



STEP UP

A GUIDE TO MOVING TO SECONDARY SCHOOL



Hello and welcome to your transition booklet.

Transition is just another way of saying 'moving on', you'll hear your teachers and other professionals 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 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 secondary 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 primary/middle school? Write or draw about them here:

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

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



Worried



Sad



Excited



Scared



Happy



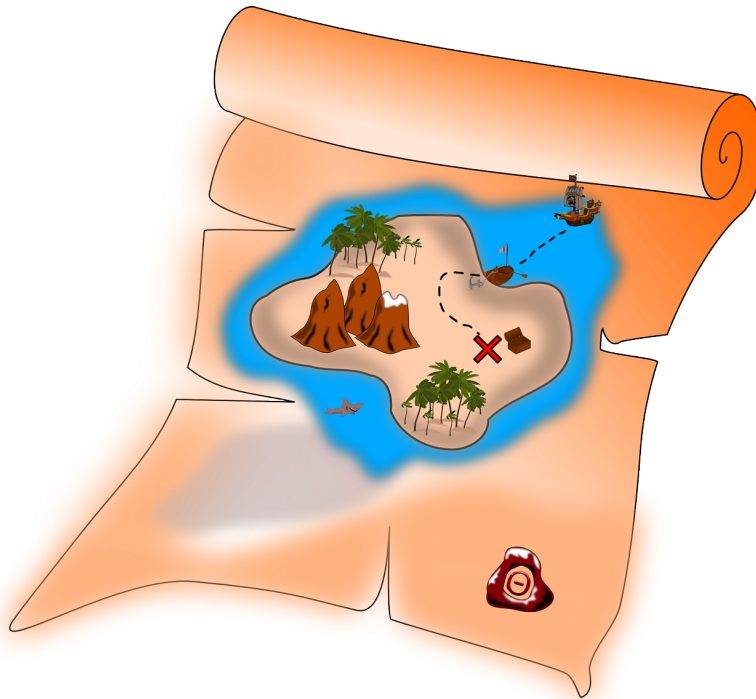
I don't know

What things would you like to know about starting secondary school that will make you feel better, write your questions below? (for example, where do I wait in the morning? Will I be with my friends? Where is the dining room? Will I have a locker? Where are the toilets?)

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 7? (year 6 students) Who is the head of year 9? (year 8 students)
3	What subjects will you study in year 7? (year 6 students), what subjects will you study in year 9 (year 8 students)
4	Can you find the school ethos and values? What are they?
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. Don't forget if you have any questions or are worried about anything, you can talk to your carer, social worker, ESLAC worker either on the phone or by putting your thoughts and questions down in writing using Mind of My Own. We're here to help you enjoy your new school!

To get you started here's a friendship wordsearch, give it a try, see how many you can find:

B	R	L	S	U	Y	W	N	D	F	R
F	R	I	E	N	D	S	H	I	P	G
L	I	S	R	N	G	H	R	N	O	P
G	F	T	T	S	K	A	S	T	J	C
S	U	E	R	M	I	R	T	E	L	A
H	N	N	R	I	D	E	E	R	W	R
G	T	E	E	L	N	D	S	E	A	I
U	H	I	D	E	R	C	A	S	V	N
A	H	E	L	P	F	U	L	T	T	G
L	R	I	A	F	T	R	U	S	T	G
L	O	Y	A	L	T	E	D	S	B	E

FRIENDSHIP

LAUGH

HELPFUL

LISTEN

SHARE

FAIR

SMILE

TRUST

FUN

CARING

LOYAL

INTERESTS

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 carers, 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 secondary 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.

This part of anxiety (or being 'scared') involves adrenaline flowing into the blood, to prepare the body to fight or run away. Several things may happen to our bodies such as:

- Your **heart rate** shoots up: it does this so it can pump blood to the muscles of your arms and legs much more quickly, because it will be your arms and legs which will get you out of danger;
- To keep your heart beating at this faster rate, you need extra oxygen to give the heart energy - so you **breathe much more quickly** as well to get this extra energy for the heart;
- Because of the extra energy being sent to your arms and legs, the muscles are more **tense**, more ready to spring into action;
- Because your arms and legs need this extra blood for the muscles, much of the blood which usually goes to the stomach area is redirected away from the stomach (which can cope with less during this emergency) and is sent to the arms and legs, this leads to the churning feeling in the stomach, the '**butterflies**';
- Just as your stomach can go on with a reduced blood supply so that your arms and legs get an extra supply, your brain can also temporarily cope with less blood. This leads to you feeling **light-headed and dizzy**;
- As your heart is pumping blood more quickly around your body, (especially to the

muscles) your temperature increases so to cool your body down, you perspire more.



