



Supporting the Return to School Following COVID-19

A guide for schools and other educational settings

Caerphilly Educational Psychology Service



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Introduction and Rationale

Coronavirus

In this unprecedented situation, feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, sadness, worry, anger, and confusion are completely normal and are likely to be prevalent at least some of the time. These feelings are likely to be heightened in children and young people as they return to school. Following the announcement from the Welsh Government on the 3rd June, we now know about the planned return to school on the 29th June. Whilst we are awaiting further information regarding what a return to schools will look like, this document aims to support you with the Welsh Government guidance to 'Check in, catch up and prepare'.

We are all currently experiencing a time of collective trauma. All of us will have had different experiences throughout this time – each experience generating a possible range of emotions. More children and young people than ever will be living with worry as a result of the pandemic and this will affect their wellbeing and ability to learn. This may include those who were not previously identified as being vulnerable. Using a trauma-informed lens may be useful in supporting positive returns to school.

Transition

All children and young people encounter natural transitions throughout their lives. For example, moving from one educational establishment to another. However, other types of transition include break times, moving to a new house, parental separation, moving between environments and a new sibling. Some transitions are positive, and expected - these children can prepare for. However, some transitions can be sudden or unexpected - leading to feelings of uncertainty. In the current pandemic, children and young people will have experienced changes they were not prepared for. This guidance will hopefully support you to help your children and young people through this period of change and prepare for their return to school.



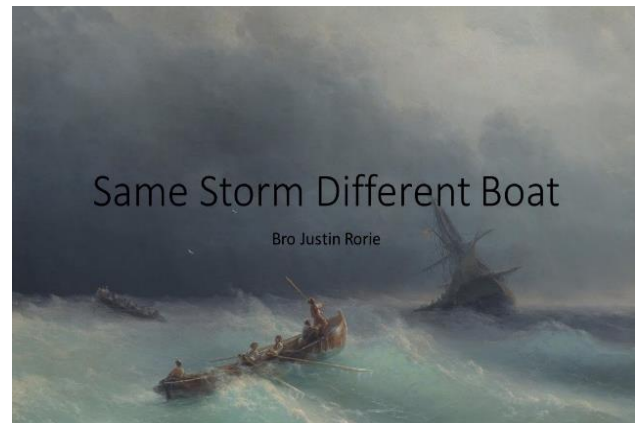
The Impact of Covid-19 – The Role of Trauma

Trauma is a response to any event, series of events or a set of enduring conditions that overwhelms the body's natural coping mechanism. Trauma can be encountered as an out of control, frightening experience that disconnects us from a sense of resourcefulness, safety, coping and/or love.

Lockdown, social distancing, and school closures could be viewed as traumatic experiences. As a result of the restrictions related to COVID-19, children and young people may have experienced sudden, unwanted change, isolation, fear, uncertainty, and dysregulated adults. For some, the experience of the pandemic would be in addition to childhood adversity they have already experienced. For example, Young Minds (2020) have received increased reports of self-harm.

All children and young people will have experienced some form of loss during this time: lost friendships; lost relationships with key adults; loss of freedom; loss of routine and structure, and bereavement. It is probable that some staff and pupils who have experienced bereavement during this time have not been able to grieve in the traditional manner due to current restrictions in place.

Due to the extended time at home and the financial impacts of the pandemic, children and young people may have also experienced heightened tensions in the home.



Every staff member and child's experience of the pandemic will be different. Children would have had varied learning opportunities and/or experiences. Some children and young people might have had access to a garden, whilst others may have spent a lot of time indoors. Others may have attended a school-hub as their parents are key workers or they were identified as a vulnerable family.

Some children and young people will have experienced conceptual losses in the form of missing out on exams, end of year celebrations, holidays, birthday parties, etc. All of these will have evoked a range of emotions. These emotions can be exacerbated if the individual has siblings who have experienced these milestones.

For those who were attending a childcare hub, their experience of these settings will have been different to a normal school day. We will need to understand and respond to what children and young people have experienced and learnt throughout this time.

Trauma: what does the science tell us?

A child's brain is organised from the bottom to the top, with the lower parts of the brain (brainstem or survival brain) developing earliest and the cortical region (thinking brain) developing much later. Whilst there is a hierarchical organisation to the brain, all parts work together as an integrated whole - different networks influencing the functioning of others.

