

Our Christian Vision - *Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven* - **Matthew 5:16**



Friday 5th September 2025

News from The Three Schools

**With HONESTY, RESPECT, FORGIVENESS
and LOVE, we persevere, succeed and shine.**

Getting back into the swing of things!

I cannot believe that we are already at the end of the first week of the Autumn term! The days are flying by already, the children have really settled into their new classes well and are working incredibly hard. So much has happened these first couple of days back across the Three Schools.

The children and staff have been ever so busy, it has been a delight to hear the 'buzz' of hard work and fun echoing through the corridors! We have enjoyed a wonderful **Shine day** today, with the children producing some stunning work, participating in some amazing discussions and celebrating how they can all bring light and joy to the lives of others with **LOVE, HONESTY, RESPECT** and **FORGIVENESS** as well as finding out about Spirituality in the World around us all.

Please enjoy this week's newsletter and have a relaxing weekend!

Yours sincerely

David May (Executive Headteacher)

Absence

When a child is absent due to illness, please contact school each day of the absence (**by ParentMail, before 9.30am**).

If your child continues to be absent from school due to illness, please ensure the school is updated on a daily basis until they are well enough to return to school.

Late arrivals will be signed in by a member of staff, with the time noted (using the E-Reception iPad in the Reception area).

Children who leave school for appointments will be signed out and signed back in again by staff.

Thank you for your support in this matter.



Prescribed and Non-prescribed medicines

Please ensure any **PRESCRIBED** medicines that children require throughout the school day are handed into the school office with the relevant administration of medicines permission form completed and signed by a parent/guardian (found on the school website).

Just a reminder—we are unable to administer **NON-PRESCRIBED** medicines such as Calpol.

Pupils are unable to bring any items such as Calpol Meltlets or Strepsils into school to self-administer. We are happy for parents to come to school to administer such **NON-PRESCRIBED** medicines during the school day if they feel this is required.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Changes to end of day collection and County bus arrangements

If you need to make any changes or updates to end of day collection arrangements for your child, including adding or removing your child to the County Bus register at Swanbourne, please contact the relevant school office to update us of these changes **by email, phone or ParentMail no later than 1.00pm.**



Thank you for your support in this matter.

Dates and INSET days for 2025-2026

Please see the dates attached to the newsletter for some of the significant events planned so far for this the Autumn term for your diary.

The 5 INSET Days for 2024-2025 are as follows:

- Wednesday 3rd September 2025
- Monday 5th January 2026
- Monday 13th April 2026
- Friday 22nd May 2026
- Friday 26th June 2026



