

Dear Parents,

We are aware that lots of families are experiencing high levels of change: transitioning back to school, moving to a new school, accessing the community and seeing family and friends again. We have put together a selection of top tips, advice and strategies to support your children at this time.

We have used the **SCERTS** framework to outline appropriate tips/ strategies for your children. For those less familiar with the SCERTS framework please see a summary below: *Communication stages are grouped into three levels as follows:*

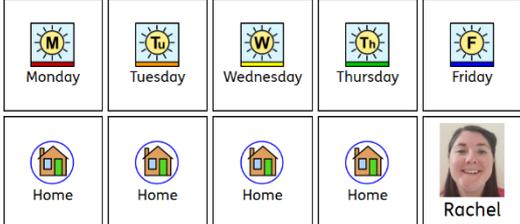


We have identified 4 key themes and offered tips, recommendations and strategies in relation to these for each communication stage. The 4 key themes are: 'Back to School', 'Going Outside', 'Meeting New People' and 'New Routines'.

We have also included a 'Parent Solution Planner', which contains questions that we hope will support you to achieve a positive outcome for some of the challenges you may be currently facing.

If you require any further support or advice on more specific resources and/or strategies please contact your school or key LCIS team member – Specialist Teacher or Speech and Language Therapist, SEN Practitioner and they will be happy to help.

Best Wishes  
The LCIS Team

Key Themes	Suggested Support/ Strategies	Additional links/ information
<p><b>Back to school</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You may need to check that old uniforms and shoes still fit correctly.</li> <li>- Take a walk past school, prior to returning to school. You may want to do this a number of times before your start date.</li> <li>- Show picture of the school on school days, and put a red cross over the picture on non-school days.</li> <li>- Should try to adjust sleep and eating routines to fit with the school timings.</li> <li>- Share transition book from the school, with the child.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sleep Advice:</b> <a href="https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/help-disabled-child-sleep/">https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/help-disabled-child-sleep/</a></p>
<p><b>Going Outside</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Show photos or videos of places prior to visiting, to prepare.</li> <li>- Use a 'transition object' (an toy or object you give to them every time you go outside).</li> <li>- Check online to make sure the places you want to visit are still open. Some play parks may have temporary fencing around them now, which might be confusing/ upsetting.</li> <li>- You may want to go out on short trips first, increasing the time on the next visit.</li> <li>- The first time outside may be quite stimulating for your child. You may want to prepare some quiet, calming time once you are back home to 'wind down' (Sensory music packs might be helpful).</li> </ul>	<p><b>See appendix A 'Sensory Music' packs-</b> Used to calm a child after a particularly alerting time.</p>
<p><b>Meeting people</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a 'count down' calendar, with a photo of the person you are going to meet. Cross the days off each day leading up to the meet.</li> <li>- Meet one or two people at a time. Larger groups may be a bit overwhelming to begin with.</li> <li>- Have sensory/favourite toys available, to help regulate emotions while you are out.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Count down calendar:</b></p>  <p>(Could be drawn out or on your usual calendar at home).</p>

## New Routines

- Begin any changes to sleep and eating routines as early as possible (maybe a few weeks before school starts), in order to be established in time for school.
- Use objects of reference for each activity throughout the day eg, a spoon to indicate dinner time, a face cloth to indicate a bath etc.
- Use timers or a countdown as an activity is finishing, eg count down from 5 as it is time for bath time to finish.
- Have a 'finished box' to tidy activities into when they are done. This could also be used to show the end of school, by putting uniform into the 'finished box' and saying good bye.
- Sensory music may be used to alert or calm your child at appropriate times of the day.
- Include sensory and physical breaks in your child's day. If there is a new event, they may need more time for physical or sensory activities after this.

### Objects of reference:



### Timers:



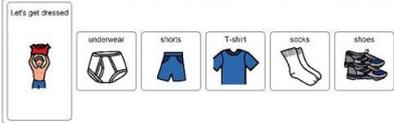
### Countdowns:



### Timer Apps:

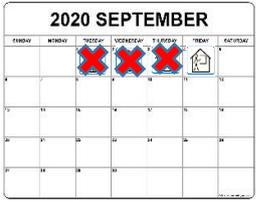
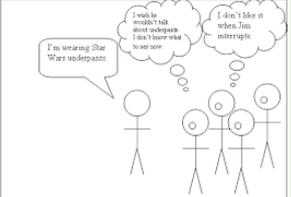