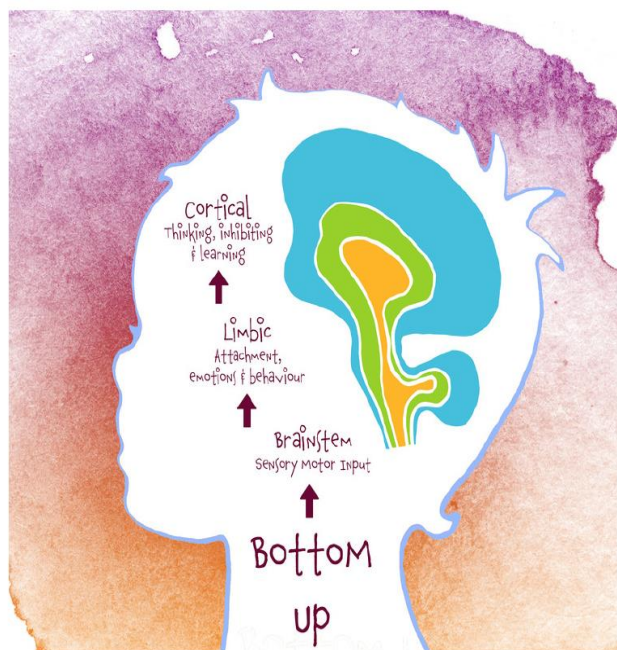


Image Credit: Beacon House

When we experience stress or threat, our bodies' natural coping mechanism - based within the autonomic nervous system - is triggered. We often hear our stress response system called 'fight or flight', although response to perceived threat can also take the form of 'freeze or collapse'. These responses are triggered to support survival to any real or perceived danger.

When we are regulated, feel safe and there is no external chaos or threat, we are able to access and use the thinking parts of our brain. The more we feel threatened, the more the lower parts of the brain start to take over – the brain targets the functions needed to prepare the body for survival.

Experience of stress is essential to healthy development and key to building resilience. But, when that pattern of stress is unpredictable, extreme or prolonged it can impact on how we perceive and respond to the world around us. It is likely that through COVID-19, all of us have experienced increased activation of our stress response system – movement towards being alert to the threat around us. For our children and young people who have already experienced trauma or early adverse experiences, this global time of uncertainty is likely to have pushed them further towards a point of vulnerability. What we have learned from literature exploring trauma is that prolonged stress activation requires physical and emotional energy resulting in fatigue, reduced ability to focus and increased irritability. You may have noticed that throughout this period of time you find it more difficult to work for extended periods of time or things that typically wouldn't irritate you have been harder to tolerate. The same happens for children and young people – they are less available for learning.

However, what we also know from the literature is that we can balance our nervous system and expand our window of tolerance. Adopting a trauma informed approach at this time may help us to understand how the current pandemic may have affected individuals and what we can do to help. This guidance document will adopt a trauma informed lens and look at how we can support the regulation of our children and young people, as they re-access the school setting. In respect of our biology, this approach works from the bottom up – focused on first regulating (brain stem), then relating (limbic system) before moving to reason (cortical region of the brain).

Guidance for Schools to Support transition: Practical Ideas

Staff wellbeing

Staff within our schools have had to assume new roles, adjust to new ways of working, manage personal and professional commitments, support within childcare hubs established for keyworkers, all whilst processing and responding to the threat around them. Now, more than ever, it is important to ensure that that we focus on the wellbeing of our school-based staff.



As we plan for the return to schools, children and young people will be looking to the adults around them for reassurance, for security, for safety. In order to support children and young people, our staff also need to feel reassured, secure and safe.

'A regulated, calm adult can regulate a dysregulated, anxious child BUT a dysregulated adult can never regulate a dysregulated child'
(Perry, 2020)

Schools have already been thinking of creative and innovative ways to work together and support each other throughout this time, for example: weekly check-ins; virtual team meetings; wellbeing sessions and random acts of kindness. The following ideas may support staff wellbeing in the lead up to, and during, the re-opening of schools:

Tips for staff wellbeing:

