

Maximising School attendance: Identifying and supporting attendance difficulties, including emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA)

## Appendices and Resource Pack



Wakefield Educational Psychology Service



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# Appendix 1 Whole School Approaches

## 1.1 EBSA Whole School Audit Tool

<b>Leadership and Management</b>	Current picture	Next steps	Comment
A designated member of SLT with responsibility for over-seeing arrangements for EBSA students			
Clear systems and processes for the early identification of EBSA with all staff			
Clear roles and responsibilities for Emotional Wellbeing leads and SENCO			
Governors have a knowledge and awareness of the complexities surrounding EBSA			
A committed and inclusive SLT which values all students and helps to foster a sense of belonging for all			
Reference to addressing social and emotional wellbeing including school avoidance within improvement plans and policies			
Ensure new initiatives and programmes reach across school and are sustainable			
<b>Ethos and Environment</b>	Current picture	Next steps	Comment
A safe and inclusive school environment e.g. bullying 'hot-spots' and stigma addressed, information available in different languages, good access for differently-abled, safe spaces, a range of playtime/break activities			
Supportive literature available for young people and parents			
Displays promote emotional wellbeing e.g. anti-bullying displays			
Relationships between staff and students and between students is recognised as being important to emotional wellbeing			
Systems in place to support foster a sense of belonging e.g. school council, house systems, circle time, performances and team sports			

A culture of communication and processes that ensure all young people's concerns can be addressed			
A safe, nurturing environment, where young people's self-worth and self-efficacy is encouraged			
Access to indicated provision e.g. safe places within school, key person			
Clear policies on attendance, behaviour, bullying and transition, highlighting support available and everyone's responsibilities			
<b>Staff Development, Health and Wellbeing</b>	Current picture	Next steps	Comment
Regular whole school staff training in the fundamentals of young people's mental health (Healthy Minds)			
Whole school training on anxiety and EBSA			
Staff are aware of how anxiety may present in CYP and have strategies to respond at different stages			
All staff have a shared understanding of EBSA, are aware of EBSA risk factors, indicators and specific strategies and programmes to support young people showing signs of school avoidance			
Clear protocols regarding emotional support and stress management for staff including supervision if appropriate			
Work-life balance for staff is promoted			
Some INSET and staff meetings dedicated to staff wellbeing			
Support for staff to reflect on and to take actions to enhance their own wellbeing			
An appreciation of the contribution that every member of the school team makes			
Develop and use staff expertise and enthusiasms			
<b>Curriculum, Teaching and Learning</b>	Current picture	Next steps	Comment

Teaching of skills including resilience, problem-solving, coping skills, conflict resolution and how to understand and manage feelings			
High status given to PSHE and links made to other areas and whole school events			
Appropriate differentiation according to individual needs			
A wide and flexible curriculum, including enrichment and vocational opportunities			
Lessons around emotional and mental health are taught in a safe environment, e.g. with ground rules, avoiding triggers, using distancing techniques, ensuring pupils know where / how to ask for help if affected and pastoral support			
Monitoring and evaluation of lessons around emotional and mental health			
<b>Pupil Voice</b>	Current picture	Next steps	Comment
Pupils have an authentic voice in teaching and learning			
Processes such as circle time, focus groups, and consultations			
Participatory groups such as the class / school council, Healthy Minds champions, eco-committee, healthy schools and peer mentors, including peer-led approaches			
Structures in place so that all pupils can be involved in decision-making, including those with additional learning needs			
Giving pupils opportunities to take responsibility for some aspects of school / college life e.g. peer support, reception duties, enterprise activities, school performances, charity events			
<b>Identify needs and monitor impact</b>	Current picture	Next steps	Comment
Staff are aware of EBSA warning signs, risk and resilience factors etc.			
Staff have regular review meetings to discuss and identify any at risk or vulnerable students			

Identification and addressing of the emotional health needs of potentially vulnerable pupils e.g. young carers, those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, children in care, those at risk of exclusion from school, pupils with SEND etc			
Effective routes for self-referral for pupils, young people and staff to seek help if they have a concern or are in need of support e.g. worry boxes, school support, email addresses, visible Pastoral Leads, resources, agencies etc			
Provision and interventions designed to meet the emotional and mental health needs of pupils are monitored and evaluated for impact using the graduated response of assess, plan, do review			
For Healthy Minds schools, school use the Healthy Minds survey to identify the strengths and needs of the individual school community, followed by the Healthy Minds action plan <a href="#">Healthy Minds</a>			
Well-being scales or measures used to identify pupil's emotional health and wellbeing needs.			
<b>Targeted Support</b>	<b>Current picture</b>	<b>Next steps</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Targeted support is matched to pupil's specific needs through quality assessment practices			
A range of evidence-based interventions used by the school to meet the needs of targeted pupils			
Collaboration with other professionals working with the students			
Awareness by staff of the role of other agencies with regard to assessing and supporting students experiencing EBSA			
Awareness by staff of the processes and procedures for support and referral within and outside of school			

<b>Working with parent carers</b>	Current picture	Next steps	Comment
Communication to parents and carers about how the school supports pupils' emotional and mental health needs e.g. through home-school booklets, on the school website			
Clear processes and points of contact for parents and carers if they have concerns or information regarding their child's emotional or mental health, behaviour or any other concerns			
Resources (or appropriate sign-posting to resources) available for parents and carers which facilitate discussion of common issues such as change, losing friends, fear and divorce e.g. through books, leaflets, displays and school website			
The welcome and inclusion parents and carers in the school community, e.g. through participation in learning activities, assemblies, parent-teacher associations, policy development, etc			

Adapted from *Emotional and Mental Health: A Resource for Schools*, Derbyshire County Council

# Supporting whole school mental health and wellbeing

## Our key beliefs

- Students need to feel safe to learn and thrive
- Behaviour is communication
- A significant trusted adult in school is key. Relationships are vital.
- Staff wellbeing is essential as a priority to supporting students, parents, carers and colleagues
- Interaction can be an intervention

## What is mental health?

Mental health involves emotional, psychological and social wellbeing:

*Emotional wellbeing* – includes being happy and confident and managing difficult feelings

*Psychological wellbeing* – includes the ability to be autonomous, problem-solve, manage emotions, experience empathy, be resilient and attentive

*Social wellbeing* – has good relationships with others and manages well within those interactions.

## Why is mental health important?

There are links between mental health and wellbeing in childhood and adolescence, and longer term outcomes in relation to academic attainment, employment, physical health and interactions with the criminal justice system. Schools are uniquely placed in being able to support mental health and wellbeing throughout education in order to offer the greatest opportunity for positive life experiences in adulthood.

## Whole school approach to mental health

A mentally healthy school is one that has well-informed and embedded practices throughout all levels of the organisation. It is knowledgeable and committed to relational approaches, well-being of both staff and students, early identification and response to need, skill-based work for students, and effective engagement with external services.

There are 8 key principles identified as integral to a whole-school (or college) approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing (see DfE, 2021).

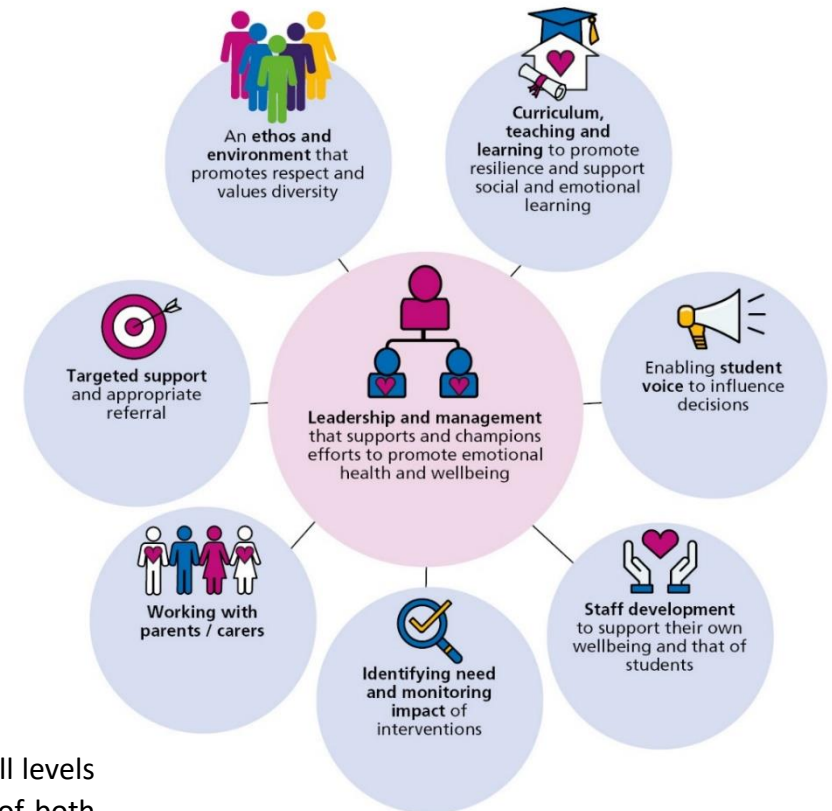


Figure credit: South West Yorkshire Partnership, NHS Foundation Trust



## Appendix 2 Early intervention

### 2.1 Profile of Risk Factors Tool

*Taken from West Sussex Emotionally Based School Avoidance Good practice guidance for schools and support agencies.*

The risk factor profile consists of five key areas, each of which contain a number of items you are asked to consider in terms of their possible importance in influencing an emotionally based attendance problem. When completing the schedule, it is important to be as objective as possible, and to base assessments on evidence. Thus it is recommended that completion of the schedule is a joint venture, wherein checking and questioning can lead to the best judgements in terms of item importance. During the process of completing the schedule, it may be useful to note factors associated with particular items, such as:

- This has been an issue in the past, but doesn't appear to be now
- This has been an issue in the past, and has persisted as an important item

Items are not quantified by a typical rating scale, as one single item (e.g. death of a parent) could be proportionately much greater than a rating scale could accommodate. As such the schedule asks you to make notes on the key items of importance you identify.