Swanbourne School Term Dates 2025/26 Academic Year



Students: 190 days
Teachers: 195 days

Pupil Days

School holidays

Bank holidays

Proposed inset days - 4 more inset days can be set by the schools

Transition Days



Sep-25							Oct-25							Nov-25							Dec-25						
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon		6	13	20	27		Mon		3	10	17	24		Mon	1	8	15	22	29	
Tue	2	9	16	23	30		Tue		7	14	21	28		Tue		4	11	18	25		Tue	2	9	16	23	30	
Wed	3	10	17	24			Wed	1	8	15	22	29		Wed		5	12	19	26		Wed	3	10	17	24	31	
Thu	4	11	18	25			Thu	2	9	16	23	30		Thu		6	13	20	27		Thu	4	11	18	25		
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	3	10	17	24	31		Fri		7	14	21	28		Fri	5	12	19	26		
Sat	6	13	20	27			Sat	4	11	18	25		Sat	1	8	15	22	29		Sat	6	13	20	27			
Sun	7	14	21	28			Sun	5	12	19	26		Sun	2	9	16	23	30		Sun	7	14	21	28			
Jan-26							Feb-26							Mar-26							Apr-26						
Mon		5	12	19	26		Mon		2	9	16	23		Mon		2	9	16	23	30	Mon		6	13	20	27	
Tue		6	13	20	27		Tue		3	10	17	24		Tue		3	10	17	24	31	Tue		7	14	21	28	
Wed		7	14	21	28		Wed		4	11	18	25		Wed		4	11	18	25		Wed	1	8	15	22	29	
Thu	1	8	15	22	29		Thu		5	12	19	26		Thu		5	12	19	26		Thu	2	9	16	23	30	
Fri	2	9	16	23	30		Fri		6	13	20	27		Fri		6	13	20	27		Fri	3	10	17	24		
Sat	3	10	17	24	31		Sat		7	14	21	28		Sat		7	14	21	28		Sat	4	11	18	25		
Sun	4	11	18	25			Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun	5	12	19	26		
May-26							Jun-26							Jul-26							Aug-26						
Mon		4	11	18	25		Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon		6	13	20	27		Mon		3	10	17	24	
Tue		5	12	19	26		Tue	2	9	16	23	30		Tue		7	14	21	28		Tue		4	11	18	25	
Wed		6	13	20	27		Wed	3	10	17	24		Wed	1	8	15	22	29		Wed		5	12	19	26		
Thu		7	14	21	28		Thu	4	11	18	25		Thu		9	16	23	30		Thu		6	13	20	27		
Fri	1	8	15	22	29		Fri	5	12	19	26		Fri	3	10	17	24	31		Fri		7	14	21	28		
Sat	2	9	16	23	30		Sat	6	13	20	27		Sat	4	11	18	25		Sat	1	8	15	22	29			
Sun	3	10	17	24	31		Sun	7	14	21	28		Sun	5	12	19	26		Sun	2	9	16	23	30			

Attendance

It is incredibly important that every child has the best attendance possible. Each session missed not only impacts on the child's learning, where gaps could develop, but also impacts on social aspects.

We are therefore keen to work with families to help ensure that attendance levels are as high as possible.

Attendance data is analysed within school every three weeks, with data passed to the local authority on a regular basis.

Any concerns will be addressed, initially by school contacting families. We aim to identify reasons for absence and mitigate in the best way possible. Good communication between home and school is key to this.

We are aware that there are times when appointment times are during the school day. We would encourage parents to bring the children in to school for as much of the school day as possible. We also encourage families to take holidays within the school holidays, rather than in term time. If however this is not possible we do ask for honest communication between home and school.

Should your child be unable to attend school, please follow the procedure and inform the school on each day of absence. Whilst we appreciate that sometimes children are not well enough to attend, as schools we are very good at supporting children who perhaps do not feel at their best, but should still be in school. By having close communication between home and school the child's wellbeing can be monitored in a dynamic way.

We look forward to working with you.

(Mr Thorp - Attendance Lead)

Harvest Festival Donations

We are asking if you would be so kind to add a few additional items to your shopping in forthcoming weeks so that we can support the **Milton Keynes Foodbank** to help those in our community who are in need. Please see the list below for the items that have been requested by the charity.

If you are happy to donate any items from the list below to your trolley in the next couple of weeks we would really appreciate your support. Any donations will be collected by the **Milton Keynes Food Bank** after the children have visited the churches as part of their Harvest Festival services.

Can we please request that all donations are to be brought in **on the day** of the Harvest Festival for each school—Thank you!

Drayton Parslow (**Thursday 2nd October 2025 – 2.30pm at Drayton Parslow Church**)

Mursley (**Thursday 2nd October 2025 – 2.30pm at Mursley Church**)

Swanbourne (**Friday 3rd October 2025 – 9.30am and 2.00pm at St Swithun's Church**)

Suggested items;

- Long life Whole milk
- Spaghetti (Tinned)
- Long life juice
- Spread (E.g. Jam)
- Cup A Soup/Noodles
- Rice pudding (Tinned)
- Vegetables (Tinned)
- Biscuits
- Dried Pasta
- Breakfast Cereals
- Dried Rice
- Pasta sauce
- Tea bags
- Soup (tinned)
- Sugar
- Meat (Tinned)
- Tomatoes (Tinned)
- Tuna (Tinned)
- Baked Beans (Tinned)

Attendance Matters



Home Learning update for 2025-2026

Following the initial consultation with staff and the Parent Forum, it was concluded that homework remains a valued part of school life and that it is desirable for it to continue. We have taken on board the comments made and would therefore like to share the plans for home learning, across the Three Schools for this academic year.