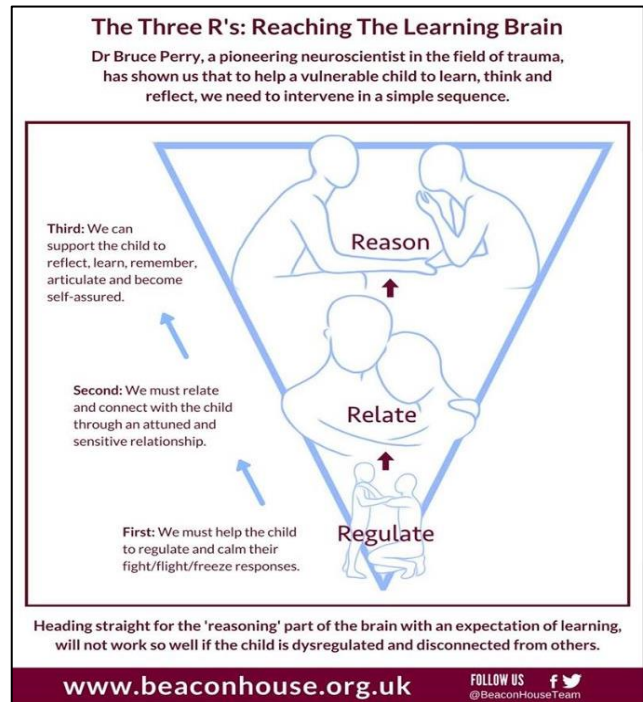
- Protected time where staff can be together and re-orient themselves before pupils return. During this time, staff could reflect on their own experiences of lockdown, consider what would support them to remain regulated throughout the school day and re-connect with team members that they have not seen across this extended period of time.
- Information/ visuals to be communicated to all staff regarding what physical safety measures have been put in place and how they look within the school setting. It may be helpful for staff to walk around their school, with the necessary safety regulations in place, during the team re-orientation sessions.
- Create safe spaces where staff can be alone or together at times that they may feel dysregulated. Consider how these rooms are decorated and, if possible, create an environment that will soothe and calm.
- Practise exercises together that support the regulation of the nervous system, for example mindfulness exercises or breathing exercises.
- Set up buddy systems in staff teams so that individuals have people that they can contact should they need/wish.
- Maintain regular check-ins.
- Ongoing team bonding activities that promote collaboration and shared enjoyment.
- Engage staff in ongoing planning and decisions being made within your school.

The PRRR model

Bruce Perry's Three R's work (2017) helps us to understand the order in which we can intervene to co-regulate alongside children and young people, using what we know about the organisation of the human brain.

Bruce Perry's work has been extended to include **Protect** as our foundation (Trauma and Mental Health Informed schools model). Protect seeks to target the brainstem, by focusing on creating a sense of safety for the child.

Image Credit: Beacon House



The Pace Approach

PACE is an approach created by Dr Dan Hughes. It stands for play, acceptance, curiosity and empathy. PACE is a way of 'being' with a child or young person, it governs how we think, feel and communicate with a child to make them feel safe, open and engaged with an adult. With attachment theory at its core, children and young people learn to go to you for safety, then support, then enjoyment.

Aspects of the PRRR framework and the PACE approach are embedded throughout the guidance in this pack and provide a theoretical basis for approaches to supporting children and young people at this time.





Preparing for Schools to Re-open



As we think about returning to school, pupils and staff will be experiencing a lot of uncertainty - uncertainty about what is to come and uncertainty about how others have experienced the school closure. Contact with pupils and families may have varied across school settings and contexts.

With this in mind, it can be useful to treat each pupil as a new starter - for staff to remain curious and empathic - accepting that not all pupils will have had the same experience. It is not about jumping straight back into learning. Instead, focus needs to be placed on building relationships with pupils again. Helping them to feel safe and navigate their way through what has happened and what is still happening.

This stance is in keeping with the Welsh Government guidance to 'Check in, Catch up and Prepare - for the summer and September'. Accordingly schools will also wish to refer to the appropriate Welsh Government guidance on the return to school.

Using the PRRR Model

Protect

Whilst it is important for children and young people to be physically safe within their school settings on return, we have to also take care to establish a sense of 'felt safety'.

Louise Bomber uses this term to highlight a psychological sense of being safe where we are and with those around us, acknowledging that the removal of threat is not the same as the experience of safety.