If the resultant profile suggests to you that the pupil is at risk of emotionally based school refusal, continue with the cycle of assess, plan, do, review.

**Name of child or young person:**

**Key adult in school:**

**Date:**

Loss and change	Level of concern				
	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Unknown
Death of parent, relative, friend					
Death of pet					
Sudden traumatic event					
Sudden separation from parent					
Moving house, school, area					
Loss of classmate					
Parent, relative, friend illness					
Note on key items					

	Level of concern				
Family Dynamic	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Unknown
Inappropriate parenting					
Birth of new child					
Parents separated					
Parents arguing/fighting					
Practical problems bringing child to school					
Problems with parental control					
Jealous of sibling at home					
Note on key items					

	Level of concern				
Social Personal	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Unknown
Being bullied					
Seems to have few friends/friendship issues					
English as an additional language					
Dislikes play/break times					
Few leisure interests					
Note on key items					

	Level of concern				
Curriculum/Learning issues	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Unknown
Low levels of literacy					
PE and/or games issues					
General learning difficulties					
Subject specific difficulties					
Exam or test anxiety					
Difficulties with a particular teacher/adult					
Problems keeping up in lessons					
Note on key items					

	Level of concern				
Psychological wellbeing	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Unknown
Often seems tired					
Low self esteem					
Appears depressed					
Appears anxious					
Keeps feelings to them selves					
Has a pessimistic nature					
Note on key items					

	Level of concern				
Other issues	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Unknown
Note on key items					



# Risk & Resilience

# Profile 1

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: Parent/Carer  Teacher  TA/Support

**Directions:** The following helps us to build a profile and identify how we can best support the child / young person. Please circle the response (**Never, Rarely Sometimes, Often or Always**) that best describes the extent that you think these have an impact for the child / young person at this time.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Feels that 'no one understands them'	N	R	S	O	A
2. Feels pressure from others to attend school / rushed to return	N	R	S	O	A
3. Appears anxious, on edge, or worried for most of the day	N	R	S	O	A
4. Seeks a lot of reassurance, especially about upcoming events	N	R	S	O	A
5. Appears low / shows a lack of positive emotion	N	R	S	O	A
6. Struggles to do simple tasks they were previously capable of	N	R	S	O	A
7. Worries what others think of them	N	R	S	O	A
8. Is shy, self-conscious and/or easily embarrassed	N	R	S	O	A
9. Lacks confidence in their abilities to achieve well at school	N	R	S	O	A
10. Is fearful of making mistakes in class / avoids work activities	N	R	S	O	A
11. Persistently talks about negative aspects of school	N	R	S	O	A
12. Never says anything good / positive about school	N	R	S	O	A
13. When feeling anxious / frustrated, feels this way for a long time	N	R	S	O	A
14. Gets stuck in negative thought patterns / continues to talk about the same thing	N	R	S	O	A
15. Has limited shared interests with peers	N	R	S	O	A
16. Does not attend clubs with peers (inside or outside of school)	N	R	S	O	A
17. Feels a sense of loss (e.g. due to bereavement, parental separation / divorce)	N	R	S	O	A
18. Feels unstable with their home / school life	N	R	S	O	A
19. Is not always certain which house they are staying at each night	N	R	S	O	A
20. Does not know who will be at home	N	R	S	O	A
21. Worries about their parents / carers when away from them	N	R	S	O	A
22. Thinks that something bad might happen to their family	N	R	S	O	A
23. Has a need to be around parents / carers to feel calm	N	R	S	O	A
24. Demands a lot of attention from adults	N	R	S	O	A
25. Feels jealous of their brother / sister	N	R	S	O	A
26. Often fights / argues with their brother / sister	N	R	S	O	A
27. Does not feel comfortable leaving the house	N	R	S	O	A
28. Only feels calm when at home	N	R	S	O	A
29. When at home in the day, is always entertained (e.g. plays computer games)	N	R	S	O	A
30. When at home in the day, spends most of their time with family	N	R	S	O	A
31. Is viewed as an 'anxious' child / young person by others	N	R	S	O	A
32. Is not encouraged to do anything which may lead to any anxiety	N	R	S	O	A

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
33. Has lost a connection to a teacher or friend	N	R	S	O	A
34. Lacks confidence being in current classroom/s	N	R	S	O	A
35. Is behind age-related expectations within areas of their learning	N	R	S	O	A
36. Struggles to keep pace with the set work in class	N	R	S	O	A
37. Dislikes going out of class for additional support	N	R	S	O	A
38. Often feels frustrated by learning tasks	N	R	S	O	A
39. Often falls out with / is bullied by peers	N	R	S	O	A
40. Lacks close friendships in school	N	R	S	O	A
41. Dislikes particular teachers / staff in school	N	R	S	O	A
42. Struggles to talk with teachers / staff when has a difficulty	N	R	S	O	A
43. Is anxious / fearful over particular parts of the school day (e.g. break time, specific	N	R	S	O	A
44. Struggles during transition points in school (e.g. arriving, lesson change over)	N	R	S	O	A
45. Feels overwhelmed by the noise / busyness in the classroom	N	R	S	O	A
46. Does not have a place in school where they feel safe	N	R	S	O	A
47. Feels that they will get into trouble for not attending school	N	R	S	O	A
48. Thinks their teachers think badly of them / judge them for not attending school	N	R	S	O	A

**What Is Their Current Rate Of Attendance?**

**Top 3 Most Difficult Parts Of The Day (e.g. Specific Anxieties, Times Of The Day Or Places They Feel Overwhelmed And Try To Avoid)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Have They Experienced Any Adverse Childhood Experiences And/Or Traumatic Events (Recent Or Historical)?**

**Have They Experienced Any Transitions Recently (e.g. New School, Returning After A Long Break, Moved House)?**

**Is There A History Of School Avoidance Within The Family?**



# Risk & Resilience

## Profile 2

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: Parent/Carer  Teacher  TA/Support

**Directions:** The following helps us to build a profile and identify how we can best support the child / young person. Please circle the response (**N**ever, **R**arely **S**ometimes, **O**ften or **A**lways) that best describes the extent that you think these have an impact for the child / young person at this time.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Feels that their parents / carers understand what they're going through	N	R	S	O	A
2. Feels that their teachers / school staff understand what they're going through	N	R	S	O	A
3. Is motivated to attend school when feeling able to	N	R	S	O	A
4. Would like to be in school full-time in the future	N	R	S	O	A
5. Wants to make progress with their learning	N	R	S	O	A
6. Know what they want to achieve in the future	N	R	S	O	A
7. There is something that they feel good at	N	R	S	O	A
8. There are things they can do which they are proud of	N	R	S	O	A
9. Feels that everything will be alright in the future	N	R	S	O	A
10. Can recognise and talk about good things that happen in the day	N	R	S	O	A
11. Has a close friendship in school	N	R	S	O	A
12. Feels liked by their peers in school	N	R	S	O	A
13. Feel confident in themselves	N	R	S	O	A
14. Feels that they are well liked by others	N	R	S	O	A
15. Are able to talk with others about how they feel	N	R	S	O	A
16. Are able to successfully calm themselves when feeling anxious	N	R	S	O	A
17. Has a close relationship with family at home	N	R	S	O	A
18. Feels able to open up and talk with family at home	N	R	S	O	A
19. Feels safe and secure when at home	N	R	S	O	A
20. Has a stable and predictable home routine	N	R	S	O	A
21. Is able to separate from parents / carers	N	R	S	O	A
22. Feels comfortable being away from parents / carers	N	R	S	O	A
23. Family are motivated to support them to attend school	N	R	S	O	A
24. Family value education and want them to do well with learning	N	R	S	O	A
25. Family talk positively about school	N	R	S	O	A
26. There is good communication between home and school	N	R	S	O	A
27. Siblings consistently attend school	N	R	S	O	A
28. Siblings have not experienced Emotionally Based School Avoidance in the past	N	R	S	O	A
29. Does things outside of school which they enjoy	N	R	S	O	A
30. Belongs to clubs / attends activities outside of school	N	R	S	O	A
31. When not at school, there is a clear routine to the day	N	R	S	O	A
32. When not at school, educational activities are still completed	N	R	S	O	A

