

# TAKING THE LEAP

A handbook to support children transitioning  
into Year 7



# ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Leap Confronting Conflict *Transitions Programme* handbook.  
We want to help you have a successful transition to secondary school.

This handbook will help you to:

- Know yourself and your strengths
- Reflect on your journey at primary school
- Think about what makes a good friendship and making friends
- Explore your feelings and start to develop strategies to manage them
- Understand more about conflict and how to manage it
- Know who to ask for help

## How to use the handbook:

You can complete this handbook by yourself or with your parent or carer. Each page has instructions for each activity under 'WHAT DO I DO?' To complete the handbook, you will need a pen or a pencil, and some colouring pencils or pens. We've added some pages at the back of the booklet for your notes and sketches. We hope you have fun!



## FOR YOUR PARENT/CARER

This handbook will support you in preparing your child for secondary school. The exercises aim to get your child thinking about this transition, and some of the things that can help them through it.



Your child can complete most of this handbook alone. However, Leap recommends that you complete this handbook with your child to help create conversations around some of the areas explored and provide support where needed. This booklet provides an opportunity to start the conversation, to share your own experiences, and to explore your child's areas of concern and excitement around moving to secondary school.

# ABOUT ME

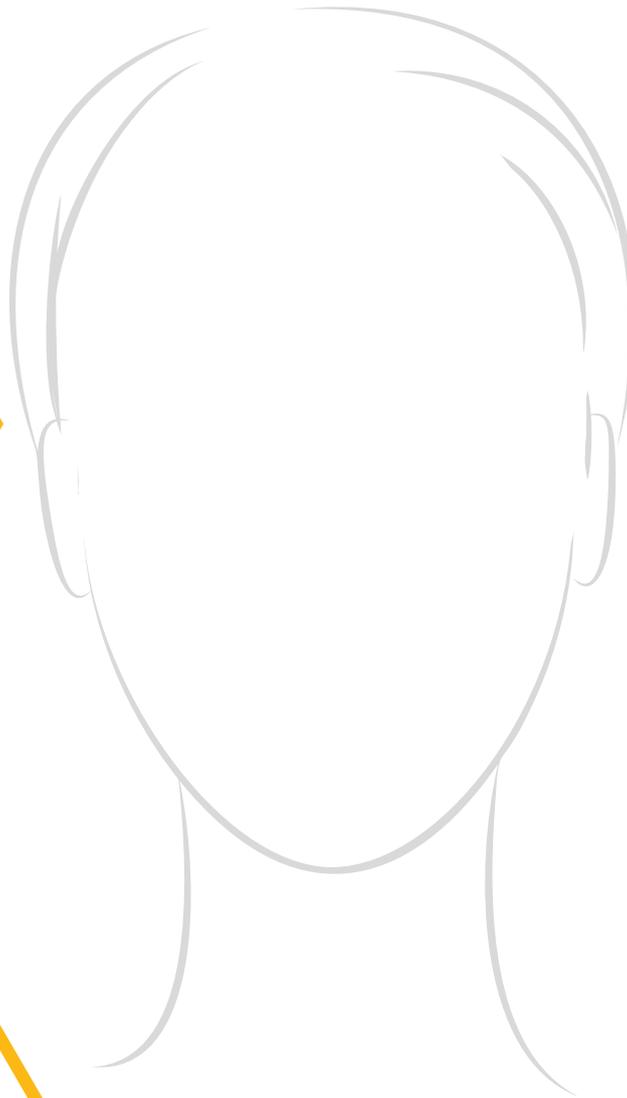
The first few weeks of secondary school involve getting to know new people, so it's important that you know who you are and what you like. You can share this information with your new friends.

**WHAT DO I DO?** We have started drawing a head in the box below. Complete the drawing of yourself. Write your name and age, and then complete the statements inside the different shapes.



Name:

Age:



# ABOUT MY PRIMARY SCHOOL

You have now left primary school. It will be good to think about what things you liked, what you've learnt and what you're taking with you when you go to secondary school. **WHAT DO I DO?** Try to answer the questions below.