"At their best, schools can function as islands of safety in a chaotic world"
(Van der Kolk, 2014)

In order to create safety, we have to increase the cues of safety for pupils by restoring some level of predictability and consistency. Safety could be considered in the following ways:

Tips for 'Protect':

- New social distancing guidelines may mean you need to alter the layout of your classroom. Think about how this can be done to create emotional safety as well as physical safety. Consider wall displays and other visuals, the layout of furniture, emotional regulation resources and positive affirmations.
- Consider the information being given to pupils about reopening and the language that is used - ensure it is clear, accurate and developmentally appropriate. Provide information on what action the school is taking and why. Vagueness and uncertainty can evoke more anxiety and threat in pupils. Spend time as a staff group creating clear messages for pupils.
- Where possible, increase familiarity for pupils in terms of staff and spaces. Consider sending photographs or videos home to pupils of the new class layout and any new staff that may be in their class.
- One Page profiles and classroom passports can be used to help familiarise new staff with pupils, and can be completed by pupils and their parents prior to returning to school. Don't assume that previous one page profiles will still be relevant.
- Social stories can be used to help pupils understand the 'new normal'.
- Activities to explore what will change and what will stay the same when we go back to school. Parents could either complete this activity at home with their children, following communication from school about the physical layout etc. or staff could generate visuals to be sent home. These visuals could be used to prompt discussion within families.
- Use phrases that promote curiosity and empathy such as "I'm wondering...", "Help me to understand..."

- Include parents in discussions regarding the implementation of safety measures in line with government guidance. Consider how their views can be incorporated so that they feel safe to send their children back to school.

Regulate

In order to access higher order thinking we need to calm the nervous system first. Working from the bottom up (brain stem), we can weave in opportunities to support the regulation of children and young people.

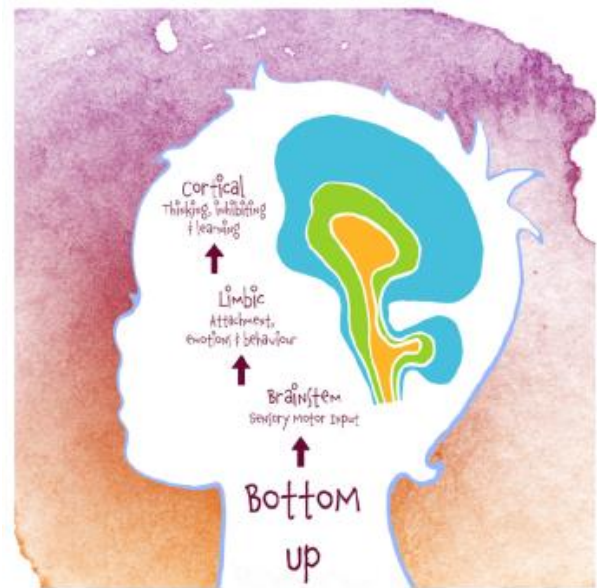


Image credit: Beacon House

Ideally, these suggestions become part of day-to-day routines – helping children and young people to regulate and develop their emotional resilience over time. We need activities that are:

- Relational (offered by a safe adult)
- Relevant (developmentally-matched to the child rather than matched to their actual age)
- Repetitive (patterned)
- Rewarding (pleasurable)
- Rhythmic (resonant with neural patterns)
- Respectful (of the child and family)

Tips for 'Regulate':

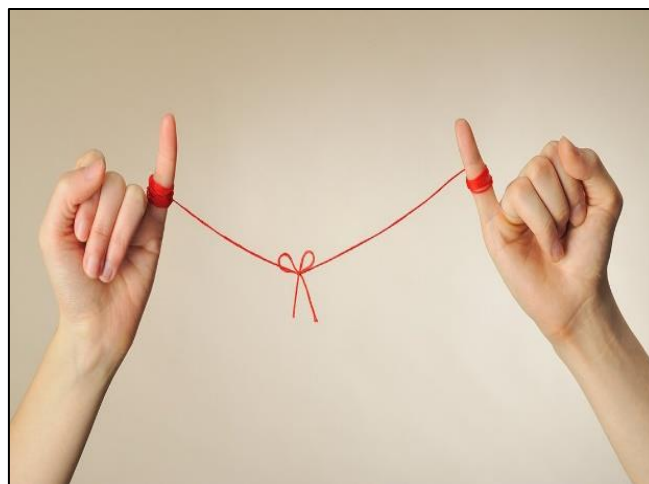
- Create a variety of emotion regulation activities and resources e.g. breathing exercises. Some may need to be different to those originally used due to social distancing guidelines.
- For example schools could consider sharing a breathing exercise that they use regularly within school or intend to use upon pupil return to support co-regulation. Model this exercise being completed, maybe through a video, so that pupils can engage with this exercise before their return to school.
- Seek the views of pupils. What strategies have worked for them during lockdown, do they have any ideas about what may work when they are back in school?
- We as adults can offer emotional regulation to the pupils that we work with. As we make connection, consider the non-verbal signals being given to the child. Smiling, overly expressing excitement in our voices and in our gestures on seeing pupils (for example, through video/ virtually) can help to remind pupils that we are there, that the relationship is meaningful and that we care about them.

