

Derby City

Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance

EBSNA 

Good Practice Guide





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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and purpose

Derby City Local Authority have developed a coordinated approach to tackling Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA). This document has been developed by Derby City Educational Psychology Service, in partnership with professionals within the local authority who are addressing EBSNA. Linked items have been developed with reference to materials developed by services in other Local Authorities, to support pupils, families and schools experiencing EBSNA (see references). This document is intended to be a guide for staff in schools and settings, as well as external professionals. It provides information on statutory duties and guidance for exploring barriers and providing support. It should also be read alongside the documents referenced in section 1.3, which provide more comprehensive information.

1.2 Explanation of terms

Previously, terms such as school refusal or school avoidance have been used to describe children and young people who are experiencing difficulties attending school. The narrative around non-attendance has traditionally been within-child focused, positioning the child or young person as “the avoider” or “the refuser.” This document uses the term Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA), to include children who are unable to attend school, and acknowledges that the difficulties they are experiencing are emotionally based rather than a choice behaviour (GOV.UK, 2023). The term is used in recognition that the situation for each family is complex, and many of the factors that create and maintain the non-attendance are family, community or school based and not merely a ‘within child’ issue.

1.3 Prevalence and impact

Locally and nationally, there is great concern regarding pupils that are persistently absent from school due to emotional wellbeing and mental health. Recent literature highlights the importance of school attendance for educational achievement (GOV.UK, 2022). The DfE released a report in 2016 which found that everyday a child or young person (CYP) is absent from school is linked to lower attainment outcomes at GCSE. This then increases the likelihood of experiencing employment difficulties and poor mental health as they go into adulthood (Kearney & Graczyk, 2013).

Reports into attendance rates in the UK (GOV.UK, 2023) have highlighted a significant increase in school absences since the Covid-19 pandemic. The DfE (2020) reported overall absence rates between 2018 and 2019 to be at 4.7% and persistent absence rates, which is defined as missing more than 10% of possible sessions, to be at 10.9%. A more recent report released in October 2023 (DfE, 2023) reported overall absence rates for the autumn and spring terms in 2022/2023 to be at 7.3% and 21.2 % for persistent absentees.

Research into the impact of COVID-19 on attendance difficulties reported that CYP found returning to school after the pandemic difficult for a variety of reasons including adapting to different school routines and the need to catch up academically. In addition, McDonald et al (2022) reported the biggest impact to be for CYP with special educational needs or existing school-based anxiety.

It has been reported that CYP with mental health disorders are twice as likely to be absent from school (NHS, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has seen an increase in CYP suffering with mental health difficulties and a decline in mental health for those with pre-existing conditions. The NHS (2021) reported that, during 2017, rates of mental health disorders in CYP were at 11.6% in 6 to 16 year-olds and 10.1% in 17 to 19 year olds. In 2023, these were reported to have risen to 20.3% in CYP aged between 8-16 years (NHS,2023).



National data shows that overall absence rates are higher for those who are eligible for free school meals, for those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and for those at SEN Support.

Research suggests that attendance issues are often evident prior to secondary school. EBSNA is mainly linked to anxiety (primarily ASC), but sensory sensitivities, friendship difficulties and unmet SEND have been cited as key reasons for persistent absence.

In 2020, 23% of CYP whose parents responded to the survey, were enrolled in a school but not receiving any education. Some parents report that they have de-registered their children at school, to prioritise their emotional well-being and mental health.

Threats of fines and prosecutions have increased between 2018 and 2020, but there is no evidence to suggest that this improves attendance for children and young people where Anxiety is a factor.

2. Guidance documents and statutory processes

The following documents should be read alongside this good practice guidance, to ensure that statutory obligations are met.

Department for Education (2024) –*Working Together to Improve School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities*. [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124421/Working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-19-August-2024.pdf)

Department for Education (2024) –*Summary table of responsibilities* [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

2.1 Wider School Culture

One key element of the Working Together document is a focus on the link between improving attendance and wider school culture, including the importance of working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance. Schools are expected to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

“Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools’ efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners. Attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools’ efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.”