That's why you feel **hot and sweaty**.

Today we do not have to worry about fighting or running away from woolly mammoths, but instead may have scary thoughts about other situations. These situations are not really dangerous, but because we think scary thoughts about them our bodies get us ready to fight or run away, just like in old times.

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!

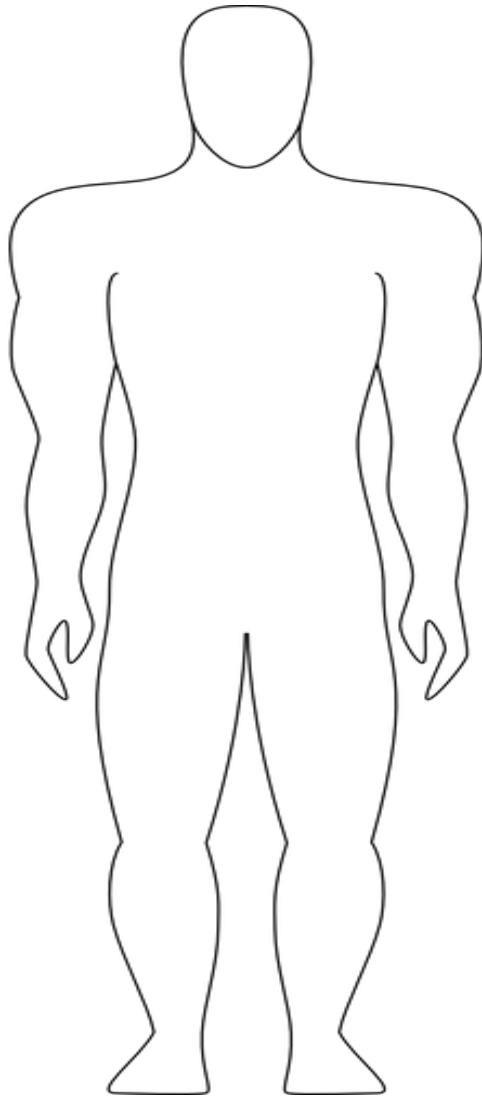
These changes in our bodies are not very nice and can make you feel even more scared, leading to more changes in the body.

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 physical symptoms you 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.



Relaxation techniques to help you calm down, when you are feeling anxious:

Slow breathing - from your lower stomach (diaphragm) breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. Breathe *in* two three...Breathe *out* two, three.

Deep muscle relaxation - holding tension for 10 seconds and then relaxing completely for 20 seconds. Take your time and work through different parts of your body from fists, forearms, biceps, shoulders and face, through to thighs (quads), and lower leg (calf).

Focus on a happy memory - Concentrate on a happy or calm image and think about it in detail, concentrating on what you can see, hear and feel in your body when you think about this situation.

Think calming thoughts - Remember that the way we think about something changes how we feel. So having worrying thoughts will make us feel worried and scared. If a worry thought pops into your head, you can fight it by swapping it for a calm thought. What calming thought you could concentrate on?

The idea of these techniques is to practice them when you are in a calm, relaxed environment. The more you can practice them when you are calm, the easier it will be to do them when you are feeling anxious. The goal is to be able to calm yourself down whenever and wherever you feel anxious. This will take a lot of practice, so don't worry if it doesn't work straight away, keep practicing!

My calming or happy thought:

Other things you can do that might help:

Positive self-talk

Keep reminding yourself that you can face your worries, that you are able to cope, 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 Mind of My Own 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.

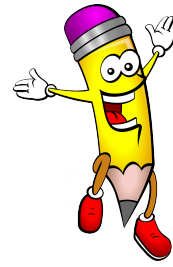
Go with it

It is normal to worry, everyone worries about things, accept 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 secondary school, try and remember the things you are looking forward to and focus on these instead.



Stuff you will need



In primary/middle school, most of the equipment you need is kept in the classroom, but at secondary school, you will 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, they might be very old but they did go to secondary school once too and might just be able to remember some of the things they used to take in their bags!

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 7/9 you may start to get more homework than you did in primary/middle school. Teachers will be a bit stricter about getting it done and handed in on time too. To help you do this you will probably be given a homework diary, where you or the subject 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 secondary school

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

The Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside

Go Big - The secondary school survival guide by Matthew Burton (from Educating Yorkshire)

If you feel you can't talk directly to someone 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.

