



Supporting Children Returning to School After School Holidays or Absence

Children often can feel worried or apprehensive about returning to school after a period of absence – such as after an illness or school holiday. This is particularly common prior to the start of a new academic year following the long summer holidays. Some behaviours an anxious child may display include:

- **Over-adaptation:** Being overly helpful, putting the needs of others before themselves.
- **Agitation:** Increased fidgeting, tapping, sensory needs, etc.
- **Attention-seeking behaviours:** Particularly in relation to feeling poorly and being unwell.
- **Aggression**
- **Negative self-talk**
- **Freeze / shut down:** Refusing to talk or engage with others, not wanting to leave the house, spending lots of time in their bedroom alone.
- **Decreased independence:** Saying they can't do things they have previously managed independently, which could include feeding, toileting, getting dressed, etc.
- **Becoming more selective about food:** Refusing to eat foods they have previously enjoyed, eating a very limited diet, refusing to adhere to family mealtimes.

As a school, we will always support our children to make a positive return to school at all times of the year. In the meantime, there are several things that you can do at home to support children who will be returning to school:

- Talk to your children about the return to school. Give them information about when and what will happen – how will they get to school, who will take them.
- Allow them to ask questions. If they have questions you are not sure how to answer, please email the school office and we will do our very best to help.
- Make sure you have collected together the clothing and equipment your child will need to come back to school in advance rather than the night before. If you need any help sourcing items, please contact the school.



- Try to ensure your child is back in some level of routine - re-establish bedtimes, finish off any last pieces of home learning, encourage them to read daily. This will help them to settle back into the school routine.
- Talk to them about the positive aspects of returning to school.
- If your child has any particular concerns (for example, regarding a particular aspect of learning), please do let a member of the class team know so that we can offer specific support with this.