Adopting a whole-school approach is also recommended by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) as a way to support overall social, emotional and mental wellbeing in schools.

[Recommendations | Social, emotional and mental wellbeing in primary and secondary education | Guidance | NICE](#)



Research in this area has highlighted the importance of a whole school approach for supporting pupils to feel safe, accepted, valued and respected and also for pupils returning to school after a period of non-attendance (Nuttall and Woods 2013).

To support schools/settings to develop their whole-school approach, a whole-school audit specific to EBSNA has been developed. The audit tool will help you consider what is currently in place and areas for development. In Derby, external agencies can also support the development of your whole-school approach.

[EBSNA audit](#)

2.2. Working in Partnership

The documents highlight the need to provide support at an early stage of concern, when it may be easier to address the reasons that a child or young person is not attending. All schools are expected to support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. This should also be the case where barriers are outside of the school's control when, as a minimum, schools should meet with pupils and parents to explore these and plan actions or interventions to address them. The action may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support.

The Working Together document states that:

School staff should build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.

Regular meetings should be held, with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.

Schools should identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.

To facilitate effective working across the local authority area, schools are expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school.

If a pupil's absence requires support from an outside agency which is not provided quickly (e.g. subject to a waiting list), schools and/or local authorities should consider other temporary solutions whilst waiting.

It is vital that schools monitor the impact of any interventions and, where necessary, make adjustments in discussion with pupil, parents and any other partners involved as part of any whole family plan or team around the family. Where interventions are not working, all parties should work together to identify the reasons and adjust or change the approach.

Good attendance starts with close and productive relationships with parents and pupils. Schools should treat all pupils and parents with dignity and staff should model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In working in partnership with parents, schools should discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, it is important that the best placed person in the school works alongside and supports the family and wherever possible the person should be kept consistent.

Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic schools should draw on these relationships and listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing. In doing so, schools should take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches."

Effective school attendance improvement and management

Prevention of poor attendance through good whole school attendance management	Early intervention to reduce absence before it becomes habitual	Targeted reengagement of persistent and severely absent pupils
<p style="text-align: center;">All pupils</p> <p>Developing good attendance patterns through effective whole school approach to attendance (including leadership, ethos and systems and processes)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pupils at risk of poor attendance</p> <p>Using attendance and absence data rigorously to support pupils with increasing levels of absence, arriving at school late or taking leave in term time without permission before it becomes a regular pattern</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pupils with poor attendance</p> <p>Intervening as early as possible and agreeing an action plan for pupils with high levels of absence and those demonstrating growing disengagement with school</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Persistently and severely absent pupils</p> <p>Put additional targeted support in place, where necessary working with partners, and agree a joint approach with local authorities for all severely absent pupils</p>

From Department for Education (2024) –Working Together to Improve School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, p.46

2.3 Persistent and Severe Absence

Where absence escalates and pupils miss more than 10% of school, schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support into place.

Particular focus should be given to pupils who are absent from school for 50% or more of the time that they should be attending. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them. All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

2.4 Absence due to physical or mental ill health

Where the barriers to attendance involve long term physical or mental health conditions or special educational needs (SEND), the usual processes for understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family should be put into place.

Schools should:

- Facilitate relevant pastoral support
- Consider adjustments to policies and practice to meet the needs of the pupil and make formal reasonable adjustments.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

Schools should carefully consider whether additional support from other external agencies would be appropriate and make referrals.

Communication must be made with the local authority when the pupil has an education health and care plan if the pupil's attendance falls or if the school become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register. In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. The school should speak to the family about what evidence is available. Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, schools should take this into account. Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence the school should have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

2.5 Supporting attendance and recording absence

- The statutory guidance highlights the need for accurate recording of attendance and absence and details the codes that should be used on the register. Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is required. Schools are expected to use an electronic management information system to keep their attendance and admission registers to improve accuracy, speed up the process of sharing and analysing information, and make returns to local authorities and DfE easier.