Relate

People are innately social creatures. From birth, we rely on those around us to offer us co-regulation and to meet our basic needs. We learn from others about the world and how we can be within the world. Our emotional state can also be heavily influenced by the people we interact with – with relational interaction being something that can either make us feel more threatened or make us feel safe and contained.

The amount that another person is able to influence another's nervous system – thereby containing them – is linked to the amount of time they are with that person. The more time spent with someone the more likely it is that they are able to influence that person's emotional state.

The current context has made it harder for a pupil's key adult, within school settings, to maintain attachments but the most important buffer at times of stress/ distress is our social connectedness. At these times, we have to remain physically distant but emotionally close.



Tips for 'Relate':

- Many staff are already thinking of creative ways to maintain connection throughout lockdown. Consider concrete ways that you can let your pupils know that they are being 'held in mind', for example: a video that they can watch or a voice recording they can listen to; a postcard or letter addressed to them; a class picture. Remind pupils that their safe adults remain available in amongst change.
- Use language that reinforces that pupils are held in mind – 'I am thinking of you and miss you'.
- Think about who makes the initial contact about returning to school, - ideally it would be a familiar and emotionally available adult.
- Find out how pupils have already been staying connected with others. How they have kept in contact with friends and family - if they have been able to.

Reason

When we feel regulated and connected to others, we are able to access the cortical regions of our brains and engage in processes of reflection, thinking, articulating those thoughts in conversation and learning.

As staff teams it will be important to reflect on where you are currently, what as a school community you have experienced – including individuals within that community – and what needs to be put back in place in order to protect and support the school community as a whole.



Tips for 'Reason':

- Try to empathise with pupils and what life has been like for them during the school closure (this work can be built upon when they actually return to school). Our lives can be seen as a book and this will be a significant chapter in theirs. Consider how you could engage with parents/communities about the experiences they have had.
- Identify staff and pupils who may need extra support going forward. Consider those who have experienced trauma and bereavement.
- Identify pupils at high risk of emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. Staff will be aware of some pupils who are at risk already but Covid-19 might mean that others are now at risk. Staff should begin to identify these pupils in advance of school opening and carefully monitor them.
- Acknowledge the losses that your pupils are likely to have experienced, for example: school trips; sports days; time spent with friends; time with key adults; assemblies. Acknowledging the loss creates a space to discuss the feelings that may be attached to these experiences. Is there a way that these events can still be marked/celebrated within your school community?



Supporting children and young people when back in school

We have already highlighted that COVID-19 is likely to have resulted in increased activation of the nervous system for all. We have told our children and young people to be vigilant – in doing so, highlighting that the outside world may not always be a place of safety. We will have explicitly modelled this through our discussion of social distancing and hand washing but we may have also implicitly modelled this through expression of our own worries during this time. It would make sense that the lower parts of their brains, and our brains as adults, are more active at present – alert to protect us from perceived threat. When pupils return to school, this increased activation of their nervous system may look like them appearing more emotional, finding it difficult to settle or attend to tasks for long periods of time and becoming dysregulated at seemingly small triggers, to name a few.

We need to be curious about the behaviours we see from pupils on return to school and what they may be communicating at any given time. We need to restore a sense of safety within our schools and support our pupils to eventually be ready for learning.

Protect

Tips for 'Protect':

- It will be important to provide an appropriate physical environment, following government guidelines. Each setting will need to consider how this looks for them but what will be important is how these new rules and expectations are communicated to children and young people.