The amount and type of home learning should vary depending on the age and developmental stage of the child. Always bear in mind that some children will grasp a task and complete the learning quickly, whilst others will take longer to finish it. Homework should not be a negative experience but should enhance the knowledge and understanding of the child. If this is not the case, please approach it from a different perspective or speak to your child's teacher to see how we can best support your child.

We recommend that you set a time limit for any homework task, although you may wish to break this into multiple sessions, rather than one longer period. For **KS1** this could be between **15-30 minutes**, extending to **30-40 minutes** in **Years 3 & 4** and **40-50 minutes** in **Years 5 & 6**. If tasks are not completed within that time, please make a note for your child's class teacher. However please don't persist for a whole session of frustration, stress and upset. End the session and again inform the class teacher.

It is vital that home learning does not reinforce any negative feelings towards learning nor should it damage relationships within families. The most effective use of homework is when parents engage with their child's learning. Spending time discussing the learning and showing that it is valued creates the greatest outcomes.

The following identifies some specific elements of home learning and how we are aiming to clarify the process.

Home-Learning Grids

- The Knowledge Organiser sheets for Maths, History, Geography, Science, RE, Computing, DT, Art and PSHE will be shared at the start of each new unit.
- An overview of the topics covered across the academic year will be shared following the transition day, when the children will have met their new teacher.

Homework

- All homework will be **issued on Friday** and **returned by the following Thursday**.
- The exception to this may be during the summer term in Year 6, to prepare the children for the changing demands of secondary school.
- Homework tasks will be linked to the learning that has been completed, or on occasions the learning that the children will be working on next.

Spellings

- KS1 overview sheets may be sent home, to show what has been learnt in class that week.
- KS2 spellings follow the Twinkl spelling scheme. Spellings are **issued on Fridays** and **tested the following Thursday**.

Reading

- Children are expected to read at **least four times each week**.
- Parents/carers should write in the child's Reading Journal to indicate when the child has completed the book, what page they are up to or to share any relevant information.

Extras

- In KS2 children will have access to **Times Table Rockstars** (TTRS), which they are encouraged to access frequently. Awards will be presented in school. Year 2 will be given access to TTRS in the Summer term.
- Children will have access to Mathletics, which they are encouraged to use frequently.
- The children take turns to do a Book Recommendation for their class. This takes a slightly different format, depending on the age of the child and happens at least once each year.
- In EYFS there is a class bear that each child will have the opportunity to take home for the week. There is an accompanying scrap book for sharing the activities that the bear did, whilst with the child/family.

Rewards and Sanctions

Research shows that once extrinsic motivators are used, not only does their impact wane over time, but if subsequently removed, people are less motivated than before the rewards were given. Intrinsic motivation is encouraged, through valuing the tasks that are set.

- Children will receive no automatic reward for completing the expected homework. They may however receive house points or stickers (depending on their age) for work that demonstrates either excellence or outstanding effort.
- Children who do not complete their homework will be reminded that it can be **handed in the following day**.

- In Key Stage 2, if the homework is still not completed, then the child may be expected to complete some of it during part of their break time.
- Children in Year 6 may be kept in class to read, if they have not read the requisite number of times in a week.
- There will be no rewards given for the children reading at home. The benefits they receive from developing their reading ability are broad and sustained throughout the child's life.