- Schools should expect parents to contact the school when their child is absent to explain the reason. They should put in place processes to contact parents, on the first day of absence, where a reason has not been provided.
- Attendance support and improvement should be appropriately resourced, including where applicable through effective use of pupil premium funding. Where possible this should include attendance or pastoral support staff (either school based or contracted) who can work in partnership with families, conduct home visits and work in partnership with school leaders, the local authority's School Attendance Support Team and other partners.

2.6 Part-time Timetables

The advice is clear that a reduced timetable should not be considered a long-term solution but rather as part of a reintegration package. They should only be used in very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests. They should be developed with the agreement of the schools and the parent that the pupil normally lives with. Regular reviews should take place and a proposed should be provided, for when the pupil will return to a full-time timetable (this may be extended as part of the review process).

Any return to school plan should recognise that EBSNA is unique to each young person. There also needs to be recognition by those involved with the pupil that often there is no 'quick fix' to EBSNA. A flexible approach that incorporates the views of all involved and most importantly, the views of the young person, is required. Everyone, school staff and parents, need to share the expectation that the plan, once agreed, will work.

For some young people, who are working on a gradual reintegration package, it can be helpful to put together a step-by-step plan that gradually, over time, exposes them to the situations that are anxiety provoking. This gives the individual some control over the plan and hopefully helps them to feel more confident as each step is achieved.

2.7 Remote Education

Remote education should not be viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school.

When a child cannot attend school but is well enough to learn, they say that their school should always seek to overcome the barriers to attendance and provide support for the pupil to attend before offering remote education.

Remote education is described as a last resort and a short-term solution as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school.

To bring the absence to an end as soon as possible, the school should work with the child, their parents or carers and, if appropriate, a relevant medical professional.

Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register.

[Providing remote education: non-statutory guidance for schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

3. Derby's graduated response



Phase 1 - Universal Approaches:

- Training need in school/setting
- Identification of additional need
- Providing time for families to share concerns and agree support
- Communication with staff team, including mental health lead and key adults working with the child/young person



Phase 2 - Targeted:

- Assess-Plan-Do-Review process.
- Gather information (use of Attend Framework)
- Meeting between family and school staff
- Timely review
- Maintain communication between school staff, pupil, parents and relevant agencies

Phase 3 - Specialist Support:

- Assess-Plan-Do-Review process.
- Meeting between specialist teachers/education practitioners, family and school staff
- Timely review
- Maintain communication between school staff, pupil, parents and relevant agencies

For further information: [EBSNA Graduated Approach](#)



4. Universal Approaches

4.1 A whole school approach

Schools should ensure that they have a whole school approach to attendance overall and specifically EBSNA. An accessible policy should be in place and schools will need to ensure that staff have received appropriate training. Universal approaches will address reasons that children and young people may feel anxious at school and will put changes into place to address these.

Use the link below for an audit which highlight areas of strength and areas for development in the whole school approach:

[EBSNA audit](#)

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) provides evidence-based guidance and resources for considering a whole school approach to attendance. This approach includes many elements that will be supportive to children, young people and families where the reasons for non-attendance are rooted in emotional wellbeing.

The EEF provides five main areas to consider:

1. Build a holistic understanding of pupils and families, and diagnose specific needs
2. Build a culture of community and belonging for pupils
3. Communicate effectively with families
4. Improve universal provision for all pupils
5. Deliver targeted interventions to supplement universal provision
6. Monitor the impact of approaches

[Supporting attendance | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)



4.2 Risk Factors

Research has identified **risk factors** for EBSNA. These should alert schools to actions that can be taken at a school level, encourage good attendance for all. School staff should also be mindful for which risk factors each pupil is experiencing, so that signs of early EBSNA are identified and addressed quickly.

