**Promoting Positive Transition during and after a Pandemic**



**Swindon Educational Psychology Service**

**INTRODUCTION**

Social distancing has changed the way we have all lived and our daily experiences and routines have been significantly altered over the last months. For both children and adults, the return to school will present another major change, bringing both challenge and opportunity. It is likely to throw up a wide range of feelings, from anxiety and frustration to relief and excitement.

Research has highlighted that many children and young people can find the transition between schools unsettling and stressful. It is likely that many children and young people will experience similar feelings when they return to school once social isolation ends, especially those who are vulnerable, have special educational needs, or are moving to a new school.

**WHY IS TRANSITION IMPORTANT?**

It is important that children and young people are supported to experience a successful transition back to school, recognising that transition is a process and not a single event. We know that an individual’s experiences during transitions can have a powerful and long-lasting effect on academic outcomes, as well as impacting on their self-esteem and emotional wellbeing.

During a period of transition children and young people can experience:

* A loss of attachment to familiar people, friends, the environment and objects within that environment
* Role and identity uncertainty
* Entry into an environment that is less predictable
* A perceived loss of control
* A feeling of being de-skilled and less valued
* Uncertainty about the future

In addition, it is important to acknowledge the ongoing thoughts and worries about safety and health at these times.

Whilst the current circumstances are unprecedented, schools are skilled in planning and preparing for transitions on a regular basis. The key principles of successful transitions still apply to the present situations (whether children are returning to the same class/setting before the end of the academic year or entering into a new class/setting) although the means of executing transition processes may need to look different. It is worth noting that as well as the children and young people who are transitioning to a new environment that schools should consider every pupil as a new pupil due to the amount of time that they have been absent. Effective transitions are supported by advance planning and preparation, clear processes for communication and consideration of relationships.

The purpose of this guidance\* is to provide advice on how schools can support children and young people in managing this transition. A wealth of information is also available on the Swindon Local Offer website:

<https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/content/send-local-offer/landing-pages/coronavirus-updates-for-send-local-offer/>

*\* With thanks to Wiltshire Educational Psychology Service and Wakefield Educational Psychology Service for their written guidance which this guidance was adapted from.*

**A Time of Hope and Opportunity**

We must remember that although this may be a challenging time for children and adults alike, this is also a time of great opportunity. It is a chance to re-evaluate our priorities, values, and ethos as a school. It is a chance to celebrate: to celebrate reuniting with our friends and colleagues; the strength and resilience of the community; the variety of experiences we have all have had; and the chance for a fresh start.

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**PREPARING THE GROUND**

It will be important to make sure that we are all well prepared for when the majority of children start returning to school. This will involve getting ready in schools and, where possible, in homes as well.

**School**

* Offer affirmation messages e.g. ‘we look forward to meeting you’ and ‘our priority is to keep you safe’.
* It may help to view returning pupils as new starters, for all intents and purposes.
* Share expectations and priorities with parents. Let them know that the focus in initial weeks (and maybe months) will be rebuilding routines, relationships, and expectations. Many parents will be keen for their children to reengage with formal academic learning but encourage patience while the groundwork is secured.
* Share routines and timetables well in advance of the return to school.
* Offer students virtual tours of their new classroom, school and virtual meetings with their new form tutor to prepare them for their new environment. Offer virtual question and answer sessions. Perhaps make a short film to share how things will be different and what will be the same.
* Ask class teachers/form tutors to contact pupils via their parents, whether through email or telephone, to touch base and ‘say hello’ prior to seeing each other again in person. This may be an opportunity for parents and pupils to share their worries and concerns prior to returning to school.
* Acknowledge and directly address concerns – contacting families or having virtual meetings can give an idea about what these are. Provide clear information about the strategies you plan to put in place. This may be by email, but make sure paper copies are available for those who struggle with internet or IT access.
* Consider the school approach to uniform. Many pupils may have outgrown their school uniform or shoes and not had the opportunity to get more, and this will not be the time for strict adherence to policy. Communicate to parents what your expectations will be around uniform.
* Identify who may require extra support at transition – this could be children who have previously experienced emotionally based school avoidance or have additional needs – and consider what their individual needs are.

**Home**

* Ask parents to talk to their children about what they are looking forward to when they return to school. It might be seeing friends, having playtime with others, or a favourite teacher or lesson.
* Encourage parents to help pupils to start getting up and dressed in time for the start of the school day, having lunch at school lunchtime, etc.
* For younger children and others who may struggle with the separation, parents might practice mini-separations during the day at home to help prepare for saying goodbye when it comes to returning to school. For example, if children find it hard to be in a room alone then start practising some alone-time (i.e., leaving them to play in a room while the adult completes tasks in another room – start by doing just 5 minutes, then 10, then 15, and so on, aiming for the ability to play alone for 30-minutes without needing an adult).

**A TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH**

*\*With thanks to Northamptonshire EPS and the Microsoft Teams national working party of Educational Psychologists/Education Professionals.*

It is important to recognise that for many children, going back to school will be a welcome return. However for many children, this will be a time of anxiety. It is important to remember that each child will have had their own experience.

Whilst there has been discussion in educational and psychological circles about the need for ‘trauma informed practices,’ it is essential to highlight that trauma is a response not an event. All staff, children and families have experienced the impact of COVID 19 on our lives; not everyone will present with trauma. A wide spectrum of emotional needs and responses should be expected.

It will take time for children to re-establish and re-learn routines and expectations in schools. It will be important to respond to what children have learnt, not what we expect them to have learnt, and what they may have forgotten. It could well be over-whelming and frightening to be amongst groups of children and adults, especially given the concentrated time spent in the home environment because of ‘lock down’. Children will have become used to being with their parents and immediate family for an extended period. This will be a potential source of anxiety for young children.

In order to help both adults and children to make a positive and successful return to school, we need to make sure we provide the emotional support that is needed. Research has identified five key principles that support recovery following a disaster or serious incident (Hobfoll et al., 2007).

* **A sense of safety**: It is important that adults, children and young people feel safe upon their return to school.
* **A sense of calm**: Children and young people are likely to experience a range of emotions including both pleasant and unpleasant emotions. It is important that these are normalised and they are given support to help them manage their emotions and return to a state of calm.
* **A sense of self- and collective- efficacy**: Children need to feel they have some control over what is happening to them, and a belief that their actions are likely to lead to generally positive outcomes (Bandura, 1997). They need to feel they belong to a group that is likely to experience positive outcomes. This is known as collective efficacy (Antonovsky, 1979; Benight, 2004).
* **Social connectedness**: It is important that adults, children and young people feel they belong and have a social network who can support them within the educational setting.
* **Promoting hope**: Whilst things may feel difficult at the moment, it is important that adults, children and young people feel things will get better and work out in future. They need to be provided with reassurance, and understand that in the long term they will feel positive again.

**CREATING A SENSE OF SAFETY**

Many people, children and adults alike will be feeling very wobbly about returning to school. Some might feel unsafe about being in close proximity to others. Others might worry about going back to academic work or being back in the classroom. It is therefore vital that schools create an environment where they feel able to cope with their emotions and safe.

The following can help to promote a sense of safety:

* **Create safety and structure for everyone**; staff, pupils, parents & visitors.
* **Be explicit about physical safety**, where rooms, people and activities are. Be clear about when lessons and meetings are going to happen and who they can go to, be with and talk to in school
* **Label and acknowledge feelings you may have yourself**. Regulate your own feelings before co-regulating with the children. Validate feelings and address fears and anxieties.
* **Use transitional objects** to help some children to feel safer. This helps them to feel connected to someone who cares about them.
* **Offer kindness and comfort**, ask them what you can do to help and give information.
* **Remember that reassurance doesn’t reduce the feeling of fear**, we need to show acceptance, validation, empathy and comfort
* **Continue with routine activities**, which helps them to feel safe.
* **Provide a safe place to talk and distraction activities** if they are not able to talk.
* **Keep them involved and included** – give children a voice and listen to them.
* **Watch and listen with curiosity and empathy** – their behaviour is communicating something they may not have the words for. Be curious about what that might be.
* All adults need to **be ready and able to listen to children’s experiences** during the lockdown and to respond appropriately to any potential disclosures or indicators of abuse. As such it may be important for staff to ensure they familiarise themselves with safeguarding policies.
* **Create opportunities for children to share their experiences** e.g. have pupils complete the sentence ‘I wish my teacher knew…’ and put it in a box (either anonymously or named): this gives a good idea about individual’s experiences or themes across the class/school. This is a great activity for staff to do to.
* **Communicate the message ‘I am safe, this is safe’** through all interactions, being particularly mindful of our facial expressions and intonation/prosody.

**Re-establishing routines**

We know that routines and predictability help us to feel safe. However, for many the re-establishment of routines will be a challenge. This will not just be for those in-school routines, it will also be for the routines of daily life, such as going to bed and getting up in the morning. We know that this is difficult at the beginning of every term, but this will be on a larger scale. We will need to allow a period of adjustment to re-learn the rhythm of the school. The following suggestions may be helpful:

* Maximise visual resources, such as visual timetables and now-and-next schedules.
* Give plenty of warning before changing activities/lessons.
* Start the days gently with low-demand activities, and wind down slowly at the end of the day.
* Allow a little extra ‘time to settle’ at the beginning of each lesson.

**PROMOTING CALM**

Many children and parents will be feeling anxious about the transition back to school after the social distancing regulations around COVID-19 are relaxed. Supporting children, young people and parents with these anxieties will be important for successful transitions.