Home learning expectations

Year group	Home learning tasks
EYFS	Reading – Children will have a phonics book and some flashcards. They may also choose a library book to share with parents. Other task – Children are given occasional projects, which are designed to help school get to know the children and families.
Year 1	Reading – Children will have a Guided Reading book, a Reading Scheme book and the option of a library book. Other task - Some activities may be given linked to the calendar (e.g., World Book Day challenge) or to consolidate some learning.
Year 2	Reading – Children will have a Guided Reading book, a Reading Scheme book and the option of a library book. Other task – 1 written task, which will be Maths, or something linked to the calendar (e.g., World Book Day challenge).
Year 3	Reading – Children will have an 'Accelerated Reader' book. On completion they will use an iPad to quiz about the book, when in school. Spellings – 8-10 words taken from the Twinkl scheme. Other task – Maths (Mathletics/TTRS/paper task) OR one other piece (comprehension/topic), alternate weeks.
Year 4	Reading – Children will have an 'Accelerated Reader' book. On completion they will use an iPad to quiz about the book, when in school. Spellings – 8-10 words taken from the Twinkl scheme. Other task – Comprehension/SPAG tasks OR Maths (Mathletics/TTRS/paper task), alternate weeks.
Year 5	Reading – Children will have an 'Accelerated Reader' book. On completion they will use an iPad to quiz about the book, when in school. Spellings – 8-10 words taken from the Twinkl scheme. Other task – English (grammar/comprehension alternate weeks) OR Maths (Mathletics/TTRS/paper task), alternate weeks.
Year 6	Reading – Children will have an 'Accelerated Reader' book. On completion they will use an iPad to quiz about the book, when in school. Spellings – 10 words taken from the Twinkl scheme. Other – <i>Autumn term</i> - Use TTRS for 30 minutes each week. Comprehension 1 page text with 1 page of questions. <i>Spring & Summer terms</i> - SATs booklets: Maths 1 test each week. Comprehension 1 page text with 1 page of questions. Grammar task.

Parking Reminders

Please can we take this opportunity to remind parents and carers to consider their parking when dropping off and collecting their children from all of our school sites, including Kingfishers Pre-School and Wrap-around sessions.

May we politely request that care and consideration for our neighbours is applied when parking and that you do not block or obstruct any residents' driveways at any point.

It has been brought to our attention that not only are some parents parking too close to the junctions causing a visual obstruction to our neighbours and other road users, but we have also had issues for the County bus entering the lay-by fully to ensure it could collect the children safely.

Please can we request that parents refrain from parking on the corner of **Station road**, in the lay-by outside of **Swanbourne CE School** or parking too close to other vehicles on the main road as this is causing a significant obstruction, especially to the County Bus which will now be arriving via **Station Road** each evening.

Although the roads around school are small country lanes, they are used by large farm vehicles, buses and a high volume of traffic - especially at pick up and drop off times.

Can we also take this opportunity to remind parents that when they are dropping off or collecting from **Mursley CE School**, **Kingfishers Pre-School** and **Wrap-around** that they do not park on the yellow Zig-zag lines outside Mursley as this obscures the view of road out from **Maids Close** making residents unable to leave their road safely due to people ignoring the yellow lines.

At **Swanbourne CE School**, you can park at **The Betsy Wynne** and in the mornings and afternoons and walk to and from school - thank you so much to those parents who continue to do so, it is much appreciated. Just to remind parents to support parents at the end of the day, we continue to extend the collection window of **3.30pm to 3.45pm**, allowing 15 minutes for pupils to be collected in a timely manner.

At **Drayton Parslow Village School** parents are encouraged to use the car park at **Greenacre Hall** and walk down to the school. Please do not park in the bus stop or on the bend to Bates gardens as this makes it very difficult for residents to join the main road.

Please can you support us by parking sensibly, respecting our neighbours and allowing plenty of time to get to school safely to collect your children.

Your understanding and help in this matter is greatly appreciated—Thank you!



Join us in the Mursley Church or the Swanbourne Village Hall for some fun together.

We will listen to a Bible story and then get creative with our bricks of all sizes!

Suitable for all who like to build - both old and young!

Encounter God, God's story and your story through the use of Lego.

Swanbourne Village Hall, First Sunday of the month, 4-5pm,

7th September

Each session ends with sandwiches and cake!





