

TOP TIPS: WHAT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAY THEY NEED FROM SCHOOLS

We spoke with primary schools to ask pupils what they wanted from the week – to help shape the activities, messaging, tips and advice we provide.

WHAT DOES BELONGING MEAN TO YOU?

'Feeling that you have a place where you are always welcome and valued as either place or set of people.'

'Places we go and are part of like clubs.'

'Belonging means that you belong in your family and you fit in with your friends.'

'Belonging is a place that you feel comfortable just to be yourself.'

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT OUR OWN SENSE OF BELONGING?

'By finding a place where you feel valued and welcome.'

'Others helping and listening to me If I have a fallout with friends, I want to spend time fixing the friendship with an adult or sit together in class.'

'By making you feel calm and help you stop carrying problems by sharing them such as at Place2Be.'

HELPING OTHER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL THEY BELONG

'Be kind'

'If you see someone left out then you can ask them to play'

'By asking people how they are and if they are okay'

'Make sure everyone has friends and feels included'

'By reminding everyone to include everyone and put yourself in other's shoes'



ASSEMBLY SLIDES

– see here for links

THIS IS MY PLACE ART ACTIVITY



**CLICK HERE to view and
download the Art Activity**

Additional ideas from children and young people

- 'You could get everyone to draw themselves holding the earth and then draw important people on the earth like all your friends'.
- 'Drawing a human that looks like you and writing things that you enjoy and places/spaces where you feel like you belong'.
- 'The game - heads up where you put emotions or feelings on your head and people have to describe it'.



CLASS ACTIVITY:

KEY STAGE 1

"WELCOME CIRCLE" (4–7 year olds)

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Children practise noticing others, using names, and inviting peers so everyone feels included.



MATERIALS

- A soft toy or "talking pebble" to hold while speaking
- Name cards (optional)
- A simple poster with the sentence

SETUP

Arrange children in a circle on the carpet so everyone can see each other. Place the soft toy in the centre.

STEPS

1. EXPLAIN (1 minute) Say the activity is called "Welcome Circle." Explain that when someone holds the toy they get to speak and everyone else listens.

2. MODEL (1 minute) Teacher holds the toy, says their name and one thing they like (e.g., "I'm Ms. Lee and I like drawing"), then passes the toy to the child on their right.

3. ROUND 1 (3–5 minutes)

Names

Each child who holds the toy says their name clearly. Teacher praises and helps any child who needs a prompt.

4. ROUND 2 (3–5 minutes)

Invite and Share

Do a second quick round: invite those children who would like to, to say their name and invite someone to join them in a short, activity today (e.g., "I'm Sam and I'd like to invite Ava to build with me at the blocks").

5. CLOSURE (1 minute) Teacher highlights two or three examples of invites heard and says, "That's how we help everyone belong." Teacher encourages those who haven't shared out loud to think about who they might like to invite to join with an activity.

SIMPLE RULES TO REINFORCE

- Wait your turn with hands quiet.
- Listen when someone has the toy.
- Use friendly words: "Would you like to...?" or "Come play with me."

DIFFERENTIATION

- For younger or shy children, let them pass the toy and wave instead of speaking, then encourage one-word responses.
- Use name cards for children learning to recognise names.
- Pair speech with visuals (picture of activity) for children who need it.

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Create a "Welcome Wall" where each child puts a drawing of someone they invited that week.
- Repeat the activity at the start of each week and celebrate when everyone has been invited at least once.

OUTCOME

Children practise naming, inviting, and listening—small, repeatable actions that build everyday belonging in the classroom.

CLASS ACTIVITY:

KEY STAGE 2



BELONGING MOSAIC

(Ages 8-11)

LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Children practise noticing similarities and differences, using names, and inviting others so everyone feels included.

MATERIALS

- Coloured paper squares (one per pupil) or paper pre-cut into squares
- Pens, crayons, stickers
- Large sheet of heavy paper or a board for the class mosaic
- Name labels (optional)

SETUP

Arrange children in small mixed groups (3–5) so each group will make a section of the mosaic. Place materials on a central table so groups take what they need.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Provide templates or stickers for children who need support.
- For children who are shy, let a partner read for them.
- Use larger tiles or pre-drawn symbols for fine-motor support.

EXTENSIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

- Display the mosaic in the classroom with a label: "Everyone Belongs" and add new tiles when new pupils join.
- Weekly "tile time": invite one child to bring a new tile that represents something they tried that week.
- Use the mosaic as a prompt for writing: a short sentence or poem about belonging.

STEPS

1. WARM-UP (5 minutes)

Quick circle: each child says their name and one thing they like (one word). **Teacher models:** "I'm Ms. Lee and I like drawing."

2. CREATE PERSONAL SQUARE (10 minutes)

Each pupil decorates their paper square to show something about themselves: a hobby, a favourite colour, a family pet, a symbol, or a short word that matters to them. Encourage pictures and labels.

3. SHARE IN GROUPS (5–7 minutes)

In groups of 3–5, pupils place their tiles in a small circle and take turns saying one sentence about their tile while others listen. Each child says, "My name is ____ and this shows ____."

4. BUILD THE CLASS MOSAIC (5–7 minutes)

Groups place their tiles together on the large sheet to form the class mosaic. Encourage groups to arrange tiles so similar colours or themes touch, showing connection across differences.

5. REFLECTION AND NAMING (3–5 minutes)

Teacher points to 3–4 tiles and asks the owner to share how it felt to be noticed. Finish with a class sentence: "Our mosaic shows we all belong."