My primary school is called: \_\_\_\_\_

My good friend at primary school is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Something I like about primary school is:

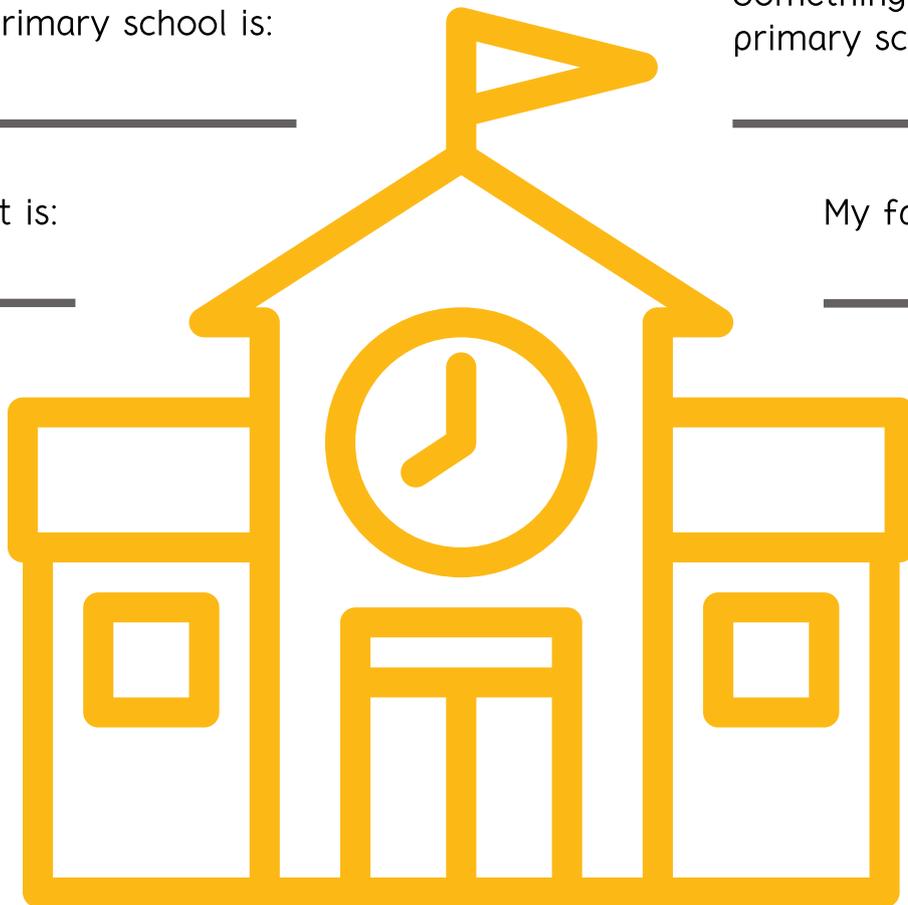
\_\_\_\_\_

My best subject is:

\_\_\_\_\_

My favourite teacher is:

\_\_\_\_\_



Something I will miss about my primary school is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Your primary school journey has come to an end. But, with every ending, there is a new beginning...

# ABOUT MY SECONDARY SCHOOL

Going to secondary school can bring up a lot of feelings and thoughts. Being aware of these helps you to prepare yourself and to think about what you can do to look after yourself, and where you can get help.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Using the boxes below, write or draw four things that you're nervous about, and four things you're excited about.

**I am nervous about:**

1	2
3	4

**I am excited about:**

1	2
3	4

Well done for completing this page and sharing what you're nervous about and what you're excited about. Did you manage to think of four things each? It's totally normal to feel nervous about starting secondary school, but there are lots of things to look forward to as well!

Over the next few pages we will explore some of these things, starting with making friends.

# ABOUT FRIENDSHIP



At secondary school, there will be lots of opportunities to make new friends. It is great if you know what makes a good friend and the things that are important to you about friendship.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Why not start by colouring in the image below. You can play around by adding different faces, hair, clothing, accessories and backgrounds.

## MY FRIENDS



### Reflection

Using the scale below from 0–10, how do you feel about making friends in secondary school?

