



Hevingham and Marsham Primary schools and Nursey

Welcome back to school after Lockdown

Please read this document for helpful advice to support you and your child/ren back into school after being in Lockdown for so many months.

Introduction

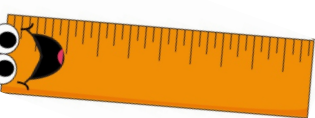
We would like to begin by sharing our appreciation for the efforts our families have given throughout the lockdown periods.

We understand that juggling family life is at times a challenge, but with the addition of remote learning, there has been an increased level of stress.

Everyone has worked tremendously hard to ensure our children have been getting a healthy balance of formal learning, social skills and life skills.

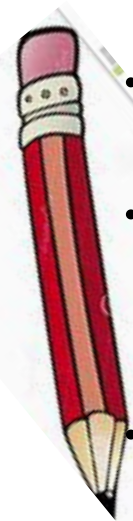
We do hope that despite the adversity, having your children at home has enlightened experiences that otherwise may not have been made possible.





Things you can do to help with the return to school

- Establish good routines of getting up, having breakfast and getting dressed
- Prepare school bags and lunches the evening before so that the mornings are less hectic
- Using visual timetables can be a good way to help keep things organised and predictable. They do not have to be fancy, just a list that can be ticked off will lessen anxiety
- Openly talk with your child about returning to school and highlight any concerns you or they are feeling. Write these down and work together to make a plan of how to make it easier. There are some useful examples at the end of this document.





WORRIES FOR CHILDREN



The spread of COVID-19

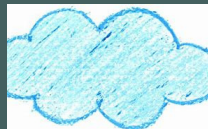
Remembering the school, its rules and teachers

Friends – will relationships be the same?

Will the teachers be the same?

Will I be able to do the work set for me?

How will I play at playtime?





WORRIES FOR ADULTS



The spread of COVID-19

The happiness of their children as they settle into
school

Understanding the new way school works

Keeping up with the academic work





ANXIETY EXPLAINED



Anxiety is a normal emotion that can be useful in some situations.

It can assist the human body to make decisions in difficult situations.

You may have heard of the fight/flight or freeze response where in difficult situations we can confront it, run from it or be unable to do anything but freeze because of the fear.

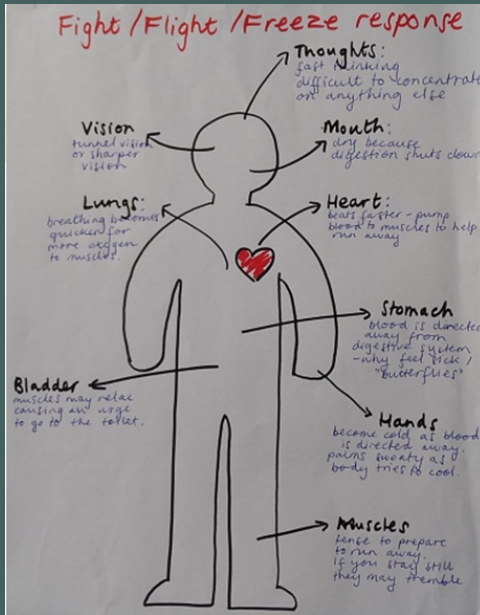
When our bodies are in a position of not being able to cope or face a certain situation, they may react physically as can be seen on the following slide.

When anxiety becomes uncontrollable, and begins to affect our everyday life, through fear of doing things – it is important to seek help from a GP and talk things through with the school.

We may be able to help and signpost you to supportive organisations.

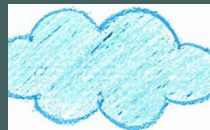


ANXIETY: THE PHYSICAL RESPONSE



This great picture shows how anxiety can affect the body physically.

Some physical responses to anxiety can be painful and frightening but there are ways to manage these responses.





HELPING OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN

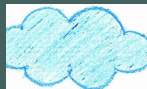


Be honest with your own emotions. Children do not need to know all of the facts about a situation but it is OK to let them know that a difficult day at work has upset you. It enables children to understand their own worries are normal.

Children learn from the adults in their lives and will follow your examples. Even in those most difficult of situations, act confidently and actively seek solutions.

For example if both you and your child are worried about being separated when school reopens, make a plan together about how it can be made to feel easier.

If you as an adult are struggling with anxiety, please seek support through your GP or at school.



10 PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR HELPING AN ANXIOUS CHILD



1

QUIET HUGS

Help your child feel safe by reassuring them that you are there and willing to help. Words can sometimes exacerbate anxiety, so sitting quietly with lots of hugs and empathizing can often work better.

2

SEE YOUR CALM PLACE



Remember a time you were happy, calm and peaceful. See it in your mind with as much detail as possible. Always use the same calm place to enhance the effect.

3

5X5 GROUNDING

See 5 things, hear 4 things, touch 3 things, smell 2 things and taste 1 thing.



4

30 JUMPING JACKS

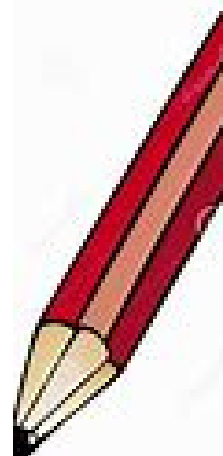
Anxiety often causes shallow breathing. Having the child do an exercise forces deep breaths that can reset the anxious feelings.