Tips for 'Protect':

- Consider songs, rhymes and actions to teach new physical routines.
- Provide facial cues, body language and voice tone that indicate safety (for example, smiling, nodding, calm voice). It will be important for staff to be aware of their own emotions and times where they may be experiencing dysregulation themselves – this may indicate that they are not in a place to be able to create a sense of safety for those around them. Staff may wish to consider when staff may need to 'check out' and regulate themselves and how this could be facilitated.
- Provide regular safety cues frequently throughout the day (e.g. positive first interactions, staff meeting pupils at the door, hugging self 'squeezing tighter'). See resources section for butterfly hug technique.
- Make use of 'soft landings' when pupils first arrive at school – such as providing a preferred activity to first engage in. This may be a form of preferred play for younger pupils or time with peers for older individuals. Ask pupils what their preferred activity is and allow them some choice and feeling of control with this.
- As adults it will be important that we are gentle in our approach but firm on our expectations. Providing clear limits, boundaries, structure and routine will help to promote feelings of safety and protection.
- Use visual timetables for all pupils, not just those with additional needs, to promote routine and feelings of safety and structure. Allow pupils choices in what makes them feel physically comfortable and ask them how you can help to support that.
- Provide nurture where possible, for example: tea, toast as comfort within the classroom.
- Encourage pupil voice and consider creating a joint plan on moving back into educational habits.

Regulate

Tips for 'Regulate':

- Outdoor experiences can be helpful in supporting self-regulation. Research has shown that we are better able to concentrate after being outdoors and that exposure to nature can decrease stress and contribute to improved mood.
- Use 'play' wherever possible to regulate and connect. Consider different types of play that could be embedded, such as: spending time outdoors; singing; art; creative tasks; music etc. 'Play' does not only relate to young children. Instead it can refer to any activity that promotes social joy. Curriculum based activities can incorporate the essence of play in being: explorative; relational; novel; sensory rich and fun.
- Build in sensory/physical breaks for all as part of a daily timetable e.g. daily mile, online exercise classes, yoga, increased free-time outside. Consider providing a menu of sensory/physical activities e.g. pick out of the hat activities such as 10 star jumps, run on the spot for 1 minute.
- In secondary school perhaps consider the use of a tactile/musical timer to allow pupils designated off-task sensory time e.g. doodling, leaving the classroom, bouncing a ball or other physical activity
- Model and teach regulation techniques – build this into a daily timetable so that these techniques are available and more automatic, should a pupil become dysregulated.

Tips for 'Regulate':

- As well as explicit teaching of emotional regulation strategies, provide physical strategies within the classroom such as regulation stations, calm corners and resources for relaxation.
- As adults we can pull pupils back into a regulated state by offering relational regulation. Listening, offering eye contact, smiling, managing our tone of voice and coming down to the level of the individual (reducing physical differences that could be a stress cue) can all send signals to the child that they are safe and you are there.
- When dysregulated, a pupil may not be able to attend to your voice and language in the same way as they would when regulated. Offering reassurance using short sentences such as 'I'm here' 'you're safe' and 'you're going to be okay' can support.



Relate

Tips for 'Relate':

- Embed the elements of PACE (see page 5) to communicate with pupils, and in turn relate with them. Approaching interactions with this in mind will help to widen children's window of tolerance and support engagement. Maintain a consistent approach to interactions, affirming that pupils are understood and that you are there for them.
- Support pupils to self-regulate. Initially this will involve accepting and validating their feelings and emotions. From this base we can then provide compassion and empathy. For example "I can see this is really hard and something you don't want to do. It's understandable and ok to feel that way. I'm so sorry this is hard for you and we are here to support you".
- Focus on supporting emotional literacy and model this for pupils e.g. how do you manage when you feel anxious. This may also consider the use of 'affect labelling' – that is putting feelings into words, encouraging pupils to say out loud or to write down how they are feeling.
- Join in with activities and allow yourself to have fun with pupils.
- Build in time to discuss with pupils their thoughts, feelings and experiences – both during the period of lockdown and regarding their return to school. Consider ways that this could be done, for example: circle time; worry box/monster; emotional meter for pupils to express how they are feeling each day/ throughout the day. Staff can model emotional literacy skills by sharing their own thoughts/feelings and emotions during this time (considering what is developmentally appropriate to share/offer and what you feel safe to share in the moment).
- Consider activities in the document 'Creating Opportunities for Connection'.