You may wish to consider the following:

* **Spend time welcoming the children back** and build in time for discussions about their thoughts and feelings.
* **Make use of emotion regulation strategies** in the classroom, such as calm corners, regulation stations and relaxation resources, also EEF Self-Regulation Toolkit/Zones of Regulation.
* **Model emotion regulation** and staying calm. Co-regulation is important – have whole-class sessions e.g. using mindfulness exercises and ensure that all staff join in.
* **Provide additional pastoral care** for those who require it, either individually or in small groups. This might include opportunities to leave the classroom if they become overwhelmed, or having access to an identified adult who they can go to if they want to talk
* **Promote frequent check-ins** within small groups throughout the week e.g. <https://www.carrmanor.org.uk/coaching/>.
* **Consider the physical environment** as we can be calmed physiologically through our senses. This is often done though soft furnishings and objects, which may need to be removed at this time due to health guidance. However a calm physical environment can be achieved in a range of other ways e.g. warm lights, colour, sensory richness, music, lovely smells and bringing the outdoors inside e.g. photos, plants and natural materials.

**Reaffirming expectations**

Over the last months, there will be huge variation in the expectations on children and young people, in terms of learning and engagement, using social skills, managing behaviour, and following adult direction. We need to be prepared to gently re-build school’s expectations. This is likely to take time and practice.

* As a golden rule be gentle on the child, firm on the expectation.
* Remind everyone that there are a lot more people in school than at home, so it is important to be calm and quiet and to act considerately.
* In class/tutor groups, take time to discuss golden rules/what is important to the class as a whole. You could come up with a new class charter.
* If young people overstep the mark, gently remind them of the school behaviour policy.
* Give plenty of prompts and reminders of appropriate behaviours before moving to sanctions. This will not be the time to enforce a zero-tolerance approach.

**PROMOTING SELF AND COLLECTIVE EFFICACY**

During the Covid-19 crisis, many children and young people may feel a lack of control over what has happened to them, and may doubt the impact their actions can have. It is therefore important that their sense of self-efficacy is developed on their return to the educational setting. This can be done in the following ways:

* **Provide children and young people with responsibilities** such as specific jobs or tasks.
* **Work with children and young people to set targets and goals**.
* **Help children and young people to regulate their emotions** (see above) thus feeling they are in control of and can manage any unpleasant feelings they may experience.
* **Teach children and young people problem solving skills**, that they can apply when facing difficult situations or trying to overcome a problem. Help children and young people to recall times when they have coped with change in the past. Using an ‘Emotion Coaching’ approach can help with this.
* **Use ‘Cognitive Behavioural Approaches’** to help children and young people challenge unhelpful thoughts which can impact on their feelings and behaviours.
* **Create a sense of community within the classroom**. This can be involvement in the planning and implementation of activities, and social activities that create a sense of belonging. Communal language such as ‘our school’ or ‘our project’ is also helpful. Make a chocolate box of ‘our joint strengths’.
* Sharing the umbrella – **identifying how we all support one another.**
* **Obtain the voice of children and young people**, identifying what they feel will support them within the school environment.

**Validating Experiences**

Each one of us will have had very different experiences throughout the period of social distancing. Some will have been in school, some will have had structured and full home learning days, others will have experienced little by way of routine or planned activities. It will be important to acknowledge these are all valid. e can celebrate the diversity of learning. Whether this was learning to bake cookies, do the washing up, or learning about pandas in China. Activities might include:

* Creating social-distancing scrap-books, blogs, or diaries.
* Show and Tell / Sharing experiences.
* Creating PowerPoint presentations on something learned.
* Circle time or group discussion ‘what I would like to learn now’.
* Time capsule - memories of our time away.
* Make a gratitude wall to share anything (big or small) we have been grateful for.

**PROMOTING SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS**

People’s social lives will have changed dramatically in recent months. Some people will have contacted their friends daily using social media, whereas others may had had limited contact with any peers for months. Time away from school may have led to erosion of key relationships for both staff and young people, including teacher-child relationships, children’s peer relationships, and even relationships between staff members.

Reinforcing connectedness to the school and their peers will be crucial during this period, enhancing their enjoyment and genuine connection to the school community. Facilitating a sense of connectedness in school where pupils feel that they are genuinely cared about, wanted, listened to and supported can positively impact on their engagement, achievement and emotional wellbeing (Keay, Lang and Frederickson, 2015). We need to be aware that this will not happen overnight. We need to give ourselves time and be kind.

Social connectedness can be promoted in the following ways:

* **Provide peer to peer programmes:** Help students to reach out to each other and facilitate connections e.g. buddy and befriending schemes which can support children to build friendships and a sense of belonging.
* **Tutor or circle times** to promote a collective understanding of ‘how to support each other’ and small acts of kindness.
* **Build relationships or reconnecting with key adults**:For some children and young people, it may be beneficial to assign ‘key adults’ to help support them. This aims to establish trust and rapport and promotes a feeling of safety and being supported through this transitional period**.**
* **Social connectedness programmes**:Develop the use of areas in school to increase interaction among students and staff. This could involve facilitating discussions on various health and mental health related topics pertinent to the crisis.
* **Engage pupils in extracurricular / out of school activities**: Activities and games could be implemented with flexibility around school hours in order to re-establish relationships with both peers and school staff.
* **Support pupils through peer conflicts**: Relational approaches that are supportive rather than punitive would benefit both staff and pupils’ understanding of emotions and possible causes for challenging behaviour. This could include the use of ‘Restorative Approaches’.
* **Model the behaviour you want to see in others**: On return to school, model a sense of community to support children to develop and maintain attachments. Using communal language such as ‘our school’, ‘our project’ will help to develop a feeling of social connectedness and belonging.

**Reconnecting with key adults**

Before the pandemic, some children and young people will have been in need of having an individual, or group of, designated key adult(s) with the aim to provide positive, trusted and consistent relationships i.e. to become secure attachment figures.

“*With a secure attachment comes the knowledge and sense that even when an attachment figure is not physically present, their presence can be recalled and the image, memory and sense of them reassures the child. When an attachment figure is too-much missed, too-long absent, the child is overcome by yearning and sadness, unhappiness and despair, leading to a sense of abandonment. The sense of safety, containment, and continuity is lost”.* (Trauma Informed Schools UK)

The length of schools closures, whilst being out of our control, may cause a rupture in these relationships and may well be too long for children to ‘bring to mind’ their school attachment figures, reinforcing their sense of abandonment and their belief that they are alone. This needs to be put into words for them, it needs to be acknowledged and the relationship needs opportunity to repair. Many of these children and young people will not know that repair and recovery can be part of a relationship journey and therefore this needs to be shown to them and it is best to start this process before their return to school. Further ideas about creating opportunities for connection and experiencing being held in mind can be found at [www.traumainformedschools.co.uk](http://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk).

**PROMOTING A SENSE OF HOPE**

‘**Active hope**’ is a practice, it is something we ***do*** and not something we ***have*** as a personality trait. Recovering from the COVID-19 crisis is an opportunity like no other to engage the whole school community in thinking about what really matters. ‘Are we the same or have we changed?’ and ‘What matters most to us now and how do we live with that?’ (Mary Meredith, 2020).

It will be important to encourage children and young people to share their thoughts and feelings about Covid 19 and social distancing. For example, through asking them to share what they felt about social distancing, what they missed from before and what they have liked better. Activities might include: extended circle times; small-group or class discussions; and creating diaries or reflective journals.

‘**Active hope**’ is rooted in our ability to create and sustain resiliency, first in ourselves and then for the children and youth in our schools and communities. It is founded on principles of Relational Practice, rooted in hope.

* **Adults need to create protective factors** in the school environment as their pupils return and they need to build them intentionally.
* **Resilience is influenced by the relationships and connections between staff** at all levels within the organisation. The school environment is one of hope when it moves from being reactive to responsive (Michael McKnight, 2020).

**LEARNING**

Across schools there will be a huge range in what learning children have engaged in while not in school. Some children will have spent every day, including the holidays, engaged in formal learning activities and completed every piece of work set by the school. Equally, there will be children who have not engaged in any focused learning activity for the entire time they were not in school. Most children will come somewhere in between. It will be helpful to be clear that learning from home is not the same as learning in school.

Respond to what children have learnt, not what we expected them to have learnt and we will need to understand what children have learnt and what they have forgotten. However, starting with formal assessments of learning is likely to act as a barrier to relationship re-building and increase anxiety about the return to school. The priority at this point is to support emotional wellbeing and relationships, to create a platform for more successful learning later.

Although the content of the curriculum is a matter for individual schools, the following ideas may help to inform the content of lessons during the transition process:

* **Celebration and recognition of what children have learnt and how** e.g. who has learnt to bake a cake, build a wall, hoover the living room, become an expert on the Roman Army or the life of an Amazonian dolphin? Who has found they can learn anything if it’s turned into a song, or completed outside? Who has learnt that if they keep trying they achieve their goal?.
* **Explicitly acknowledge emotions and teach regulation strategies**: many children will have been experiencing a range of emotions e.g. fear, grief, sadness (as well as happiness and excitement). This is an important opportunity to build emotional literacy and help pupils draw on and develop new regulation strategies. Knowing that other people have similar feelings is very comforting and helps to reduce those feelings. Regulation strategies can be built into classroom routines e.g. sensory breaks for everyone or regular feelings check-ins or adults being explicit about what strategies they are using.
* **Find opportunities to engage the ‘play’ and ‘seeking’ emotional systems** to help buffer against the more challenging emotional systems which may be overactive during school closures/during transition. ‘Play’ refers to social joy (humour, fun, playfulness, shared laughter) and ‘seeking’ refers to having an abundance of motivational and psychological energy for life. Engaging in fun and motivational activities activates oxytocin, reducing anxiety and increasing our readiness to learn.
* **Consider learning outside or bringing the outside in:** Being outside in nature is good for our wellbeing, can provide greater physiological discharge, provides social challenge and regulation (e.g. team work, playing), gives us sensory feedback through nature, and provides multiple opportunities for learning.
* **Manage the pace of the day:** Remember that for most children the pace of their day will have slowed, and the amount of formal learning they will have engaged in will be considerably less. To jump from zero to sixty for any of us will be too much, so consider the pace of the day as a gradual transition.

**EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS**

**TRAVELLERS AND OTHER MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES**

During the return to school, it will be important to be mindful that families and individuals from ethnic minority communities may need specific support. For example, some Traveller families were among the first to self-isolate, and cultural attitudes towards disease and difficulty accessing public health messages may mean that parents are especially cautious about their children returning to school. Similarly, migrant families may be accessing public health messaging from outside the UK which may differ in emphasis and recommendations.

* Families with first languages other than English and/or those with limited literacy skills may find generic school communication difficult to access and may need something more to help reassure them it is safe for their children to re-attend. Some Traveller families will not be able to engage with email or written communication and should be contacted by phone.
* Families whose first language is not English may be able to access written communication in English, but in general try to keep messages short and highlight the most important information. Machine translation using web-based solutions such as Google Translate can sometimes be effective but should be used with caution - always include the English version of any translated document as a reference, and be aware that potential mistranslations could be the source of additional difficulties in what are likely to be quite sensitive messages. Most effectively, use multilingual colleagues or a translation service to communicate key messages to home where you know families may struggle to access information in English.
* Families may need specifics about what has been done in school to make it as safe as possible for children to re-attend and what further safeguards will be in place after reopening.
* To begin with, if families have genuine concerns about re attendance and children are not attending, continue to provide reassurance while ensuring that accessible work packs are still provided, and key adults continue to make regular communication with families.

**MANAGING TRANSITIONS BETWEEN SETTINGS \***

*\*With thanks to guidance from Alison Gardner at Northamptonshire EPS and the Microsoft Teams national working party of Educational Psychologists/Education Professionals*

Some children will be moving from early years settings to primary school, from infant to junior schools or between primary and secondary schools in September 2020. These are very important transition periods and children, young people and parents/carers may have additional concerns around this given the uncertainty of the current situation. We need to plan carefully for this process for all children and particularly for some groups of children with additional needs or vulnerabilities. Here are some possible considerations for each stage of transition.

**Planning transitions at all stages:**

* **Having friends in the same class** helps children to adjust to being in a new setting and creates a sense of continuity for them when everything else has changed. Ask parents/carers or staff at the child’s previous setting about friendship groups. Staff could also ask the children themselves if they are transitioning from primary to secondary school.
* **Predictability and routines** are important, especially when children are first settling in to their new school. For children entering their Reception year, times of sustained play will still be essential. Providing timetables in advance could be helpful for children moving to secondary school**.**
* **Listening to children** provides the opportunity for children to voice their concerns or ask questions. Younger children may find exploring feelings and ideas about transition easier through play-based activities and stories. Therapeutic stories such as those written by Margot Sunderland are also helpful. Check-ins in small groups may be a useful way of exploring thoughts and feelings with older children**.**
* **Using a trauma-informed approach** will be essential throughout transitions. More children than ever will be living with anxiety as a result of the pandemic and this will affect their ability to learn. This may include children who were not previously identified as experiencing anxiety. Staff need to have an awareness that children’s learning and development may have been impacted by the crisis, especially for the youngest learners and they may not be where they were predicted to be in their attainments.

**Transition of children from nursery into school**

The transition from nursery to full time school can be a particularly anxious time for parents/carers and children as they begin their formal education. Due to the current pandemic, typical events may not have happened to support transition. It is important to think about transition as a process rather than an event, as it will take time for both children and parents/carers to settle into the new structure. Below are some possible ideas that could be helpful.

* **Place an evener stronger emphasis on consulting with parents/carers** this will help to reduce their stress which can otherwise transmit to their child.
* **Share information**: additional questions to consider when completing/discussing your transition documentation might be: sleep, what comforts them, how they show distress etc.
* **Having friends in the same class** helps children adjust to the demands of the new setting. Ask parents/carers as well as staff from previous settings if any.
* **Help the child to become familiar with your setting** which under current circumstances could be by providing virtual photo books and/or video tours of key features of the school/classroom e.g. entrance, toilets, pegs, break out area, playground, a selection of toys/equipment available by providing these on your website.
* **Relaxed/staggered starts under the current situation will be evermore important** to allow the child and their parent/carer to take their time separating and to choose what the child is ready to engage in. However, parental agreement must be previously sought and accommodating of parents and their needs, such as returning to work or other commitments.
* **Adopt an individualised approach to separation**; be watchful and flexible to respond to the variable needs of individual children and families. These are likely to be accentuated after the pandemic. Observe attachment behaviours. Young children who are securely attached need to continue to experience an optimum level of support and nurturing care with their key adults. Children who are showing insecure or avoidant attachment behaviours need help building relationships.
* **Transitional objects**: understanding and appreciating the role that comforters play helps us to respond sensitively to their presence.
* **Hellos and goodbyes**: the time when parents/carers will need to feel most connected with and supported by practitioners, especially at this challenging time will be at the beginning and end of sessions. What parents and children will need at handover transition times is the soothing presence of a sensitive practitioner who understands and empathises with them.
* **Predictability and routines** will be important, especially during the settling in phase without too many interruptions to sustained play or too many breaks for adult-driven tasks, such as snack times, assemblies and whole-class discussions.
* **Listening to children** - ask gentle questions, provide opportunity for children to voice concerns. Incorporate ideas and feelings about change and transition into their play, through story and drama, role play and in their ‘small world’ play.

**Planning transition to a junior or secondary school:**

* **Plan an end of year celebration.** It is possible that children will be leaving their infant or primary school without all the usual celebrations, such as a leaver’s assembly. Saying goodbye to friends who may not be attending the same junior or secondary school as them will be important for pupils, as will saying goodbye to teachers. Perhaps a celebration could be planned for the Autumn term instead to allow for this.
* **Consider building peer relationships** which may have ordinarily begun during ‘move-up days’ or events. This might need to be built into the beginning of Year 3 or Year 7 instead through activities in class, tutor periods or after-school events.
* **Have a virtual worry box** or build in time for concerns to be addressed. Children will no doubt have questions and staff from the infant and junior or primary and secondary schools could work together to address these now in a virtual format.
* **Consider repeating aspects of the curriculum between year groups.** Much of the curriculum that Year 2 and Year 6 pupils would normally be accessing at this time of year may only have been accessed on a limited basis or not at all for some children. Infant and junior or primary and secondary schools will need to work together to make sure there is some continuity of the curriculum and to ameliorate gaps in learning, whilst still providing some novelty for pupils in their new year group

**CHILDREN WHO WERE EXPERIENCING ATTENDANCE DIFFICULTIES PRIOR TO PARTIAL SCHOOL CLOSURES**

A subgroup of children at school will have been experiencing attendance difficulties, and in some cases persistent non-attendance, prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The reasons for non-attendance are wide ranging, including emotionally based non-attendance; physical and/or mental health issues of the CYP or a family member; systemic, habitual absenteeism; or school behaviour related absence, such as exclusion, part-time timetable, or alternative provision (British Psychological Society, 2017).

There are also factors that can make it more difficult for children to re-engage with school following periods of absence, such as:

* Loss of relationships and feeling disconnected from others due to isolation.
* Falling behind in school work and/or fear of falling behind.
* Decreased motivation to attend school.
* Anxiety and negative thoughts about ability to return to school linked to above factors.

It is anticipated that extended school closures and possible emotional consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak may exacerbate children’s school attendance problems and the underlying factors that may have been contributing to this. It is also recognised that children who are vulnerable to possible school attendance problems may find the return to school particularly challenging.

The advice included in this document should serve as good practice for children who were experiencing school attendance difficulties prior to COVID-19. Other considerations for school staff include:

**Planning a return to school**

Identify children who may be ‘high risk’ or vulnerable to school attendance difficulties – this can be based on a combination of data such as:

* Children who have experienced known trauma during COVID-19 – this may include loss or bereavement or heightened mental health difficulties.
* Children at key transition points as noted elsewhere in this document.
* Children who may be considered ‘vulnerable’ for example due to: special educational needs and disabilities, health or other identified needs, peer difficulties, bullying or known difficulties in the family.
* Children who were experiencing absences prior to COVID-19 – where possible categorise absence data e.g. demographically (by gender, age, ethnicity, year group), by degree of absenteeism (chronic, emerging etc.) and by high risk or vulnerable groups (students with social, emotional or learning difficulties). An understanding of which groups at school are most at risk for absenteeism helps to identify where to assign preventative resources.

It is likely that staff have been in regular contact with vulnerable children and families and will have up to date information regarding their well-being and feelings about returning to school. In planning for the child’s return to school it will be important to gather the child and parent’s views directly and as far as practically possible involve them in designing what their return to school may look like.

Plans for vulnerable children may need to be personalised and where possible linked to their views. The process of children and families feeling listened to will support partnership working and contribute to their return to school. Questions could include:

* What would make school a perfect place to come in the morning?
* If we could change one thing about school, what would it be?
* What’s the worst thing about not being at school?
* Who are you most looking forward to seeing when you return to school?