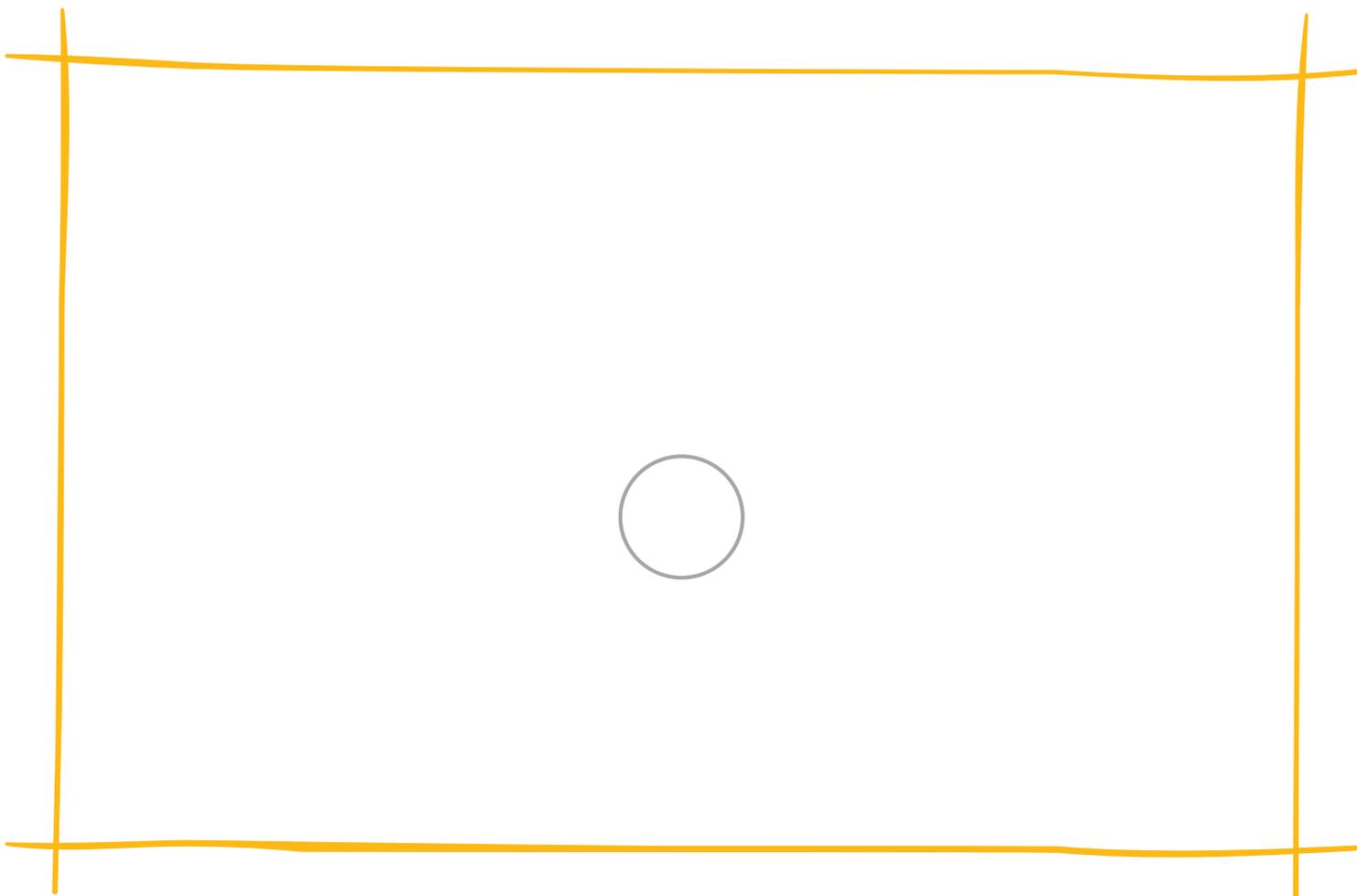


**WHAT DO I DO?** Now, let's draw a friendship map below to explore the friends you have and share what makes them a good friend for you.

1) In the box, you can see a circle: colour that in with a colour you like and label it 'me'. That represents you.

2) Now think about the friends you have and place them around you (the circle) in any order using different colours. Think about where you would place a best friend compared to other friends – closer to you on the map or further away? Also think about what shapes or symbols you can use to represent each friend. Draw these on the map and write their names above it.

3) Now you've got your friends placed on the map around you, write next to their shape or symbol at least one thing that makes that person a good friend. It could be the way they listen, or how they make you laugh and smile.



You have successfully created your friendship map. Well done!

**WHAT DO I DO?** Think about three things that make you a good friend:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Below is a box that contains things that a good friend does along with some things a good friend wouldn't do. Circle the things that make someone a good friend.