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
33. Has a 'safe space' in school they can go to if feeling anxious	N	R	S	O	A
34. Feels that school is a safe and predictable place to be	N	R	S	O	A
35. Gets on well with most teachers	N	R	S	O	A
36. Feels supported by teachers / staff in school	N	R	S	O	A
37. Feels that teachers / staff care about them	N	R	S	O	A
38. Has a close relationship with at least one member of staff	N	R	S	O	A
39. Feels a sense of belonging / identity within their class or a club in school	N	R	S	O	A
40. Feels a sense of belonging / identity within their friendship group in school	N	R	S	O	A
41. Has a particular strength in something they feel good at in school	N	R	S	O	A
42. Is able to do something they are confident to show to their class	N	R	S	O	A
43. Feel able and confident to ask for help in school	N	R	S	O	A
44. Enjoys receiving additional support (e.g. 1:1 or small group) in school	N	R	S	O	A
45. There are parts of school which they really enjoy / have an interest in	N	R	S	O	A
46. There are things in school which they look forward to	N	R	S	O	A
47. Feels that teachers / school staff take time to try and understand them	N	R	S	O	A
48. Views have been integrated into any plans or support	N	R	S	O	A

**Top 3 Best / Easiest Parts Of The Day (e.g. Times When They Seem Calmer / More Confident, Activities They Really Enjoy)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**What Has Made The Difference When They Feel More Comfortable / Able To Attend School?**

**Any Patterns To Increased Attendance Over Time? (e.g. Days Of The Week, Times Of The Year, Before Or After Certain Events / Holidays)**

**What Strategies Or Approaches Have Been Most Helpful So Far?**





# Push and pull factors tool



# Appendix 3: Assessment Tools

## 3.1 Information Gathering Form



### Wakefield EBSA Toolkit

### Information Gathering Form

#### Assessment of school attendance difficulties should aim to:

1. analyse the nature and severity of the attendance difficulty (*what* is happening?)
2. consider what factors are contributing to and maintaining the difficulties (*why* is it happening?)
3. formulate a hypothesis – YOU MAY WANT TO USE THE 'EBSA FORMULATION TEMPLATE' TO HELP

<b>Name:</b>	<b>School:</b>	<b>Completed by:</b>
<b>Year group:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>School Attendance (e.g. current pattern, duration, history of non-attendance)</b>		
<b>Developmental and Educational history (e.g. milestones, health, schools, academic attainment)</b>		
<b>Family – composition, changes of circumstance, parental views of the non-attendance etc.</b>		
<b>Pupil – views/perceptions of school attendance (see EBSA Toolkit for suggested techniques/materials)</b>		
<b>Information from school staff (e.g. presentation in lessons, learning/communication/social skills)</b>		
<b>Other Professionals (e.g. EWO, EP, WISENDSS, CAMHS)</b>		
<b>Functional assessment: what purpose is the non-attendance serving for the pupil?</b>		
Function 1: Avoidance of school-based stimuli that provoke negative emotions e.g. anxiety or depression		
Function 2: Avoidance of aversive social/evaluative situations in school e.g. bullying or social anxiety		
Function 3: Pursuit of attention from significant others at home e.g. parent (including separation anxiety)		
Function 4: Pursuit of tangible reinforcement/reward outside of school e.g. online gaming or shopping		

### 3.2 Function of School Non-Attendance: Card Sort Task

This card sort activity, based on a School Refusal Assessment Scale developed by Kearney (see below), has been devised by Sheffield EPS (shared with permission) as a tool to support staff to develop a greater understanding of a young person's school avoidance. The 24 statements are colour-coded by the function of behaviour identified by Kearney and Silverman (1990). By asking a CYP to sort the statements or by talking about each one, mentors may find that using the cards can support an understanding of the function of the school avoidance behaviour.

Blue, Function 1: To avoid something or situations that elicits negative feelings or high levels of stress or anxiety (e.g. fear of the toilets; the noise in the playground; lots of people moving all together in the corridors between classes, tests/ exams)

Red, Function 2: To escape difficult social situations (e.g. feeling left out at playtime, reading out loud in class or other public speaking/group task, working as part of a group)

Green, Function 3: To get attention from or spend more time with significant others at home (e.g. change in family dynamic, concerned about the well-being of parent)

Yellow, Function 4: To spend more time out of school as it is more fun or stimulating (e.g. watch tv, go shopping, play computer games, hang out with friends).

#### **How the statements could be used with a CYP:**

- Cut up the statements.
- Ask the CYP to sort the statements into three groups, shown on the white cards: A bit like me, most like me and least like me.
- Using the key below, consider if any patterns are noticeable and whether some functions are more prevalent than others.
- If the CYP is comfortable, discuss the statements to help build a richer picture.
- Consider together how this information can help to plan the next steps.

I have bad feelings about going to school because I am afraid of something related to school (e.g. tests, school bus, teacher, fire alarm)

I stay away from school because it is hard to speak with the other kids at school

I would rather be with my parent(s) than go to school

When I am not in school during the week (Monday to Friday), I leave the house and do something fun

I stay away from school because I will feel sad or depressed if I go

I stay away from school because I feel embarrassed in front of other people at school

I think about my parents or family when in school

When I am not in school during the week (Monday to Friday), I talk to or see other people (other than your family)

I feel worse at school (e.g., scared, nervous, sad) compared to how I feel at home with friends

I stay away from school because I do not have many friends there

I would rather be with my family than go to school

When I am not in school during the week (Monday to Friday), I enjoy doing different things (e.g., being with friends, going places)

I have bad feelings about school (e.g., scared, nervous, sad) when I think about school on Saturday and Sunday

I stay away from places in school (e.g., hallways, places where certain groups of people are) where I would have to talk to someone

I would rather be taught by my parents at home than by my teacher at school

I stay away from school because I want to have fun outside of school

If I had less bad feelings  
(e.g., scared, nervous, sad)  
about school, it would be  
easier for me to go to school

If it were easier for me to  
make new friends, it would  
be easier for me to go to  
school

It would be easier for me to  
go to school if my parents  
went with me

It would be easier for me to  
go to school if I could do  
more things I like to do  
after school hours (e.g.,  
being with friends)

I have bad feelings about  
school (e.g., scared, nervous,  
sad) compared to other kids  
of my age?

I often stay away from  
people in school compared to  
other kids of my age

I would like to be home with  
my parents more than other  
kids my age would

I would rather be doing fun  
things outside of school more  
than most kids of my age

**Most Like Me**

**A Bit Like Me**

**Least Like Me**

### 3.3 Pupil Questionnaire (adapted from Kearney's School Refusal Assessment Scale-Revised, SRAS-R)

Kearney's rating scale is a tool for professionals working with pupils experiencing attendance difficulties. In the same way as the card sort activity (above), it provides information to help ascertain which of the 4 functions are relevant for that pupil. Scores for are added, averaged and then can be compared.

A slightly adapted version of the SRAS-R, more suitable for UK pupils, is on the next two pages. Please note that the results should be used alongside other sources assessment information and is not a standalone diagnostic tool. This scale can also be used for pre and post intervention assessments.

- **0 points:** 0, meaning "never"
- **1 point:** 1, meaning "seldom"
- **2 points:** 2, meaning "sometimes"
- **3 points:** 3, meaning "half the time"
- **4 points:** 4, meaning "usually"
- **5 points:** 5, meaning "almost always"
- **6 points:** 6, meaning "always"

Each item in the question set contributes to a different function which may be contributing to the child's school refusal behavior. Total scores may be computed by adding the scores of each of four functions on both the parent and child versions. These function scores are each divided by 6 (the number of scores in each set). Parent and child function scores are then summed and divided by 2 to determine the mean function score. The function with the highest mean score is considered the primary cause of the child's school avoidance. The function divisions are as follows:

- Function one ("avoidance of stimuli provoking negative affectivity"): items 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, and 21
- Function two ("escape from aversive social and/or evaluative situations"): items 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, and 22
- Function three ("attention seeking"): items 3, 7, 11, 15, 19, and 23
- Function four ("tangible rewards"): items 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, and 24

Scores within 0.50 points of one another are considered equivalent.



## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DIFFICULTIES – PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:	Date of Birth:	Year Group:
School:	Date:	Completed with:

Young people have different reasons for not going to school. Some feel badly at school, some have trouble with other people, some want to be with their family and some prefer to do things more fun outside of school.

This form asks questions about why you sometimes don't go to school. For each question, pick one number that describes you best for the last few days. Please answer all of the questions. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Just tick the number that best fits the way you feel.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never			Half the time			Always
	Not at all			Half as much			Very much
1. How often do you have bad feelings about going to school because you are afraid of something in school (e.g. tests, fire alarm, a teacher)?							
2. How often do you stay away from school because it is hard to speak with the other kids at school?							
3. How often do you feel you would rather be with your mum/dad (etc) than go to school?							
4. When you are not in school during the week (Mon to Fri) how often do you leave the house to do something fun?							
5. How often do you stay away from school because you will have bad feelings (e.g. sad or worried) if you go?							
6. How often do you stay away from school because you feel embarrassed in front of other people at school?							
7. How often do you think about your parents or other family members when in school?							
8. When you are not in school during the week (Mon to Fri) how often do you talk to or see people other than your family?							
9. How often do you feel worse at school (e.g. scared, nervous, or sad) compared to how you feel at home with friends?							
10. How often do you stay away from school because you do not have many friends there?							
11. How much would you rather be with your mum/dad/family than go to school?							
12. When you are not in school during the week (Mon to Fri) how much do you enjoy							



### 3.4 Ideal School Activity

***Think about the type of school you would want to go to. What would it be like? What would be there?***

#### **Instructions**

***Part 1: Drawing the kind of school you would NOT like to go to.***

**Help your child to make a sketch or talk to you about the type of school they would want to go to by reading out these questions.**

#### **1. The School**

Think about the kind of school you would not like to go to. This is not a real school. Make a quick drawing of this school in the middle of this paper.

