

Return and reintegration to school

This advice is taken from The Central Bedfordshire reintegration to school document.

We will send further detailed information later this week regarding the return to school arrangements for your child and a booking form for you to complete if you would like your child to return to school.

As you will appreciate, there is a lot to consider and we are taking time to thoughtfully examine the guidance and how this impacts our schools.

Preparing your child for return to school – advice for parents and carers

Talk to your child about going back to school: They may have some anxiety; talk to them about their worries. Acknowledge these feelings; reassure them that these feelings will pass; that you are there to take care of them and that when they go to school, staff will be available to listen and take care of them too.

- Share the returning to school information with your child
- Consider informing the school if you feel your child is having difficulty managing their worries
- Using pictures or drawings in cartoon type stories (known as social stories) can help children understand what is going to happen in school and can help calm anxieties, especially with younger children. For older children, healthy family routines are important with boundaries around use of technology, eating and sleep routines.
- Remind your child of the things that they enjoyed about school, but discuss how these may be different upon their return
- Remind your child of what's in their power—washing hands thoroughly and often, coughing and sneezing into their elbow, getting plenty of sleep, etc.

A short video from the Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families, provides guidance to parents and carers about how they can help children and young people manage their mental health and wellbeing during any disruption caused by the Coronavirus:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnANLAcPRZ4&feature=youtu.be>

Other advice

Re-set body clocks! In the week before your child is due back at school make sure they go to bed early and wake up in time to 'get ready for school.'

Set up a back to school routine at home:

- 1/2 weeks before returning to school, have consistent bed and wake up routines (9- 11hrs for 5-13yr olds; 8-10hrs for 14-17yr olds)
- Set up a practical chart showing the steps needed to get ready for school: getting up, breakfast, getting dressed, getting equipment ready, travelling to school.

Clean Hands! Show your child how to wash their hands properly, explain that their teachers will want them to wash their hands 5 or 6 times a day when they are at school.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lisgnbMfKvI>

Catch it, bin it, kill it! Make sure your child knows how to blow and wipe their nose and to put the tissue in a bin. Show them how to cough into their elbow if they need to and do not have a tissue to hand.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/09/catch-bin-kill.pdf>

Social distancing! Measure out 2 metres and show your child what that looks like. They may not always be able to keep that distance but an awareness of what it looks like will help us and them to stay safe.

Play safe! Explain to your child that they will not be able to touch, hug or play close to other children. They may not be able to play on equipment or with some toys until we can clean them - so they will need to be patient and take turns.

Listen and learn! Your child needs to be able to concentrate. Limit the amount of screen time your child has; they will need to re-learn how to be in a class with other children and to listen to the teacher. Read with them every day, tell them stories and ask them to listen all the way through before you discuss what you have read. With older children, get them to read to you and to explain what the text means and what they think about it.

Be independent! Children will not be able to work with a partner or in groups like they often do, and teachers will not be able to sit alongside children to help them with their work. Talk to your child about 'having a go' and not becoming upset if they are finding something difficult. Tell them that they can raise their hand to ask for help, but remember, this help will be given from a distance.

Be patient! Everything will take longer than usual, and your child may have to wait for lunch, or in line to be picked up to go home. They will have to follow a one way system in school and life will be very different to before lockdown - they need to follow instructions carefully to keep themselves and others safe.