## A good friend is:

*Someone who makes me laugh*

*Someone who encourages me to do my best*

*Someone who listens to me when I talk*

*Someone who calls me names*

*Someone who plays games with me*

*Someone who says horrible things to me*

*Someone who comforts me when I'm sad*

*Someone who makes fun of me in front of others*

*Someone who respects me*

You've done really well to think about what makes a good friend – in yourself and in others. Later we will look at what to do when conflict arises in our friendship or when people do or say something we don't like.

Now, on the next page, it's time to practice making friends using some different situations.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Look at the situations below. Pick one and act it out with a member of your household to see how it feels making new friends.

If you need help, see the *Top Tips* section at the bottom of the page. Try pausing after each situation and think about how it felt. Share your thoughts with the person you're doing the role play with, and then give another one a go.

## Situations

-  Imagine you're on your break and you see someone playing football and you want to join in. What could you say or do?
-  Imagine you see another student who likes something you like, and you want to ask them about it. What could you say or do?
-  Imagine it's lunch time and you're looking for somewhere to sit. You see a space on a table with 5 other people, and you know one of them. What could you say or do?
-  Imagine you need a ruler but you realise you've forgotten yours. The student next to you has one. What could you say or do?
-  Imagine you can see someone in the class has made a TikTok with your favourite song as a backing track and you want to let them know that you like it. What could you say or do?

### Top Tips for Making Friends



- Say "Hi"
- Introduce yourself
- Comment on something you both share
- Ask questions about topics like school, home, what they like doing?

### Reflection

Using the scale below from 0–10, how do you feel now about making friends in secondary school?



# ABOUT MY FEELINGS



Knowing how you feel and being able to tell someone is important. First, let's explore what different emotions there are using the wordsearch below.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Try and find the 10 feelings listed below. The words appear horizontally, vertically and diagonally.



## Feelings

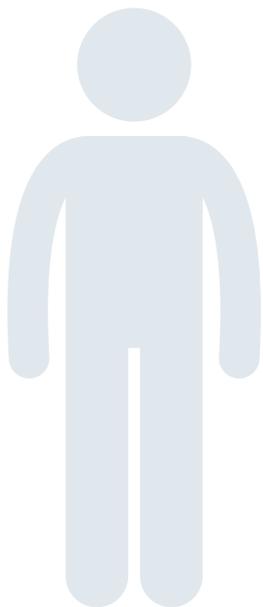
- Love
- Happiness
- Fear
- Disgust
- Sadness

- Anger
- Surprise
- Excitement
- Hope
- Frustration

# MY FEELINGS, CONTINUED...

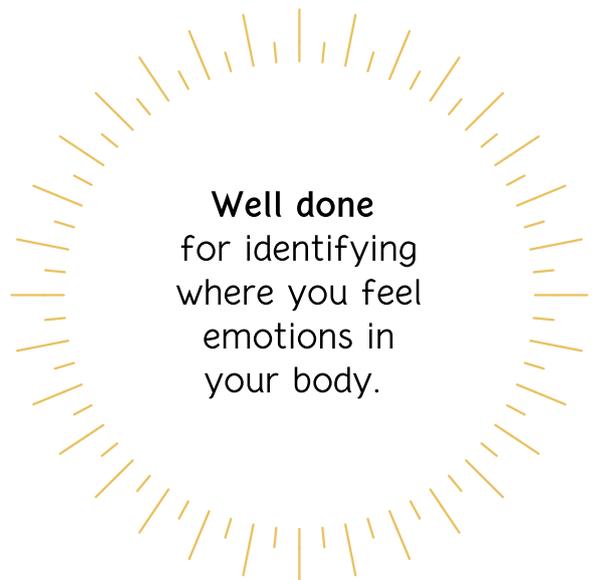
Well done for completing the wordsearch. Remember the drawing you did at the start on the 'About Me' page, where you drew how you look on the outside? Now we're going to look inside and notice what happens when you have a feeling, and where you feel it in your body.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Take a moment to think about the feelings listed below. Mark each feeling on the drawing, in the place where you feel it in your body. Use the colours that are next to that feeling. For example, if you feel anger in your chest, you would colour it in red. If you feel happiness in your face, you would colour that in yellow.



