



Dear Parent,

We understand that there are a lot of worries and concerns in the community about Coronavirus, where we can go, who we can mix with, who is vulnerable etc. However, the government have made it clear to Local Authorities, schools and the public, that **all schools will re-open to a full population in September and parents will be expected to send their children to school or they could face legal consequences.**

To help you to prepare your children to return to school we are sending out this letter to give you as parents some tips on things you might do to help them start back with confidence.

We know that schools post lockdown will not look like they did when they closed to most pupils in March. We need to help our children to understand what they might expect so that they are not worried about going back. Here are some things that might change.

- Social distancing
- More hand hygiene
- Areas out of bounds
- Being taught by a different teacher

All of these can be worries for children of any age, so we have shared some useful ideas to help your children feel ready to go back to school

**Talk to your teen about their feelings** about going back to school. Don't make assumptions. Ask if they are worried or scared about anything, but also if they are excited about or looking forward to something. No matter how your teen feels, tell them that it is completely normal to feel a mixture of emotions and that everyone will be in the same boat. Take the opportunity to have short conversations about school as the new term approaches.

**Provide your Teen 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 made to the timings of their day, the layout of their classroom, their peer groups and breaktimes. For year 7 pupils, it can be really helpful for them to visualise these changes – so look on line at the school's web site, many schools have now put virtual tours on line to show pupils what the school will look like when they reopen in September.

**Reassure your teen.** During the lockdown we have been told to stay at home, remain socially distant from others and wash our hands regularly. This means some teens may find it difficult to go back to a large school with lots of other pupils, because it will be a huge change from what they have been asked to do during the pandemic. Talk 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.

Teen Parent Tips 'All in Education'

**Re-establish a routine to help ease into school life.** During lockdown it is understandable that your family's routine may have changed. Teenagers are likely to have been going to bed quite late and waking up later than normal. Help them get ready for school by gradually getting them back into their usual morning and bedtime routines as they get closer to their return date.

**Don't put pressure on yourself.** The transition back into school is likely to take some time. Lots of teens may experience ups and downs. Try your best to support, reassure and comfort them, without putting pressure on yourself to make sure they settle into a new routine straightaway.

**Think ahead.** As well as looking back on what has happened during the past few weeks, it is important to help our teenagers look to the future and develop a sense of hope and of excitement for things to come. Because of the pandemic and all the restrictions, they have had to deal with it may be hard for them to feel positive but identifying 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.

**Seek support if you need it.** Transitioning back to school after being in lockdown is no easy task. You may find that your teen struggles to accept school rules, wearing a uniform or completing school work in a classroom after being at home for so long. If this is the case, reach out to the school as soon as you can so that you can make them aware of the challenges and you can work together to support your teen.

If you are concerned about your teen's mental health and you think they need professional support, speak to the school and your GP about the best next step.

Yours Sincerely

Ann Robinson, Team Manager Education Welfare Service  
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