

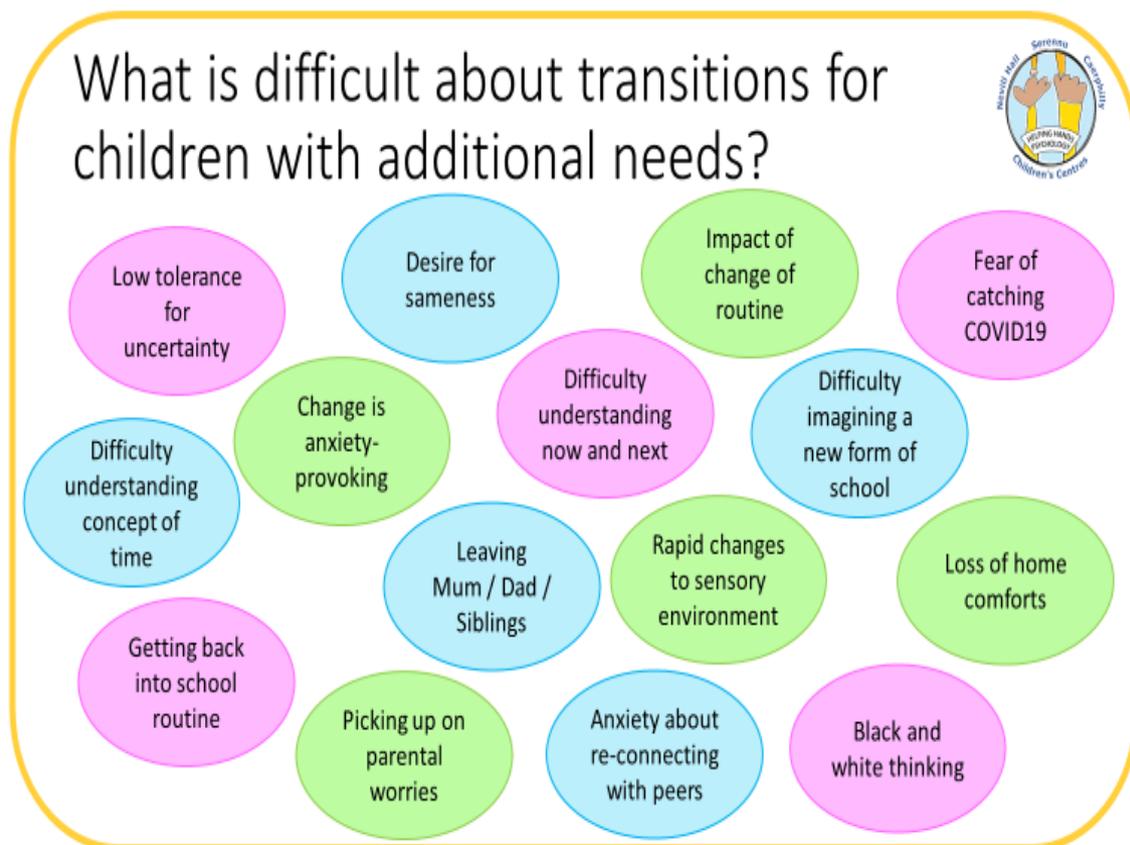
Supporting Parents – Supporting Children

We want our school to be a secure base for the whole community.



We understand and know that returning to school is exciting, we also understand that children will also be quite anxious about their return. We have been working with Dr Paula Levett to understand and look at ways in which we are able to support parents and children on their return. (**Providing Support to parents on their child returning to school Post Lockdown.** [Dr Rebekah Sutherland – Clinical Psychologist.](#))

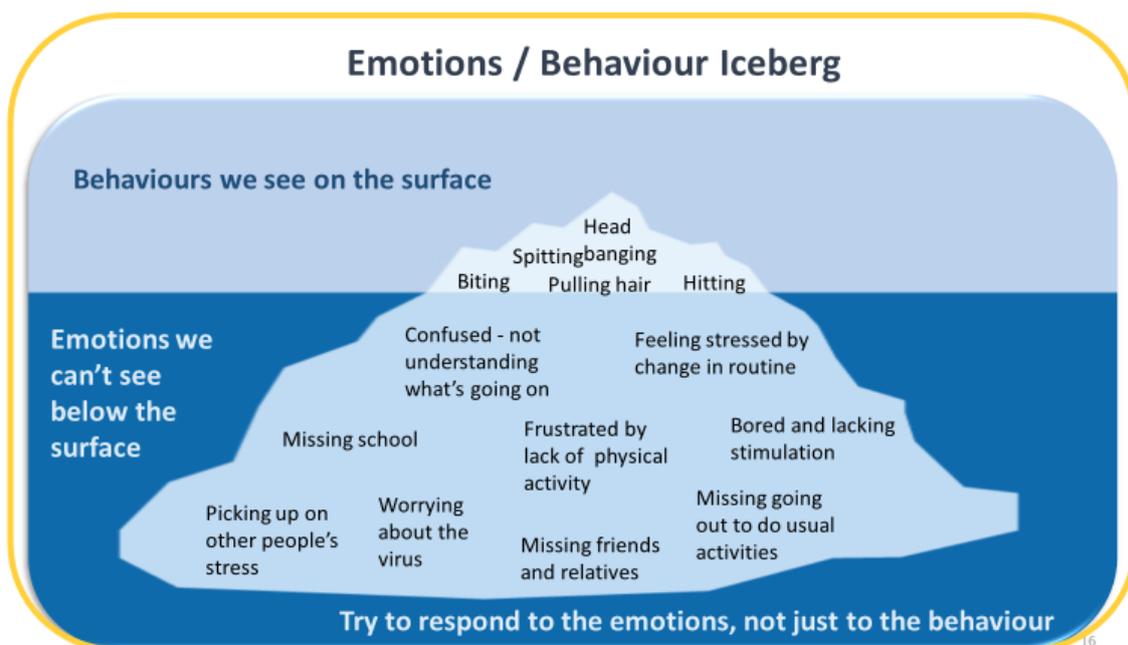
Our children will be thinking about all the things that they had before and during Lock Down, but things have changed for all of us. Anxieties will be difficult for the children to explain, but we do understand that change is not good for our pupils. We know the difficulties that could arise too: -



