DSPL9 Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9

Emotional Based School Absence Support Package Guidance

Academic year 2026-27

September 2026

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Introduction

In November 2022, the DSPL 9 SEND Review Group made a decision to focus on EBSA for the academic year. This had been identified as a local and national priority and at this point work, knowledge and support was in the process of being considered and developed. Through discussions, meetings and a working party comprising of a range of stakeholders the DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package was created. The concept behind the support package was to enable schools to identify and respond to needs through a tiered support approach from early identification (tier 1) to a triangulated approach to support the child, the family and the school (tier 4). Since the initial pilot which launched in January 2023, DSPL 9 has continued to commission SWHP and Nessie to provide a quality EBSA support service across the local area.

This document and support package is available to all mainstream primary and secondary aged children and young people who are experiencing Emotional Based School Absence (EBSA). West Sussex County Council (2022) state *that Emotional Based School Absence (EBSA) is a broad umbrella term used to describe a group of children and young people who have severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors, often resulting in prolonged absences from school. The impact of EBSA on young people and schools is far reaching. Outcomes for young people who display EBSA include poor academic attainment, reduced social opportunities and limited employment opportunities. EBSA is also associated with poor adult mental health.* It has been updated to reflect the support available at a national and local level to ensure that SENCos, schools and parents have access to a range of support when considering how they meet the needs of CYP experiencing EBSA.

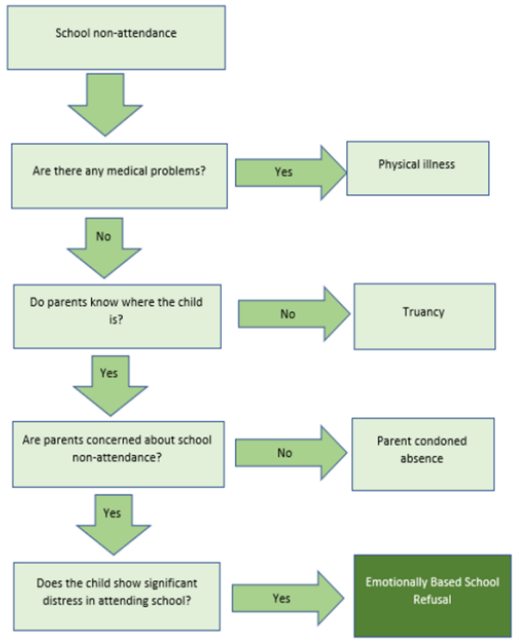
What is EBSA?



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzxmeVRTjwU&t=3s

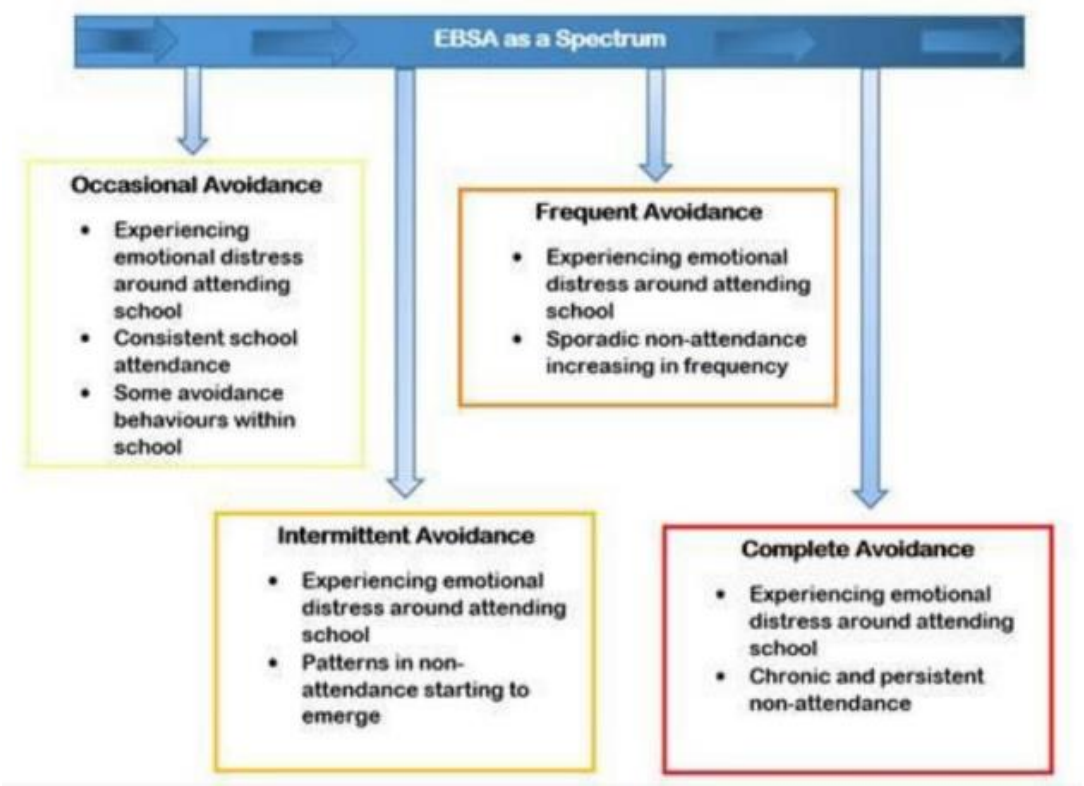
The above clip provides an overview as to what EBSA, how it can be identified, and provides some ideas for supporting.