Establish short term and long-term goals with the child and their family so that everybody is clear on the plan moving forward, with the recognition that these are fluid and possible to change if required. Some families may want to map this out on their calendar or a visual timetable – but this shouldn’t be mandatory as some families may find this stress inducing. Discuss and agree what the plan might be for days and times where school might feel overwhelming for the child and family.

Other preparations for the young person’s return to school may include briefing peers (where appropriate and agreed with the child and parent), selecting suitable buddies and arranging a time and place for the young person to be met by welcoming staff

**Starting and maintenance of attendance**

* Provide key staff to meet and greet the pupil to check in with them and discuss the day.
* Ensure that the young person has access to supportive staff or mentors.
* Maintain close communication with parents regarding progress and successive steps in the plan for increasing attendance. Agree ways to celebrate successes and problem solve how to overcome obstacles with the parent and child.
* Regularly review procedures with key staff in school and any outside services involved.
* Recognise that initial progress could be slow and that attendance may improve and dip again over time – this will be particularly important as the child but also their family and the wider school system learn to adjust and process the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prepare all key people (including child and parents) for ‘bumps in the road’ so that people do not lose hope in the young person’s ability to eventually return to school full-time.
* If attendance difficulties do persist over time or worsen, despite appropriate interventions, then consider accessing appropriate services if the child and parent consent to this (e.g. Early Help, Educational Psychology, SSENS Communication and Interaction team etc.).

**All staff** should be alert and responsive to early warning signs of school attendance problems, such as:

* Difficulties attending certain classes (e.g. P.E) or other times (e.g. lunchtime).
* Difficulties eating lunch or attending the dinner hall.
* Difficulties entering the school building upon entry to school.
* Difficulties transitioning from class to class.
* Frequent visits to student support or the main office.
* Increased requests to leave the classroom to attend the toilet.
* Persistent distress in the classroom (crying or withdrawal).
* Persistent distress upon separation from family members (e.g. crying or clinging).
* Persistent requests during the school day to contact parents or others outside of school.
* Sudden declines in attainments or completed work.

**Links with outside agencies**

Whilst planning the transition back into school and implementing this, it will be important to maintain close links with any outside professionals and agencies who are involved. These might include the Education Welfare Service, CAMHS, Educational Psychology Service or the Medical Needs Education Reintegration Service, but may also include others.

**SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

For some groups of children, such as those with special educational needs or social, emotional and mental health needs, transitions back to school after COVID-19 will be more difficult. This section focuses on additional points you may wish to consider when supporting these groups of children and young people with transitions.

**Supporting transitions for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

Children with ASD will need additional opportunities to process the transition back to school in advance and afterwards. The following strategies are recommended:

* **Make use of a Social Story or other visual supports** and share these regularly with the child or young person.
* **Share virtual tours, photographs or maps of the new school setting** and allow children to access these repeatedly.
* **Allow time for the pupil to readjust to the physical and sensory environment in school.** Be aware that children and young people with ASD are likely to experience additional anxieties around returning to school after the COVID-19 pandemic. There will have been many rapid changes to their routine and everyday life. Even if they have been able to remain in school this will have been a very different experience from usual including changes in their physical and sensory environments.
* **Ensure children feel safe back at school.** Some children and young people with ASD may also have health-related anxiety and this will have been heightened by the current situation.
* **Give consideration to different ways that timetables can be displayed for individuals.** Does the pupil need information displaying in a different format?
* **Create daily checklists** so that children and young people can make sure they have the correct equipment for the day and this will help to promote their independence (refer to the Young Minds resource below).

**Supporting transitions for children in care**

Children who have had unsettled or traumatic early life experiences are likely to respond to starting school in ways that are different from other children of their age.

*‘Major transitions, such as the start of a new school year or moving to a new school, as well as minor transitions such as moving from classroom to classroom or from school to home at the end of the day, can be challenging for many foster children. When a child has had times in her life when she has felt unsure or unsafe and lacked a sense of a ‘secure base’, a transition can trigger the anxiety and fear she has felt before’* (Fursland, 2013).

The following advice and considerations apply to a variety of situations, including children in foster care, adopted children or those that have been in care and now returned to their birth family.

Staff will need to:

* **Have an awareness that due to periods of frequent or prolonged stress, the child’s development may be affected in significant ways and they may have emotional responses typical of a much younger child.**  This will need to be taken into account when planning transitions. Teaching and learning approaches will need to match the emotional developmental level of the child.
* **Understand that engaging in learning feels risky for children in care. They risk failure and damage to their self-esteem.** No matter the age of the child, their efforts in engaging in learning should be recognised and praised.
* **Consider extending the transition process**. Children may take longer to feel safe and comfortable within the school environment,
* **Share information about the child.** School staff need to involve the parents/carers and key school staff in this process so that the individual child and their context can be understood as much as possible before they start or return to school. Wherever possible, involve the child in this, asking them what they would like their new school to know about them. Remember that the child is so much more than their care status and it is important to capture the strengths, interests and achievements of the child alongside their story of coming into care.
* **Create positive relationships with a key adult within school.** Staff should set aside time to spend with the child and engage them in preferred activities and provide emotional co-regulation. Sensory and physical activities, rather than talking, would also be good strategies to use at the start.
* **Establish clear routines and consistency**. These are important for all children and even more so for children who have experienced traumatic backgrounds. It will be essential to support children in learning which behaviours are expected in a new situation, such as moving to a new school, due to the different coping strategies children in care may have developed (Graham-Bermann, 1998).
* **Focus on ways to help the child feel safe.** This needs to be considered before transition to school as well as during and following the move. Remember that a child who has experienced prolonged episodes of stress, been used to fending for themselves or been hurt or ignored by adults will not see the school environment in the same way as a child who has come from a more settled home life.
* **Begin preparation in plenty of time and support independence.** A pupil transitioning from primary to secondary school, for example, may need to have several practice runs at travelling to their new school. It is also a good idea to begin cultivating positive relationships with other children attending the same school.

**Supporting children with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs**

A study by Young Minds (2020) sought the views of young people with identified mental health needs to explore the impact of COVID-19 on their emotional wellbeing. The study identified that:

* For some children the COVID-19 situation meant that they did not have access to their usual support networks and strategies. **Support networks will need to be rebuilt for pupils and it will take time for them to be effective again.**
* 83 per cent of young people who already had mental health needs said the Coronavirus had made their mental health condition worse. **Children returning to school may need more support than they did before, and children who were previously coping may now not be.**
* Young people experienced anxiety, panic attacks, problems with sleep, and urges to self-harm, especially those who had previously self-harmed. **It is important to be aware of these anxiety related issues and the risks of self-harm when pupils return to school.**
* Many young people were anxious about family members being ill or themselves passing COVID-19 onto more vulnerable family members. **The return to school may well heighten concerns about becoming ill or infecting others and this will need to be carefully managed.**
* COVID-19 appears to have had a big impact on those already suffering with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) in terms of their focus on hygiene and handwashing rituals. **Children and young people displaying OCD behaviours will need understanding and additional support**.
* **Primary and secondary school staff need to be in contact before transition to share information**. It will be vital for primary school staff to pass on the wealth of information they have learned about a pupil with SEMH needs, including which particular strategies have been helpful.
* Staff will need to consider children who may have been able to manage at primary school but for whom secondary school is predicted to be a challenge. **Be aware that many more children may have developed anxiety as a result of the pandemic and prepare for this in advance.**

**Identification of vulnerable individuals**

Identifying and supporting vulnerable children will be important, and settings must recognise that these cannot be assumed to just be the children with previously identified needs, but also some children who are considered to typically manage well.

A simple emotional well-being rating could be completed by all pupils. Based on previously identified needs and through information shared with the setting in their communication with parents (this will take into account any recent events, experiences of loss, identified worries about returning to school), settings may consider ‘RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating’ pupils to identify the level of support that may be needed to facilitate a successful return to school.

The emotional needs of some children may become more apparent once they are back in the school setting. It is therefore important that staff continue to monitor pupils, showing sensitivity to the signs that they need to be supported in a different or enhanced way. It may be helpful to continue to use a RAG rating system over the period of a term following the return to school, making adjustments to the level of emotional and social support in place as required.

**SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO ARE SHIELDING AND/OR MEDICALLY VUNERABLE**

It is important that settings take into consideration young people who may not be returning into school along with their peers. It is possible that on-going shielding and social distancing measures may prevent some pupils returning at this time, due to their own health needs, or those of family member. Settings will need to make plans as to how to remain connected to those pupils and consider their emotional and relationships needs, as well as their educational needs.

* Work on maintain a sense of connection between the child and their class/school e.g. collective art work that all children (whether at home or at school) can contribute to, video/virtual contact with classmates, virtual involvement in assembly.
* Find ways that children at home can have contact with their friends and their teachers e.g. the class could write letters to their absent friends, make use of a media lesson to send messages home, teachers can email children on their birthdays, teachers to contact children virtually to let them know they are being held in mind and missed, lunchtime/playtime video calls between friends at home/school.
* Consider how you can continue to support children with their education at home: e.g. online learning, sending home learning packs, differentiating topics/work planned for the classroom so that some can be completed at home.
* When the time comes for children to return to school, school staff will need to work with health professionals to consider any additional requirements that would be needed to make it safe for them.

**STAFF WELLBEING**

\* *With thanks to BiBorough Educational Psychology Consultation Service*

**What can teachers do to help themselves?[[1]](#footnote-1)**

*Knowing your children and young people is what makes your school a place that the community will turn to as a key support for children and young people, and in whom the community is placing their trust to aid children and youth in their recovery.*

It’s a big responsibility, especially when we acknowledge that many adults in the school community will also be experiencing a similar range of emotions and reactions as the children, young people and their families. Experiences of bereavement and loss, caring for someone shielding, living with a frontline NHS worker or carer, coping with additional stressors, worry and anxiety will be shared and lived experiences for many.

However, we also know that resilience research frequently cites teachers as trusted significant adults and positive role models for children and young people. Teachers have the skills needed to support children and young people through difficult times, to help inspire their resiliency and hope and to help them recover their wholeness and find comfort in their community.

Now is the time that the work you have done previously with the children and young people in your class and school will help them in their response to the challenges that the transition and recovery period will present. And, as always, we can continue to ‘top up’ resilience in the way we teach, interact with and model positive behaviour. This doesn’t mean we pretend that nothing is different or that we haven’t found the pandemic scary, difficult or sad. What it means is we show that people can endure such challenges and are especially able to withstand such hard times when those around them are supportive and caring. It is important to acknowledge that everyone will have their good and bad days and that there are things that we can do that will help us to feel less distressed. Remember:

***“Those who live through terrible times will often be able to help others….and some may go on to do something to make the world a better place. Even terrible things can teach some good things – like understanding, caring, courage… and how to be okay during difficult times” [[2]](#footnote-2)***

**Before we can help others, we need to help ourselves**

As teachers we need to be seen to be practising what we are encouraging children and young people to do. Congruence between our actions and our expectations is vital for trusting relationships. During the transition period after lockdown you will most likely be exposed to stories and information that are distressing to hear. This can result in stress and distress. Taking time to firstly recognise this and then to adopt strategies that provide psychological resilience and reduce stress is not only important, but professionally responsible.

**Managing your own stress[[3]](#footnote-3)**

**Try to:**

* Take time out to get sufficient sleep, rest, relax and eat regularly and healthily.
* Talk to people you trust and allow yourself to be comforted. You don’t have to tell everyone everything, but not saying anything to anyone is often unhelpful. It’s ok not to be ok.
* Reduce outside demands and avoid taking on additional responsibilities.
* Spend time in a place where you feel safe and calm to go over what’s happened over the course of the day/week. Don’t force yourself to do this if the feelings are too strong or intense at the time.
* Try to reduce your access to the constant stream of news from media outlets and social media. Try scheduling ‘digital power off’ times.
* Use relaxation strategies e.g. slow breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, self-talk.
* Build in opportunities for recognising hope and positive strength.
* Allow yourself experiences of sadness and grief.

**Try to avoid:**

* Bottling up feelings. Consider whether it would be helpful to talk about them with someone you trust.
* Feeling embarrassed by your thoughts, feelings or those of others. These are normal reactions to a stressful event and period of time.
* Isolating yourself from those you trust and feel safe around.

**What might be helpful during the transition period?**

**For individuals**

* Think about having a buddy in school, so you can check in with each other at various times if needed. It might also be helpful to have someone on hand to help you think through any questions that might come up in class and work through them together.
* Don’t put any pressure on yourself to do any activities or have any discussions you don’t feel up to, that is absolutely fine.
* Talk to each other, support each other- the staffroom can become a real sanctuary at times when things are feeling difficult. It never hurts to bring in a few snacks and treats to share or to try and come together for a quick catch-up at break time.
* Mindfulness based activities- having strategies you can use in the moment to support you to stop…..clear your mind for a few seconds….focus on your breath….carry on again.

**For schools**

* Ensure plans regarding the transition back into school are shared early, with time for staff to ask the questions they need to. Share safety information regarding social distancing and hygiene protocols and give clear examples of how these will be implemented in school.
* Consider a buddy system for staff to regularly check in with each other, and to share thinking around tricky questions that students might raise.
* SMT and heads of department to check in with staff reporting to them each day.
* Make sure the staff room is a warm, welcoming place. A few doughnuts can go a long way!
* Minimise unnecessary staff-meetings and demands so that staff can get home shortly after the end of the school day.
* Consider additional support for specific roles such as DSL, where there may be extra increase in workload.

**What can teachers do to help each other?[[4]](#footnote-4)**

**PSYCHOLGICAL FIRST AID**

Psychological first aid refers to the actions that can be taken by people without formal psychological or counselling training to provide emotional support for people following an emergency or critical incident.

The following may be useful for staff when providing psychological first aid for each other:

* Ask simple questions to ascertain what help may be needed.
* Emphasise the support available.
* Initiate contact only after you have observed and appraised the situation. It is important to make sure that contact will not be seen as intrusive or disruptive.
* Review the situation and emphasise the positive actions taken by colleagues in managing the situation.
* Listen with compassion.
* Offer to make them a cup of tea/coffee.
* Reflect the words of the person. Don’t judge the statements a person makes.
* Ask non-intrusive questions (e.g. “Where were you during…?”).
* Keep the discussion based on what happened. Avoid “What if…?” or “I should have…” statements. If your colleague takes this line, bring the talk back to real events.
* In some instances staff members may have an intense and lasting response and need professional psychological help. However, your interventions as a line manager or a colleague can do much to reduce or even remove the need for counselling.
* Follow-up should be at a level appropriate to the relationship between the person and helper. In some instances it may be as simple as asking, “How are you now?”.
* Remember that psychological first aid is about reducing distress, assisting with the current needs of colleagues and making sure that they are offered the support to allow them to function within their professional setting. It is not about revisiting traumatic experiences.

# **ADVICE FOR PARENTS**

The return to school will also be a time of significant change for many parents and carers. For most, they have been at home with their children for an extended period, and the parents themselves may have worries about the return to school.

They may have concerns about:

* Their son or daughter settling into a new class, or for some, a new school.
* Any enduring emotional impact of recent events, including experiences of loss and bereavement.
* Any lasting impact of the disruption to their son or daughter’s learning and progress.
* Their son or daughter being able to re-establish friendships and relationships in the class/ school.
* Their son or daughter’s safety, particularly if they have any existing health concerns.

It is important that schools and professionals appreciate the thoughts and worries of parents and carers and pro-actively seek to reduce anxieties which may transfer to the individual child. We should reassure parents that any feelings of worry are understandable and normal in the current circumstances.

**For all parents/carers**

* Ensure that there is effective and enhanced communication in place the lead up to any return to school. This should include contact from the pupil’s new class teacher (if this has changed) and key workers (if relevant). This will enable the sharing of information on both sides, and offer parents an opportunity to share information that may impact on the pupil’s return to school (for example, have they experienced bereavement and loss as a result of Covid 19, have there been any changes within the family, are parents key workers etc.).
* Make parents aware of all plans that are being implemented for transitions and the enhanced arrangements on offer. Explain what is different about the process of transition this year.
* If social distancing and safety measures remain in place at the point of the return to school, make sure that parents know how these are being implemented in school.
* Parents may appreciate information being shared with them about changes that they can prepare their son or daughter for: new staff, classroom, routines, any changes that have occurred in school.
* Offer a key point of contact for questions and concerns. Parents may have more queries than would typically be expected at a transition point.
* Once children return to school, parents may continue to need an enhanced level of contact, and the space and opportunity to talk to staff about the settling in process more frequently than might typically be planned.
* Share information with parents about the emotional support and provisions that will be in place for all children in the weeks (and months if necessary).
* Make parents aware of how any impact on learning will be addressed over the coming months.

**Parents of children entering reception & year 1**

For the parents of children formally entering school for the first time, the current situation may result in increased worries and the possibility of separation anxiety occurring.

* Schools may consider replacing the typical ‘home visits’ that support transition, with virtual meetings and video calls where this is possible.
* Parents are likely to find the use of virtual video tours of the setting, including points of entrance, cloakrooms etc useful.
* Consider how you can enhance home-school communication in the initial weeks.
* Parents may need greater sensitivity and flexibility in how they separate from their child at the start of the day. Work with parents to make this an emotionally supportive process for them, as well as their child.
* Staff should ensure they are available to talk to parents at the start and end of day. Parents may need more contact, and over a longer period of time than is typically expected. This may mean that an extra member of staff is required to support classroom routines at that time in order to make key staff available.
* Resources such as ‘The Invisible String’ can also help parents to feel connected to their son or daughter when they are separated.

**Parents of pupils leaving the setting (year 6, or moving to a different setting)**

* Consider how they can say ‘goodbye’ to parents, as well as the pupils, even if this is done retrospectively.
* Let parents know what information has been shared with the new school, so that they feel assured that information has been effectively shared.

**Parents of children moving from primary to secondary education (or changing settings)**

* Ensure that parents are given adequate and enhanced opportunity to share their views and information about their son / daughter in advance of transition.
* Personal contact (by telephone call or email) from the form tutor / head of year will likely be appreciated by most parents.
* Make sure parents are aware of the contact that there has been with the primary school (or previous school) so that they feel assured that information has been effectively shared.
* Share information about routines and what the first few weeks will look like.
* Make sure that parents know who the key points of contact are and assure them of their readiness and availability to answer questions and talk to them.
* All of the above points may need to offer at a further enhanced level of those children with identified needs and known vulnerabilities. Make sure parents understand and know about the support and provisions that are being put in place (as appropriate).