We will support the children to understand the changes and how this will make them feel. We will: -

- Connect with the family
- Help the children to express their feelings
- Listen and take notice
- Pause, help the children to take time to connect with the school and develop trust that we will keep everyone safe
- Most importantly, we will have fun. We will do things they enjoy and take time to laugh.

We are aware that children might return to school with high anxiety and their behaviours could present in lots of different ways. Therefore, we are mindful of the following information when we are dealing with the behaviours, trying to understand the cause and the emotional difficulties the children might have.



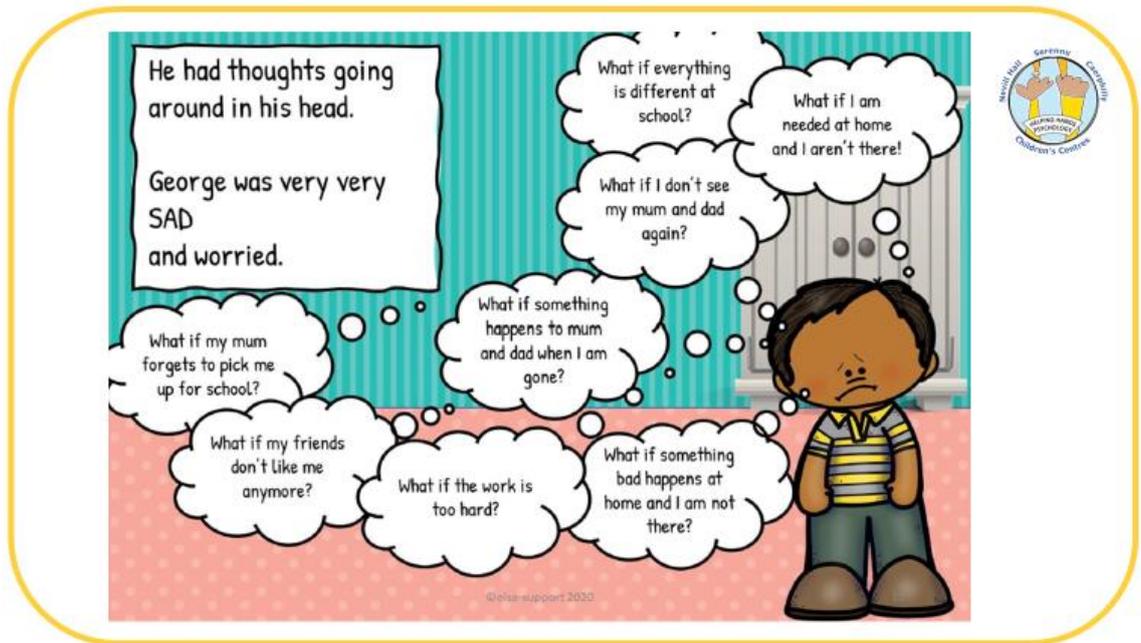
Everyone wants the school community to thrive and grow over the coming years. Like all parents the children's happiness is our focus and supporting them to explore and develop into secure young people is our ultimate aim.

Our short-term goal is to support you in supporting your child to return to school.

Leaving in the morning. You could: -

- Give lots of hugs/kisses goodbye. You could turn this into a game, for example you could say "how many kisses and squeezes would you like today?".
- Let the child know when you will see them next and what you will do together e.g. I will meet you here at the end of the day, I will pick you up straight after school and we can go and get an ice-cream.

- Have a transitional object e.g. a toy, photograph, picture or special scent, or item that comforts the child.
- Be positive and decisive when saying good-bye to your child.
- **Matching items:** Give your child something which you also have a copy of, which you can both keep on your person when you are apart e.g. matching home-made wrist bands; or draw a heart, cut it in half and keep a half each.



On their return home:

- A positive greeting after the school separation. This could be a hug, smile, kiss, high-five, a fun handshake, or a special phrase that you use with your child.
- Let your child know that you are glad to see them and that you have thought about them during the day, e.g. "when I was at work I thought about you when I had a cup of tea out of my special mug".
- If you planned a special activity that you were going to do together after school, it is important to still try and do this even if your child has had a bad day at school. Your child will be better able to take on any thoughts or consequences you have if they feel safe and connected with you.

And most of all...



Remind the child (and yourself) that the Transition Storm will come, and it will go. You will stick it out together, and soon it will be over.



Useful social stories.

Explaining why it is safe to go to school now

Social stories



I am going back to school



My school has been closed because of Coronavirus



It is safe to go back to school



I will travel to school in the morning



I will have lessons



Going to school is good for me



It is okay to feel sad or worried about going back to school



If I am sad or worried I can speak to an adult who looks after me



It is safe to go back to school



I can be happy to go back to school



I will go to school on the bus



School will be clean



Adults will make the school safe



I can feel safe in school

Daniels' Safety Checker

My hands are clean, I have washed them.



I can speak to an adult if I am worried.



I can stay 2m apart from other people.



I think I can feel...

Safe

Unsafe

When we are back together, we will reflect on the positives, the smiles we see everyday and we will celebrate achievements.

The routines will be re-established, with regular breaks, time to calm, sooth and be grounded again.