## Language Partners – Advice for parents related to change

Key Themes	Suggested Support/ Strategies	Additional links/ information
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Back to School</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personalised calendar</li> <li>- Tick off, colour, sticker days/weeks</li> <li>- Verbal and visual countdown</li> <li>- Rehearse the walk there and back</li> <li>- Watch film of the walk</li> <li>- Watch film of the new classroom / school</li> <li>- Look at aspects of school website</li> <li>- Visit school reception and meet staff</li> <li>- Take photos of new staff</li> <li>- Match spoken name to labelled photo</li> <li>- Try on new school uniform</li> <li>- Have photos of order in which school uniform can be put on and taken off</li> </ul>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Free return to school guide <a href="https://www.beyondautism.org.uk/about-autism/resources/?gclid=CjwKCAjwIh3BRB6EiwAhj0IUGYbVvdPK9egfmXwJLMPZDN__mS18AKACzr-ggDwrExBU59XSATIUBoCMxIQAvD_BwE">https://www.beyondautism.org.uk/about-autism/resources/?gclid=CjwKCAjwIh3BRB6EiwAhj0IUGYbVvdPK9egfmXwJLMPZDN__mS18AKACzr-ggDwrExBU59XSATIUBoCMxIQAvD_BwE</a></li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Going Outside</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take photos / video of immediate outside space</li> <li>- Look at related moving images on the Internet that the child will see e.g. insects, transport, crowds, balcony, garden</li> <li>- Use a timer to show how long the child will go out for and what they will do next</li> <li>- The amount of time and the nature of the next activity could be extended over time</li> <li>- Use different senses to communicate what the child will experience e.g. listen to the recording of a busy street or bird song, smell something similar to what might be immediately outside e.g. dirt or grass from the garden, feel gravel from outside</li> <li>- Draw pictures of what the child might see, smell, touch, hear, taste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bus sounds <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aT1Um8dY0gE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aT1Um8dY0gE</a></li> <li>- Crowd sounds <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veq7-ubXUs8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veq7-ubXUs8</a></li> <li>- Bird song <a href="https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tube+bird+sounds&amp;docid=608026000058352479&amp;mid=3568B49FAB41276B284F3568B49FAB41276B284F&amp;view=detail&amp;FORM=VIRE">https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tube+bird+sounds&amp;docid=608026000058352479&amp;mid=3568B49FAB41276B284F3568B49FAB41276B284F&amp;view=detail&amp;FORM=VIRE</a></li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Meeting People</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who? Family members, members of the community (look at photos, face time)</li> <li>- Where? (look at photos or visit the place in advance but don't go inside)</li> <li>- When? (visual count down, calendar, how many sleeps)</li> <li>- How will you get there? (practice the journey)</li> <li>- What doing? (what is the purpose of the visit, what will the child do when they get there. This could be shown using a photo/video, by packing things the child would like to do, by drawing and labelling a simple structure)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Free Colourful Semantics visuals <a href="https://integratedtreatmentservices.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Colourful-Semantics-Starter-Pack.pdf">https://integratedtreatmentservices.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Colourful-Semantics-Starter-Pack.pdf</a></li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Practice what other might say and how the child could respond</li> </ul>	
<p><b>New Routines</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Break the next couple of months down into: rest of term, holiday, preparation for change</li> <li>- Use visual calendar (mark off days, use sticker, colours, ticks/crosses or smiley faces)</li> <li>- The child could have their own diary</li> <li>- Same and different for each section of the next few months</li> <li>- What can the child do that they like during this time</li> <li>- What will they need to practice</li> <li>- What can they try that is unfamiliar and where will they try it</li> <li>- Show each new routine by creating one visually by using photos on a mobile or tablet</li> <li>- Looking at or watching photos/videos</li> <li>- Having a consistent routine where the day is broken into zones e.g. morning, day and evening</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>good morning</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some of the visuals are free</li> <li>- <a href="https://do2learn.com/picturecards/overview.htm">https://do2learn.com/picturecards/overview.htm</a></li> </ul>