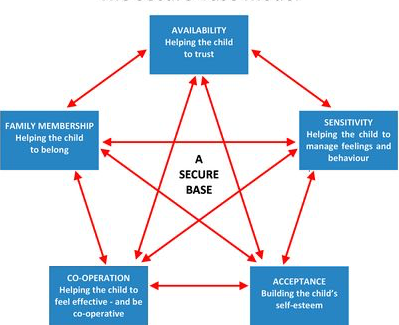
**Psychological Theories and Principles Underpinning Guidance**

This information is included, in order to explain the psychological theories that form the basis of the advice provided to support you in welcoming children and young people back into schools/settings. It is included to share the theoretical frameworks underpinning recommendations, for your reference.

**ATTACHMENT**

Theprinciples of attachment (relationships with others) are key in thinking about and supporting transition. For some children and young people, they have healthy and secure attachments with their parents/caregivers, meaning that they might have no/little issue separating from parents to return to school, despite being in their care for an extended period of time. We know that transition can prove to be difficult, even when children have secure and stable ‘backgrounds’, reinforcing the need to use attachment informed principles, universally, for all students. Additionally, the uncertainty of the coronavirus and the impact that this has had, such as routines being disrupted and/or family members being ill, may cause anxiety for children upon their return to school. An attachment (emotional/relational) informed approach will also ensure that provision is appropriate for those children whose attachments may have been ‘disrupted’, so are not secure.

It is important that relationships with staff are re-established for all children. The school setting, as well as the adults that care for children and young people, need to be safe and secure bases, in order for them to be emotionally able and ready to learn. The following diagram demonstrates the importance of schools being a safe base and how this can be achieved:



Children need experiences of being and feeling calm; believe that they are lovable and are loved; that others want to connect and interact with them; that others are interested in them and their thoughts/ideas; that they can be curious and make mistakes; that they are safe and that they can trust others to meet their needs.

Key principles from attachment literature, which promotes positive attachments (relationships) include (but are not limited to);

* Staff to welcome and reassure children to ensure and sustain connections with them.
* Tuning in to them and their feelings; acknowledging behaviours, as a form of communication and ‘wondering aloud’ to translate behaviours to understand their emotional need.
* Communicate empathy with them and acknowledge that for some children, the impact of the coronavirus has been difficult (as it likely has been for staff).
* Differentiating the way we interact with them – be explicit about what they need to do, in order to carefully re-assert and remind them of boundaries and expectations.
* Ensure that they know what is happening and how the environments that they knew and were familiar with have changed (depending on social distancing measures being stipulated) (Bomber, M.L; 2007).

For children, where there are known social care needs or for whom staff have particular concerns about relationships with family members or staff, specific planning may be appropriate with regards to provision, such as identification of a key adult to provide wrap around care to aid the transition or ELSA involvement.

The PACE Model is also an effective approach in promoting attachments (see below).

**PACE MODEL**

PACE can be used by adult to validate explore and understand children’s feelings. It is an approach, which limits shame, promotes compassion and brings a sense of mutual support, strength and resilience. When an adult spends time with a child and demonstrates an interest in their inner life, they contain and regulate the child’s emotions so that they can learn to do this themselves. **PACE** stands for Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy.

**Playfulness**

An open, ready, calm, relaxed and engaged attitude

**Acceptance**

Unconditionally accepting a child makes them feel secure, safe and loved

**Empathy**

A sense of compassion for the child and their feelings

**Curiosity**

Without judgement children become aware of their inner life

More information can be found at <https://ddpnetwork.org/about-ddp/meant-pace/>

**NURTURE APPROACH PRINCIPLES**

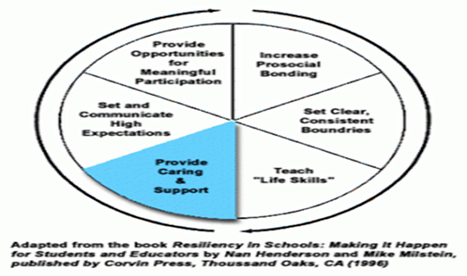
Nurture approach principles derive from Marjorie Boxall’s (1969) work on Nurture Groups which are defined as an, “in-school, teacher-led psychosocial intervention of groups of less than 12 students that effectively replace missing or distorted early nurturing experiences for both children and young adults; they achieve this by immersing students in an accepting and warm environment which helps develop positive relationships with both teachers and peers” (Nurture Group Network, 2017). The underlying features of Nurture Groups are derived from 6 core principles:

(Colley, 2009)

These principles of adapting a nurturing approach can also be implemented within a classroom, such as providing children and young people a feeling of being safe and secure, as well as thinking that the transition back to school may be a difficult move for some children and a range of activities to meet their emotional and social interaction needs should be foremost to ensure that they are ready to learn when the focus moves to a more formal curriculum. However, first and foremost, nurturing principles focus on having the child or young person form attachments to loving and caring adults at school who can provide support giving clear structures and boundaries, responding to their need. A whole school approach is more likely to have a positive impact on both staff and pupils.

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) can provide further training for staff if requested.

**Resilience**

Resiliency can be described as “a person’s capacity to handle environmental difficulties, demands and high pressure without experiencing negative effects” (Kinman and Grant, 2011). Resilience is not a trait. Resilience is a capacity that involves behaviours, thoughts, and actions that can be learned by and developed in anyone. Being resilient involves tapping into your resources, such as personal strengths and the support of others. Luthar & Cicchetti (2000) argue that resilience should be seen as a dynamic process that involves interactions between individuals and their environment and not as something that represents a personal characteristic. Therefore, resilience is learnable and teachable. As we learn we increase the range of strategies available to us during hard times.

One way of promoting resilience in school is to use the Resiliency Wheel which identifies six major approaches to promoting resilience along with specific strategies. Research shows that these six factors are critical factors in fostering resiliency. The Resiliency wheel can be used in building resiliency in individuals, groups or within a whole school approach.

Again, the wheel shows the importance of establishing positive relationships to feel safe and connected. The reason why ‘provide caring and support’ part of the wheel is highlighted is that is because it is the most critical element to develop resilience. It can be argued that it is impossible to overcome adversity without the presence of a caring person. This does not have to be family, having a caring person in your life is critical for support and consequently academic success.

**MINDFULNESS**

[](https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=9RRUhy3i&id=39B731A8FEA632A7F5CCF05F1AD7F1743D9D5FFC&thid=OIP.9RRUhy3i_N6611mrkPss6wHaGR&mediaurl=https://mindfulmunchkins.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Benefits-Of-Kids-Yoga-for-web.png&exph=525&expw=620&q=mindfulness+for+children+benefits&simid=608030917630691922&selectedIndex=0)Mindfulness is not an abstract or remote body of knowledge, like physics or history. It’s more of a practical skill, like being able to ride a bike or play the piano. Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we’re doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what’s going on around us. This can be difficult when other thoughts come into our mind, especially if we are worried about something. It helps children and young people to regulate their emotions and focus their attention as well as developing their resilience. Furthermore, it can open a channel of discussion with adults on discussing any thoughts worries and concerns.

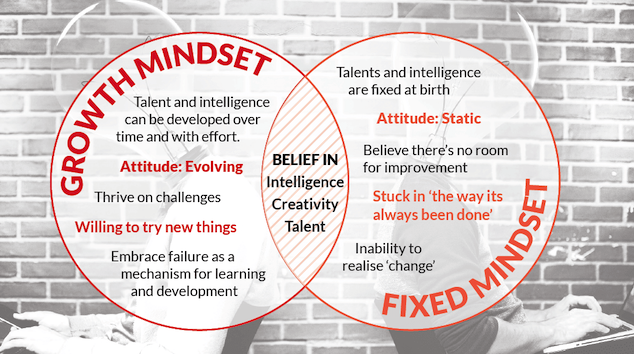
**EMOTION COACHING**

Emotion Coaching is an evidence-based strategy based upon the work of John Gottman. Emotion Coaching uses moments of heightened emotion and resulting behaviour to guide and teach the child and young person about more effective responses. Through empathetic engagement, the child’s emotional state is verbally acknowledged and validated, promoting a sense of security and feeling ‘felt’. This activates changes in the child’s neurological system and allows the child to calm down, physiologically and psychologically. Challenging behavioural responses are not condoned in Emotion Coaching. When the child is calmer, incidents are discussed in a more rational and productive manner. Moves are made to problem-solve and engage in solution-focused strategies. As a result, Emotion Coached children are better able to: control their impulses; delay gratification; self soothe when upset; and pay attention.

The impact of emotion coaching means that children and young people:

* Achieve more academically in school
* Are more popular
* Have fewer behavioural problems
* Have fewer infectious illnesses
* Are more emotionally stable
* Are more resilient (Gottman, J; 1997)

**GROWTH MINDSET**

A Growth Mindset refers to the belief that abilities and knowledge are not fixed and that with effort, experience and support, we can achieve growth. In contrast, those who have a fixed mindset are of the view that their qualities are “carved in stone” and are unchangeable.

Research has shown that when children have agrowth mindset they more willing to take on challenging tasks, focus on learning goals and able to rebound more easily from failures.

The Growth Mindset will be important and useful for staff to foster when children return to school. It is highly likely that they will feel overwhelmed with academic work, following the unexpected break from school, despite home learning. As such, the key messages and strategies that we can take from the Growth Mindset will reassure and support them that the difficulties that they experience now can be mastered. The power of the word ‘yet’ is a quick and easy way to promote a Growth Mindset. For example, “you cannot do that maths question *yet* but you will get there*”.*

The Growth Mindset complements and promotes resilience, as well as enables trusting relationships with staff to form a holistic approach to supporting children and young people to adapt back into school life and their education.(Dweck, C. S; 2006).

