

KEY STAGE 4 TRANSITION

A guide for young people and families following the Covid-19 Pandemic



A note from a Psychologist...

Your transition into post-16 learning is going to look and feel different this year. There might not be the opportunities you expected to visit your new college or training centre, or meet the staff and other students before you start. The pandemic has meant that you've experienced a lot of change in a short space of time. Psychologists know that change affects us all in different ways. It affects how we think, feel and act.

Are you feeling the same now about college as you were? Do you feel excited and motivated, or has this changed? Are you questioning some of the decisions you've made or do you feel more confident about them?

This guide will help you to tune in to how you are responding to all the changes and to recognise the strengths that you have that will enable you to successfully transition into this new phase of your life.

NOTICING THE POSITIVES IN OUR LIVES CAN HELP US FEEL SAFE AND READY FOR CHANGE. SOME POSITIVE THINGS WE HAVE NOTICED OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS...

- Schools across Darlington, and the rest of the UK, staying open for the people who need it most!



- The NHS working so hard every day to keep us all safe!



- People looking out for other people in their communities

- Everyone keeping in touch more via telephone and social media



- Rainbows popping up all over the place to make people smile every day



- People appreciating the smaller things in life!



**Psychologists
answer your...**

Common Questions!

“What if....”

Q. All of my mates are going to a different College to me. I'm a bit worried I'm not going to know anyone or make friends

A. *It's normal to worry about making friends at college. There are often different groups on social media that help people to link up with others who will be attending the same college. Call, message or tweet the college and they'll probably be able to point you in the right direction. It is likely that you will have similar interests to people who have chosen the same courses as you, which can always be a good start to a friendship – and staff will do lots of activities to help you get to know each other. Also, remember, just because you aren't going to the same college as the friends you have now, that doesn't mean you can't stay friends with them! Keep in touch using social media!*

Q. I'm worried about the pandemic. Will I get poorly if I attend College?

A. *Lots of people will be feeling like this. We don't know how quickly treatments or vaccines for Covid-19 will be developed. What we do know is that most people who get it recover well. Colleges will be putting lots of information online explaining what they are doing to keep everyone safe. Look out for this, and if you are still unsure, get in touch by phone or online. No question is a silly question!*

Q. My brain doesn't feel like it's working anymore. What happens if I can't get back into learning?

A. *Brains quickly switch on to the task in hand. Whilst you might have felt more 'switched off' over the past few weeks, you'll switch back on faster than you think. Being back in a routine and having structured lessons will help, and the natural nerves you'll have in a new environment will help you feel alert and take in new information. Before starting college, try and ease yourself into a routine that's closer to the one you'll be following – aim to get up and get to bed at specific times, perhaps try doing a bit of reading or listening to some podcasts to let your brain know that it's going to get busier. College staff know that you've had lots of change and upheaval recently so will ease you into learning gently. Everyone will be feeling the same, but remember to tell someone you trust if you do start to feel overwhelmed.*

Q. My initial plans for College have changed. What shall I do?

A. *Deciding what to do after GCSEs is a big decision, but whatever you decide, remember it isn't set in stone and plenty of people are there to help you find the right path. If you're doubting your plans, think carefully about whether this is because you are generally feeling uncertain and unsettled due to what's going on in the world, or whether you really do need to explore different options. Talk to friends and family. Check out social media pages of different colleges and courses for information about online tours and information sessions. Get in touch with the college you're interested in and there'll be someone to answer your questions, especially on and after results day. Don't feel you need to make the decision alone.*

Q. I thought it would be really cool not to have to wear a uniform anymore, but what if people don't like my clothes? What should I wear to College?

A. *Some colleges will have set requirements about what you should wear. Make sure you check these. Wear something you feel comfortable in and that makes you feel good. College is a chance to be yourself! It might help some people to plan what they want to wear on their first day, to save becoming worried about that on the first morning. Remember that there is much more to who you are than what you are wearing.*

A Time to Reflect...

In times where things feel a bit uncertain, it can be helpful to think about how we might have faced similar challenges already in our lives. That way, we can reflect upon what helped us during those times, and think about what we can learn from them which may be helpful in the current situation.

We have created a table below for you to try to complete. This will require some thought! Don't rush it. Try to make it as useful an experience as possible. You could always ask a member of your family to do it with you, if this would be something that you **would find helpful**.

	Think about a time you have done this before. What was it like? How did you succeed?	Who would have known that you had done this? What would they have noticed?	What advice would you give to a friend who needed to do this now?
Dealing with a change			
Building a new relationship			
Learning something new			
Pursuing a goal			