

# TOP TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING BACK TO SCHOOL

With the recent update that schools will open to all students, you may be wondering how you can support your child's return back to school. Most children will be looking forward to returning and others may be worried. For both cases, your child/ren will benefit from preparation to go back. Here are some tips to help.



**1. If you think going back to school is OK, this will help your child feel the same**



**2. Consistency and structure create a sense of safety for kids**



**3. Establish clear routines and expectations**



**4. Communicate with school**



**5. Make time to notice your child's emotions and listen to their concerns**



**6. Reconnect with friends and seek support if needed**



### 1. If you think going back to school is OK, this will help your child feel the same.

Prepare your child with information before the return. If your child is nervous, communicate with calm words that it is safe to go back. Primary-age school children may need you to talk them through a school day. You could even practice the walk to school together a few days before.

### 2. Consistency and structure create a sense of safety for kids.

Create predictability with kind but firm boundaries around sleep and technology. Maybe during lockdown, rules changed around these so begin to gently adjust schedules (earlier, regular bedtimes, less screen time etc.) to help your child settle back into a school timetable.



### 3. Establish clear routines and expectations.

Create consistent routines and structures that suit you and your family, this will ease the transition back to school. You may think about whether your child is getting regular mealtimes, exercise and enough sleep.

### 4. Communicate with school.

Circumstances at home might have changed for you or your child or your child might be presenting differently to usual; be sure to let school know so that they can provide support on return. Every school has a designated mental health lead that you can contact, and Southwark has a number of services that you can reach and access.



### 5. Make time to notice your child's emotions and listen to their concerns.

Changes can make us anxious and some children may feel worried about returning to school. If your child is anxious, it will help to have open discussions with your child to help you understand.

Thinking together can ease your child's anxiety. Making a list of what they are looking forward to and also what they are worried about.

Simply listening and accepting is helpful. Your child may also like to draw or write about how they feel.

Repeat what they say, so your child knows that you have heard them. Then rephrase it, to show you have understood.

Expect a range of emotions to surface, notice them and sit with them.

Help your child to name emotions: excitement, happiness, sadness, anger, anxiety,

Don't be tempted to "fix" difficult feelings, rather try to listen, and empathise.

Once emotions have been acknowledged, you can move towards problem solving.

Maybe create a step-by-step plan of going back to school. Encourage them to think about the things they used to enjoy about school. Praise them for every step towards the transition. Talk to key people at school so they can help you and your child with their transition if needed.

### 6. Reconnect with friends and seek support if needed.

School is about relationships, not just learning. Relationships are crucial to ease the transition back to school. Perhaps arrange for your child to have a social distanced meet up with one friend outside/ or a video call to re-establish connections and friendships. Talk about possible changes in friendships, this will help them adapt and be open to change.



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## For further support you can contact:

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### **Southwark Educational Psychology Parent Consultation Service**

Offers parents and carers an opportunity to request consultation about concerns they have about their children at home, for example:

- A parent is concerned about their child's emotional well-being.
- A child behaves well in school or nursery, but is difficult to manage at home.
- A child is having difficulty managing their feelings.
- A child is unhappy at a time of change or loss.
- A young person is getting into trouble outside of school.

*Sessions are currently offered by via telephone or video-calls*

**Email:** [SEN-EducationalPsychologist&EHO@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:SEN-EducationalPsychologist&EHO@southwark.gov.uk)

### **The Autism Support Team Helpline**

Our specialist team are able to provide consultations to parents/carers, and educational staff. We are able to schedule telephone, TEAMS or Zoom appointments.

**Email:** [AutismSupportTeam@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:AutismSupportTeam@southwark.gov.uk)

### **Southwark Information Advice and Support Team (SIAS)**

*(formerly Parent Partnership)*

Can sign post to lots of local information on services, groups and other support.

**Email:** [sias@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:sias@southwark.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** **0207 525 3104**

### **Back to School Team**

If you have concerns about your child returning to school go to the Southwark website to arrange a call back

**Website:** [click here](#)

### **School Nurse Text Parent Line Service**

If you have concerns about your child's physical and mental health

**Telephone:** **07520 631 130**