



Dear Parents & Carers,

In the last weeks, we in the Inclusion Hub, have been researching how best to support you and your children to face 'the new normal' when schools return. Following government guidelines, Local Authority advice and significant guidance from REACHOUT ASC, we have put together a pack that aims to prepare pupils needs to come back to school, especially focusing on preparing pupils with additional needs.

Our aim is to reduce the anxiety that pupils may be feeling by drawing from past familiar experiences to help them to understand the new and very strange C-19 experience that resulted in school being closed and then, at some point opened again, in a way that may look different to what they are used to. The pack contains a menu of ideas that you may choose from, or not, depending on what you and your child need. You may choose not to do any of them, that's absolutely fine too. It also outlines what we will be doing in school to support your child.

We may not know yet exactly when schools will reopen, but we can start planning the transition at home and at school now for when it does happen.

The plan contains three main parts:

- ◇ Planning for transition in the home
- ◇ Planning for transition at school
- ◇ Supporting change in school this includes supporting; communication, social interaction, sensory needs and emotional needs.

We have included all of the resources that we suggest may be of use in this pack in both A3 and A4 versions. If there is anything else that we can do at all, please don't hesitate to contact any of the Inclusion team on Dojo or email me directly on jcunliffe@prioryceprimary.org.

Kind Regards,

Jenny Cunliffe

Deputy headteacher & Inclusion Lead

#TeamPriory

Preparing pupils to come back to school

Please find all resources attached in A3 and A4 following this cover letter in the order that they are mentioned—if you need/would like an electronic copy, please email me on jcunliffe@prioryceprimary.org

Planning for transition in the home

- ◆ **Draw from past experiences to deal with this experience** - support pupils to record their experience of lockdown (*1 Transitioning back to school document & 2 My lockdown experience*).
- ◆ **Colour code emotion words to help clarify strength of feelings** e.g. I like spending more time with my Mum and Dad—green, I miss my friends—red, I like learning when it's more quiet - green, my sister touches my stuff sometimes, amber etc.
- ◆ It difficult when we don't know exactly when and how things are going to happen, **record the things/facts that we do know in a Mindmap** (see link to guidance on p.3).
- ◆ **Use a social story**—explore it in small chunks using direct and factual language (*3 School Soon & 4 We will be going back to school sometime*).

Planning for transition at school

- ◆ We'll share what we know as soon as we know it—we generally hear the information on the news at the same time as you, so when we know, you'll know - keep checking Dojo.
- ◆ When we do know how school will run, we'll put pictures and videos on Dojo so that children can see in advance what to expect when they come back into the building.
- ◆ We'll provide information on the 'worry points' for some children e.g. coming into school, worship, break and lunchtimes etc. and answer any questions or concerns that children may have. Just ask the Inclusion team or class teacher. We're here for you!
- ◆ We will use your Mindmaps and transition sheets to create a support plan—so please share them with us.

Supporting change in school

- ◆ **Communication** - some pupils may have had narrowed communication experience or increased online communication (and may have preferred this), we'll provide adjusted whole class listening, supported by visual communication, additional quiet breaks and time in a less sensory stimulating environment if needed.
- ◆ **Social Interaction**—taking in social information may feel overwhelming for some, some social conventions may have been forgotten, we will provide increased support for pupils with routines and expectations if needed and remind all pupils about respect and safety.
- ◆ **Sensory Needs** - these may have shifted or increased to allow children to self-regulate or feel safe, we will provide sensory breaks and provide mindfulness activities to support pupils. There will be a sensory safe space and pupils will know how they can access this.
- ◆ **Emotional Support**—some pupils may experience distress or discomfort or be hypersensitive. We will listen, give pupils the time and support they need to develop emotional regulation.

Useful websites

8 ways to help Autistic pupils manage anxiety

<https://www.reachoutasc.com/blog/8-ways-to-help-autistic-pupils-manage-anxiety>

How to Ease Children's Anxiety About COVID-19

<https://nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/March-2020/How-to-Ease-Children-s-Anxiety-About-COVID-19>

How can we help kids with self-regulation?

<https://childmind.org/article/can-help-kids-self-regulation/>

Social stories

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx>

Mindmaps for kids

<https://kidengage.com/blog/2019/02/mind-mapping-for-children-how-to-teach-children-to-use-mind-maps/>

25 Mindfulness activities for children and teens

<https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-children-kids-activities/>

Mindfulness for kids

<https://www.netdoctor.co.uk/parenting/a26435/easy-mindfulness-techniques-for-children/>

Meditation for kids

<https://www.headspace.com/meditation/kids>

Guided meditation for kids

<https://www.greenchildmagazine.com/free-meditation-guided-relaxation-scripts-kids/>