

Transitioning Back to School during Covid-19

After being off school for so long, it is only natural that many young people will be worried about returning to school.

1. **Talk to your child about how they are feeling** about going back to school and try not to make assumptions. Ask them if they are worried or feel scared about anything, but also if they are excited about or looking forward to something. No matter how your child feels, let them know that it is completely normal to feel a mixture of emotions and that everyone will be in the same boat. Model calm response and hope. Try to limit sharing of own concerns or catastrophising.
 - **Create a safe space to talk** identify a good time for both of you to talk and check in with other
 - **Encourage problem solving** work together to discuss solutions
2. **Provide your child with as much information about their new routine and school day as you can.** This will help them to prepare for any changes that have been such as;
 - **Change of locations for Year 8 and 10**, including entrance, playgrounds, canteen and classrooms. Remind them of when they used these spaces last academic year. For Year 10 talk to them about how they will be the oldest and able to be role models for the younger Year 7s.
 - **Wearing masks in classroom** talk about how successful they were wearing them in the corridors before and remind them that they will be able to remove when outside or eating at breaks and lunches.
 - **Lateral flow tests** you could look at a video together online and look at the photos of the hall together so they know what to expect.
3. **Reassure your child.** During the lockdown we have been told to stay at home, remain socially distant from others and wash our hands regularly. This means children may find it difficult to go back to school because it will be a huge change from what they have been asked to do during the pandemic. Talk with your child about ways they can stay safe at school, such as washing their hands before and after eating, and reassure them that the school are putting measures in place to keep them safe. This includes:
 - **Lateral flow tests staff have been doing these since January** and will continue to do them twice a week.
 - **Cleaning hands**, staff will remind everyone to sanitise their hands when arriving at school and before lunch and when entering classrooms.
 - **Wearing masks**, staff and students will be wearing masks when they cannot socially distance (unless exempt).
 - **Teacher areas in classrooms**, teachers will have a marked area in classrooms away from students and will teach from these spots to ensure distance for when they are teaching the whole class.
 - **Social distancing** staff and students will try socially distance when possible

4. **Re-establish a routine to help ease into school life.** During lockdown it is understandable that your family's routine may have changed. Children are likely to have been waking up later or going to bed later. To help them get ready for school, try to gradually get them back into their usual morning and bedtime routines as they get closer to their return date.
 - **Check uniform together** as soon as possible and communicate any problems that cannot be solved for Monday in homework diaries
 - **Get them prepared** review the updated timetable (sent last week) and get them to check their pencil cases and pack their bag before Monday. We start on week 2.
5. **Don't put pressure on yourself.** The transition back into school is likely to take some time. Lots of children will experience ups and downs. Try your best to support, reassure and comfort them, without putting pressure.
6. **Think ahead.** As well as reflecting on what has happened during the past few weeks, it is important to help children develop hope and a sense of excitement for the future. At a time like this, it can be hard to feel positive, but identifying the things that they can look forward to will help them to realise that the current situation won't last forever and their feelings will change. It can be good to display a shared family list of things to look forward to soon and those that can be achieved as the 'road map' gives us all more opportunity.
7. **Seek support if you need it.** Transitioning back to school after being in lockdown is no easy task. You may find that your child struggles to get back into school or experiences difficulties while they're at school. If this is the case, reach out to initially to their tutor. Their tutor will have read the Returning to School Parent and Student Surveys but keep them updated. If you are concerned about your child's mental health and you think they need professional support, speak to staff (Miss Denslow SENDCo, SLT, Mr Stewart or Mrs Hamilton) and your GP about the best next step.
8. **Encourage social support and connections** encourage them to connect with friends before returning if they haven't already. It's if they are worried because they haven't spoken to each other much then remind them their friends feel the same.

If you would like to access further support, we have shared the following on our website:

- NHS Lockdown & Transition Back to School during Covid-19 Resource Pack for Parents – it has extensive advice a wider range of needs that children and parents may be presented with from sleep, how to talk about COVID 19, ADHD and Autism Community Links, Separation Anxiety and bereavement.
- CAMHS & CRHS Early Intervention Resource pack for schools (pages 10+11)

In addition, they have published five short support videos with advice on how to support your child with anxiety. These include:

1. What is Anxiety
2. Strategies for Managing Anxiety
3. Anxiety in the context of COVID-19
4. Transition to a new school
5. Returning to school following lockdown and COVID-19

Lateral Flow Testing at Kings



Tests will be taken in the hall with members of the TA Team and Reception staff who you will know.



The hall has been set up with four 'test stations'. There are screens between the stations.

Each station has a mirror, sanitiser and tissues ready. A member of Kings staff will sit with you and explain how to take the test and your own pace.