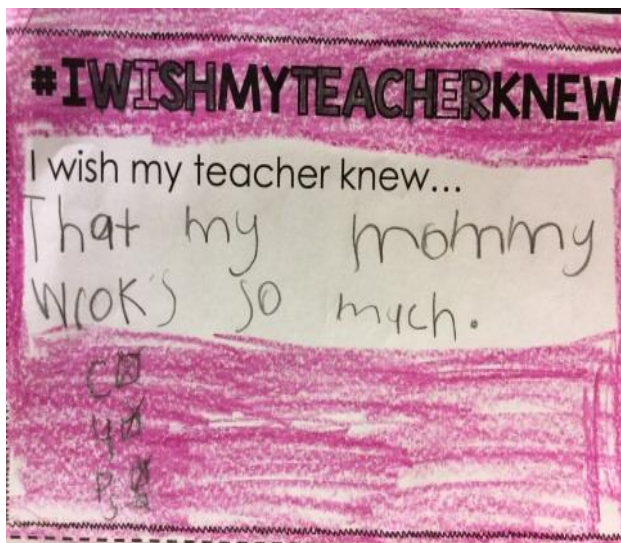
Tips for 'Relate' continued:

- Rebuild peer connections and create a sense of belonging– consider activities that could be completed that embed opportunities to relate in a socially distanced way, for example: group exercise, play, music.
- Create community within the classroom and involve pupils in planning and taking part in activities that can create a sense of community. For example, a large art project in the form of a 'being back together chain'. This activity involves creating a paper chain, each strand created a by a pupil in the class. Pupils could discuss all the reasons they are glad to be back together again.
- Consider peer or buddy programmes to support pupils to connect with each other.
- Some pupils may benefit from a designated key adult to provide additional check-ins and opportunity for pastoral input.
- For some pupils the transition back to school will be a form of loss and they may require support to relate with school life again. Use of transitional objects from home (with sanitary considerations) can help to support this process and bridge the gap between home and school.
- During this time schools have been connecting with families in new ways. Consider how these relationships can be maintained. What can be done to further include parents/carers in school planning moving forward?



Reason

On returning to school, we need to remain curious and wonder, what did lock down look like to each child?

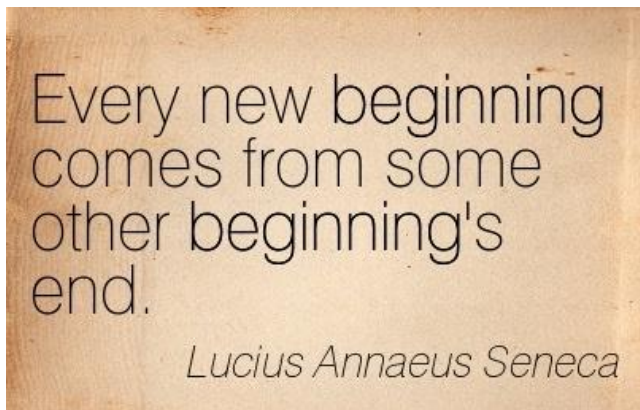


Tips for 'Reason':

- It will be important to reflect upon the experiences, both positive and negative, that we will all have experienced, and may continue to experience, through the coronavirus pandemic. Adults who are emotionally available themselves are best placed to provide comfort and support to children and young people. Provide opportunities for all to share their stories and experiences – parents, staff and pupils. With older pupils allow them time to discuss their experiences with their peer group – don't force discussion with adults. Appreciate that not everyone will want to share immediately and that different pupils will experience loss, anxiety etc. in different ways.
- It will be important to acknowledge and navigate the personal and collective loss within the school community. There will be many things during this time that may fuel sadness in members of your school community. Having a forum to express this sadness offers safety and gives permission to pupil's to express their grief.
- Whilst it is important to allocate time to loss, we have to ensure that we allocate equal time to express appreciation. Model and allocate time to practise appreciation, for example: 'three things I am grateful for today'; thank you cards to those that helped individuals during this time.
- Where there may be difficulties with social conflict or challenging behaviour, remain curious about what a child or young person's behaviour may be communicating to us at that particular time. Make use of PRRR (Protect, Regulate, Relate, Reason) and also Repair – providing opportunities for pupils to repair difficulties at an appropriate time.



Marking Endings and New Beginnings



As human beings, structure and routine are important in providing us with a sense of safety and security. Through COVID-19, all of our children and young people experienced an unexpected ending to their day –to – day normal. Returning to school marks a new beginning for them. It is important for us to acknowledge and carefully manage this unexpected ending/new beginning, in recognition that any transition involves loss and the need to deal with uncertainty.

Look at the preparing for school section for ideas on how you could prepare for children and young people's new beginning – page 8

Some children and young people were preparing for hugely important events in their lives, be that, moving to secondary school; moving to college/university or ending their school career. For these children and young people lockdown has included additional losses, for example: not being able to complete exams they had

prepared for; not being able to complete end of year rituals, like signing a class t-shirt; not being able to visit their new secondary school. We need to attend to these significant endings, in turn honouring and respecting the relationships created within our school settings. Each school will need to consider what is possible for them to do at this time. The following are examples of how we can mark the endings of key transition points and prepare our children and young people for the new beginnings they are about to encounter:

Tips

- Bring pupils back together and enable them to say their goodbyes. Think of an activity that could be completed to mark the ending.
- Create a space for pupils and staff to share their memories of the time they have had together. For a key adult relationship this activity could look like creating a memory book together.
- Consider creating transitional objects together, for example painting pebbles, pictures, artwork, poetry that the pupil can take and keep and the teacher can put up in school. Again, acknowledge that just because the child may not see the adult every day, they are not forgotten.
- In amongst quick transitions, it may be helpful for a staff member to visit a pupil/class in their new setting to say hello and see how they have settled.

Tips

- Use a card or letter to mark final goodbyes so that the child is left with something tangible from that relationship.
- New teachers could create their own one page profile and share with all pupils prior to their arrival, alongside a welcome letter. If children have not been able to complete transition visits to their new school, consider a visual book of the school layout that could be sent home for all pupils or a video walkthrough of their new building.

It is important to note that typical transition guidance will still apply and be helpful. Likewise, some pupils will require an enhanced transition package that is tailored to their individual needs.





Additional Sources of Information

Transition

Creative Education – Free Online Courses for Schools

Creative Education provide a free online course called “Support a Safe & Successful Return to School using the SWAN framework” which you can access via their website: <https://elearning.creativeeducation.co.uk/courses/support-a-safe-successful-return-to-school-using-the-swan-framework/>

Webinars from Louise Bomber

A series of three webinars for Education staff and supporting professionals in schools. Webinar 1 focuses on a trauma reduction strategy. Webinar 2 focuses on preparing to return to school. Webinar 3 focuses on re-orientation: how to restore safety, security and stability once back in school. You can access details about these webinars via:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/louise-michelle-bomber-27788294903>

The British Psychological Society’s Back to School Document

The BPS has produced a back to school document to support re-engagement and recovery upon the return to school. The document can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/bps-delivers-new-guidance-supporting-psychological-needs-children-they-go-back>

Recovery Curriculum is built on 5 Levers, as a systematic, relationships-based approach to reigniting the flame of learning in each child. The 5 Levers are: relationships; community; transparent curriculum; metacognition; and space – to be, to rediscover self, and to find their voice on learning in this issue. You can access more information via the following link:

<https://www.evidenceforlearning.net/recoverycurriculum/>

Supporting Connection within Schools

Trauma Informed Schools

TIS have created a document highlighting a variety of ways that staff can connect with children, young people and their families across the period of lockdown. The ‘Creating opportunities for connection: experiencing being held in mind’ document can be accessed via the following link:

https://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk/images/TIS_Creating_Opportunities_2.pdf

Activities to support regulation

Dr Karen Treisman – Video Resources

Dr Treisman has placed a range of free videos on her website (Safe Hands Thinking Minds) to support relaxation and emotional regulation, alongside recommended resources to purchase. The videos can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.safehandsthinkingminds.co.uk/covid-anxiety-stress-resources-links/>

Relax Kids Relaxation Resources

Relax kids have a number of resources to support relaxation on their website: <https://www.relaxkids.com/>

Resources to Explain COVID-19/ Social Distancing to Pupils

While we can't Hug', Hedgehog and tortoise story
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PnnFrPaRgY>

Butterfly hug technique – this technique can support grounding, alongside providing a means of encouraging virtual hugs within the school environment:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqSlobux6iE>

'Coming back to school in a bubble' (An audio recording of a short book to help 3-7 year old children back to school in their new covid-safe environments)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUXDX0WFyno>

Download the book here <https://bit.ly/2XOk9NC>

Twinkl have created a social story that explains the return to school for children:
<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/returning-to-school-social-situation-t-s-2548814>

Resources to support KS2-KS3 transition

CASS (Caerphilly Autism Spectrum Service) has put together a Transition to Secondary Schools Guide for parents with advice and activities. This has been sent to schools and can be accessed in English or Welsh through CASS or the Educational Psychology Service.

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