

Hello everyone, and welcome back to school. For anyone who doesn't know, I am Miss Clay and I am the SENCO at Dean Field. You can expect to see a Newsletter from me with SEND specific tips and information on at the start of each half term.

My role is ever changing as we work to meet the changing needs within school. This year, I will have teaching commitments Monday-Thursday lunchtime – so any SEND related emails or parent messages won't be able to be answered at this time, and only on an afternoon when I have dedicated SEND office time. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's educational needs please speak to the class teacher in the first instance. Otherwise you can make an appointment to speak to them with myself at the school office, or message me directly on Seesaw. Thank you!



Supporting your child as they settle into a new school year

The start of a new school year can be exciting — but it can also be a **big adjustment** for children with SEND.

New teachers, classrooms, routines, expectations and people can take time to get used to. If the first few weeks feel harder than expected, **you are not doing anything wrong, and your child is not failing. They are settling.**

ROUTINE TAKES TIME

Try to re-establish familiar routines around:

-  Bedtime and getting up
-  Getting dressed
-  Breakfast and mealtimes
-  Preparing bags and clothes
-  Screen time
-  Homework and reading
-  Time to relax after school

Visual timetables, checklists, timers and **"first... then..."** language can help make expectations clearer and transitions easier.

CONSISTENCY IS KINDNESS

When your child is struggling, it is natural to want to make things easier for them. Sometimes flexibility is exactly what they need.

However, **supporting your child doesn't mean removing every expectation.**

Children often feel safer when boundaries and routines are **clear, calm and predictable.**

Try to be:

Flexible where you can.

Consistent where you need to be.

You can acknowledge that something is difficult while still keeping the expectation:

"I know this feels hard today. I'm here to help you, but we still need to get ready for school."

Consistency isn't about being strict. **It's about being predictable.**



EXPECT SOME BIG FEELINGS

The first few weeks may include:

- More tiredness
- Meltdowns or emotional outbursts
- Anxiety or reassurance-seeking
- Refusal or avoidance
- Changes in sleep
- Difficulty with transitions
- Needing more quiet time after school

This can be completely normal during a period of adjustment.

Some children manage to hold things together at school and then **let everything out when they get home because they feel safe there.**

Give them time to decompress.



KEEP TALKING TO SCHOOL

Don't wait until a small concern becomes a big one.

Let school know about changes you've noticed at home, difficulties your child is experiencing and strategies that help them.

Home and school working together can make settling in much easier.



NOTICE THE SMALL WINS

Progress doesn't have to look perfect.

Getting dressed independently, managing a transition, remembering their bag, entering the school building or coping with something that previously felt impossible can all be significant achievements.

Notice the progress, however small it may seem.



MOST IMPORTANTLY...

Give it time.

There may be good days and difficult days. There may even be moments when it feels like you've gone backwards.

That's okay. Keep routines predictable. Keep important boundaries calm and consistent. Offer reassurance. Celebrate small steps. And remember that **settling into a new school year is a process.**