Tell me three things about this school. What kind of school is this?

#### **2. The Classroom**

Think about the sort of classroom you would not like to be in. Make a quick drawing of this classroom in the school. Draw some of the things in this classroom.

#### **3. The Children**

Think about some of the children at the school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these children. What are the children doing? Tell me three things about these children.

#### **4. The Adults**

Think about some of the adults at the school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of the adults. What are the adults doing? Tell me three things about these adults.

#### **5. Me**

Think about the kind of school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of what you would be doing at this school. Tell me three things about the way you feel at this school.

***Part 2: Drawing the kind of school you would like to go to:***

#### **6. The School**

Think about the kind of school you would like to go to. This is not a real school. Make a quick drawing of this school in the middle of the middle of this paper.

Tell me three things about this school. What kind of school is this?

#### **7. The Classroom**

Think about the sort of classroom you would like to be in. Make a quick drawing of this classroom in this school. Draw some of the things in this classroom.

#### **8. The Children**

Think about some of the children at the school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these children. What are the children doing? Tell me three things about these children

#### **9. The Adults**

Think about some of the adults at the school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these adults. What are the adults doing? Tell me three things about these adults.

#### **10. Me**

Think about the kind of school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of what you would be doing at this school. Tell me three things about the way you feel at this school.

MY IDEAL SCHOOL



A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing or writing about the ideal school.

A SCHOOL I WOULD NOT LIKE TO BE AT



Example of the type of school I would not want to go to



Example of the type of school I would want to go to



## 3.5 School Stress Survey

With thanks to [www.HumansNotRobots.co.uk](http://www.HumansNotRobots.co.uk) for sharing this resource

### Instructions

#### Administration

1. Ask the student to meet with a teacher, mentor or teaching assistant they are familiar with.
2. The member of staff goes through each item in sequence and asks the student to rate themselves, by highlighting or putting a cross through the *best fit* answer.
3. With each item, the member of staff also asks the student to identify reasons. The student is unlikely to find this easy – questions such as “*What happens during this part of the day?*”, “*What do you see?*”, “*What do you hear?*” are more likely to elicit a response rather than “*Why did you put this?*” Make a note of any indicative words / phrases such as ‘teacher shouting’, ‘swearing’, ‘queuing up’, ‘too busy’ etc. on the recording sheet.

If the student identifies another student as causing stress, write their name as initials to maintain confidentiality.

4. At the end of the items, it may also be useful to ask students to undertake a similar rating activity with their timetable to identify any subjects / peer groups they may find stressful. These can also be noted on the recording sheet.
5. Finally, ask the students if there is anything else that they find particularly easy and enjoyable or particularly ‘annoying’, ‘difficult’ etc. about school. These can also be noted on the recording sheet.




### Scoring

The scoring below is not an exact science – it is based on averages / a ‘rule of thumb’ rather than standardisation.


12 → 18	19 → 36	37 → 48
High and regular stress levels. Student will require additional support in managing their day-to-day stress levels.	Specific points of stress that may need further attention. Possibility that the student is ‘masking’ high stress levels.	Based on the answers given, student appears to generally have low day-to-day stress levels in school.



# School Stress Survey

	I very often or always feel stress at this. I can't cope with it.		I sometimes feel stress. I don't like it but I can cope.		I feel OK about this. I can cope with it easily.
---	---	---	--	---	--


**1. Getting Up & Ready**



 -  - 

**2. Journey To & From**




 -  - 




**3. Assembly**



 -  - 

**4. Corridors**



 -  - 

**5. Written Work**



 -  - 

**6. Break Times**



 -  - 

**7. Teacher Q&A**



 -  - 

**8. Team / Group Work**



 -  - 

**9. Lunch Times**




 -  - 




**10. 1 to 1 with Adults**




 -  - 




**11. Tests**



 -  - 

**12. Homework**



 -  - 

## School Stress Survey – Recording Sheet

Item	Score ☹=1 ☺=2 😊=4	Indicative Words / Phrases
1. Getting Up & Ready		
2. Journey To & From		
3. Assembly		
4. Corridors		
5. Written Work		
6. Break Times		
7. Teacher Q&A		
8. Team / Group Work		
9. Lunch Times		
10. 1 to 1 with Adults		
11. Tests		
12. Homework		
<i>Total Score:</i>		

Timetable Issues	
Other Issues	

### 3.6 Suggested Scripts for Pupil Views

A set of example scripts that could be used to gather a pupil's views (from Solihull's guidance, p21)

	<b>What makes it more likely that I will come to school?</b>	<b>What makes it less likely that I will come to school?</b>
<b>Child/ YP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How I would describe myself as a learner...</li> <li>• Things I like about school...</li> <li>• What I find easy...</li> <li>• What I am good at...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How I would describe myself as a learner...</li> <li>• Things I don't like about school...</li> <li>• What I find hard...</li> <li>• What I am not so good at...</li> </ul>
<b>Family/ Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some good things about my family are...</li> <li>• I would describe my family as...</li> <li>• How others might describe my family...</li> <li>• Things I miss about school when I am at home...</li> <li>• To help me get / feel ready for school in the morning, I like to...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes I don't like leaving my family/home and coming to school because...</li> <li>• I would describe my family as...</li> <li>• How others might describe my family...</li> <li>• When I stay at home, I like/enjoy...</li> <li>• Things I miss about home when I come to school...</li> <li>• People I miss at home when I come to school...</li> </ul>
<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other children at school and/or friends make me feel...</li> <li>• People I enjoy spending time with at school...</li> <li>• During my free times (break, lunch etc.), I like to...</li> <li>• Social situations/activities that I look forward to in school...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other children at school and/or friends make me feel...</li> <li>• Activities / social situations that I do not look forward to in school...</li> <li>• I don't like play/free times in school when...</li> </ul>
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would describe school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would describe school as...</li> </ul>

	<p>as...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessons I enjoy... because...</li> <li>• Things about school that I find difficult...</li> <li>• When I think about school, I feel...</li> <li>• I would describe my teachers in school as...</li> <li>• Things that people do that helps me in school...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessons I don't enjoy... because...</li> <li>• Things about school that I find enjoy...</li> <li>• When I think about school, I feel...</li> <li>• I would describe my teachers in school as...</li> <li>• Things that I feel worried about in school...</li> </ul>
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things I link about the area I live in...</li> <li>• When I'm not at school, I spend time doing...</li> <li>• Where I like spending time when I'm not at home...</li> <li>• When I'm not at school, I spend time with...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things I don't like about the area I live in...</li> <li>• When I'm not at school, I spend time with...</li> <li>• When I'm not at school, I spend time doing...</li> </ul>

### 3.7 Parent/Carer views - suggested questions

School staff may find it helpful to use these themes and question prompts during the initial meeting with parents. Sensitivity and active listening skills will be crucial at this stage.

Theme	Possible questions
<b>Family dynamics</b> It can be helpful to gain an understanding the young person's life journey and significant events which may have impacted upon their lived experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could you describe your family? Or draw your family tree?</li> <li>• Who is X closest to in the family? Has this always been the case?</li> <li>• Have there been any changes within the family recently? Or are there any upcoming changes in the near future?</li> <li>• Was anything different in your family at the time that you noticed X's difficulties increasing?</li> <li>• Have there been any significant life events that X has experienced? Or any important losses/bereavements/long-term illness?</li> <li>• When X does not attend school, how does this impact upon the family? What are you doing if X does not go to school?</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths, interests and aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is X good at? What do they like doing?</li> <li>• Do they have any hopes for the future? Do they know what they want their life to be like when they are an adult?</li> </ul>
<b>Developmental and educational history</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was X like as a young child?</li> <li>• Can you tell me about their early experiences at school? The primary school, at the start of secondary school?</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does X talk about any other children? What does s/he say?</li> <li>• Does X talk about any adults within school? What does s/he say?</li> <li>• Who does X get on with...who doesn't X get on with?</li> <li>• Does X interact with other students out of school?</li> <li>• Which friendship groups are significant?</li> </ul>
<b>Academic progress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School should be aware if the young person has identified SEN needs and should ask about these needs and the support in place.</li> <li>• If there is no identified SEN school should ask if they have any concerns, or if the child has spoken about difficulties.</li> </ul>
<b>Behaviour and symptoms of anxiety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When X is worried what does it look like?</li> <li>• What do they say they are feeling?</li> <li>• Is X's sleeping and eating affected?</li> </ul>
<b>The child's view – fears and worries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has X spoken to you about what X finds difficult about school? What do they say?</li> </ul>
<b>The child's view – going well in school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has X mentioned anything that is going well in school? (e.g. teachers, lessons, friends)</li> </ul>
<b>Typical day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does a typical day look like for X / yourself when they do/do not attend school?</li> <li>• Take me through it, what happens from the moment they wake, to the moment they sleep...</li> </ul>
<b>Parental views on the reasons for EBSA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you think X has difficulty attending school? (ask each parent separately)</li> <li>• If (other parent/ sibling/Grandparent) were here, what would they say?</li> <li>• Are there any differences of views about the reasons and what should be done within the family?</li> </ul>
<b>Exceptions</b> These questions can help shift the focus away from the presenting problem, to consider aspects within a situation which are working well or supporting the young person not to get worse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me about the times when X is feeling most/less anxious/sad/angry.</li> <li>• Tell me about the days/times of day when you think something has gone well for X. What is different during these times?</li> <li>• Tell me about the times when X has managed to go to school. What was different about these times?</li> <li>• Tell me what other people have done that has been useful/helpful for X.</li> </ul>
<b>Previous attempts to address the problem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has helped in the past when things have been difficult?</li> <li>• What strategies have been most helpful so far in managing their anxiety?</li> </ul>

### 3.8 Attendance Difficulties Questionnaire for parents (adapted from Kearney's SRAS-R)

Kearney's scale is an evidence-based tool for professionals working with children and young people experiencing EBSA. This questionnaire can be used to gather parental views as part of the assessment stage for a pupil with attendance difficulties. There is a companion pupil version (above).