Individual	Family	School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Anxiety • Difficulties with emotional literacy (awareness and regulation) • Separation Anxiety (current or historic) • Worries about home situation/family • Being a young carer • Low self confidence or self esteem • Physical illness/health needs • Previous exclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent mental ill health • Siblings being educated at home due to illness or EBSNA • Absence of a parent • Family transitions • Bereavement and loss • Limited social interaction • Parents are very anxious about their child’s anxiety • Conflict/family dynamic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning needs not being identified/met • Requirement to engage with activities the child can’t cope with (e.g. talking in front of others in class) • High noise levels • Bullying or problems with peer relationships • Poor relationships with staff • Poor organization/unpredictability in the child’s classroom • Harsh or unfair consequences from teachers

(From Buckinghamshire County Council [Early identification and prevention | SchoolsWeb \(buckinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schoolsweb))



This information may be useful for considering those pupils that may be at greater risk of EBSNA. It can also be used as a basis for exploration of barriers to attending school.

Templates for profiling risk factors is available here: [Profile of risk factors of EBSNA](#)

4.3 Early Support

It is often the case that school avoidance, due to emotional wellbeing, has developed gradually and there are initial signs that the child or young person is feeling anxious. It may be that the pupil is avoiding some lessons but remaining on the school site. Or it may be that the pupil is very anxious before school, but parents are managing to get them to school for the start of the school day or a little late. Where there are early signs of anxiety related to attending school, discussions should take place about provision that would be supportive. At this point, small changes could make a big difference and prevent further avoidance.

4.4 Making the learning environment accessible to all

- Schools that have provided tablets and laptops to the whole school benefit those children who struggle to spell and write, without singling them out.
- Relaxing or scrapping school uniform policies supports pupils with sensory issues who cannot tolerate wearing the uniform.
- Lots of schools no longer sound a bell between classes, which generates a calmer atmosphere for all.
- Where sensory differences or sensitivities are raised for particular pupils, a sensory profile should be completed to identify any changes that could be made in the learning environment.

4.5 Transitions

Research suggests that transitions between schools or between year groups can be a contributing factor to EBSNA. The transition from Year 6 to Year 7 has been highlighted as a time that difficulties emerge, although there is often a history of anxiety around attendance or separation from parents and carers. Year 8 has also been identified as a time that more severe difficulties emerge.

The following strategies may help to prevent increased concerns at transition times:

- A thorough transition process, including the sharing of information between staff already working with a pupil and those who will be working with them the following year.
- Clear information for the pupil and a chance to become comfortable in the new environment before they start.
- Completing a one page profile for children moving between year groups, so that the adults working with them will be aware of any history of anxiety or school avoidance.
- Identifying anxiety about school attendance at the earliest stages and discussing these with parents or carers.
- An 'open door' approach for pupils and parents or carers, so that they are able to raise concerns at the earliest stages.

Further information: [EBSNA supporting transitions](#)

5. Targeted Approaches

Where universal strategies have not been effective and concerns continue, targeted approaches should be put into place. The starting point for these should be discussion with the child or young person and their family.

The targeted approach should follow an 'assess-plan-do-review' cyclical process.

The broad scope of possible contributing factors should be considered, to explore where support and intervention will be most useful.

5.1 Gathering information and The Attend Framework

The Attend Framework is used in Derby City, as a tool for gathering information about the factors contributing to EBSNA. It is currently available as a paper copy from [ATTEND Framework | BEEM](#)

5.2 Pupil Voice

Having open communication and good relationships enables school staff to collect the views of the CYP and take these into account when planning the necessary adaptations. Gathering of pupil views, using resources such as child friendly questionnaires and card sort activities, helps gain an insight into the factors affecting their attendance. This information can then be used to form an action plan. Children should be listened to and included in decisions around their education. Where appropriate, CYP should be included in action planning meeting around supporting their attendance.