SEND Peer Support

Drop-ins for parent/carers

Buckinghamshire Council in partnership with YC2 Young Carers, Forever Colours Children's Hospice and Verdetto Lounge are offering a drop-in session for parents and carers of children with SEND. The sessions will provide the opportunity to meet informally and build support networks.

Professionals will be on hand to provide information and signposting support. Children are welcome to attend with parents/carers.



**Verdetto Lounge,
Buckingham**



**Third Tuesday of
every month**



**10:00am to 12:00
midday**

 Please note we cannot comment on individual EHC Plan queries or outcomes.



**Buckinghamshire
Council**

Proud to be part of
Family Hub Network
Buckinghamshire

The Three Schools Calendar and Important Dates (2025-2026)		
Monday 8 th September 2025 – Thursday 11 th September 2025	Swanbourne (Year 5)	Bike-ability Sessions
Tuesday 9 th September 2025	Swanbourne (Year 6)	Secondary Transfer Practice Test
Wednesday 10 th September 2025	Swanbourne (Year 4, 5 & 6)	Meet the Teacher Meetings (2.45pm)
Wednesday 10 th September 2025	Mursley (Year 1 & 2)	Meet the Teacher Meetings (2.45pm)
Wednesday 10 th September 2025	Drayton Parslow (Year 2)	Meet the Teacher Meeting (2.45pm)
Thursday 11 th September 2025	Drayton Parslow (Year 1)	Meet the Teacher Meeting (2.45pm)
Thursday 11 th September 2025	Swanbourne (Year 6)	Secondary Transfer Test
Friday 12 th September 2025	Drayton Parslow (EYFS)	EYFS Phonics Workshop for Parents (2.00pm) at Drayton Parslow
Friday 12 th September 2025	Mursley (EYFS)	EYFS Phonics Workshop for Parents (2.00pm) at Mursley
Friday 12 th September 2025	Swanbourne (Year 3)	Bike-ability Sessions
Thursday 18 th September 2025	Mursley & Drayton Parslow (Year 2)	Year 2 Maths Workshop for Parents (2.15pm) at Drayton Parslow
Friday 26 th September 2025	All Three Schools	MacMillan Coffee Events
Thursday 2 nd October 2025	Mursley & Kingfishers (EYFS & KS1)	Harvest Festival Service (2.30pm)
Thursday 2 nd October 2025	Drayton Parslow (EYFS & KS1)	Harvest Festival Services (2.30pm)
Friday 3 rd October 2025	Swanbourne (KS2)	Harvest Festival Services (9.30am & 2.00pm)
Tuesday 7 th October 2025	Swanbourne (KS2)	Author Workshop (11.15am)
Friday 10 th October 2025	All Three Schools	Hello Yellow Day
Wednesday 15 th October 2025	All Three Schools	Parents Evenings (3.30pm – 8.00pm)
Thursday 16 th October 2025	Swanbourne (KS2)	Parents Evenings (3.30pm – 6.30pm)
Friday 17 th October 2025	All Three Schools	Show Racism the Red Card Wear Red Day
Monday 20 th October 2025	Swanbourne (Year 3)	Chiltern Open Air Museum Trip
Monday 20 th October 2025	Mursley & Drayton Parslow (Year 1 & 2)	Stables Theatre Trip
Wednesday 22 nd October 2025	All Three Schools	Popcorn Night
Friday 24 th October 2025	All Three Schools	Break up for October Half Term
Monday 3 rd November 2025	All Three Schools	Autumn Term 2 Starts
Tuesday 11 th November 2025	All Three Schools	Remembrance Services
Thursday 13 th November 2025	Drayton Parslow (Year 1)	Celebration Assembly (2.50pm)
Friday 14 th November 2025	All Three Schools	Children in Need (Spots & Stripes Day)
Friday 21 st November 2025	All Three Schools	Winter Disco
Monday 8 th December 2025	Kingfishers, Mursley & Drayton Parslow	Nativity Dress Rehearsal – Grandparents & Younger Siblings to watch (2.00pm)
Wednesday 10 th December 2025	Kingfishers, Mursley & Drayton Parslow	Nativity Performance (2.00pm)
Thursday 11 th December 2025	Kingfishers, Mursley & Drayton Parslow	Nativity Performance (2.00pm)
Monday 15 th December 2025	Kingfishers, Mursley & Drayton Parslow	Christingle Services