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| **TABLE OF PROVISION** | | |
| **Level of Response** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies** | **Provision** | |
| Universal Response | Building Relationships  Resilience  Nurturing Principles  Mindfulness  Emotion Coaching  Trauma Informed approach  PACE model  Growth Mindset – Carol Dweck | * Acknowledge that for some children and young people, they will be frustrated by the situation and want to be back in school. * Acknowledgement that some children and young people will have experienced safeguarding issues being at home. * Priority to be given to the re-affirming of relationships between both staff and children/young people. Although there will be some learning lost, not to get straight into formal assessment. * Flexibility – a way of demonstrating that wellbeing is the first priority. * Awareness of any Key Worker children, if they have remained in school and their feelings towards others who have not been attending school. * Consideration of the day especially in the first instance to think about activities that build on relationships, feeling safe, repetition of routines and structures. This can involve Circle Time, games, welcome back assembly (re-establishing school community) to celebrate any missed birthdays, show appreciation for key workers, reinforce everyone safe and back together. * Time within the curriculum to acknowledge that everything has not just ‘returned to normal’ * Thought around displays in school to reflect the situation, for example things that we are sad about and things we should be happy about. * Adults to model appropriate behaviours and talk about experiences when needed * The use of visual resources to explain and reinforce routines and structures of the day. This could be via visual time tables, checklists etc… * Clear and consistent rules and routines expressed – re-teach these. * Use of social stories. * Repetition and reminders that are supportive rather than assertive. * The use of positive praise at all levels. * Staff to not directly question children on what work they may or may not have completed at home. * Children who have completed home working to be praised privately. * Parents to be included in plans of the school with opportunities for parents to share if their child has experienced any difficulties during the lockdown (e.g. emotional, bereavement, illness). * Safe spaces for children to talk about experiences. * Ensure pastoral support is available throughout the day and is not by timetable/appointment only. * Clear communication regarding the whereabouts of members of the school community. * Opportunities to celebrate members of the school community who have died, this could be in the form of a remembrance assembly where names could be read it of family members of children, as well as celebrating the work of the NHS and key workers (in line with parental / family wishes and only when consent from bereaved families has been sought to do this). * Opportunities to talk about feelings/emotions embedded throughout the curriculum. * Careful balance of prioritising wellbeing and also ensuring boundaries are in place, as these are safe, i.e. (it’s OK to feel scared about being at school but it’s not OK to hit staff). * Expect ‘behaviours’ – plans in place for these. * Gradual approach to reintroducing academic demands. Children and young people have to be emotionally ready before they can learn. * Staff wellbeing also a priority – “need to feel nurtured to nurture”. * New rules and restrictions articulated as ‘do’ statements rather than ‘don’t’ – such as ‘do wash your hands’. * Use of therapeutic stories for the whole class. * Peer mentoring schemes. * The use of transitional objects to be used with younger children. * DSL to be in contact with Virtual School if support needed. | |
| Targeted School Response | Building Relationships  Resilience  Nurturing Principles  Mindfulness  Emotion Coaching  ELSA | All of the above and:   * A number of adults being ‘available’ to support children if and when needed. * Ensure that key members of staff such as SENCo and DSL have additional time to attend to any matters that have arisen. * Small group work, specifically targeting area of need, such as specific work around emotions, emotional regulation, bereavement etc. * Examples of support: ELSA, Zones of Regulation, Lego Therapy, Talking Partners. | |
| Individual Targeted Response | Building Relationships  Resilience  Nurturing Principles  Mindfulness  Emotion Coaching  ELSA  Anxiety  CBT approaches  Loss and Bereavement work | All of the above and;   * Provide a consistent adult that a child can develop a positive and trusting relationship with. * Specific targeted work with a familiar adult trained in delivering the programme. * Information gathering and action plan set out to meet needs. * Personalised timetable in the short term * Allocated a member of staff/key worker, in the short term to help re-adjust. * The use of both social and therapeutic stories with individuals if needed. * Some specific children may experience separation anxiety from parents/carers – individual support may be needed to offer reassurance. * Some children may experience specific anxiety. Looking at individual ways that they can be supported to offer reassurance, such as the use of CBT approaches. * Some children may have experienced loss and bereavement and will need some additional adult support, such as an ELSA or other suitably trained adult. | |
| Outside Agency Support | Educational Psychology Service  School Nurses  Virtual School  TAMHS & CAMHS helpline  Education Welfare Service | To have tried all of the above strategies:   * This should be done following the graduated response with the Plan, Do and Review Cycle. * In the majority of circumstances children and young people should be raised at the planning meeting with the supporting documentation. | |

**Additional Considerations**

*\*With thanks to the Microsoft Teams national working party of Educational Psychologists/Education Professionals.*

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| Issues to be Aware of … | Possible Impact | Practical Activities |
| Everything is NOT normal | Expectations of normality amongst pupils, staff and parents will be high. | * Schools to manage expectations and uncertainty in their communication to all stakeholders. Time must be available to do this. * The ways in which school is likely to be different is considered and communicated to all prior to the return to school. * There may need to be activities and displays in school which reflect upon this time. Things that we are sad about / things that we are glad about. * Time provided within the curriculum to consider this. |
| Ongoing Social Distancing / Hygiene Considerations | Impact on attendance and distribution of classes within the school, as well as routines and practices. Understanding how social distancing measures might affect emotional wellbeing. | * Part time attendance, spacing in the classroom, time for hygiene * Plan, communicate in advance, reinforce expectations consistently * Communicate with families what measures are in place before children return so they know what to expect. * Film the classrooms and make available online so children and young people can see the environmental changes before they return. * Reinforce and explain that the measures are in place to keep everyone safe. |
| Routines have Changed | Not just for children but for whole families. There may need to be some sympathy and understanding around this. | * Plan clear routines, share these in advance, including any phased returns. * Consider the impact of these new routines on attendance. How can families be supported/encouraged to prepare themselves for going back to school? * Communicate with them to proactively plan for those who might need additional support. |
| Relationships | These need to be re-established and this may be an opportunity for renewal. | * **PRIORTISE** Staff to focus on creating relationships with children and young people, such as, greetings, individual conversations, ‘checking in’, modelling and expressing calmness and warmth, emotion coaching approaches and PACE approaches. Treat all children as having attachment needs. |
| Gaps in Learning | Huge variation in the experiences and opportunities available to young people. | * Do not begin with formal assessment, assess knowledge more informally. Start curriculum with what children know … not what you think has been taught. * Topics may be revision for some…this will not harm them. Plan additional tasks / topics for those who have covered more to enable those who haven’t to catch up. Give children the opportunity to share what they have learned (even if it is having watched films or played Minecraft). * Catch up intervention for those who need it. |
| Some Children have Remained on Site. | Possible stigmatization, potential feelings that safe space is being intruded upon when all children return. | * Preparation of those children who have remained on site for the arrival of others. Perhaps plan a welcome back event or ask them to help with the planning and decision making about how they can welcome other children back to school. |
| Trauma and Bereavement | Many children / staff will have experienced trauma and bereavement | * Provide opportunities and encourage communication from parents / carers around child experiences. Plan information sharing. * Staff to be vigilant (update awareness training prior to schools opening). * Provide safe spaces for children to talk about experiences. * Clear communication regarding the whereabouts of members of the school community. * Opportunities to celebrate members of the school community who have died. |
| Safeguarding | There is likely increase in safeguarding issues including those related to poverty, Domestic Violence, parental mental health, substance abuse etc. | * Ensure that training is refreshed and up to date so that staff are aware * Provide opportunity for young people to share experiences if needed. * Extra time and support for DSL upon re-opening to work with relevant agencies to safeguard children. |
| Ongoing Illness Anxiety | Concerns about illness are heightened and are likely to be continually reinforced. | * Balance between acknowledging the issue and managing anxiety. * Use of Social Stories. * Opportunity to teach coping skills. * Implementation of nurture and attachment principles to reassure and re-establish trusting and safe relationships. |
| Separation Anxiety | Children (and staff) are used to being home with their families. This is particularly comforting when the world feels so unsafe. This may particularly impact where there are key workers or vulnerable people in the family. | * Clarify communication lines so that children and young people are confident that contact could be made with them at school, in case of emergency (phones as transitional objects). * Again, acknowledge feelings (emotion coaching / PACE) and teach coping skills. |
| Additional needs, especially children with ASD | Any time of change can be challenging … | * Additional preparation will be required, such as videos of any changes to the school; new routines and expectations shared in advance; additional adult support available to check in, explain, answer questions and reassure, as well as use of social stories/comic strip conversations to prepare for going back to school. |
| Sensory Needs | Potentially overwhelming environment for staff and Children and young people.  A development of fear of being around people – unused to people in their personal space. | * Consider a phased return, staggered starts and/or part time timetables. * Availability of calm spaces, ear defenders, ability to protect personal space and choose who accesses it. * Use of markers on the floor may be necessary. |
| Placement Transitions | Loss of ‘ending’ activities  Loss of transition activities during the previous term. | * Online transition activities, such as virtual school tours, sharing of videos the school has (sports / concerts) photos of classrooms and teachers. Virtual meeting with class teacher if possible. * Phased starts. * Real opportunities to meet the class teacher in home environment in September. * Walks past the school. * Acquisition of uniform when this is possible. |
| Uniform Issues | Outgrown, not replaceable at current time, financial issues | * Not the time for strict adherence. Show flexibility and aim to return to uniform at a later date. Consider how to organise uniform swops (may need to consider washing and handling of clothes at this time). |
| Staff Issues | Burnout, lack of downtime, bereavement, illness, stress and anxiety, childcare issues, financial issues | * Consider how staff wellbeing has been monitored. What have their experiences been and have they been bereaved of family members/friends? * What are their current circumstances and family pressures? Are their children back at school? How can they be supported to balance work and home life? * What information do you know to help create flexibility and support for them upon their return? * Have staff had sufficient time and information to prepare for their return to work? Are expectations and plans to transition children back in to school clear? * Initially, limit demands made of them, such as reducing pressures outside of the classroom (paperwork, unnecessary meetings and observations). The focus should be on relationships and supporting one another to re-adjust, rather than performance. * Ensure that they have space and time to talk not only to each other but the children and young people. |
| Frustration for some students | Some students may feel frustrated that they want school to just get back to normal and feeling they have coped well with the crisis and schools being shut. Some students will have developed resilience through various coping strategies and approaches. | * Acknowledgement that students will respond to the situation in lots of different ways, some better than others and that this is fine. There is no shame in not coping. * Celebration of the ways in which students coped and managed to keep going and feeling positive or hopeful. * Recognise and celebrate the resilience and coping seen amongst our schools, settings and families and in so doing, consider ways to connect people to share how they have coped with these times, what sources of strength and even joy they have discovered, what reserves within themselves and their communities have taken them by surprise. |