**Conversational Partners – Advice for parents related to change**

Key Themes	Suggested Support/ Strategies	Additional links/ information
<p><b>Back to school</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gain information from school staff as to what school may look like etc</li> <li>- Think about adjusting <b>sleep</b> to fit with school timings – it would be advised to adjust sleep routine by 15-30minutes at least 3 days before return to school.</li> <li>- Re-establish <b>familiarity with the route to/ from school</b> – Practise travelling to school to ensure this is something your child is familiar with and you are able to identify any potential anxieties.</li> <li>- <b>Countdown calendar</b> – to be introduced at least 1 week before return to school where to student crosses off each day.</li> <li>- Talk to your child/ write/ draw out <b>what will be the <u>same</u> about school</b> – add to normality.</li> <li>- Look at photographs/ video of <b>school building/ classroom</b>.</li> <li>- Look at photographs of <b>new staff members</b> – match names with photos.</li> <li>- Try on <b>school uniform</b> and ensure your child feels comfortable wearing it.</li> <li>- Create a simple <b>morning checklist/ visual timetable</b> with your child so they are aware of the routine.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Back to school questions:</b>  <a href="https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources-and-downloads/going-back-to-school-or-college-checklist.pdf">https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources-and-downloads/going-back-to-school-or-college-checklist.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Scope Website:</b>  <a href="https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/help-disabled-child-sleep/">https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/help-disabled-child-sleep/</a></p> <p><b>Countdown Calendar:</b></p>   <p><b>Photographs/ Videos:</b></p>  <p><b>Simple visual timetable/ Checklist:</b></p> 
<p><b>Going Outside</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide <b>clear pre-warning of when a trip outside of the house is scheduled</b> - add to calendar to provide visual representation.</li> <li>- Provide a <b>simple checklist of what activities</b> will take place when away from the home e.g. 1. Walk to shop, 2. Doing shopping, 3. Go to the park 3. Walk home – review this before you leave the house.</li> <li>- Use <b>drawing to illustrate expected vs unexpected behaviours</b> – for example: drawing a picture of people queuing outside of a shop, with reference to this being an expected behaviour.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pre-warn of trip out of the house:</b></p>  <p><b>Use of drawing/ comic strip conversations:</b></p> 

## Meeting People

- Ensure your child is aware of **who** they are meeting, **where** they are meeting and **when** – show photographs, add to calendar.
- Use simple drawings and discussion to talk through the **expected vs unexpected behaviours** – e.g. alternatives to close contact greetings.

## Free Colourful Semantics visuals

<https://integratedtreatmentservice.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Colourful-Semantics-Starter-Pack.pdf>

## Alternatives to close contact greetings:



## New Routines

- Use a **calendar/ diary to ensure specific activities are visually represented** – for both school and home based activities.
- **Check in regularly with how you child is feeling** – change in emotions. Family members to also model their changing emotions – use of the Zone of Regulation framework if this is something your child is familiar with.
- Provide a **structured routine within the daytime** – with added physical and sensory breaks to support emotional regulation. E.g. jumping, skipping, and washing up with water.
- Ensure a **mix of adult led activities mixed with independent based activities.**
- Provide opportunities for **functional activities to build on life skills** e.g. cooking, cleaning.
- On return to school ensure time at home includes **calming based activities** e.g. music, massage, creative activity.

## Zones of Regulation – ‘check in’:



## Managing Anxieties:

<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources-and-downloads/files/tips-for-families-on-managing-health-anxiety-and-self-isolation-ambitious-about-autism.pdf>

## Daily Planner:

<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources-and-downloads/files/daily-planner-editable-ambitious-about-autism.pdf>

## Life skills activities:

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/special-educational-needs-sen-ks3-ks4/special-educational-needs-sen-ks3-ks4-life-functional-skills/special-educational-needs-sen-ks3-ks4-life-functional-skills-life-skills>

## Sensory Music- Calming and uplifting

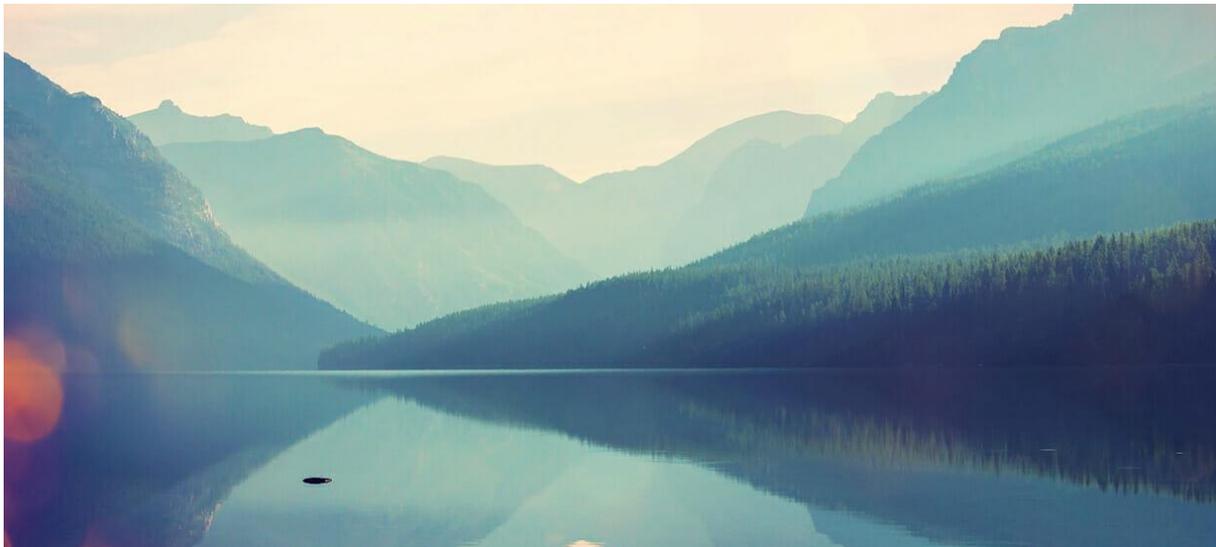
Sensory music is a resource used in schools to help to regulate a child's emotions and to help with communication. These have been put together for you to try at home 😊