- **0 points:** 0, meaning "never"
- **1 point:** 1, meaning "seldom"
- **2 points:** 2, meaning "sometimes"
- **3 points:** 3, meaning "half the time"
- **4 points:** 4, meaning "usually"
- **5 points:** 5, meaning "almost always"
- **6 points:** 6, meaning "always"

Each item in the question set contributes to a different function which may be contributing to the child's school refusal behavior. Total scores may be computed by adding the scores of each of four functions on both the parent and child versions. These function scores are each divided by 6 (the number of scores in each set). Parent and child function scores are then summed and divided by 2 to determine the mean function score. The function with the highest mean score is considered the primary cause of the child's school avoidance. The function divisions are as follows:

- Function one ("avoidance of stimuli provoking negative affectivity"): items 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, and 21
- Function two ("escape from aversive social and/or evaluative situations"): items 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, and 22
- Function three ("attention seeking"): items 3, 7, 11, 15, 19, and 23
- Function four ("tangible rewards": items 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, and 24

Scores within 0.50 points of one another are considered equivalent.

A slightly adapted version of the SRAS-R, more suitable for UK pupils, is on the next two pages. Please note that the results should be used alongside other sources assessment information and is not a standalone diagnostic tool.

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DIFFICULTIES – PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Pupil's Name:	Pupil's Date of Birth:	Pupil's Year Group:
Completed by:	Relationship to Pupil:	Date:

Young people sometimes have different reasons for not going to school. Some feel badly at school, some have trouble with other people, some want to be with their family and some prefer to do things more fun outside of school. This form asks questions about why your son/daughter sometimes doesn't want to go to school. Please answer all of the questions below without discussing them with your child (because this could affect the responses they give on their own version). Tick one number that you think describes your son/daughter best for the last few days.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never			Half the time			Always
	Not at all			Half as much			Very much
1. How often does your son/daughter have bad feelings about going to school because they are afraid of something in school (e.g. tests, fire alarm, a teacher)?							
2. How often does your son/daughter stay away from school because it is hard for them to speak to other students?							
3. How often does your son/daughter feel they would rather be with you or another family member than go to school?							
4. When your son/daughter is not in school during the week (Mon to Fri) how often do they leave the house to do something fun?							
5. How often does your son/daughter stay away from school because they will feel bad (e.g. sad or worried) if they go?							
6. How often does your son/daughter stay away from school because they feel embarrassed in front of other people at school?							
7. How often does your son/daughter think about you or other family members when in school?							
8. When your son/daughter is not in school during the week (Mon to Fri) how often do they talk to or see people other than family?							
9. How often does your son/daughter feel worse at school (e.g. scared, nervous, sad) compared to how they feel at home or with friends?							
10. How often does your son/daughter stay away from school because they do not have many friends there?							

11. How much would your son/daughter rather be with you or other family members than go to school?							
12. When your son/daughter is not in school during the week (Mon to Fri) how much do they enjoy doing different things (e.g. being with friends, going out)?							
13. How often does your son/daughter have bad feelings about school (e.g. scared, nervous, sad) when they think about school on Sat and Sun?							
14. How often does your son/daughter stay away from certain places in school (e.g. corridors or places where certain people are) where they would have to talk to someone?							
15. How much would your son/daughter rather be taught by you or your partner at home than by their teachers at school?							
16. How often does your son/daughter refuse to go to school because they want to have fun outside of school?							
17. If your son/daughter had fewer bad feelings (e.g. scared, nervous, sad) about school how much easier would it be easier for them to go to school?							
18. If it were easier for your son/daughter to make new friends, would it be easier for them to go to school?							
19. How much easier would it be for your son/daughter to go to school if you or you partner went with them?							
20. How much easier would it be for your son/daughter to go to school if they could do more things they like to do after school (e.g. being with friends)?							
21. How much more does your son/daughter have bad feelings about school (e.g. scared, nervous, sad) compared to other people their age?							
22. How often does your son/daughter stay away from people at school compared to other pupils their age?							
23. How much more than most people their age would your son/daughter like to be at home with you or your family?							
24. How much more than most people their age would your son/daughter rather be doing fun things outside school?							

*There is space to record parental responses on the pupil questionnaire sheet.*



### 3.9 Template for Gathering Views of School Staff

[insert name] is currently experiencing difficulties attending school, as such we would like to gather as much information as possible from any staff member working with them. Please complete this form providing as much information as possible. Feel free to leave any sections blank. Please treat this information as confidential.

[insert name] has stated that they are / are not happy for you to discuss this with them. Their key staff member to contact is [insert staff member name]

<b>Name of young person</b>	
<b>Your job role</b>	
<b>Description</b> Please describe this young person	
<b>Strengths</b> What is going well?	
<b>Difficulties</b> What things do they find difficult?	
<b>Emotional difficulties</b> Have you observed any emotional difficulties at school? What have these been? When did/do they occur?	
<b>Response to academic tasks</b> Are they engaged and motivated with their learning? Are they making progress? If not, why do you think this may be?	
<b>Relationships with peers</b> How do they get on with their friends/ other peers	
<b>Relationships with adults</b> How do they get on with you and other adults?	
<b>Support</b> What support do you provide? How do they respond to this support?	
What is your understanding of their attendance problems?	
<b>Any other information you feel is important</b>	
<b>Further support</b> Have you got any ideas for further support? What do you think would help in school?	

### 3.10 Additional Assessment Tools

#### **Spence Children's Anxiety scale** (completed with child and/or parent)

This is a psychological questionnaire designed to identify symptoms of anxiety in children and young people aged 8 – 15. Answers are scored and then interpreted. The test takes around 10 minutes to complete and is available in various languages.

- <http://scaswebsite.com/>

#### **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire** (completed with child/parent/staff)

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief behavioural screening questionnaire about 3-16 year olds, giving information on 1) emotional symptoms, 2) conduct problems, 3) hyperactivity/inattention, 4) peer relationship problems, 5) prosocial behaviour/ It can be used as a pre and post intervention measure and is available in various languages. Information on scoring along with the questionnaires can be found here.

- <http://www.sdqinfo.org/a0.html>

#### **Scaling anxiety** (completed with child/young person)

5 Point Scale; this is both an assessment measure and an intervention. The 5-point scale can be used for young people of any age and is a tool to both assess current feelings of anxiety and to assist with developing coping strategies. Resources are free to download from here.

- [THE INCREDIBLE 5-POINT SCALE - HOME \(5pointscale.com\)](http://www.5pointscale.com/)

#### **Revised Children's Anxiety and Depression Scale (and Subscales) (RCADS)** (completed with child/young person)

The Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale (RCADS) is a 47-item, youth self-report questionnaire with subscales including: separation anxiety disorder, social phobia, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and low mood (major depressive disorder). It also yields a Total Anxiety Scale and includes a parent version that assesses parent report of youth's symptoms of anxiety and depression across the same six subscales.

- <https://www.childfirst.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/163/2018/03/RCADSUsersGuide20150701.pdf>

#### **Sensory audit** (completed by school)

Anxiety can be increased by sensory stimuli not normally noticed by others. With some children and young people, sensory stimuli may be one of the main sources of their anxiety and as such, it may be useful to assess their sensitivity to various sensory stimuli. An audit form can be downloaded here.

- [Sensory Audit for Schools and Classrooms \(education.gov.scot\)](http://www.education.gov.scot/nscotland/education/primary/primary-4-6/primary-4-6-10/primary-4-6-10-10/sensory-audit-for-schools-and-classrooms)

#### **Warwick-Edinburgh mental well-being scale (WEMWBS)** (completed with child/young person)

A positively worded scale that can be used to measure well-being with young people aged 13 and over. It is recommended that it is used with samples of over 100 people. The shorter version, which has seven questions, can be found at

- [WEMWBS](http://www.wemwbs.com/)

## **Anna Freud Resources**

Further information regarding the use of well-being measures can be found here:

- [Anna Freud Organisation Well-being Measures Guidance](#)

## **The Core (Child Outcome Research Consortium)**

The Core (Child Outcome Research Consortium) group website has a range of other assessment measures which practitioners may find useful.

