

Information to help support feelings and thoughts

It's natural to feel anxiety and a normal reaction to feel the need for safety, predictability and control. Anxiety is a normal reaction!

At present children (and adults!) are feeling worried and this is understandable. The uncertainty and unpredictability makes everyone feel unsettled. Focus on the positives and what children know as the familiar and certainty- for example; the same adults around them, their same peg, the same lunchtime. Changes in routine, for all of us, cause denial, anger, then acceptance and resilience. We can all settle into another routine and develop resilience.



So what can you do?

- Provide quality time to talk (while playing a game, during a meal for example), if they don't want to talk that's ok.
- Respond with active listening skills, listening without interruption.
- Reflect back- paraphrase and summarise.
- Use prompts- 'tell me more', 'do you want to tell me more?'
- Validate/empathise- 'that's understandable, 'I can see/understand how you are feeling'
- Be alongside them- let them know you are there for them.
- Offer reassurance and comfort.
- Modelling how to cope with situations, by acknowledging they exist, teaches resilience.



Remember...

Being listened to, feeling understood, validated and acknowledged does not makes things worse.

- Notice, label and accept your emotions.
 - Accept anxiety as one of your emotions.
 - Keep it in perspective.
 - Direct your attention to things that help you calm, such as calm breathing.
 - Talk to other people.
 - Recognise the positive things around us, the more we practice the easier it gets and the happier we feel!
- Being heard helps!**



Useful links

A free digital link for primary age children, child friendly and aims to inform and reassure.

<http://axelscheffler.com/books-for-older-children/coronavirus>

A useful link to worries

<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

As a school we strive to support children's mental health and well-being and more work will be done in school through PSHE to rebuild children's' confidence as learners.

We see this as five stages

Relationships- we can't expect all children to return joyfully to school, relationships will need to be restored.

Community - the need to listen to what has happened and understand the needs of all our community.

Curriculum- children may feel like they have lost learning times and we must show how we are addressing the gaps.

Metacognition- we make the skills for learning in a school environment to reskill and rebuild their confidence as learners.

Space- space to be, to rediscover self and to find their voice on learning.