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**RESOURCES FOR SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE \***

*\*Collated by Swindon Borough Council Mental Health and Wellbeing Group*

These resources are a selection of the many that are available and have been reviewed for suitability. The ages are for guidance, please choose what is most suitable for an individual child’s understanding and need.

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| **Under 5 Years old** | | |
| **Resource** | **Description** | **Link** |
| Public Health England | Advice for parents | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> |
| Zero to Three | Resources and services for parents/carers of young children, including a section responding to coronavirus. | <https://www.zerotothree.org/> |
| Cosmic Kids Yoga | Free videos (nearly daily) which are fun, interactive and intend to introduce children to yoga, mindfulness and relaxation. For around 3+ years. | <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga> |
| Tiny Happy People | Activities for under 5’s | <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people> |
| Hungry little minds | Activities for under 5’s | <https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/> |

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| **5 – 11 year olds** | | |
| **Resource** | **Description** | **Link** |
| Fact sheet down loadable | Fact sheet aimed at children about corona virus also available as a You tube video | <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5093>  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMR3WPCRuAI&feature=youtu.be> |
| Book for children | Free downloadable Book aimed at primary age children about Corona virus | <https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus-ABookForChildren.pdf> |
| CBBC Newsround web site | Lots of short films to support children including exercise | https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround#more-stories-2 |
| Public Health England | Advice for parents | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> |
| Cosmic Kids Yoga | Free videos (nearly daily) which are fun, interactive and intend to introduce children to yoga, mindfulness and relaxation. For around 3-8 years. | <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga> |
| NHS | Children’s live-well exercises and activities | <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people/> |
| MindEd | A free educational resource on children and young people's mental health for all adults | <https://www.minded.org.uk/> |
| 'Support a Safe and Successful Return to School using the SWAN Framework’ | One hour online training delivered by Dr Pooky Knightsmith. | <https://elearning.creativeeducation.co.uk/courses/support-a-safe-successful-return-to-school-using-the-swan-framework/> |

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| **11-16 year olds** | | | | |
| Resource | Description | | | Link |
| Kooth | Online monitored platform that offers lots of resources to support emotional well-being, also offers one to one counselling. All content monitored | | | <https://www.kooth.com/> |
| Young minds | Web site with lots of resources and a parents/carers helpline. Good section on coping with impact Corona Virus and links to other resources | | | <https://youngminds.org.uk/> |
| CBBC newsround web site | Lots of short films to support children including exercise | | | https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround#more-stories-2 |
| Public Health England | Advice for parents | | | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> |
| Mind | Young people’s section of the website for Mind, the mental health charity, which includes information and advice on mental wellbeing and where to find support. Also includes a link to a specific section for ‘coronavirus and your wellbeing’. | | | <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/> |
| Anna Freud Centre | Online directory of information and services for different wellbeing concerns. | | | <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/youth-wellbeing/>  <https://www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support/support-for-schools-and-colleges/> |
| MindEd | | A free educational resource on children and young people's mental health for all adults | <https://www.minded.org.uk/> | |
| 'Support a Safe and Successful Return to School using the SWAN Framework’ | | One hour online training delivered by Dr Pooky Knightsmith. | <https://elearning.creativeeducation.co.uk/courses/support-a-safe-successful-return-to-school-using-the-swan-framework/> | |

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| **16 years +/and parents** | | |
| Resource | Description | Link |
| Kooth | Online monitored platform that offers lots of resources to support emotional well-being, also offers one to one counselling. Can be used by anyone up to the age of 25 years | <https://www.kooth.com/> |
| Young minds | Web site with lots of resources and a parents/carers helpline. Good section on coping with impact Corona Virus and links to other resources | <https://youngminds.org.uk/> |
| Public Health England | Advice for parents | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> |
| Anna Freud Centre | Online directory of information and services for different wellbeing concerns, up to the age of 25. | <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/youth-wellbeing/>  <https://www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support/support-for-schools-and-colleges/> |
| Every mind matters | Top ten tips for supporting emotional well being with lots of links, good section on sleep | <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/> |
| Supporting young people with worries about COVID 19 | Good resource for parents | <https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/media/34030/covid19_advice-for-parents-and-carers_203_v31.pdf> |
| Mediation app | Free mediation app | <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/insight-timer-meditation-app/id337472899> |

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| **All Ages** | | |
| Resource | Description | Link |
| New Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service 24 hr helpline for children and young People and parents and carers. Provided by Oxford Health NHS Trust and Swindon Borough Council (TaMHS) | Anyone concerned about a child or young person’s mental health, or a child or young person themselves, can phone the helpline and speak to mental health experts over the telephone.  This is not an emergency helpline. | Helpline  9am – 5pm on a weekday 01793 463177  5pm – 9am on a weekday or on weekends 01865 901000  <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/new-mental-health-helpline-for-children-and-young-people-in-banes-swindon-and-wiltshire/> |

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| **Special Educational Needs** | | |
| Resource | Description | Link |
| Mencap | Website with easy read and pictorial advice about Corona Virus | [https://www.mencap.org.uk](https://www.mencap.org.uk/) |
| National Autistic Society | Web pages to support families and individuals | <https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus.aspx> |
| Public Health England | Advice for parents | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> |
| Public Health England | An easy-read guide to looking after your feelings and your body | [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876989/Easy_read_looking_after_your_feelings_and_body.pdf)  [attachment\_data/file/876989/Easy\_read\_looking\_after\_your\_feelings\_and\_body.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876989/Easy_read_looking_after_your_feelings_and_body.pdf) |
| Council for Disabled Children | Guidance and information to education/parents/carers/social care | <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/news-opinion/news/covid-19-support-and-guidance> |
| Your kids.com | Sensory motor paths | <https://www.yourkidsot.com/blog/sensory-motor-paths-make-your-own> |
| BRHC | You Tube Flamingo Chicks, virtual Dance for disabled children | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zxhu2oh--8c&t=16s> |

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| **Bereavement** | | |
| Resource | Description | Link |
| Cruse Bereavement Care | Cruse provide bereavement support to all ages. They have a national helpline provide bereavement services locally. They have an excellent section on their website where they have put together resources to show how bereavement and grief may be affected by this pandemic. It covers some of the different situations and emotions bereaved people may have to deal with. | <https://www.cruse.org.uk/coronavirus/children-and-young-people>  Telephone national help line 0808 808 1677  Swindon provision |
| Child Bereavement UK | Child Bereavement UK supports families and educates professionals both when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying and when a child is facing bereavement. | <https://www.childbereavementuk.org>  Tel: 0800 1111 |
| Winston’s Wish | Provide specialist bereavement support services, including following a bereavement by accident or illness, suicide, murder or manslaughter and deaths in the military. They have an experienced bereavement support team who provides bereaved children and families with the tools to come to terms with their grief. | <https://www.winstonswish.org>  Freephone National Helpline: 0808 020 021 |
| Wiltshire Treehouse | Offer a wide range of post bereavement support for young people | <http://www.wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk/young-people> |

**Contacts**

* **Educational Psychology Service**

[EPSenquiries@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:EPSenquiries@swindon.gov.uk)

* **School Nurses**

[SNN@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:SNN@swindon.gov.uk) & [SNS@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:SNS@swindon.gov.uk)

North: 01793 465050 & South: 01793 465030

* **Virtual School**

[Sjoseph@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:Sjoseph@swindon.gov.uk)

* **TAMHS & CAMHS helpline**

9am – 5pm on a weekday 01793 463177

5pm – 9am on a weekday or on weekends 01865 901000

* **Education Welfare Service**

[wlunt@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:wlunt@swindon.gov.uk)

* **Swindon Trailblazers**

[enquiries.swindontrailblazer@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:enquiries.swindontrailblazer@barnardos.org.uk)

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*Extra acknowledgement to Wiltshire Educational Psychology Service and Wakefield Educational Psychology Service for their written guidance which this guidance was adapted from*

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1. *With reference to materials developed by Australia Child & Adolescent Trauma Loss & Grief Network* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Marge Heegaard (1991) ‘When Something Terrible Happens’ Woodland Press.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Adapted from Advice from NHS Guidance for Coping with Stress Following a Major Incident* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Government of Western Australia Department of Education Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan Nov 2011* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)