What to do:

- Find the relevant playlist on Youtube (at the top of each instruction page)
- It is best to have a very quiet space (if you can!), with room for them to lay down if they wish.
- Play the music and follow the instructions for each song. You can follow the 'hands only' or 'objects' instructions (if you can find these things in your house), or a mixture of both.
- If there is an action your child doesn't like, feel free to repeat one of the other actions.

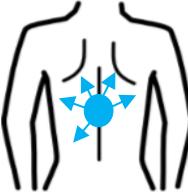
Tips:

- Look for cues from the child- do they want you to do it on their head? Are they holding a hand out to be tapped? Are they making eye contact?
- Keep your language to a MINIMUM. Sensory music is best used with little or no talking at all. If you do need to talk, just use one or two word sentences.



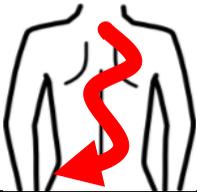
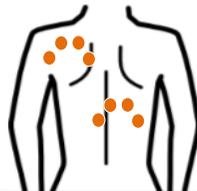
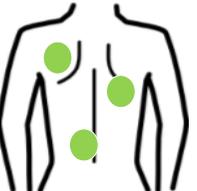
## Calming Sensory Music

Playlist on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7JIaap7KIE&list=PLNwRz-ZrbtOB4tI4nvukxYXCZI-oEb9GV&index=2&t=0s> or search for 'LCIS Sensory Music- Calming'

	Using hands	Using objects
<b>Track 1:</b> 	<b>Rocking/ deep pressure</b> Child sits in front of you, hug them and rock gently from side to side, around and around. You can just hold in a deep hug if rocking isn't preferred.	<b>Towel/blanket</b> Wrap towel or blanket around child and hug them, rocking gently from side to side. Can just hold in a deep hug if rocking isn't preferred.
<b>Track 2:</b> 	<b>Flower fingers</b> Bunch fingers together, then slowly spread fingers out (like a flower opening).	<b>Same as hands</b>
<b>Track 3:</b> 	<b>Circle motions</b> Rub hands in a circular motion over back, shoulders, arms and legs.	<b>Ball</b> Roll a ball in circles over back, shoulders, arms and legs.
<b>Track 4:</b> 	<b>Head Massage</b> Gently run fingers over your child's head, or in a slow motion like you using shampoo.	<b>Same as hands</b>
<b>Track 5:</b> 	<b>Hand/ foot massage</b> Apply gentle pressure to hands or feet, moving thumbs in circles over palm or sole of foot.	<b>Hand cream/ moisturiser</b> Give your child a hand or foot massage, using hand creams or moisturiser.

## Uplifting Sensory Music

Playlist on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eazw6wZlr9E&list=PLNwRz-ZrbtODuaUvJFcqtUhALi\\_E5BgI1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eazw6wZlr9E&list=PLNwRz-ZrbtODuaUvJFcqtUhALi_E5BgI1) or search for 'LCIS Sensory Music-Uplifting'.

	Using hands	Using objects
<b>Track 1:</b> 	<b>Wiggly Worm Finger</b> Use one finger like a 'wiggly worm' to move over back, shoulders, arms and legs.	<b>Paint brush/ make up brush</b> Brush paint brush over back, shoulders, arms and legs.
<b>Track 2:</b> 	<b>Piano Fingers</b> Tap fingers over back, shoulders, arms and legs like you're playing the piano.	<b>Same as hands</b>
<b>Track 3:</b> 	<b>Circle motions</b> Rub hands in a circular motion over back, shoulders, arms and legs.	<b>Ball</b> Roll a ball in circles over back, shoulders, arms and legs.
<b>Track 4:</b> 	<b>Taps</b> Gently tap your hands over back, shoulders, arms and legs to the beat.	<b>Wooden spoon/ spatula</b> Gently tap the spoon/spatula over back, shoulders, arms and legs to the beat.
<b>Track 5:</b> 	<b>Rocking/ deep pressure</b> Child sits in front of you, hug them and rock gently from side to side, around and around. You can just hold in a deep hug if rocking isn't preferred.	<b>Towel/Blanket</b> Wrap towel or blanket around child and hug them, rocking gently from side to side. Can just hold in a deep hug if rocking isn't preferred.

What do you want to achieve?



What is happening now?



What different things could you try?



What one simple change could you make today?



How will you know it is working?

