

Returning to school and coronavirus (Covid-19)

Going back to school can be scary for children whatever their age and it can also be an anxious time for parents. Wherever your children live, they might have questions and worries about going back to school during Coronavirus (Covid-19). We've got advice to help.

Preparing younger children:

- 1** Have conversations with your child about what going back to school might look like. You might have to walk to school a different way, start at a different time, the school might look different and teachers and teaching assistants might be dressed differently.
- 2** Ask your child's school if they've prepared any videos, factsheets or letters for children about changes to expect.
- 3** Ask your child what they're looking forward to about going back to school as some of these things might not happen so will help you manage their expectations. They may not see their favourite teacher or play with their friends – but they might have a new teacher they like and make new friends.
- 4** Show your child a calendar and look at how many days there are until they go back to school. Think about ways to get ready together. If your child takes their lunch to school, think about ways to make a special lunch for the first day – you could include a favourite snack or a note or drawing.
- 5** Readjust bed times the week before they go back, to get into a healthy routine.

Preparing older children:

- 1** Encourage your child to talk to you or another trusted adult about how they're feeling. We've got tips on how and where to have **difficult conversations**. This doesn't have to be face-to-face – they might find it easier writing their thoughts down.
- 2** Rolling news and social media can cause a lot of anxiety. Remind children of the facts and explain what false or sensationalised information is. It's important to allow your children to ask questions about the things they see online. And if you don't know the answer, letting them know that some things aren't certain or known yet is okay.
- 3** Making sure they aren't bringing their mobiles, tablets, or any devices to bed that might stop them sleeping.
- 4** Share Childline's **Calm Zone** with children of all ages. It's designed to help children find what works best for them – whether that's breathing exercises, activities, games or videos to help let go of stress.
- 5** Readjust bed times the week before they go back, to get into a healthy routine.

You can find more advice on the return to school, visit nspcc.org.uk/coronavirus

EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR