

## School Belonging 'Ask' Resource Pack

### Primary version

<b>Part 1 – Conversation Starters (Sentence Stems)</b>	
<p>These are designed to encourage safe, open sharing. Staff can use them in small groups, circle time, PSHE, tutor sessions, or one-on-one check-ins to encourage children to share their feelings about belonging.</p> <p>You can print them on cards, display on a slide, or give pupils their own copy to complete.</p>	
<p><b>KS1 (ages 5–7)</b> <i>Keep language simple, concrete, and linked to everyday experiences</i></p>	<p><b>KS2 (ages 7–11)</b> <i>A little more detail, starting to explore feelings and reasons.</i></p>
I feel happy at school when...	I feel part of my school when...
I like playing / learning with...	One thing that helps me feel welcome is...
My teacher helps me feel I belong when... <i>(other adults too)</i>	I feel most included when...
I feel safe when...	A time I felt proud to be in this school was...
I feel part of my class when...	I feel safe at school when...
One place I really like in school is...	One thing adults in school do that helps me feel I belong is...
I feel like I belong in my school because...	If I could change one thing to help me feel more included, it would be...
My friend helps me feel like I belong when they...	Belonging to me means...
I can help others feel like they belong by...	I feel most like myself when I am with...
	A time I helped someone else feel they belonged was when...
	Something that makes our class a good place to belong is...
	A place in school where I feel I belong is...

<b>Part 2 – Draw and Write: “My Places of Belonging Map”</b>	
<b>Purpose:</b> This activity helps children visualise and express, in words and pictures, where they feel they belong both <b>in school</b> and <b>outside school</b> .	
<b>Instructions for pupils:</b>	
<p>Fold a page in half (or use a worksheet split into two sections: “In School” / “Outside of School”. Sample below).</p> <p>In the “<i>At School</i>” section, ask them to draw a picture of a place, a person, or an activity that makes them feel like they belong. . They can add a sentence explaining their drawing. On the other side, draw a place outside school where you feel you belong. Add words or short sentences about why.</p> <p>In the “<i>Outside of School</i>” section, they should do the same, drawing a place (e.g., home, a club), person (e.g., family, friends), or activity (e.g., a hobby) that makes them feel they belong</p> <p>(<i>Optional</i>) Facilitate a sharing session where children can voluntarily share their “Belonging Maps.”</p>	
<b>Adaptations</b>	
<b>KS1:</b> Give them simple prompts and sentence starters on the page.	<b>KS2:</b> Encourage more detail in both drawings and written parts.

### Part 3 – Safe Spaces Activity: "My School Spaces"

**Purpose:** This is an emotional literacy tool for children to think about their physical and emotional safety in different school environments. It helps identify physical and social spaces where pupils feel safe, unsafe, or unsure, and can be used to inform work around belonging.

**Note:** The aim of the activity is to gather information. Some sensitivity is needed – for example not encouraging children to share their work with other pupils – especially if they have identified spaces as ‘unsafe’. Follow up children who have identified feeling unsafe. E.g. are they being bullied or picked on in those spaces.

#### Materials:

- Printed simple school map (floor plan) or list of different school areas: (classrooms, playground, corridors, toilets, lunch hall, library, school office etc.) – see sample below.
- Red, green, and amber stickers or coloured pencils /pens.

#### Instructions for pupils:

1. Look at the school map.
2. Mark places in **green** for a space where you always feel safe and happy.
3. Mark places in , **yellow** for a space where you sometimes feel unsafe or unsure.
4. Mark places in and **red** for a space where you feel unsafe.
5. Encourage pupils to think about **why** they chose each colour. For example, "I chose green for the library because it's quiet and I love reading," or "I chose yellow for the corridor because it can be noisy and crowded."
6. (*Optional*) In a separate box, write a sentence about one thing that would help you feel safer in a red/amber space.

#### Adaptations:

- **KS1:** Use pictures or symbols instead of a full map (playground, classroom, etc.) and colour in happy/sad faces.
- **KS2:** Include key adults they feel safe with in certain spaces.

