

# Back to School Wellbeing Guide



## Tips for a Smooth Transition



# The Calm Comeback: Navigating School After a Break

## Introduction

Returning to school after a break can be unexpectedly challenging. While holidays offer rest and reflection, the shift back to structured routines may bring fatigue, stress, and emotional strain. Whether you're a teacher, leader, or support staff, this guide offers six common challenges, and practical, compassionate tips to help you ease back into school life.

## Six Common Challenges & Tips

### 1. Resetting Sleep Routines

**Challenge:** Late nights and slow mornings can make early starts feel tough.

**Tip:** Begin adjusting your sleep schedule a few days before term starts. Gradually shift your bedtime and wake-up time to match your school routine. Consistency is key—aim to sleep and wake at the same time daily.

### 2. Rebuilding Structure

**Challenge:** Moving from flexible days to a full timetable can feel overwhelming.

**Tip:** Plan your first week with a balance of light tasks and enjoyable activities. Use checklists to stay organised and remember to pace yourself. Give yourself permission to ease in.

### 3. Rekindling Motivation

**Challenge:** Finding your rhythm again can be difficult, especially with a full workload ahead.

**Tip:** Set small, achievable goals and celebrate progress. Reconnect with what you love about your role. Share best practices and talk with colleagues, they're feeling the same and mutual support can go a long way.



## 4. Managing Overwhelm

**Challenge:** Catching up on emails, planning, and admin can feel like a mountain.

**Tip:** Prioritise using a simple system (e.g., urgent vs. important). Delegate where possible and be kind to yourself. You can do anything, but not everything.

## 5. Emotional Readjustment

**Challenge:** Missing family time or feeling anxious about returning can affect your mood.

**Tip:** Acknowledge your feelings. Use body-based techniques like deep breathing or mindfulness to stay grounded. Emotions don't need fixing, they need space to be felt and understood.

## 6. Recharging Your Social Battery

**Challenge:** Reconnecting with colleagues or students may feel draining.

**Tip:** Start with small, positive interactions. A simple 'How was your summer?' can rebuild rapport. Honour your own pace and communicate your needs, it's okay to ease back in socially.

## Mental Health Support Contacts



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**Education Support** – Free, confidential help for education staff  
Helpline: 08000 562 561  
Website: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk>

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**Samaritans** – 24/7 emotional support  
Call: 116 123  
Website: <https://www.samaritans.org>

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**NHS Every Mind Matters** – Tips and tools for wellbeing  
Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>

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## Additional Resources

Hub of Hope

<https://hubofhope.co.uk>

Setting Boundaries Guide

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/media/qzbhv3o4/16-setting-boundaries.pdf>

Staff Mental Health Training

<https://www.myedupod.com/download-staffmentalhealthwellbeing>

Vicarious Trauma Webinar

<https://www.myedupod.com/blog/vicarious-trauma-cpd>

DfE Workload Reduction Toolkit

<https://improve-workload-and-wellbeing-for-school-staff.education.gov.uk/>

## Final Thought & Reflection Space

Returning to school doesn't have to mean losing your holiday calm. With thoughtful planning, self-compassion, and support, you can transition back into your routine in a way that feels right for you.

*Reflection Prompt: What's one thing I'll do differently this term?*

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Book a Meeting with Dr Asha Patel