- <https://www.corc.uk.net/outcome-experience-measures/>

## **Autism Education Trust (AET)**

Pupil Progression tool - Autism Education Trust (AET 2017) (teacher views).

[Progression Framework Resource | Autism Education Trust](#)

## **ASD checklist measures and resource**

Autism from Diagnostic pathway to Intervention: Checklists to support diagnosis, analysis for target setting and effective intervention strategies by Kate Ripley published by Jessica Kingsley, such as learning style (teacher views) and Landscape of Fear tools (pupils views).

## **Sensory Profile Checklist**

- [Support your child's sensory processing needs | Mid Yorks](#)

# Appendix 4: Resources for Action Planning

## 4.1 Template to help formulate a hypothesis



### Attendance Difficulties Formulation Template

#### Assessment of school attendance difficulties should aim to:

1. analyse the nature and severity of the difficulty (*what* is happening?)
2. consider what factors are contributing to and maintaining the difficulties (*why* is it happening?)
3. formulate a hypothesis to inform intervention – USE THIS TEMPLATE TO SUMMARISE THE ASSESSMENT INFORMATION AND FORMULATE A HYPOTHESES ABOUT THE PUPIL'S ATTENDANCE DIFFICULTIES

<b>Name:</b>	<b>School:</b>	<b>School staff &amp; other agencies involved:</b>
<b>Year group:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Brief description of current behaviour (the attendance difficulties)</b>		
<b>Concerns &amp; Risk factors – School, Pupil, Family</b>		
<b>Strengths &amp; Protected factors – School, Pupil, Family</b>		
<b>Formulation/Hypothesis (integrate the assessment information to summarise/explain the 'problem')</b>		
Main function(s) of non-attendance? What are the maintaining factors (why is the problem ongoing)?		

Use the information summarised here to set 'SMART' outcomes and plan relevant intervention/support strategies for the pupil (jointly with parents) – write these down on an 'ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PLAN'

## 4.2 Example Formulation Template

### EBSA Formulation Template

#### Assessment of school attendance difficulties should aim to:

4. analyse the nature and severity of the difficulty (*what* is happening?)
5. consider what factors are contributing to and maintaining the difficulties (*why* is it happening?)
6. formulate a hypothesis to inform intervention – USE THIS TEMPLATE TO SUMMARISE THE ASSESSMENT INFORMATION AND FORMULATE A HYPOTHESES ABOUT THE PUPIL'S ATTENDANCE DIFFICULTIES

<b>Name:</b> Pupil	<b>School:</b> Primary Setting	<b>School staff &amp; other agencies involved:</b>  SENCO
<b>Year group:</b> 3	<b>Date:</b>	

#### **Brief description of current behaviour (attendance difficulties)**

Pupil has not attended school since February 2023. School staff, mum and grandad are working collaboratively to facilitate his reintegration back into school. Mum is supportive of her son's reintegration back to school.

Pupil has had involvement from EPS since November 2022. This has resulted in statutory assessment (June 2023). This work has identified that pupil experiences difficulties with social interactions, has sensory sensitivities and physical issues (hyper mobility).

No difficulties with cognition and learning have been identified at this time. It is likely that once he has reintegrated, the school staff will need to identify learning gaps to ensure that these are revisited.

#### **Concerns & Risk factors – School, Pupil, Family**

- Sensory sensitivities
- Recent ASC diagnosis
- Hypermobility
- Masking his difficulties - Dealing with sensory overload & sensitivity which leaves him fatigued
- Difficulties understanding & expressing emotions
- Separation anxiety
- Low motivation to attend school – not attended fully since February 2023
- Pupil's non-attendance will have affected attainment and created gaps in his learning.
- Limited friendships
- Pupil does not feel that he has anyone interested in him at home or at school.
- Pupil does not like break/ lunchtimes – noise
- Perfectionist tendencies – fears not meeting impossible standards and unattainable goals
- Family dynamics – older brother with ASC and aggressive tendencies.

### **Strengths & Protected factors – School, Pupil, Family**

Good relationship with mum and grandad

- Loves family dog
- Friendships with two key peers
- Likes learning - with specific interests in art, geography, animals, languages, maths, music
- Building a positive relationship with SENDCO

### **Formulation/Hypothesis (integrate the assessment information to summarise/explain the 'problem')**

Pupil's barriers to attendance are anxiety based, both in terms of within-school stimuli and being apart from main caregiver, caused by ASC-related needs (e.g. emotional regulation, rigid thinking, sensory differences).

#### **Main function(s) of non-attendance?**

1. *To avoid something or situations that elicit negative feelings or high levels of stress or anxiety*
  - Difficulties at break time, noise during lunch, and likes to know what is going on during the day.
2. *To get attention from or spend more time with significant others at home*
  - spending more time with mum

#### **What are the maintaining factors (why is the problem ongoing)?**

The information shared by the pupil reflects the anxiety maintenance cycle. He feels that he is losing connection with his friends and is now worried about his schoolwork because of long school absence. These thoughts have led to increased anxiety about school attendance which combined with engaging in pleasurable activities at home have decreased his motivation to attend school.

Use the information summarised here to set 'SMART' outcomes and plan relevant intervention/support strategies for the pupil (jointly with parents) – write these down on an 'ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PLAN'

### 4.3 Attendance Support Plan



#### Attendance Support Plan

<b>Name:</b>	<b>School:</b>	<b>Start date:</b>	<b>Review date:</b>
<b>Year group:</b>	<b>Contributors:</b>		
<b>Key adults in school (and their roles):</b>		<b>Safe place in school:</b>	
<b>Communication between school and home:</b>			

<b>Current situation What's working/not working?</b>	<b>Next step (SMART)</b>	<b>Strategies – who/what/when?</b>

## 4.4 Example Attendance Support Plan

<b>Name:</b> Poppy Smith	<b>School:</b> Wakefield Secondary	<b>Start date:</b> 1.10.22	<b>Review date:</b> 21.10.22 at 3pm
<b>Year group:</b> 8	<b>Contributors:</b> Poppy, parents, Head of Year, school link EP		

<p><b>Key adults in school (and their roles):</b></p> <p>HOY – coordination of plan, review with parents, sharing information with colleagues/agencies.</p> <p>Mentor – Poppy can seek her out for conversation and emotional support if needed in school</p> <p>KS3 admin assistant – always available in KS3 office &amp; for ‘meet and greet’ in reception.</p>	<p><b>Safe place in school:</b> Rainbow room Key adult in here = Mrs Jones</p> <p>Poppy can access rainbow room any time during the school day, if she feels she needs a quieter environment. She can do work or a relaxation activity.</p>
<p><b>Communication between school and home:</b> KS3 admin assistant is available by telephone any time for daily concerns/info share. Parents can email HOY with more general issues and they will meet to formally review this plan every two weeks.</p>	




**Outcome:** For Poppy to be able to attend school every day so that she can engage in school life and make progress across the curriculum.

Current situation What's working/not working?	Next step (SMART outcome)	Strategies – who/what/when?
<p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>Approx. 3 days per week attended last half term. Sporadic since middle of Year7.</p> <p>Mon/Fri seem most difficult.</p> <p>Morning ‘meet and greet’ at 10am successful a few times recently.</p>	<p><i>For the three weeks Poppy will come to school for ‘meet and greet’ at 9.30am and she will go home at 12.30am (at least 3 times per week).</i></p> <p><i>Poppy will have 10 minutes of ‘talk time’ at the start of her school day with a key adult (KS3 admin) who will then accompany her to classroom for p2 lesson.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poppy will not go to PE or French lessons for this half term (work in rainbow room at these times).</li> <li>• She can sit with a friend in lessons.</li> <li>• Subject teachers will not ask Poppy to read out loud or answer questions in front of the class. Also please don't comment on her school absence at all and ensure she is not disadvantaged academically by having missed work.</li> <li>• Online learning available for work in the afternoons at home.</li> </ul>



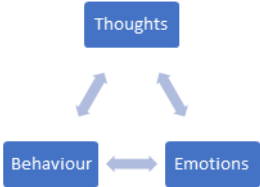
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'time out' pass to leave lesson without question if needed (and go to rainbow room or KS3 office)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Routines at home</b></p> <p>Poppy struggles to get ready in the mornings. Poor sense of time plus anxiety about school.</p> <p>Difficulty getting to sleep most nights.</p>	<p><i>Write down a school morning plan and display it at home EG:</i></p> <p><i>Wake up 7.30am. Shower and get dressed. 8.15am breakfast. Check bag. 9am in car</i></p> <p><i>Wear uniform and work at kitchen table until 3pm when not able to be in school.</i></p>	<p>Distraction techniques e.g. listen to music whilst getting dressed, have a conversation with parents over breakfast.</p> <p>Have broadly consistent bedtime. Warm bath and dry hair before. Screen time to end 90 minutes before sleep. Reading/colouring/audiobook/calm music.</p>
<p><b>Emotional wellbeing</b></p> <p>Poppy usually avoids thinking about her anxiety and about problems generally.</p> <p>She has contact with friends over phone but is not going out-and-about.</p> <p>Not getting any exercise currently.</p> <p>Doesn't always take care of her appearance.</p>	<p><i>Poppy and her mum will try an activity of her choice from the 'Mindful Kids' pack (at least one per day) – Poppy to let her key adult in school know which ones she finds helpful.</i></p> <p><i>Poppy will have 15 minutes of exercise, either walking, playing on her tramline or riding her bike each day.</i></p>	<p>Parental support with developing emotional awareness, vocabulary and self-management techniques.</p> <p>Help with meeting up with friends – invite someone over to the house for dinner?</p> <p>Encouragement/praise for exercise and self-care generally. Consider 'rewarding' with logical items e.g. new trainers or hairbrush.</p>