## Part 4 - Guidance for School Staff

### Using the Tools

- **Create a Safe Environment:** Before starting any activity, make it clear that there's no right or wrong answer and that all feelings are valid. Emphasise confidentiality and respect. Encourage peer listening and respectful responses.
- **Be clear about confidentiality,** but also explain that if someone shares something worrying, staff will follow safeguarding procedures. Allow pupils to pass if they don't want to share verbally — they can draw or write instead.
- **Be a Facilitator, not a Judge:** Your role is to guide the conversation, not to provide answers or pass judgment. Use open-ended questions like "Can you tell me more about that?". Validate feelings before moving to problem-solving
- **Observe and Listen:** Pay attention to what's being said and what isn't. Non-verbal cues can be very telling. The activities can reveal students who may be struggling.
- **Follow Up:** These activities are conversation starters. They should not be one-off events. The data and insights gained should be used to inform school-wide strategies.

### Building on the Activities

- **Taking Action:** If a student identifies a specific area as "yellow" or "red," you could explore this further by asking, "What would make this space feel more green?" This could lead to a class project to improve a shared space.
- **Curriculum Links:** Integrate these themes into other subjects. For example, in English, students could write stories about a character's journey to find where they belong. In PSHE, you could explore concepts like empathy and inclusion.
- **Link to whole-school SEL work:** Embed findings into PSHE, anti-bullying strategies, buddy systems, or student-led welcome teams for new pupils.
- **Whole-School Initiatives:** Use the insights gained to inform a whole-school approach to belonging and the school's wellbeing policy.
- **Follow-up discussion:** Share anonymised themes with staff or school council to work on solutions.
- **Action planning:** Use safe/unsafe space maps to inform supervision, environmental changes, or timetable adjustments.
- **Peer voice projects:** Invite pupils to design "welcome packs" for new students, or posters promoting kindness and inclusion.
- **Regular check-ins:** Repeat the activities each term to see if perceptions are changing.

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## Resources for Secondary School (KS3)

### Part 1 - Conversation Starters (Sentence Stems)

These stems are designed to facilitate deeper, more reflective conversations about identity and social dynamics. Encourage reflection, openness, and possible solutions.

#### KS3 (ages 11–14)

- I feel I belong at school when...
- A time I felt left out at school was... and what would have helped is...
- I feel comfortable being myself at school when...
- One thing school could do to help everyone feel included is...
- I feel safe in school when...
- I feel respected by my peers when...
- If I could redesign part of school life to improve belonging, I would...
- I feel a sense of belonging in a group when...
- The difference between 'fitting in' and 'belonging' is...
- A time I felt like I didn't belong was when... and what helped was...
- I believe our school community could be more inclusive by...
- When I see someone alone, I can...
- Belonging to me is a feeling of...

## Part 2 - "Identity & Community Collage"

This activity moves beyond simple 'draw and write' to a more abstract exploration of identity and belonging.

### Instructions:

1. Provide magazines, newspapers, and art supplies.
2. Ask students to create a collage on a large piece of paper. One half of the paper should represent their individual identity, using images, words, and colours that describe who they are.
3. The other half should represent the communities they belong to (school, family, sports teams, online groups, etc.).
4. Encourage students to consider the connection between their individual identity and their sense of belonging within a community. What parts of themselves do they share with others?
5. This can lead to a discussion about intersectionality and how people can belong to multiple groups at once.

### Part 3 - Safe Spaces Activity: "Mapping My School Experience"

- This is intended to prompt students to reflect on the emotional and social aspects of different school spaces.

#### Instructions:

1. Give each student a list of school spaces (e.g., classroom, common area, sports hall, canteen, locker area, toilets, student support area).
2. Ask them to rate their feeling of **safety** and **belonging** in each space on a scale of 1-5 (1 = low, 5 = high).
3. Follow up with a written reflection: *Why did you give these ratings? What factors (e.g., noise level, people present, supervision) influence how you feel in these spaces?*
4. Invite them to suggest changes or improvements for spaces with lower ratings.
5. This activity can provide valuable qualitative data about student experiences and provide starting points for taking action.

