

Supporting children transition back to school

It is important to acknowledge that we will all have had a range of different experiences during school closure. We will have experienced (and are no doubt still experiencing) a range of different emotions during the school closure period such as helplessness, isolation, fear and disbelief. It is critical that we all look after ourselves at this time; we must put on our own emotional oxygen mask before tending to the needs of others. This may seem impossible at times but it is important to try and carve out some time for self-care which might just be 3 minutes of deep breathing or a nice cup of tea.

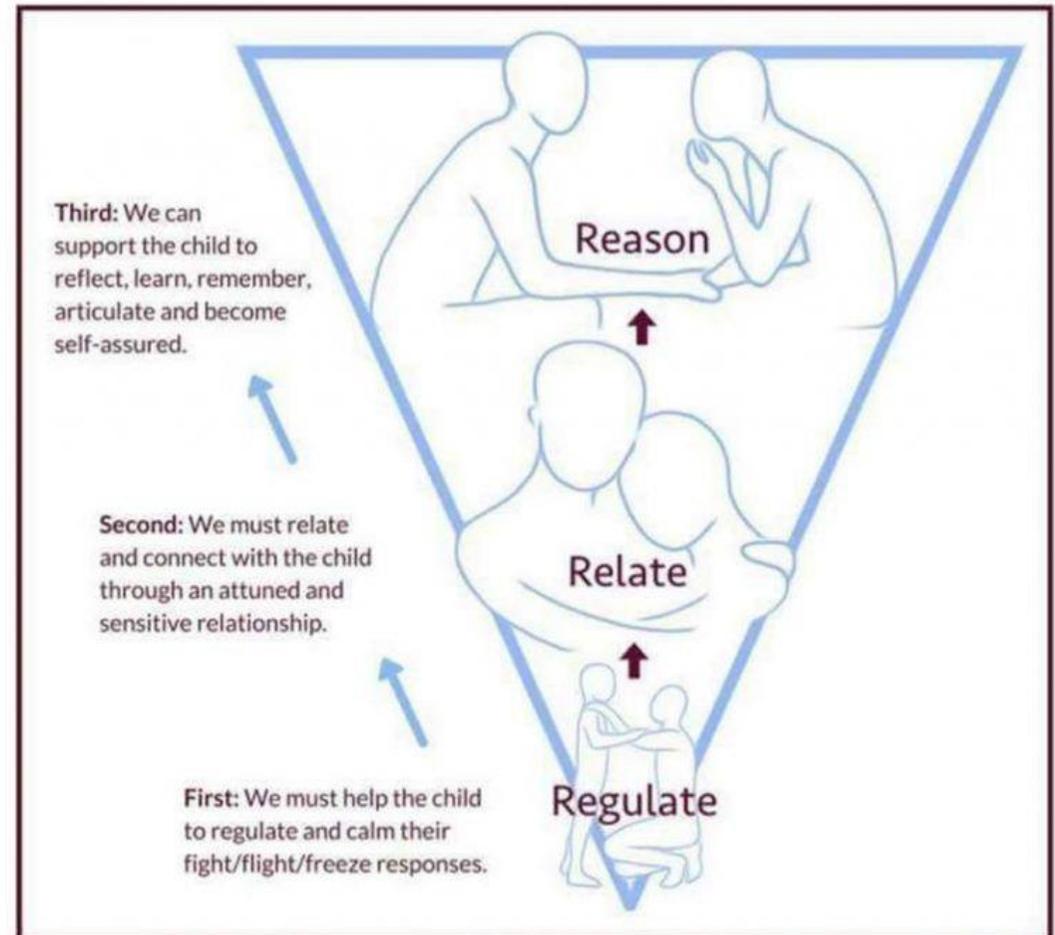
As a staff we will be considering how best to support our children as they return to school. We will base our responses on our own understanding of our children and relevant research such as the work of Dr Bruce Perry.