## Feelings

- Fear – PURPLE
- Sadness – BLUE
- Surprise – ORANGE
- Anger – RED
- Love – PINK
- Happiness – YELLOW
- Disgust – GREEN



## Behaviours

**WHAT DO I DO?** When we have these feelings, we can behave in certain ways. Let's explore this further. Look at the behaviours to the right and circle the ones you are familiar with.

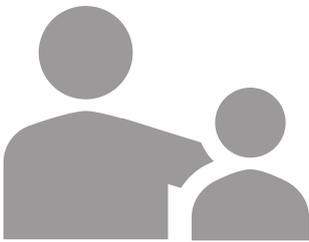


- Shout
- Do something I enjoy
- Laugh
- Cry
- Smile
- Hit something
- Run away

# ABOUT LOOKING AFTER MYSELF

Sometimes, we can have strong emotions. Learning how to look after ourselves is important. One way to support ourselves in these moments is to practice ways to relax, such as the breathing activity below.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Below is a relaxation script that you could try, maybe asking your parent/carer/older sibling to help. Find a comfortable position in your chair, not touching anyone. Sit comfortably and relax your gaze.



**Parent/Carer:** Set up some meditation music for your child by simply typing 'meditation music for kids' into YouTube. Pick a video and press play. Ask your child to sit in a chair with their feet flat on the floor and arms resting at their sides. Explain to them that you are going to read the script below and all they need to do is listen and follow.

*Start by taking a few deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.*

*Now close your eyes and continue taking deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth.*

*Wiggle into your chair. Feel your back against the chair and your feet firmly on the ground. Your arms should be resting at your side or on your thighs.*

The script continues on page 19...

## Reflection

- How did you find the activity?
- Did you notice anything physically?
- Is it something you will try again?

*Answer in the cloud below*

## Thoughts

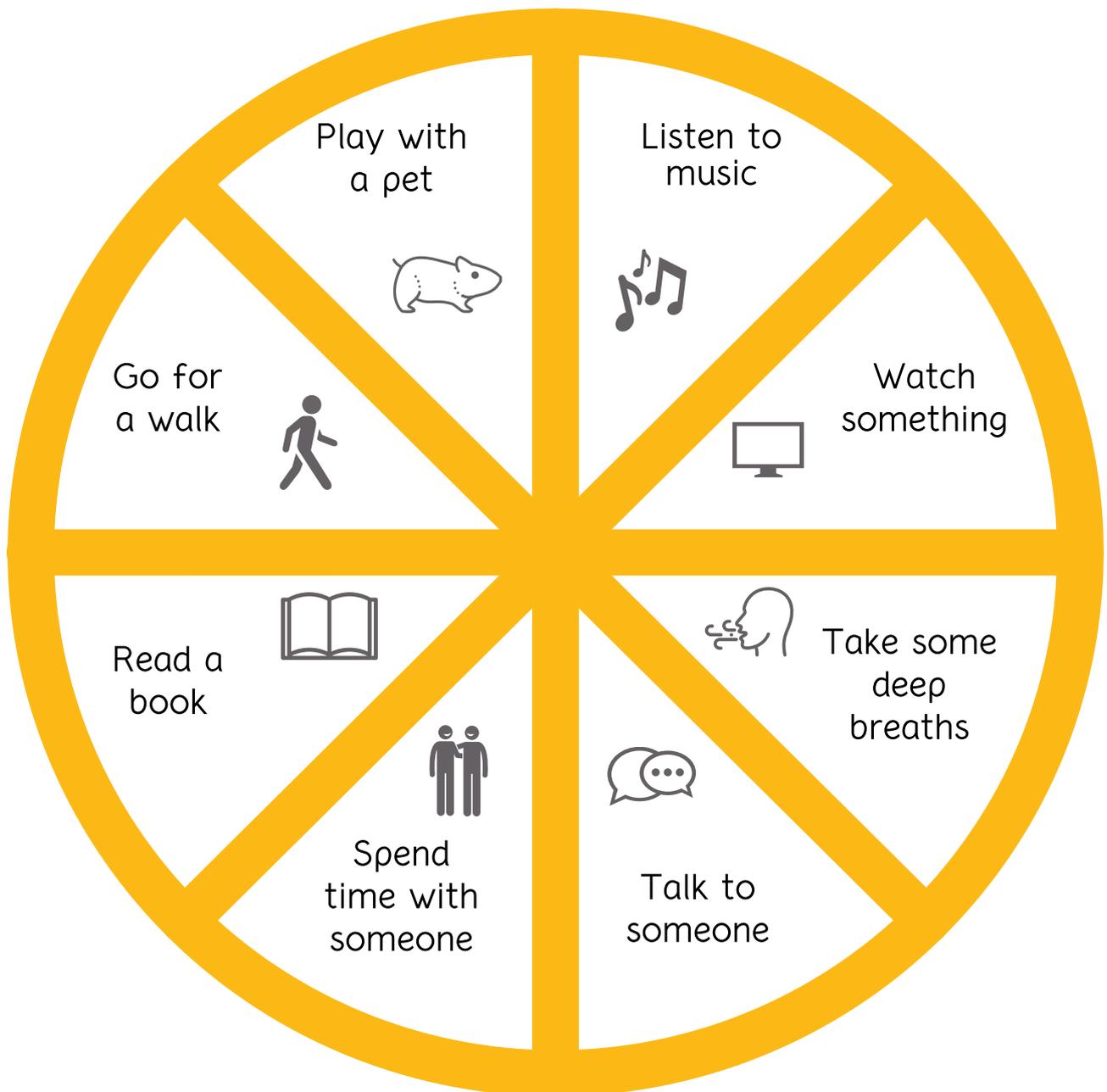
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# ABOUT LOOKING AFTER MYSELF

