

# Let's Talk .... About back to school

## Summary from June sessions



### Attendees

10 parent carers representing 12 CYP with SEND ranging from 7 to 24

### General consensus

With many children and young people (CYP) having been out of education for six months by the time they return in September, the LA, schools and parent carers will all need to work together to ensure the best possible transition back to school.

### Key points

- Parent carers are becoming increasingly concerned about their CYP returning to school, especially as many children will have been out of school for six months.
- Communication between schools and parents is, on the whole, very good: several parents have received videos of what children can expect when they go back to school, including use of PPE.
- Parent carers unanimously agreed that there will need to be a well-designed, gradual transition for CYP going back to school in September.
- It was suggested that parent carers could complete a short survey so that schools are aware of how their CYP has been over the last six months. This could include services they have and have not received, what has been achieved or not over this time. This could be extended to cover ALL children returning to school.
- Parent carers whose children and young people had returned to school said that transitioning back had increased behavioural issues and left children unsure on their first morning.
- Screen time has helped some children become more confident in talking to others but has made other children quieter than they usually are
- Parent carers are interested in social networking schemes that would allow “bubbles” to meet and give children someone their age to talk to.
- Professionals, such as GPs, are not aware of Kooth, the online mental well-being community.
- Parent carers acknowledged that this has been an incredibly difficult time for siblings of children and young people with SEND and their transition back to school will also need to be carefully addressed.

### Quotes

“I have to be very creative – we’ve been doing an awful lot of life skills work as my son refuses to do any of the great work that the school has sent him.”

“Take away stressful situations and children become happier. For some children, school is an extremely stressful place.”

“We’re doing our best with the school work that has been provided. We are winging it a lot of the time!”

“September is a long way off and I feel that he may need to go back part-time in September to transition him.”

“We have all been changed by what has been going on these last few months. It’s been a scary time and going back into the world is huge. It’s going to take a lot of preparation.”

“My son went back to school this week and his behaviour towards me is now totally unacceptable, as it was before March.”

“ Have been desperate for Short Breaks but it caused more problems that it’s all worth”

### **What Family Voice Norfolk will do to make sure parent carers' views are heard**

Family Voice has:

- Raised the idea of a short survey for parent carers about how their CYP has been over the last six months at Virtual School SEND Advisory Group.
- Raised the lack of knowledge amongst GPs about Kooth at the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Parent Carer Forum and the Children’s Health Integrated Commissioning group.
- Has signposted to parent carers the support groups available for young carers.
- Has raised concerns about young carers transitioning back to school with the Young carers steering group, the Young carers (COVID) recovery plan team and the Back to school (COVID) recovery team.