The following questions could be included in the discussions:

- Where does the pupil most comfortable sitting in class?
- Which teachers and staff they feel most comfortable with



- How they find it easiest to enter the room
- Who they have to support them?
- How do they feel about being asked questions in class?
- How they get from class to class?
- Where do they feel comfortable in school if they cannot get to class?
- The use of, and access to, toilets.
- Where do they feel comfortable eating and drinking?

Further resources:

- [EBSNA card sort](#)
- [EBSNA primary pupil questionnaire](#)
- [EBSNA secondary pupil questionnaire](#)
- [EBSNA Lego](#)

5.3 Parents and carers

Parents and carers can have a difficult experience of working with schools to support children and young people experiencing EBSNA. Research indicates that they often feel ignored or unsupported, with their concerns not being taken seriously until the problems are embedded.

The Derby Direction website provides an EBSNA toolkit for parents

[EBSNA-Parent-and-Family-Toolkit.pdf \(derbydirection.org.uk\)](#)

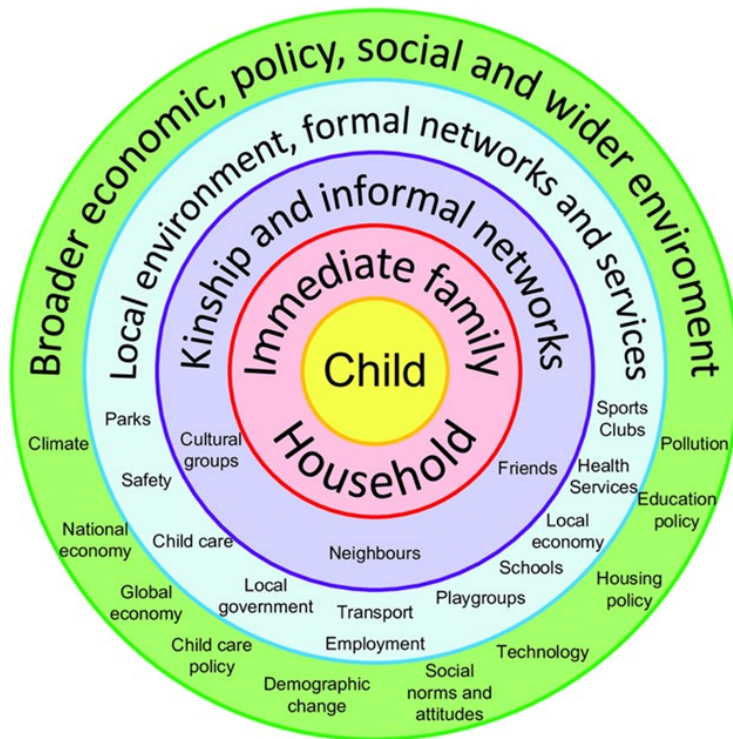
5.4 Building resilience

For each young person, consider the factors that may be a risk factor to their emotional wellbeing and those factors that may be protective for them. A diagram by Joel Gibbs based on Bronfenbrenner’s (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) ecological model 28,157 (Scott et al. 2016.P –7,) can be viewed at at [Children and COVID19: Understanding impact on the growth trajectory of an evolving generation - ScienceDirect](#)

It illustrates some of the factors that can impact each young person at a range of levels.

These factors include:

<p>Immediate family and household</p>	<p>Kinship and informal networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural groups • Neighbours • friends 	<p>Local environment, formal networks and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks • Safety • Child care • Local government • Transport • Employment • Playgroups • Schools • Local economy • Health Services • Sports Clubs 	<p>Broader economic, policy, social and wider environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollution • Education policy • Housing policy • Technology • Social norms and attitudes • Demographic change • Child care policy • Global economy • National economy • Climate
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Those working with the pupil should consider how they can support at each of these levels or whether external agencies are required to provide support. For example, if the pupil has caring responsibilities at home, it may be that discussing these with an adult at school is helpful. Alternatively, external support may be required to take some pressure from the young person.