Well done for giving the relaxation activity a go. That's one way of calming yourself when experiencing strong emotions. Below is a *calm wheel* with some other suggestions of things you could do to look after yourself.



**WHAT DO I DO?** Circle three things from the calm wheel above that you would like to try. See which of them you can keep doing over the next few weeks.

# ABOUT CONFLICT

We recognise that conflict is something that happens every day for all of us, including at secondary school. The first step in managing conflict is knowing what it is and what it means for you.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Below is a word storm looking at conflict in secondary school. You can see there are already some examples of types of conflict that might happen. Can you think of any more? Add them using a black pen.

## **Conflict with a teacher.**

E.g. a student gets blamed for something they didn't do

What is conflict at secondary school?

## **Conflict with yourself.**

E.g. not making friends

## **Conflict with another student.**

E.g. someone pushes in front of you

**CONFLICT**

What are some of the feelings in conflict?

Where in school might this happen?

**WHAT DO I DO?** Once you have added your own conflict examples, underline the ones that you are most worried about. Then, choosing a different colour, write some of the feelings that you might experience during conflict. Take a look at the feelings we explored earlier on if this helps you. Finally, choose a different colour and write down some of the places in school that these types of conflict might happen.

On the next page, we will look at how you can manage conflict in secondary school.

# What can you do if conflict happens?

**WHAT DO I DO?** Read the conflict situations below. Then read the different ways you could respond. Select which of the ways you would respond in each of the situations by writing the letter A–E next to each situation.

## Situations

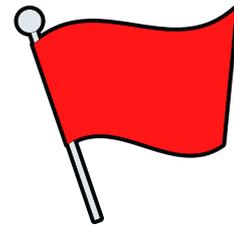
- You get detention for something someone else did
- You get called a name by another student in your class
- You feel like you're not doing well at any subject and you want to stop school
- You don't understand something from your homework which needs to be handed in the next day.

## Ways of responding

- A) Tell a teacher
- B) Speak to a friend or family member
- C) Walk away
- D) Take some deep breaths
- E) Give yourself some space to think