# School Belonging 'Ask' Resource Pack

## Guidance for School Staff

### Using the Tools

- **Create a Safe Environment:** Before starting any activity, make it clear that there's no right or wrong answer and that all feelings are valid. Emphasise confidentiality and respect. Encourage peer listening and respectful responses.
- **Be clear about confidentiality,** but also explain that if someone shares something worrying, staff will follow safeguarding procedures. Allow pupils to pass if they don't want to share verbally — they can draw or write instead.
- **Be a Facilitator, not a Judge:** Your role is to guide the conversation, not to provide answers or pass judgment. Use open-ended questions like "Can you tell me more about that?". Validate feelings before moving to problem-solving
- **Observe and Listen:** Pay attention to what's being said and what isn't. Non-verbal cues can be very telling. The activities can reveal students who may be struggling.
- **Follow Up:** These activities are conversation starters. They should not be one-off events. The data and insights gained should be used to inform school-wide strategies.

### Building on the Activities

- **Taking action:** Use the data from the "Mapping My School Experience" activity to form student focus groups. They could be empowered to propose solutions and changes to improve the school environment for everyone
- **Curriculum Links:** Integrate these themes into other subjects. For example, in English, students could write stories about a character's journey to find where they belong. In PSHE, you could explore concepts like empathy and inclusion. **Empathy Lab UK – have excellent resources and book suggestions**
- **Link to whole-school SEL work:** Embed findings into PSHE, anti-bullying strategies, buddy systems, or student-led welcome teams for new pupils.
- **Whole-School Initiatives:** Use the insights gained to inform a whole-school approach to belonging and the school's wellbeing policy.
- **Follow-up discussion:** Share anonymised themes with staff or school council to work on solutions.
- **Action planning:** Use safe/unsafe space maps to inform supervision, environmental changes, or timetable adjustments.
- **Peer voice projects:** Invite pupils to design "welcome packs" for new students, or posters promoting kindness and inclusion.
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# School Belonging 'Ask' Resource Pack

## Staff Reflection Sheet

*(To be completed after running conversation starters, draw-and-write, or safe/unsafe spaces activity)*

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class/Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff name:** \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Overall sense of belonging in this group

Mostly strong sense of belonging

Mixed – some pupils strongly connected, others less so

Mostly low sense of belonging

### 2. Key themes pupils shared

*(Summarise main ideas without naming individuals)*

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### 3. Safe/unsafe spaces identified

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### Safe spaces mentioned most often:

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### Unsafe or uncomfortable spaces mentioned:

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**4. Notable positive moments**

*(e.g. surprising examples of kindness, inclusion, peer support)*

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**5. Areas of concern or follow-up needed**

*(Include any safeguarding concerns following school policy)*

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**6. Ideas or actions suggested by pupils**

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**7. Next steps for staff team**

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*How can this be shared to ensure insight can be built into school-wide actions, not just within one class?*

# "My Places of Belonging"

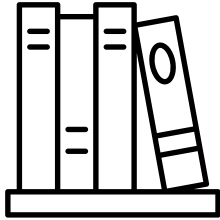
In school

outside school

# Mapping Safe and Unsafe Spaces in School

Think about the different spaces in school - classrooms, playground, corridors, toilets, dining hall, library.

1. Mark places you feel safe with a **green dot**.
2. Mark places you feel unsafe with a **red dot**.
3. Mark places you're unsure about with an **amber/yellow dot**.

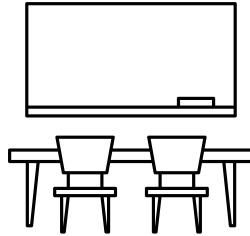


Library

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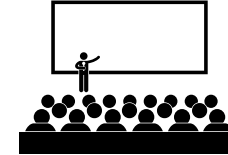


Classrooms

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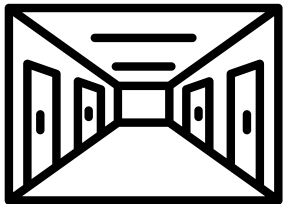


Assembly Hall

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Corridors

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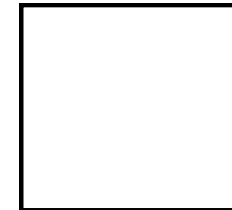


Toilets

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Other spaces?

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Playground

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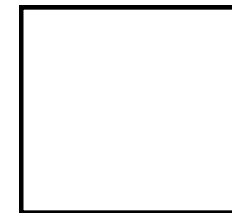


Dining Hall

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Other spaces?

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write a sentence about one thing that would help you feel safer in a red/amber space