Primary to Secondary transition resource for Year 6s:
15-25 minutes

How to talk to Year 6 pupils about their relationships when moving to secondary school

This classroom activity helps Year 6 pupils prepare for the move to secondary school by exploring how friendships, routines and social situations may change, and how to manage those changes positively.

The activity gives pupils space to talk about worries, expectations and confidence, helping them feel more prepared for transition.

How this activity supports schools

This resource supports:

- Personal Development and Wellbeing
- Meaningful RSHE delivery
- Transition preparation
- Emotional readiness for change
- Safeguarding and independence awarenes

Objective

To help pupils:

- Understand that friendships may change during transition
- Feel confident about meeting new people
- Know how to handle common friendship challenges
- Know where to seek help if worried or upset

Step 1

2 mins

Starter question

Ask pupils:

"What are you most excited or worried about when starting secondary school?"

Collect quick responses and reassure pupils that mixed feelings are normal.

Step 2

5 mins

Scenario discussion

In pairs or small groups, ask pupils to discuss how they might respond to common transition situations.

Scenario examples

- Your best friend is placed in a different form group.
- People from your old friendship group start making new friends.
- You don't know anyone in your class on the first day.
- You see someone sitting alone at lunch.
- You feel lost or unsure where to go.
- You have been put in a form class with someone you find difficult.

Ask pupils:

- What could you do?
- Who could help?
- How might you manage the situation?
- How do you think the person might feel who is sitting alone at lunch?

Step 3 Whole-class discussion

5 mins

Bring the class back together and ask:

- Why do friendships sometimes change?
- How can we make people feel welcome?
- What helps someone feel confident when they feel nervous?

Highlight that many pupils worry about the same things.

Step 4 Building confidence for transition

5 mins

Discuss simple strategies pupils can use:

Making new friends

- Smile and say hello
- Ask simple questions
- Join clubs or activities
- Have boundaries and the confidence to be yourself and do the things you want to

Handling friendship changes

- It's okay to have different friends
- Old friendships don't have to end, but it's ok if they do
- Be open to new friendships

Asking for help

- Speak to teachers, form tutors or pastoral staff
- Talk to parents or carers
- Tell someone if something feels wrong.

Step 5 Reflection activity

5 mins

Ask pupils to complete one or more sentences:

- One thing I'm looking forward to is…
- One thing I feel nervous about is…
- One thing that will help me settle in is…
- Someone I can talk to if I'm worried is…

Key takeaway for pupils

Starting secondary school is a big change, and everyone feels nervous sometimes. New friendships will form, support is always available, and confidence grows over time.