

Ideas for the summer that will help your child to have a smooth start to the next school year

All summer:

- *Talk about school, friends and September regularly – don't let it get completely forgotten – look at the video of the new teacher every now and then*
- *Keep in touch with peers – online, phone and in person. Arrange to meet up safely if you can.*
- *Work on some stress relieving strategies – develop a range that your child knows work and then they can use them when terms starts but also they can use them for non-school situations that they find challenging. Try out:*
 - *Listen to music*
 - *Have some lavender oil on a tissue in a pocket and smell it when you feel stressed*
 - *Deep breathing – blow out the candle while counting to 10*
 - *Massage the back or palm of your own hand/ base of thumb*
- *Try an end of day review at bedtime – when they says good night they tell you about one thing they have liked about the day and one thing they are looking forward to tomorrow. The adult doing this could also share one thing they have enjoyed doing together that day or something they noticed them deal with really well.*
- *Try some techniques to help your child focus on the positive and build their confidence such as using affirmations – positive phrases to say to themselves, visualisation – imagining a happy place or time etc.*
- *Read regularly – and find series of books that they enjoy, maybe do the library summer reading challenge*
- *Use maths for real life things like money, time, shopping, baking etc. and writing for real reasons e.g. letters, diary, notes etc. Journaling can help with processing stress too.*
- *Get a brain training app/game to play*
- *Try to have a good balance of activity each day – some physical activity, some helping out with jobs at home, some things that will keep learning skills ticking over, some screen time and some relaxation. Maybe have a tick list or plan to follow so that no one type of activity comes to dominate how holiday days are spent.*
- *Have a routine – for a day/ week – and make clear which are the family holiday weeks where that isn't going to be followed*

The week or so before school returns and on the first day:

- *Begin to move the bedtime/ morning routine in line with school days – get the times closer to what they will need to be etc.*
- *Go for a shopping trip to get some things needed for school –hair clips, water bottle, bag, clothes etc.*
- *Walk to school or make the journey as you will for real and have look around – but then go to the high street for something nice like a coffee or ice cream – or go to the park to meet a friend. (Maybe do this a couple of times)*
- *Prepare everything so that isn't being done on the last day/ morning school starts back – pack bags, get uniform ready etc.*
- *Review the video from the class teacher ready for the start of school*
- *Plan in advance the first morning, what time to get up, order to do things, what to have for breakfast etc. and make a list – so that each thing happens predictably*
- *Arrange to meet a friend on the journey to school to walk in together on the first day*
- *Plan something nice that you will do on the first weekend after school restarts – a cinema trip, meal out or take way etc.*