

# Going back to school



We won't all feel the same about going back to school after Covid-19, and that's okay. Some children might not even know how they feel about going back but may show us in different ways. You might notice them acting differently or that they are quieter than usual.

## Before Day One

## What your child might be worrying about...

- Its ok to feel.... nervous
- Other people will be feeling it too
- You can only do your best
- What can we do together to make you feel less nervous?
- Are there pictures / videos of the school we could look at together?
- Forgotten where things are
- They might not be in a class with their friends
- Being away from mum and dad
- Being told off/getting the new Covid rules wrong
- Will everyone be wearing masks?
- What will my classroom look like?

Children's worries might seem small to adults, but they may seem big to children. We don't always have to fix everything, sometimes being there is enough.

## Helping your child to feel connected to you...

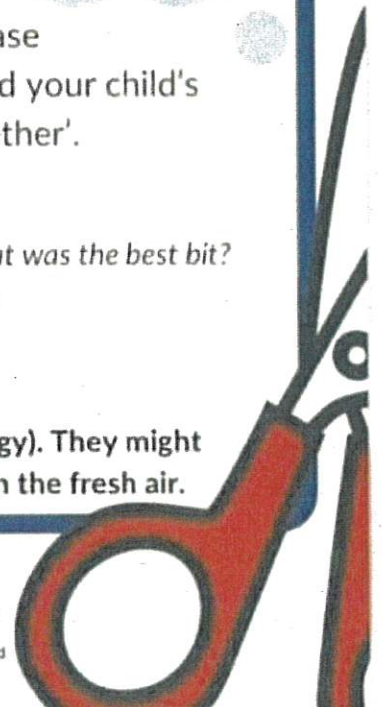
- Leave a little note in their school bag or lunch box
- Wearing matching items (e.g.: wristbands)
- Sending them a text in the day
- Your child could keep a picture of you both in their bag/pencil case
- You could tie an imaginary piece of string around your thumb and your child's thumb to show that even though you are apart you are still 'together'.

## During Day One

## Sharing experiences...

- How was your day?
- What was the best bit?
- What was the worst bit?
- What are you looking forward to tomorrow?
- Is there anything that would make tomorrow better?

At the end of the day, children may feel differently (tired/have lots of energy). They might need some quiet time wrapped in a blanket to calm or a walk to the park in the fresh air.



# Preparing Your Child For the First Day Back in School

*As schools begin to open to more children, parents and children may well be feeling anxious. Here's some ideas of how best to prepare.*

## Be Calm.

Your child will take their lead from you and be reassured if you are steady and matter of fact.



## Be Curious.

These are strange times and their imagination may run away with them. Listen, and try not to dismiss or minimise their fears but validate how they are feeling – “it’s completely fine to feel like that at the moment” or “I can really understand why you would feel like that”



## Be Positive.

Remind them of all the ways they have learnt to keep themselves safe: washing their hands regularly, sneezing and coughing into their elbow, not hugging others and staying in their own space.



## Be Thankful.

Help your child think of things they are looking forward to: being with their friends, seeing their teacher, favourite activities but be mindful some of these may not be available for them



## Be Supportive

Younger children particularly may struggle with separation anxiety and may become tearful, clingy or act out. Reassure them that you will miss them too and think of them throughout the day. It might be helpful to draw a little heart on their wrist and one on yours too. You can call it the hug button and when they find they are missing you they can press the heart and know that you will be doing the same at home. Sometimes having a little object to remind them of you through the day helps but please check this out with your school first.



## Be Prepared.

Support your child to be aware of changes that may have happened to their classroom environment since they were there last and rehearse any new routines that school may have shared. Rehearse and practice your 'goodbye' routine and create a 'hello' greeting for the end of the day for them to look forward to.

