



Jubilee Primary School & Children's Centre
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Supporting your child with the return to school

As a school, we are incredibly impressed with how our community has responded to the most recent school closure. The commitment of staff, pupils and parents to continuing our children's learning in the face of huge difficulties has meant that the children we welcome back have not missed out academically, and should be able to return and continue with their year group's curriculum without large gaps in their learning.

Spending a lot of time away from friends, working on a screen and hearing news about the pandemic may have some negative effects on the children's wellbeing. It could be that some pupils may be experiencing low mood, anxiety or stress. With this in mind, we hope the following advice may help you as parents prepare your child for their return to school on 8th March.

My child seems anxious - what should I do?

The most important thing is to reassure your child that this is a very normal response to an unusual situation. Talk with them about what's going on, keeping communication as open as you can. Let them know that it's okay to feel however they feel – whether that's scared, worried, angry, sad or something else. Try to answer your child's questions and reassure them in a way that's appropriate for their age. While you don't need to know all the answers, talking things through can help them feel calmer. Talk to them about the fact that they will be returning to school soon, you may even want to create a countdown calendar so they know when it will be happening. For many, this will be an exciting prospect and they will enjoy seeing the days tick away! Making sure the children know that they will be returning to familiar surroundings, adults and friends will also be useful. Ask them what they are looking forward to the most and try to focus on the positives as much as possible. Encourage your child to do the things that help them when they're finding things difficult. This will be different for everyone – it could include things like doing exercise or going for a walk, watching a favourite film, reading a favourite book, cooking or baking, talking to friends, or drawing or writing. There are some wonderful books out there that support children with their wellbeing and mental health, and some in particular that are designed to support children in understanding the COVID 19 pandemic. Please see the separate book list to see if there are any that may work for your family.

What if my child is anxious about getting the virus?

There has been a lot of information about the virus in the media, and it would have been almost impossible to avoid them being aware of the negative impact of the pandemic. If they are concerned about becoming unwell themselves, it is useful to talk to them about the safety measures that have been put into place in school. You will be able to find this information on the letter sent home earlier this week by Mr Prestwich, or in more detail on the risk assessment on the website. Also remind the children of the steps they are taking to keep safe themselves, for example handwashing and not going out as much.

My child is concerned that they may pass the virus onto other members of their family - how can we reassure them?

The children may well be aware that the risk is higher for older people than it is for children, and may worry about putting members of their family at risk by coming in. Again, reassuring them about the measures that are in place in school and how these help to keep everyone safe will be important here, as will reminding them of the steps you as a family are taking. Try to remain calm yourself. Don't share your worries with your children, and if you are feeling anxious, find a way to ground yourself. Don't forget to make space for yourself if you can. Taking a break and making space to do something for yourself, whether that's reading, exercising or just simply being alone will help. It is much harder to be there for your children unless you take care of yourself and you should not feel guilty for needing a break.

How are the staff prepared to support the children who might find it difficult to return?

The staff at Jubilee have been particularly focused on the children's wellbeing throughout this entire period. They are all clear of the safety measures and have planned for activities in the classroom that support the wellbeing of the children, including activities that will prepare them for coming back into school. They know your children well and are clear on how best to support them.

We hope you have found this helpful. If you believe that your child is in need of additional support from the school in relation to their mental health or wellbeing, then please do get in touch with us via the school office to arrange an appointment to discuss this.

We cannot wait to see you all.

Yours faithfully,

Pippa Cail
Deputy Headteacher