Tuesday 16 th December 2025	Swanbourne (Year 6)	Christmas Cracked (10.00am)
Wednesday 17 th December 2025	All Three Schools	Christmas Cinema Trip
Wednesday 17 th December 2025	Kingfishers Pre-School	Christmas Party
Thursday 18 th December 2025	Swanbourne (KS2)	KS2 Christmas Concert (9.30am & 2.00pm)
Friday 19 th December 2025	All Three Schools	Christmas Jumper/Headwear Day
Friday 19 th December 2025	All Three Schools	Break up for Christmas
Monday 5 th January 2026	All Three Schools	INSET DAY
Tuesday 6 th January 2026	All Three Schools	Spring Term 1 Starts
Wednesday 14 th January 2026	Mursley & Drayton Parslow (Year 1)	ZSL Tring Museum Trip
Monday 2 nd February 2026	Swanbourne (Year 5 & Year 6)	Young Voices Concert
Friday 13 th February 2026	All Three Schools	Dare to be different day
Friday 13 th February 2026	All Three Schools	Break up for February Half Term
Monday 23 rd February 2026	All Three Schools	Spring Term 2 Starts
Friday 27 th March 2026	All Three Schools	Break up for Easter Holidays
Monday 13 th April 2026	All Three Schools	INSET DAY
Tuesday 14 th April 2026	All Three Schools	Summer Term 1 Starts
Wednesday 15 th April 2026	All Three Schools	Parents Evenings (3.30pm – 8.00pm)
Thursday 16 th April 2026	Swanbourne (KS2)	Parents Evenings (3.30pm – 6.30pm)
Monday 4 th May 2026	All Three Schools	Early May Bank Holiday
Saturday 16 th May 2026	All Three Schools	Colour Run
Thursday 21 st May	All Three Schools	Break up for May Half Term
Friday 22 nd May 2026	All Three Schools	INSET DAY
Monday 25 th May 2026	All Three Schools	May Bank Holiday
Monday 1 st June 2026	All Three Schools	Summer Term 2 Starts
Monday 8 th June – Friday 12 th June 2026	Swanbourne (Year 6)	Skern Lodge Residential Trip
Wednesday 17 th June 2026	All Three Schools	Book Look
Friday 19 th June 2026	All Three Schools	Summer Disco
Friday 26 th June 2026	All Three Schools	INSET DAY
Wednesday 1 st July 2026	All Three Schools	Transition Day
Thursday 2 nd July 2026	Swanbourne (Year 6)	Transition Day 2 (Year 6 only)
Friday 10 th July 2026	All Three Schools	Speech Cup Final
Monday 13 th July 2026	Swanbourne (Year 6)	Year 6 Production (7.00pm)
Tuesday 21 st July 2026	Mursley & Drayton Parslow (Year 2)	Year 2 Leavers' Services (2.30pm)
Wednesday 22 nd July 2026	Swanbourne (Year 6)	Year 6 Leavers' Services (9.30am)
Wednesday 22 nd July 2026	All Three Schools	Break up for Summer Holidays

MILTON KEYNES THEATRE CREATIVE LEARNING

YOUTH THEATRE & MKT YOUNG COMPANY



ATG
Milton Keynes
Theatre
Academy

Did you know... Milton Keynes Theatre run weekly drama-based classes for those in Year 2 to Age 18?

All our weekly Youth Theatre classes take place in the backstage studio right in the heart of Milton Keynes Theatre, giving children and young people a unique glimpse into the world of professional theatre.

The classes develop key drama skills, teamwork, confidence, speech development and creativity through a range of drama-based games, scriptwork, devising and more!

Plus, being a member of the MKT Academy gives you access to other Creative Learning Masterclasses and events, workshops with industry leaders, theatre tickets (where available) and performance opportunities.