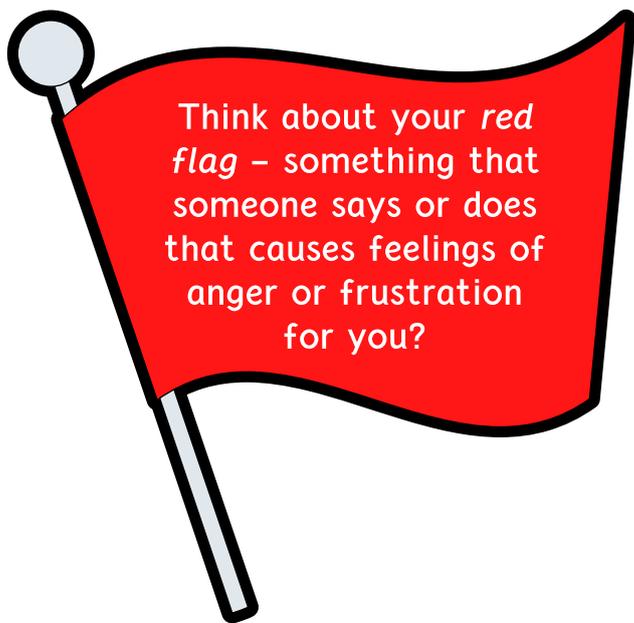


# ABOUT MY RED FLAG



We have thought about what conflict is, what it might look like, and some ways of responding to it. Now it's time to look at conflict for you, focusing on what someone says or does that can make you upset or angry. We often call this a red flag. It's important to identify our red flags so we can think about how we manage ourselves when someone waves them.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Do you know what your red flag is? For example, a red flag might be when someone takes your food without asking. Give it a go using the prompts below.



**1** My red flag is:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2** When my red flag is waved:

My feelings are...

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



In my body, I feel...

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Well done!

You have identified one of your red flags and explored what happens in your body and mind when the red flag is waved. Often this is called **reaction**. Let's explore what this means on the next page...

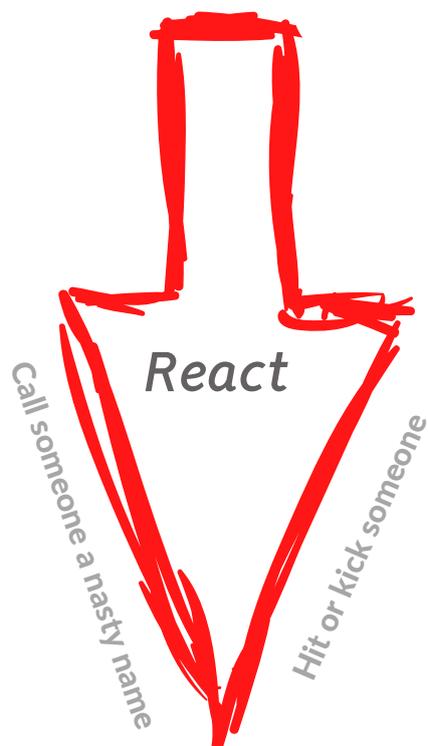
My first thought is...

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# ABOUT REACTING AND RESPONDING

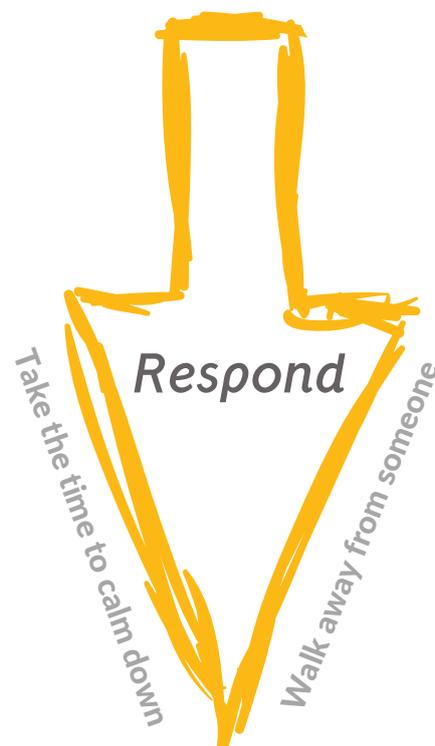
When someone waves your red flag, you react:



**Reaction** involves little thinking. It means that our emotions have control over us.

This does not always get us the **outcome** we want.

When someone waves your red flag, you respond:



**Responding** involves more thought. It means that we have control over our emotions.

More often, this helps us to achieve the **outcome** we want.

## Reflection:

Can you recall a time when you responded rather than reacted in a conflict situation?

A useful tool to help you to respond rather than react is something called an **'I' Statement**. Turn to the next page to find out more.

# ABOUT COMMUNICATION IN CONFLICT

Sometimes it can be difficult to say what we feel when we are in conflict with someone. Using an '**I** Statement' can help with this. This means talking from your own point of view. '**I** Statements' can make it easier for the other person to listen to you and understand your experience.



## Try Asking

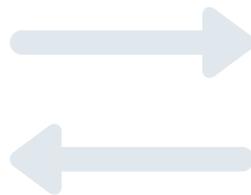
- What happened?
- What did you feel?
- What did you think?
- How have you been affected?
- What will make it better?



