to manage our worries and not let them become too big, spoiling what should be an exciting time for you.

You might be especially worried and uncertain at the moment when things are different and a bit weird. These are some of the ways your body might react:

### **Fight or Flight response**

When we have scary thoughts and feelings, our bodies get ready to fight the danger or run away from it.

Thousands of years ago man was faced with many dangers such as big woolly mammoths and sabre-tooth tigers! They had two choices – either fight them or run away! Therefore, the body had to prepare them to do this.

If you are worried or anxious about moving to your new school, your body might feel funny, you might get butterflies in your tummy, or your head might hurt, or your muscles might feel sore because you are tensing them, you might feel sick or hot. There might be other times when you feel like this, for example, if you worry about speaking in front of the class, your heart may start to pound and you may feel shaky, hot and sweaty. Your body thinks it is in danger and so is preparing you to run or fight! If you are scared of crossing bridges, you may feel just the same!

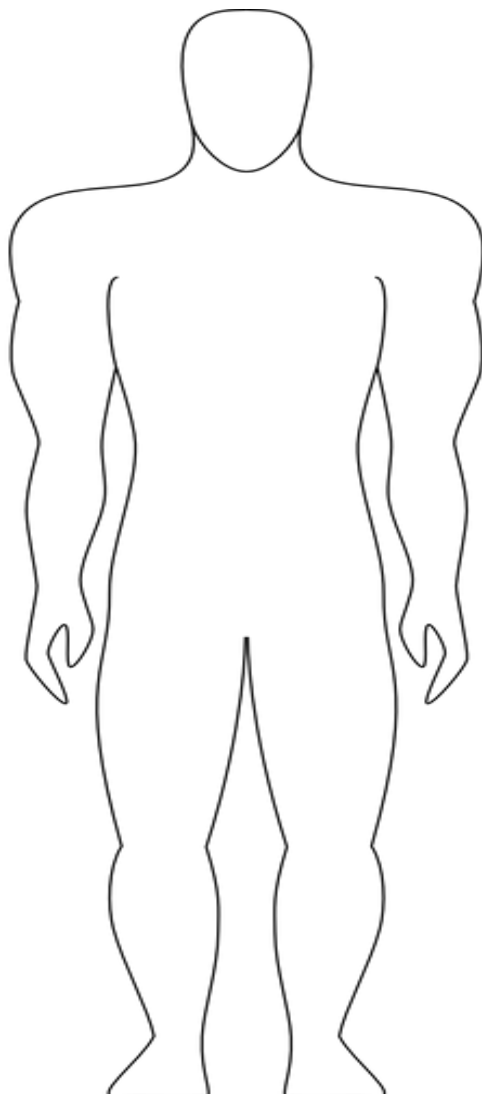
These changes in our bodies are not very nice and can make you feel even more scared, leading to more changes in the body.

## What we do when we are scared

Being scared of something may make you want to run away, or avoid the situation. You may start to avoid the situation more and more or look out for danger. This can make you even more scared of it! What we need to do is to get into training so that we can cope with the anxiety and face up to frightening situations until you are no longer scared.



**THE ONLY WAY TO BEAT IT IS TO FACE UP TO IT!**



### Physical symptoms

On the body shape opposite, choose a colour to represent anxiety and shade the areas affecting you when you feel anxious. Write some of the feelings you might experience, for example, feeling sick, headache, sweaty, tense.

It is important that you recognise these worry signs and physical feelings so you know what to do to reduce them.



Below are some breathing exercises you could do to help you relax and feel calm, give them a try and see if they help, you might need to try them a few times. If you still feel worried then tell your carer or social worker or someone you trust, you can also write things down on the Mind of My Own app and send them to a trusted person. We are all there to help you.



### Butterfly Breaths

Sit on the floor with the bottom of your feet touching and your knees bent out to the sides. Put your hands on your ankles and gently bounce your knees like you are flapping butterfly wings. Close your eyes and breathe slowly and calmly. Be sure to take slow deep breaths in and out. Pretend you are flying to your favourite place in the whole world. Imagine what it looks like. What do you see? What do you hear? What does it feel like? Imagine you are flying around and you are happy and calm. Now it is time to fly back, slowly flap your wings back to where you started. Take a deep breath in and slowly exhale. Now slowly open your eyes .



### Rainbow Breaths

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, arms gently resting by your sides. Slowly raise your arms and take a deep breath in. Try to breathe in until your hands reach each other over your head. Breathe out slowly while lowering your hands. Repeat 5-10 times. Each time you breathe in imagine you are adding another colour to your rainbow. What colours are you adding to your rainbow? Once your rainbow is finished, slowly open your eyes.

## **Other things you can do that might help:**

### **Positive self-talk**

Keep reminding yourself that you can face your worries, and that you will be ok. You might start off feeling like you have to pretend to be confident, but the more you do, the more confident you will actually feel.

### **Support network**

Think about your support network - who are the people you can go and talk to who will listen to you and help you at school and at home. Don't forget you can use the Mind of My Own app to send your views, worries and questions to one of your workers, sometimes it is easier to write things down if you don't know what to say.

### **Stay in the “here and now”**

Don't make your worries worse by thinking about what “might” happen. Stay in the present. Notice what really is and is not happening around you.

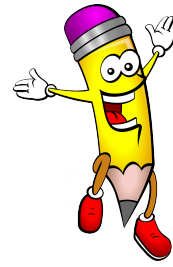
### **Go with it**

It is normal to worry, everyone worries about things, it's ok that you will worry and when those waves of worry come allow them time to run their course without running away. They are scary and unpleasant for a while BUT they won't harm you.

When thinking about Middle school, try and remember the things you are looking forward to and focus on these instead.



## Stuff you will need



In first school, most of the equipment you need is kept in the classroom, but at Middle school, you might need to carry your things with you in your school bag. What sorts of things do you think you will need to have in your school bag? Write them below, you could ask your carer to go through them with you.



## **HOMEWORK - YUK!**

Not many pupils like it but it's just one of those things that you have to do and the more organised you are, the less time you'll have to spend doing it. In year 5 you may start to get more homework than you did in first school. To help you to remember what you have to do you will probably be given a homework diary, where you or the teacher can write down what you have to do and when it has to be finished by.

### **Why is homework important?**

*Homework is really important because it shows the teacher whether you've understood the work or not. It also means that you can cover more work than the time allowed by a lesson in school.*

#### **Some advice:**

- Do your homework the same day you get it, if you can.
- It is better to have a go and hand something in than nothing at all.
- If you have a long term project, try to do some work on it every day. Set yourself a timetable and stick to it.
- If you forget or can't do your homework, tell the teacher before the lesson if possible. Most teachers prefer a note from home.
- If you find it hard to do homework at home, ask if there is a homework club in school and go to that, there will be teachers there to support you.
- Pace yourself. Take regular breaks so your head doesn't spin and your mind stays fresh.

## AND FINALLY!

Don't forget, there are people out there who can help you if you are worried, answer your questions and support you to have a great move to middle school

If you enjoy reading then you might like to have a look at this book, it should be available through your MyOn account, but if you have trouble finding it let ESLAC know and we'll see what we can do.

The Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside

If you feel you can't talk to someone face to face but you want people to know you're worried or need to speak to someone in private, use your Mind of My Own account to put your feelings in writing. Someone will get back to you and help.

Stay in touch with your friends, they probably feel the same as you, you can support each other.

Once you have completed the first part of the Booklet, let your carer know and we will arrange to get it to your new designated teacher. If you have other questions or something you think should be included let ESLAC know and we can help.

Have fun completing this booklet.

