

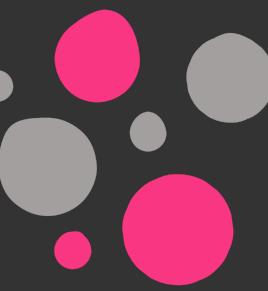


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Managing Tricky Transitions

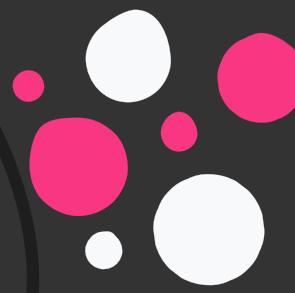
Practical strategies to help
students re-engage, reconnect,
and thrive after a break.



Understanding the possible impact of transitions

Even short breaks can disrupt routines and affect students' wellbeing. Some return refreshed, others anxious or socially hesitant. This resource provides practical, student-focused strategies to help all learners settle back into school successfully.





The 4 Steps Framework

For Successful Transitions



Step 1: Check In

Mood meters, emoji charts, or 1–2–1 check-ins

Journaling prompts:

- “Something I’m looking forward to this week...”
- “One thing that’s worrying me...”

Teacher reflection: “Which students might need extra support?”

Step 2: Re-Establish Routines

Visual weekly schedule

Start with short, focused tasks

Positive reminders of classroom norms

Tip: Allow flexibility, some students need time to adjust

Step 3: Foster Connection

Icebreakers / group discussions about break experiences

Peer buddy systems

Gratitude / positivity wall

Reflection prompt: “How might someone else’s break have been different?”



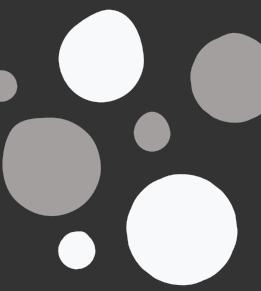
Step 4: Promote Emotional & Cognitive Regulation

Mindfulness or grounding exercises (1–2 minutes)

Movement / brain breaks

Reflection circle: “One goal and one support I need this week”

Choice moments to encourage autonomy



Situational Strategies Table



SITUATION	STRATEGY
Anxiety / stress	1-on-1 check-ins, calm corner, breathing exercises
Disengagement	Short tasks, gamified learning, peer support
Social struggle	Group activities, guided reflection, social scripts
Thrived over break	Encourage sharing, mentoring, highlight strengths





Quick Wellbeing Wins for Students Returning After Half-Term

1. Micro Check-Ins (1–2 minutes)

- Mood emoji board: Students place an emoji on how they feel that morning.
- Temperature check: Students hold up fingers to show energy levels (1 = tired, 5 = ready to engage).
- One-word share: Students say one word to describe their week or current mood.

2. Mindful Moments

- Breathing breaks: 4–7–8 breathing (inhale 4, hold 7, exhale 8).
- Grounding exercise: Ask students to silently notice 5 things they can see, 4 they can touch, 3 they can hear, 2 they can smell, 1 they can taste.
- Mini body scan: Guide students to notice tension in shoulders, neck, jaw, then relax.

3. Movement & Energy Reset

- Stretch breaks: 1–2 minutes of stretching or standing up.
- Shake it out: Quick whole-body shake to release tension.
- Movement games: Quick, low-stakes games like “Simon Says” or a brain-break video.



Quick Wellbeing Wins for Students Returning After Half-Term

4. Connection & Community

- Peer shout-outs: Students name one thing they appreciate about a classmate.
- Classroom gratitude wall: Each student posts one positive thing from the break or week.
- Partner reflection: Students share one goal and one support they'd like this week.