## Try Saying

- I feel...
- ...because...
- I'd like it if...

On the left are some questions which might be helpful to ask yourself. On the right are some ways of responding to questions and forming your '**I** Statements' to help achieve a better outcome



## Top Tip

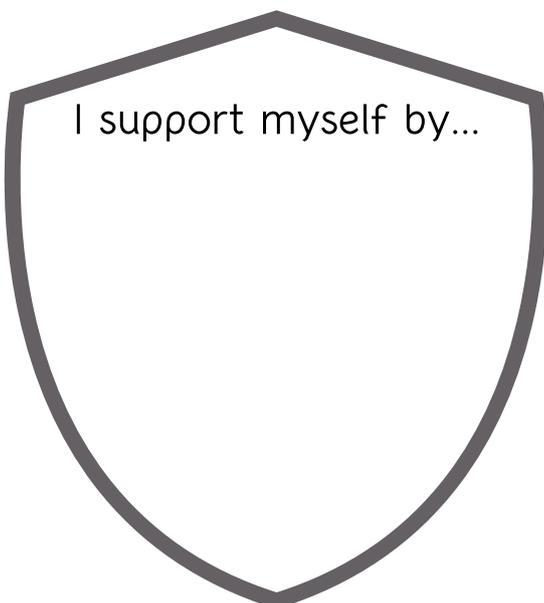
When we **react**, we might not be thinking about what we really feel or want. Taking time to think about this before you speak to the other person may help you. You may want to do something to calm down so that you can think, like in the *calm wheel* on page 12. Why not practice at home first?

**WHAT DO I DO?** Use the notes space on page 20 of this handbook to practice your '**I** Statements'. Good luck!

# ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE LEAP?

You are almost at the end of the handbook. You have done really well to get this far. Hopefully you are feeling prepared since starting year 7. We have one final activity which will be a reminder of what we have covered so far.

**WHAT DO I DO?** Fill in the shields below with words or sketches to complete the statements, thinking about all the things you have learnt from this handbook. You can share your completed shields with family members or friends!



# Breathing Exercise

## Script continued

*Continue to take those deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth...*

*Now imagine that you are resting on top of a white fluffy cloud high in the sky, just floating peacefully. You are moving very slowly, feeling as light as a feather on that cloud. Feeling safe and peaceful...*

*Now, as I count to 3, imagine that with each second, you are sinking deeper and deeper in that cloud and it is surrounding you. 1....2....3...*

*You are in the cloud, feeling light and peaceful. Notice how light and relaxed your body feels, how light your feet feel. Notice that light and relaxed feeling travelling up your legs to reach the rest of your body.*

*Notice your arms, your neck, your head. How relaxed your body and mind feel. Now, as I count down from 3, get ready to come out of the cloud and open your eyes slowly when you feel ready. 3....2....1...*

**Any time you feel strong emotions, you can give this breathing relaxation activity a go. You have your own personal cloud ride and it is free to use any time you like!**

# YOUR NOTES

*'I' Statements: Continued from page 17*

**Try saying...**



I feel... (refer back to the word search on page 9)

Because...

I'd like it if...

**Try saying...**



I feel...

Because...

I'd like it if...

# YOUR NOTES AND SKETCHES

# Thank You and Well Done!

Well done for completing this handbook. We hope you have found this resource both fun and helpful, and that it has given you confidence in *Taking the Leap* from primary to secondary school.

Here is a list of things you have achieved by completing this handbook:

- ✓ You have spent time reflecting on yourself and your strengths
- ✓ You have spent time reflecting on your journey at primary school
- ✓ You have spent time thinking about friendship
- ✓ You have spent time thinking about how you feel & how to manage those feelings
- ✓ You have spent time developing your understanding of conflict
- ✓ You have spent time exploring tools to manage yourself in conflict situations

From everyone at Leap, we would like to wish you the best of luck with the start of school in September!

Leap Confronting Conflict (Leap) is proud to have created this resource. We invite teachers, staff, parents and carers to share their comments and feedback on how we can improve design and content. Please email Alex McKell, Innovation Manager, on [alex.mckell@leapcc.org.uk](mailto:alex.mckell@leapcc.org.uk) with any feedback.

If you would like to include the *Taking the Leap* handbook in your school's or organisation's core curriculum, we ask that you contact Alex to discuss in the first instance.

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