

Back to school checklist for families and carers



This checklist is designed to help parents and foster carers support a calm, supported return to school. Use what is helpful and leave the rest. Support looks different for every child.

Before school starts

- We have talked about what the school day will look like.
- Morning and after-school routines have been practiced or discussed.
- My child knows who they can go to for help at school.
- We have focused on what will stay the same, as well as what will change.
- Any required supplies, uniforms or equipment are organised.

Emotional wellbeing and regulation

- We have talked about feelings related to starting school.
- My child knows it is okay to feel positive and negative feelings (e.g. worried, excited or unsure).
- We have identified calming strategies that help (e.g. breathing, movement, quiet time).
- Time for rest and downtime is planned after school

After the moment has passed

- Expectations are clear and realistic.
- Tasks are broken into manageable steps.
- Choices are offered where possible to support a sense of control.
- We are observing what helps and what makes things harder.

Working with the school

- The school is aware of my child's strengths.
- Support needs or helpful strategies have been shared.
- We know how and when communication will occur.
- We know who to contact if concerns arise.

Checking in after school starts

- We are checking in regularly about how school feels.
- Changes in mood, sleep or behaviour are being noted.
- We are allowing time to settle in during the first few weeks.