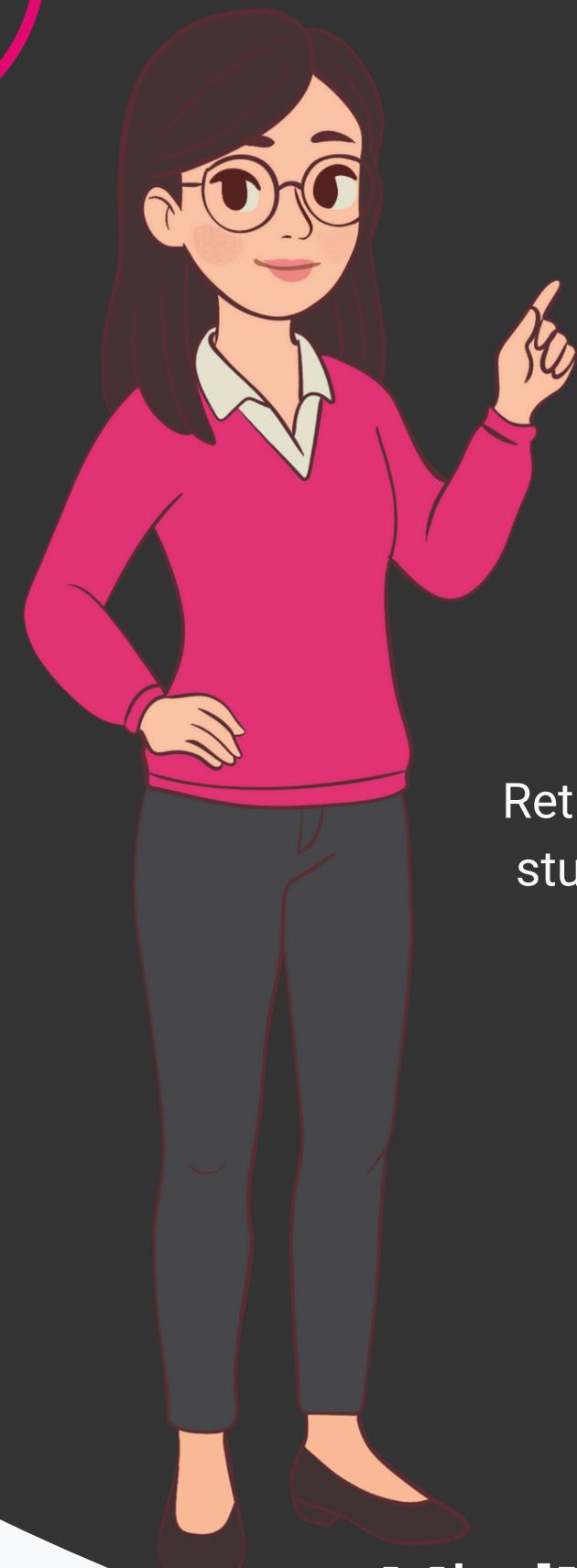


5. Cognitive & Emotional Support

- Focus check: Ask, "What's one small thing you want to achieve today?"
- Calm corner: Space for students to reset when overwhelmed (with fidget toys, soft lighting, or mindfulness cards).
- Emotion labeling: Encourage students to name emotions, e.g., "I feel frustrated because..."

6. Quick Positivity Boosts

- Music pause: Play a 1–2 minute upbeat or calming track while students reset.
- Brain snack: One short fun activity (puzzle, riddle, joke, or mini quiz).
- Visualisation: "Imagine your perfect week—what's one small step you can take today?"



Teacher Reflection

- “Which strategies could I implement immediately?”
- “Which students need extra support?”
- “How will I balance structure and flexibility this week?”

“Every transition is an opportunity.”

Returning from a break isn't just about getting back to lessons—it's a chance to reconnect, reflect, and rebuild. Some students return refreshed, some return anxious, and some somewhere in between. What matters most is the small, intentional moments you create: a check-in, a smile, a choice, a safe space.

Remember:

Transitions can be challenging, but support, understanding, and connection make all the difference. Wellbeing is the foundation for learning a student who feels safe, heard, and seen can thrive. Your actions, however small, help students navigate change with confidence.

TOGETHER, WE SUPPORT TRANSITIONS

**Bring People First Bespoke
Training to Your School**

Empower your staff and students to create
a whole school culture of wellbeing.



Available Workshop:

Managing Tricky Transitions Workshop: Practical strategies for prevention, early intervention, and restorative responses for periods of transition

💬 **Get in touch:**

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