Dr Perry is a pioneering neuroscientist in the field of trauma and he has shown that to help a child to learn, think and reflect, we need to ensure that they feel regulated and connected. Heading straight for the 'reasoning' part of the brain with an expectation of learning will not work so well if the child is dysregulated and disconnected from others.

Therefore, on their return to school the children will be spending time participating in activities to help them reconnect with their peers and the grown-ups at school. The children will have some downtime and opportunities to take part in regulating activities such as listening to soothing music and walking outside. Alongside this, staff will also help to ensure they feel contained with, for example, the use of visual timetables and maintaining clear expectations/boundaries.

The Three R's: Reaching The Learning Brain

Dr Bruce Perry, a pioneering neuroscientist in the field of trauma, has shown us that to help a vulnerable child to learn, think and reflect, we need to intervene in a simple sequence.



Heading straight for the 'reasoning' part of the brain with an expectation of learning, will not work so well if the child is dysregulated and disconnected from others.

Supporting children transition back to school



What can I do to help my child prior to reopening?

Take time to look at the transition resources on our website (within the Our Learning Section).

You can revisit the welcome videos from your child's new teacher and look through the transition booklet. These are now located on your child's new year group page.

Additional resources are also available on this page to support the full re-opening of the school and your child's understanding of what this might look like.

There are also a range of useful websites to help children understand coronavirus on our Home Learning Page – Useful Home Learning Links and Resources.

Talk positively about school, focus on it being safe to go back to school.

Familiarise yourself with the route into school before arriving – talk it through with your child

The night before your child returns to school set out their school uniform, bag etc. in preparation for the next morning.

What can I do on the first day back to school? –

If you show your child that you are positive and calm about a return to school, he or she will pick up on that positivity. Consider your body language and tone of voice when talking about school. Focus on the good: seeing friends again, learning new things etc. - If your child is worried about returning to school, encourage them to tell you or draw a picture of what is concerning them.

Acknowledge and sit with their feelings – it is OK to not always have the answers or solutions. Empathy is the key rather than sympathy. There is an excellent You Tube clip explaining the key differences by Brene Brown:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

Put a note in your child's lunchbox if they are bringing one – ideas: "Enjoy your lunch! Love from Mummy" or "I'm thinking about you today. Love from Daddy." If your child has hot school lunch, you can tell your child that you will be thinking about them at lunchtime, eating their lunch and pudding

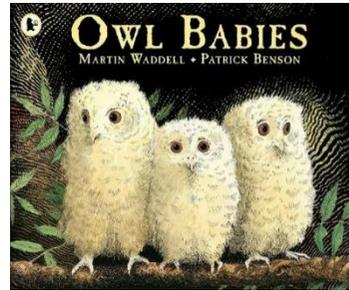
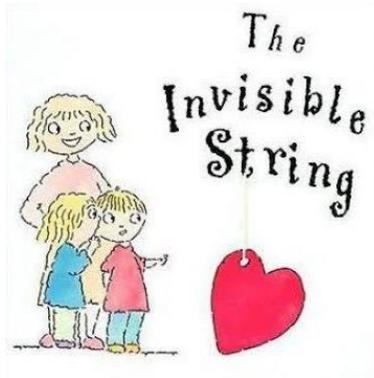
On your walk to school, play games like Eye Spy, count silver cars or how many bikes you see.

Have a goodbye routine (eg. high five, blow a kiss)

Have set times to discuss any worries otherwise they can spill into the whole day. Your child could write down their worry to discuss at a set time later that day.

Supporting children transition back to school

Here are two story books that you could share with your child that have the theme of separation and reunion:



You can find these books being read on You Tube if you cannot get hold of a copy.

If you or your child continue to have concerns, please share this with school.

In addition, advice and support can be obtained from the School Nursing Service: ChatHealth Messaging Service (NHS) by sending a text to 07480 635424. This service is for parents of a child aged between 5 and 19 years old and is available from 9am to 4.30pm Monday – Friday.

They aim to reply within one working day.

The most important things are to: - Listen, observe and respond - Remain curious and empathetic - Be kind to yourself - Seek help if needed – and remember we are all in this together.