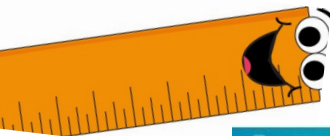


5

BLOW BUBBLES

Research has shown that 10 deep breaths resets the autonomic nervous system and helps to calm the amygdala. Blowing bubbles is a great way to get a child to blow deep breaths. Party blowers or straw and balled up paper offer other ways to do the same.





6



DRAW YOUR ANXIETY


Draw a picture of what you are worried about.

7

REMEMBER PAST SUCCESS

Remind the child to think about the last time they overcame their anxiety. Remind them that they can do this, even though it can be hard.

8



PROBLEM SOLVE THE FEAR

Help the child talk through what solutions could be used if their fear were to come to fruition. Knowing they can handle the worst can help calm the fear.

9


DESTROY THE WORRY

Have the child write their anxiety on a piece of paper and then tear it up and throw it away.

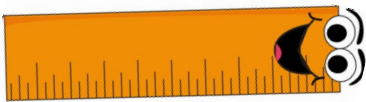
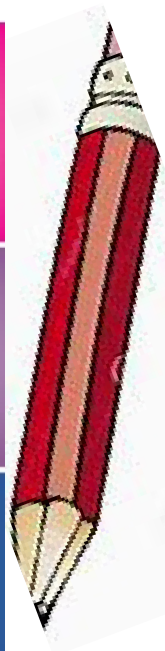
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PET A FURRY FRIEND

Research has shown that petting an animal reduces the heart rate and calms the body. Sitting for 10 or 15 minutes petting a furry friend is a wonderful way to relieve anxiety and bring some smiles to a child.



Find out more about Special Education Advocacy from:
WWW.SPECIALMOMADVOCATE.COM/BLOG





OTHER WAYS TO HELP ANXIETY



Get back into a routine

When things are less hectic and the day is planned, it helps promote a positive mood that is beneficial to engage in all activities. We really recommend a timetable to help put order to the day ahead.

Responding to your child's anxiety:

Stay calm - be aware of your responses and not express a sense of panic.

Talk things through with your child and help them to unpick what it is that is worrying them.

Show your child coping methods for anxiety such as the list above or The 5 Ways to Wellbeing

Listen to your child and let them know you are there for them.

Be honest about how you feel. Children do not need to know reasons, just that it is normal to feel different emotions.



ENCOURAGE POSITIVITY



Reward

It may seem really small that your child arrived at school, spoke with friends and remembered the rules but in actual fact these activities can seem huge to a child, for it is no longer the norm.

Some children may struggle with being separated from you, they may not feel confident in speaking with their friends and the work set may seem daunting.

Speak with your child and work together to find the things that they may be worrying about with the return to school. Write them down and score them out of 10. You can then attach an agreed reward to them.

See the example on the next page for tips.





ENCOURAGE POSITIVITY

1. Recognise the worry and make a reward
2. Make a plan
3. Do the plan
4. Get the reward

Recognise the Worry	Score the worry out of 10	Make a plan	Do the plan	Get the reward(chosen when the anxiety was recognised)
Jamie is worried about leaving his mum	10	Mum will keep the phone <u>near</u> <u>by</u> , Dad will check in with mum throughout the day. If Jamie is really worried, school will make a phone call home	Jamie trusted that Dad would check in with mum during the day and did not need school to ring home	A film with mum and dad in the evening eating chocolate ice cream
Schoolwork	8	Mum has explained to the teachers about the lack of <u>school</u> <u>work</u> . School will help Jamie to identify gaps in his learning. Jamie will ask lots of questions to help his learning	Jamie worked really hard and asked to work through his playtime to get the work finished	An extra 15minutes screen time in the evening





ENCOURAGE POSITIVITY



Top Tips for reducing anxiety

Make a pros and cons list for a situation or event. Once clear on paper it is easier to manage the emotion of fear that is associated with the action

Remind children of resilience: the ability to cope with uncertainty, resist adversity and recover from traumatic experiences. Remind of the times where they have overcome things

Celebrate successes: Some achievements are big, such as getting a good grade, others can be small, such as learning to tie shoe laces. Any achievement is worth celebrating as it provides strength at the next challenge a person faces.

Do things that are fun

Get Active

Talk and listen

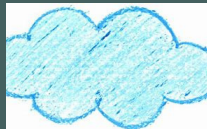
5 Ways to wellbeing



RELAXATION TECHNIQUES



54321 Grounding Exercise





RELAXATION TECHNIQUES



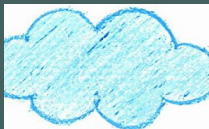
Hands and Arms: *Squeeze a Lemon*

Pretend you have a whole lemon in each hand. Now squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out! Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Squeeze hard! Don't leave a single drop. (Hold for 10 seconds). Now relax and let the lemon drop from your hand. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed.



Shoulders and Neck: *Hide in Your Shell*

Now pretend you are a turtle. Try to pull your head into your shell. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold it tight! (Hold for 10 seconds). Okay, you can come out now. Feel your shoulders relax.





PLACES OF SUPPORT



- **Talk to your Nurture Lead at school**
- **Speak to your GP**
- **MIND helpline 0300 1233393**

Resources:

Talking to children about Coronavirus

Child Mind Institute:

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

Interactive resource explaining about covid

<http://cdc.mobilize.io/links?lid=KGSPTL-VZUIxBBXTyUc36Q&token=VB6Gu3hBJAh1JLZm4wTrqg&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mindheart.co%2Fdescargas>
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