 

**Supporting transition**

**What do we mean by transition?**

Transition is simply changing from one thing or place to another. So when we talk about ‘transition’ in nursery we mean changes children experience. This might be moving from one activity to another, going to play outside, moving from one room to another, moving up to P1 in school. Often children can manage these changes well, but others can be more daunting and children need support and encouragement to cope.

We know that most children will have been away from nursery and school for a long time because of the lockdown. Many of them will feel anxious about coming back, especially those who perhaps will move straight into P1. We want to share some tips you can try at home to help prepare your child for when the time comes for them to come back to nursery or school.

1. **Time to talk**

* Chat about what your child has missed about being at nursery. What did they like best about it? What is the first thing they would like to do when they go back?
* Arrange to video call some of your child’s friends and have a catch up about what you’ve been doing while you’ve been at home.
* Talk about what your child thinks school/ P1 will be like. Do they remember going for visits? What did they see? Who were the teachers? Have a look on the school website for their pictures: do you know any of their names?
* Share photos of you when you were at school. Talk about happy memories you have from your own school days. Did you go to Newington School too? Are any of the same teachers there?

1. **Get into the routine**

Routines are important for children’s mental health and well-being because they feel safe and secure when they know what to expect next. It is easy to be more relaxed about routines during the lockdown period but predictable structure is reassuring for children.

* Stick to bedtime and mealtime routines
* Give prompts when you know a change is coming, e.g “When we have read the story it is time to go to sleep” or “When you have finished breakfast we will get dressed”
* Plan the day together. Children need opportunities to make some choices to help them build independence.

1. **Building resilience**

Emotional resilience helps children to face new challenges, to be more curious and adventurous and be more adaptable to change. Here are some ways you can help your child to become emotionally prepared for new experiences:

* Mindfulness breathing: lie flat on the floor with your eyes closed. Count to 5 as you take a deep breath in, and count to 5 as you breathe out again. Put you hand on your tummy so you can ‘feel’ your deep breaths.
* Strike a pose: pretend to be Superman, stand with your feet apart, clench your fists and stretch your arms high above your head; or pretend to be Wonder woman, stand tall with your feet apart and your hands on your hips. Can you think of any other superhero poses you can do?
* What’s that smell?: gather together a few items that have a strong smell, e.g. scented candle, fresh herbs, flowers, fruit, spices, vinegar. With your eyes closed, can you guess what the smell is?
* Keep in touch: it is tricky at the moment to stay close to your friends and family but strong relationships are very important for children to help them cope with any anxious moments they may have. Video calling family, sharing special moments on social media, and spending one-to-one time with you are all good ways to maintain relationships during lockdown.
* Problem-solving: helping your child to work out solutions to problems by asking them questions such as “What do you think?” “What will happen if….” etc. will help them to overcome challenges independently.
* Acts of kindness: you may have already made a rainbow to put in your windows or joined in the weekly ‘clap for carers’ on Thursday evenings. Explaining to your child the reason behind this will help them to understand why they are not coming to nursery at the minute. There are lots of ideas online at <https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids/supporting-children-and-young-people-during-covid-19/>