**My Attendance Support Plan**

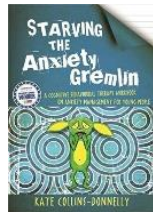
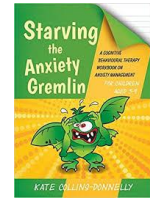
<p><b>Name:</b></p>	<p><b>My plan will be reviewed on</b> (date) <b>by</b> (who)</p>
<p><b>My key adults:</b></p> <p>I can get help by....</p>	<p><b>My safe place:</b></p> <p>I can go to this place by...</p>
<p><b>What I’m finding difficult at the moment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>	
<p><b>My next steps are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>	
<p><b>To help me...</b></p> <p><b>My teachers will:</b></p> <p><b>My family will:</b></p> <p><b>I will:</b></p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>	
<p><b>Other changes in school (e.g. timetable, lunchtimes):</b></p>	

## Appendix 5 Information on strategies

### 5.1 Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) Approaches

<p><b>What is CBT?</b></p>	<p>CBT looks at the relationship and interaction between our thoughts (cognition), our feelings (emotions) and our actions (behaviours). Specifically, our thoughts determine our feelings and our behaviour. Unhelpful or unrealistic thoughts can cause us distress and problems.</p>  <pre> graph TD     Thoughts[Thoughts] --&gt; Emotions[Emotions]     Thoughts --&gt; Behaviour[Behaviour]     Emotions &lt;--&gt; Behaviour     </pre>
<p><b>Key Concepts</b></p>	<p>The CYP is encouraged to focus on the problems they are experiencing, consider why the problems are occurring and explore strategies to help address these. The CYP takes an active role in solving their problems.</p> <p>Within CBT, thought patterns are believed to form the basis of behaviours, so the CYP is supported to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unhelpful (negative, unrealistic) thoughts</li> <li>• unhelpful behaviour patterns</li> <li>• the links between their thoughts and behaviour</li> <li>• ways to challenge their negative thoughts and behaviour</li> </ul>
<p><b>What does the research say?</b></p>	<p>CBT has a robust evidence base (Hofmann et al, 2012) and has proven to be an effective form of intervention for use with CYP in schools (Stallard, 2005, Werner-Seidler et al, 2017).</p> <p>Typical difficulties that can be supported through CBT-based approaches include: emotional regulation difficulties, social relationships and barriers to learning (NICE, 2013). The time limited, goal-orientated and flexible nature of CBT is well suited for use within educational settings (Mennuti et al, 2012).</p> <p><i>References as cited in the Solihull guide.</i></p>
<p><b>Examples of interventions using CBT principles</b></p>	<p><b>Starving the Anxiety Gremlin</b></p> <p>Kate Collins-Donnelly has written two books that can be worked through by children and young people. Activities involve puzzles, stories, quizzes along with writing and drawing activities. Chapters and activities can be ‘dipped into’ and relevant pages may be photocopied.</p> <p><a href="https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/products/children-and-anxiety/starving-anxiety-gremlin/">https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/products/children-and-anxiety/starving-anxiety-gremlin/</a></p>

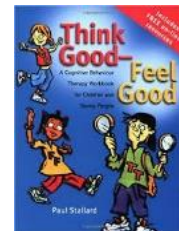
Starving the Anxiety Gremlin: A Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Workbook on Anxiety Management for Young People and



Starving the Anxiety Gremlin for Children Aged 5-9: A Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Workbook on Anxiety Management.

### **Think Good, Feel Good A Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Workbook for Children and Young People**

Paul Stallard has written a practical resource in print and online with a range of activities and worksheets. The book contains 10 modules that can be worked through complete programme or sections can be adapted for individual use.



as a

### **FRIENDS For Life, Fun FRIENDS and My FRIENDS Youth**



FRIENDS For Life, Fun FRIENDS and My FRIENDS Youth are school-based anxiety prevention and resilience building programmes developed by Dr Paula Barrett in Australia. FRIENDS is an acronym for the skills taught throughout the programme:

**F** Feelings

**R** Remember to Relax -have quiet time.

**I** can do it! I can try (Inner helpful thoughts)

**E** Explore Solutions and Coping Step Plans.

**N** Now reward yourself! You've done your best!

**D** Don't forget to practice.

**S** Smile! Stay calm, Stay Strong and talk to your support networks!


### **Additional**

CBT information and worksheets can be accessed for free at <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheets/cbt/none>

## 5.2 Gradual exposure and desensitisation techniques

<p><b><i>What is gradual exposure?</i></b></p>	<p>Gradual exposure involves gradually facing your fears and worries by gradually putting yourself into situations that you would normally avoid because of your anxiety. This can be done by creating an exposure ladder or anxiety/avoidance hierarchy. Gradual exposure can form part of a CBT approach.</p>
<p><b><i>Key Concepts</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This approach is based on the belief that the more we do something that we are afraid of or are exposed to something that we are afraid of, the less afraid we tend to be and the easier it becomes to be in that situation.</li> <li>• The goal of exposure is to gradually expose ourselves to whatever it is that we are avoiding, which helps us reduce the anxiety.</li> <li>• We are more likely to reach our goals if we don't avoid, but by doing the exposure exercises the anxiety can actually become less, so we feel better.</li> <li>• Desensitization: We can make our brain less sensitive to certain anxiety triggers through experience and over time.</li> </ul> <p>Exposure and desensitization are just one set of skills used in CBT. It works best when we know what triggers our anxiety and are aware of avoidance and safety behaviours that we use when anxiety presents itself.</p>
<p><b><i>What does it involve?</i></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draw a ladder.</li> <li>2. On the top rung of the ladder, write the final step that you want to achieve. This will differ depending on the child, it may be a full week in school, a day, a full lesson or going into the lunch hall.</li> <li>3. On the bottom rung of the ladder, write the first thing you want to do to face your anxiety. This needs to be an action that is currently in reach.</li> <li>4. Put other steps on the rungs, gradually building up to reach the top rung.</li> <li>5. Ensure steps are small and achievable.</li> <li>6. Start to carry out the action on the first step.</li> <li>7. Measure your anxiety on a scale of 1 -10 or 1 -100, with 10 or 100 being the most anxiety-provoking situation.</li> <li>8. Move on to the next rung when you feel ready.</li> <li>9. Reward yourself for achieving each step.</li> <li>10. If one step seems unachievable, think about how you could break it down further and smaller, more manageable steps.</li> </ol>

It is important to work with the young person to think about what **coping technique** (e.g. thinking, grounding, relaxation, distraction) they will use as they work through the rungs on the ladder and what **support** will be in place for them within school.

	Situation	Anxiety (0-10)
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- [DOWNLOAD: Anxiety Exposure Ladder - Dr Pooky Knightsmith](#)

### 5.3 Solution Focused Approaches

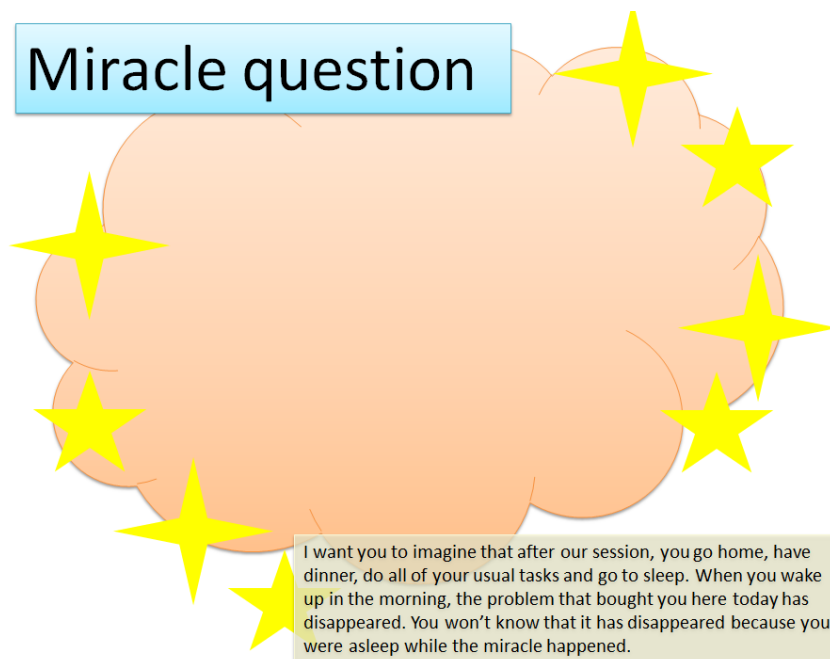
<p><b>What is a solution focused approach?</b></p>	<p>Solution focused interventions are strength based, and person-centred approaches. They replace the focus from problems and the past to building positive solutions and making progress. The pupil is supported to focus on and define a preferred future, share best hopes and consider strengths and what is going well.</p> <p>During a situation that can feel overwhelming for a pupil, a solution focused approach can help bring about a shift in the pupil's thinking, in which they are able to see a more positive future and recognise how they can use their own resources to move in the right direction.</p>
<p><b>Key Concepts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View the CYP as the expert in their life.</li> <li>• Progress and future focused.</li> <li>• Pupils are supported to draw upon their own skills, strategies and ideas.</li> <li>• Recognise that there are always exceptions to the problem, for example when the problem is not happening, it occurs less or has less of an impact on the pupil.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples of interventions using a solution focused approach</b></p>	<p>The Miracle Question is an example of a creative solution focused intervention that uses a goal setting question to help focus on the possibilities (see below for more details).</p> <p>The adult/mentor asks the pupil to imagine an ideal future and then asks questions to connect it to the present. See the following page for suggested script and guidance for The Miracle Question.</p> <p>A range of solution focused tools including Time Machine and Changing the Channel can be found in this booklet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2015/solution-focused-practice-toolkit">https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2015/solution-focused-practice-toolkit</a></li> </ul>