Anna Freud Mentally Healthy Schools offers advice to schools on risk factors and how school staff can play a major part in helping pupils build a ‘protective shield’ against them. [Mental health information : Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

Those working closely with the child or young person will be able to build an understanding of their strengths and interests. Spending some time focused on these can help to build resilience and self-esteem. For example, some schools are able to offer Forest Schools time for pupils who have an interest and strength in outdoor activities. This can also be time to build relationships with adults and peers.

Consider whether the pupil experiences a sense of belonging at school. How can this be built? A sense of belonging include four elements:

- Membership – I have a right to belong to this group
- Influence – I have an impact on the group and people listen to what I say
- Reinforcement – My needs are met by being part of this group. This can include shared values.
- Emotional connection – sharing events and positive emotions with other members of the group.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) receive specific training in this area and can offer support. ELSA training is available from STePS.

5.5. Secure base and keyworker

Evidence suggests that there are many benefits to providing a key worker for a child or young person, at school. The positive relationship can help to increase self-worth and develop self-reliance and self-worth. An adult can support the pupil to emotionally regulate and explore any fears or worries that they have. It will be important to consider how often the pupil and key worker are able to meet and how the pupil is able to access that support at more challenging times. Sessions with a keyworker should not be used as a 'reward' and sessions should not be missed once they are arranged.

5.6 Extra support for CYP with SEND

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have been identified as being a contributing factor to attendance difficulties. It is important that extra support is put in place for pupils with SEND, particularly during big transitional periods such as the transition from primary to secondary school. Derby city's transition toolkit can be used to support with these transitions and can be accessed by contacting stepsadmin@derby.gov.uk

It is important that staff have a good understanding of how a CYP's SEND plays a role in their anxiety and to understand their behaviour to be able to put the right support in place. CYP need to have a good understanding of their diagnosis to help reduce the anxiety around their differences.



Sensory difficulties are often a factor for CYP with SEND. A graduated response should be taken to understanding sensory differences. This should involve completing an environmental audit and sensory profile, implementing support strategies and reviewing the impact. See the Derby City Sensory Processing Graduated Response Guidance for more details and information.

6. Specialist Support

Specialist agencies may be able to offer support at the universal or targeted phases, in addition to being asked to support at later stages of the graduated response. Examples include, offering training to schools and parents/carers or supporting schools to develop a systemic approach to EBSNA.

There are a number of professionals who can offer valuable support to schools including educational psychologists (EPs), education mental health practitioners (EMHPs) and the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Support from these external agencies can be useful for upskilling staff and providing them with the skills and strategies to support CYP and deliver valuable interventions.

- Derby City Education Welfare Service [Education Welfare Service \(EWS\) - Derby City Council](#)
- CAMHS [Children's mental health services \(CAMHS\) - Derby and southern Derbyshire :: Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust \(derbyshirehealthcareft.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Compass Changing Lives [Compass Changing Lives - Compass \(compass-uk.org\)](#)
- Specialist Teaching and Psychology Service (STePS) [Specialist Teaching and Psychology Service \(STePS\) - Schools' Information Portal \(derby.gov.uk\)](#)



7. Derby City EBSNA Pathway

Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) Pathway

There may be times further professional support and advice is needed to make appropriate interventions. The EBSNA Pathway below shows how Schools, Local Authority agencies and Health Services can offer support and processes to children, young people and their families in Derby City.