MKT YOUTH THEATRE: ACT 1

School Years 2 – 4
Tuesday evenings
4.30pm – 5.30pm
£126 for the 14-week term



MKT YOUNG COMPANY

A performance project where young people can perform or take on backstage roles to bring a production to life!

School Year 9 – Age 18
Wednesday evenings
6pm – 8.30pm
£380 or (4x £95)

Bursary supported places available



MKT YOUTH THEATRE: ACT 2

School Years 5 – 8
Tuesday evenings
5.45pm – 7pm
£133 for the 14-week term



You can attend the first session as a taster before committing to the term – just drop us an email to secure your place!

Email MKCreativeLearning@atgertainment.com or visit ATGTickets.com/MiltonKeynes for more info

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SUPPORTING CHILDREN GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

Returning to school after the summer holidays can be both exciting and daunting for children of all ages. Different routines, classes, schools, and academic pressures can cause anxiety or uncertainty. Parents play a vital role in easing this transition. This guide will help you support your child emotionally, mentally, and practically as they return to school.

1 RE-ESTABLISH ROUTINES



Gradually shift back to school-time routines a week or two before term starts. Regular bedtimes, wake-up times, and mealtimes can help children feel more secure and reduce the shock of change when school begins. Having a routine creates predictability and stability, helping to reduce anxiety while improving sleep and concentration.

2 TALK ABOUT FEELINGS



Encourage open conversations with children about their feelings. Ask them how they feel about returning to school, such as what they're looking forward to and anything they might be feeling unsure or worried about. Validating their emotions can help reduce anxiety and show them it's okay to talk about their emotional wellbeing.

3 SUPPORT WITH SLEEP



Children need adequate sleep for concentration, brain function, memory, and emotional regulation. Establish a wind-down routine without screens at least an hour before bed, and encourage relaxing activities like reading or listening to calming music.

4 LOOK OUT FOR SIGNS



Some children hide their anxiety. Watch for changes in their behaviour, such as withdrawal, stomach aches, and irritability. If worries persist, speak with their teacher or the pastoral team early to ensure your child receives support.

5 REFRESH SOCIAL CONNECTIONS



Help children reconnect with school friends by arranging playdates or video chats in the week before school starts. Familiar faces and social interactions help the transition and provide emotional comfort on that first day back.

6 CREATE A CALM MORNING



Mornings set the tone for the day. Plan ahead with a consistent morning routine that allows time for breakfast, getting dressed, and talking calmly about the day. Avoid last-minute rushing to reduce stress for everyone.

7 FOCUS ON POSITIVES



Talk about the fun and interesting parts of school – seeing friends, favourite subjects, or exciting activities. One simple but powerful change parents can make is swapping “How’s your day been?” for “What’s been good about your day?” This invites more of a positive, open response. Focusing on positives can help shift children’s anxious thoughts and reframe school as a safe and engaging place.

8 VISIT OR VISUALISE SCHOOL



If possible, encourage visits to the school grounds before the first day, especially if it’s a new school. Walking the route or even looking at photos of classrooms and teachers can make the environment feel familiar. The school website is always a great go-to place for this. This is particularly helpful for younger children or those with additional needs.

9 PLAN AHEAD TOGETHER



Involve children in preparing for school – buying supplies, packing their bag, or choosing lunch options. This gives them a sense of control and builds excitement. Use checklists or calendars to prepare together, helping reduce last-minute stress.

10 STAY POSITIVE AND PRESENT



Children pick up on your outlook. Stay calm, positive, and present, especially during drop-offs. Avoid lingering goodbyes, and let them know you’ll be there at pick-up. A consistent, reassuring presence builds their confidence and resilience.

Meet Our Expert

This guide was created by Jo Morton-Brown, an Emotional Health Practitioner with nearly 15 years’ experience supporting children and young people’s mental health. She produces uplifting YouTube content for pupils and trains adults to better support young people’s wellbeing, with a mission to help every child feel valued and understand their emotions.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®