## The 'Miracle Question' Technique

I want you to imagine that after our session, you go home, have dinner, do all of your usual tasks and go to sleep. When you wake up in the morning, the problem that brought you here today has disappeared. You won't know that it has disappeared because you were asleep while the miracle happened.

When you wake up the next morning, how are you going to start discovering that the miracle happened? ... What else are you going to notice? What will you see/hear? How will you feel? How will you act? What will be different?

What will you be doing that is different? How will you respond when x happens?



## Scaling

Once the miracle day has been explored, the mentor can then begin to ask scaling questions.

0

10

On a scale where 0 is the worst things have ever been, and 10 is this miracle day, where are you now?

Where would it need to be for you to know that the problem has gone away?

What will be the first things that will let you know you are 1 point higher.

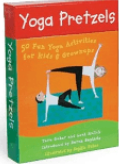


The mentor can then ask: what would be stopping you from moving one point down the scale? What would make you move one point up the scale? Where would be good enough? What would this day look like?








## 5.4 Anxiety Management

### Relaxation and Distraction exercises

There are lots of different exercises and strategies that can help people to relax, either as part of their daily routine or when they notice they are starting to feel anxious. Here are just a few for you to explore. The young person may need support in trying out a range of techniques to find what works best for them.

<p><b>Yoga</b></p>	<p>Some CYP find yoga helpful in helping them to relax. Cosmic Kids yoga has many videos suitable for younger children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga">https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga</a></li> </ul> 
<p><b>Breathing exercises</b></p>	<p>There are many different breathing exercises to try, including 5 finger breathing, star breathing, box and belly breathing. Below are some examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original, Full Belly Breathing - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaB_6LOIOLw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaB_6LOIOLw</a></li> <li>• Three-Part Breath - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrTW5MhWuvI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrTW5MhWuvI</a></li> <li>• Alternate Nostril Breathing - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Me4MC0zusiQ&amp;t=14s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Me4MC0zusiQ&amp;t=14s</a></li> <li>• Extended exhalation - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7jxstPKQXw&amp;t=97s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7jxstPKQXw&amp;t=97s</a></li> </ul> 
<p><b>Grounding exercises</b></p>	<p>Grounding exercises can be helpful during anxiety or a panic attack by helping to ground the person in the present.</p> <p><b>The 5-4-3-2-1 exercise</b></p> <p>Try the 5-4-3-2-1 exercise with the CYP. They name 5 things they can see, 4 things they can touch, 3 things they can hear, 2 things they can smell and one thing they can taste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://youtu.be/9Y9t65JDJhl">https://youtu.be/9Y9t65JDJhl</a></li> </ul> 
<p><b>Mindfulness exercises</b></p>	<p>Research has shown that mindfulness can help to reduce anxiety. Techniques include the Body scan: Sit or Lie down somewhere comfortable, close your eyes, tightly squeeze every muscle in your body, squish your toes and feet, fingers and hands, after a few minutes release all your muscles and relax.</p> <p>Suggested websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.smilingmind.com.au/mindfulness">https://www.smilingmind.com.au/mindfulness</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUgSqj3itBTJMjC6SvqjByA">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUgSqj3itBTJMjC6SvqjByA</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.headspace.com/meditation/kids">https://www.headspace.com/meditation/kids</a> (also available as an app)</li> </ul>

<b>Visualisation exercises</b>	<p>Visualisation is another powerful technique that can help people unwind and relieve stress. Visualisation uses mental imagery to reach a more relaxed state of mind.</p> <p><b>Support the child to imagine:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A funny image</li> <li>• A happy place</li> <li>• A calming place</li> <li>• Throwing their worries away</li> </ul>	
<b>Do what you enjoy!</b>	<p>Doing the activities that we enjoy can help us relax so it may be useful to support the child to identify these and help them to find ways to incorporate them into their day.</p>	

<b>Other useful Anxiety Management tools</b>		
<b>Worry Time</b>	<p>Worry time is a set time in the day where a pupil can focus on their worries either by themselves through drawing or writing, or with another person through talking. Having a fixed and limited time to concentrate on your worries can help reduce the amount of time you spend thinking about them. In this time, the pupil should identify what is worrying them and what they can do to address the worry.</p>	
<b>Worry Monster</b>	<p>Some children may find a worry monster helpful. They can write/draw their worries or tell an adult who writes them down and then the child can feed their worries to the worry monster's mouth. Worry monsters can be bought or easily made out of a cardboard box and some craft materials.</p>	
<b>Journaling</b>	<p>Journaling or keeping an anxiety diary can support the pupil in working through anxious feelings.</p>	
<b>Talking</b>	<p>Talking to other people can help to manage anxiety as it provides an opportunity to express feelings, challenge thinking and problem solve. It can be helpful for the pupil to identify who they can talk to about their worries.</p>	
<b>Books about anxiety</b>	<p>Books can be a useful tool in helping pupils and adults to understand more about their anxiety.</p>	
<b>Social Scripts</b>	<p>Working with the CYP to plan what they are going to say to their peers if they are asked about their absence can be helpful for some CYP and alleviate some worries.</p>	

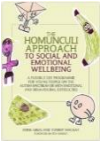
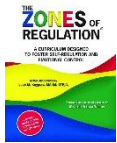
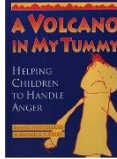
## 5 point scale

The 5 point scale can be used as a way of supporting CYP understand and manage overwhelming feelings. It can be used with CYP of all ages. Beginning with an exploration of emotions, then the CYP can use the scale to describe how are feeling, and what these feelings may look or sound like. With the mentor, they can explore situations that may make them feel this way and then move to identifying coping strategies that will reduce these overwhelming or difficult emotions. The scales that the CYP makes can be used as a communication tool e.g. making into a keyring or using different coloured cards or bracelets to let adults know that they feel a certain way. There are free downloadable resources available on the website below.



- <https://www.5pointscale.com/>

## 5.5 Tools to support social and emotional needs for CYP with Autism

<b>Social and Emotional Tools to Support Pupils with Autism</b>	
<b>The Homunculi Approach</b>	<p>The Homunculi Approach is a CBT Programme that seeks to build social and emotional resilience in pupils. The Homunculi are miniature agents with problem-solving missions and special gadgets who live inside the brain and help out with distressing thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Through inventing their own Homunculi characters and stories, pupils learn to cope with their real-life social problems.</p> 
<b>Social Stories and Comic Strips</b>	<p>Social stories are short descriptions of a particular situation, event or activity, which include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why. They present information in a literal way, which may improve a CYP's understanding of a previously difficult or ambiguous situation or activity.</p> <p>Comic Strip Conversations are simple visual representations of conversation. They can show the things that are actually said in a conversation, how people might be feeling and what people's intentions might be. By seeing the different elements of a conversation presented visually, some of the more abstract aspects of social communication (such as recognising the feelings of others) are made more 'concrete' and are therefore easier to understand.</p> <p>Please see the following link for examples: <a href="http://autism.org.uk">Social stories and comic strip conversations (autism.org.uk)</a>.</p>
<b>The Zones of Regulation</b>	<p>Zones of Regulation is a complete social-emotional learning curriculum developed by Leah Kuypers, created to teach CYP self-regulation and emotional control.</p> 
<b>A Volcano in My Tummy</b>	<p>A Volcano in My Tummy is a clear and effective approach to helping CYP understand and deal constructively with their anger, developed by Eliane Whitehouse and Warwick Pudney.</p> 
<b>Starving the Anxiety Gremlin</b>	<p>Starving the Anxiety Gremlin is a workbook that uses fun and engaging activities based on cognitive behavioural principles that link thoughts, feelings and behaviours. The techniques described help CYP to understand why they get anxious and how they can 'starve' their anxiety gremlin, in order to manage their anxiety, developed by Kate Collins-Donnelly.</p>