- School based intervention
- Local Authority interventions and packages
- [Locally commissioned Mental Health services](#)

Stage 1	Stage 2		Stage 3	Stage 4
<p>Emerging Concerns</p> <p><u>Relational Approach</u> Pupil voice Family engagement Parental meetings Trusted adult Safe space Reasonable adjustments <u>School based interventions</u> <u>CPD and networking</u></p> <p><u>School Health referral, including Health Needs Assessment</u> <u>Family Hubs</u></p> <p><u>Local Offer signposting to services including Mental Health Pathway</u> <u>Mental Health Whole School Approach</u> <u>Derby & Derbyshire Emotional Health and Well Being website</u></p>	<p>Escalating Concerns <i>All of the Stage 1 interventions, and...</i></p> <p><u>EBSNA Graduated Approach</u> EBSNA Toolkit for schools <u>Individual Health Care Plan</u> <u>The ATTEND Framework</u> <u>EBSNA Toolkit for families</u> Reintegration plan <u>Virtual Learning Package</u> Blended timetable</p> <p><u>Education Welfare Service</u> <u>Family Hubs</u> <u>The Attendance Project (Educational Psychology Service)</u></p> <p>School Counsellor <u>Compass Changing Lives MHST & Early Intervention Targeted Support</u> <u>Specialist Community Advisors (SCAs)</u></p>	<p><u>Health Needs Education Panel</u></p>	<p>Short Term Intervention <i>Stage 3 aims to help to improve the health condition of the child or young person, so they can return to mainstream education.</i></p> <p><u>Turnaround placement at Castle Health Needs Provision</u> Step up or step down to the new ERP (September 2025) Alternative short term EOTIS or outreach package <u>Early Help</u> <u>Social Care</u></p> <p><u>CAMHS or other mental health support service</u></p>	<p>Long term interventions <i>Stage 4 could be a child or young person who has accessed a Tier 4 acute service, inpatient service or needing long term intervention due to their complex Mental Health needs</i></p> <p>Outreach service or Home Tuition <u>Early Help</u> <u>Social care</u> Multi Agency Approach</p> <p><u>CAMHS</u></p>

8. Additional Resources

Additional resources are available on the Schools' Information Portal:

[Health needs provision - Schools' Information Portal \(derby.gov.uk\)](https://derby.gov.uk/schools-information-portal/health-needs-provision)

[School Wellbeing Risk and Resilience Card Set \(schoolwellbeingcards.co.uk\)](https://schoolwellbeingcards.co.uk)

Online resources:

[Not Fine in School - School Refusal, School Attendance](#)

[School Anxiety and Refusal | Parent Guide to Support | YoungMinds](#)

[Supporting attendance | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

Leeds Beckett University Carnegie School of Education, *Emotionally Based School Avoidance: How To Get Persistently Absent Children Back Into School.*
[emotionally-based-school-avoidance.pdf \(leedsbeckett.ac.uk\)](#)

Face to face and online support for children and young people (Derby) :

[SafeSpeak](#)

[Meet The Team - Compass \(compass-uk.org\)](https://compass-uk.org)

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[Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2021 - wave 2 follow up to the 2017 survey - NHS England Digital](#)

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With thanks to those who have provided EBSA guidance for their Local Authority, which we have made reference to when developing the linked resources:

Anxiety Management – Brighton and Hove EBSA guidance

Measures – Sheffield EPS EBSA guidance

Autism strategies – Walsall Council and Brighton and Hove EBSA guidance

Card sort – adapted from Lancashire County council EBSA guidance

Ladder template – Lancashire EBSA guidance (reference to Derbyshire)

Primary pupil questionnaires – West Sussex EPS ESBA guidance

Secondary pupil questionnaires – West Sussex EPS ESBA guidance

School stress survey – Sheffield EPS (With thanks to www.HumansNotRobots.co.uk for sharing this resource)



Profile of risk factors – West Sussex EPS service EBSA guidance

Mapping the landscape of your school – Lancashire EBSA guidance

Information gathering from school staff – West Sussex EPS EBSA guidance

Support Plan – West Sussex EPS EBSA guidance

Support Plan – West Sussex EBSA guidance

Action Plan – Walsall Council EBSA guidance

Return to School – West Sussex EBSA guidance

Audit – Lancashire EBSA guidance Camden EPS EBSA guidance

Transitions – as stated in document