When considering if a child is experiencing EBSA, please use the flowchart below to support you.



[1] Flowchart taken from Thambirajah, M.S., Grandison, K. and De-Hayes, L. (2008) *Understanding School Refusal: A handbook for professionals in Education, Health and Social Care*. London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

The Anna Freud National Children and Families Centre recognises EBSA as a spectrum and this guidance uses the terms identified below:



Thank you to the following schools and services for supporting the development of this document and guidance:

- All members of the DSPL 9 SEND Review Group
- Laurance Haines for hosting working party meetings
- DSPL 9 Triage Service
- SWHP (South West Herts Partnership)
- Nessie
- Herts Educational Psychology Service

EBSA Support Package Criteria

Need		
Criteria	**Tier 3 (Occasional, Intermittent Avoidance)**	**Tier 4 (Intermittent or Frequent Avoidance)**
MUST HAVE: Attendance between 50 and 90% **OR** On a part time timetable **OR** Attending school but not the full curriculum	X	X
Anxiety around school	X	X
In addition to the above MUSTS, the CYP will need to identify with at least two of the risk factors below to be eligible to access support		
Structure of the school day	X	X
Peer/staff relationship difficulties	X	X
Academic demand	X	X
Social and emotional factors	X	X
Neurodiversity	X	X
Bullying	X	X
Specific subject difficulties	X	X
Provision		
Criteria	**Tier 3 (Occasional, Intermittent Avoidance)**	**Tier 4 (Intermittent or Frequent Avoidance)**
Evidence of implementation of whole school EBSA support (tier 1)	X	X
Evidence of pupil voice (school refusal assessment scale/EBSNA Framework questionnaire)	X	X
Evidence of APDR cycle/NESSie EBSA toolkit and review (at least one and half to identity impact) (tier 2)	X	X
Evidence of reduced timetable (if appropriate)	X	X
Evidence of collaborative working with parents	X	X
Evidence of attendance and impact of solution circles (tier 3)		**X**
Completion (including scoring) of an SDQ		**X**

This package of support is available for those CYP experiencing occasional, intermittent or frequent avoidance. It is an early intervention tool to enable schools, parents and CYP to work collaboratively. It is not suitable for CYP experiencing complete avoidance. At this point the EBSA needs are beyond the support that can be provided within the package. Please refer to the following services for further support:
DSPL 9 Triage Service: https://www.dspl9.uk/page/?title=DSPL9+Triage+Service&pid=27
CAMHS: https://www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk/#
PALMS: https://www.hct.nhs.uk/service-details/service/positive-behaviour-autism-learning-disability-and-mental-health-service-palms-50/
Access to this package will not be available to CYP where the following services are already involved:

SWHP (Family Support Worker)	Chessbrook
DSPL 9 Primary Behaviour Partnership/Acorn Centre	CAMHS
Children's Service (CIN, CP)	Any ongoing therapeutic support

Model of support

Tier 1: Universal Support (Occasional Avoidance)

Whole school approach to EBSA:

Staff and parents access training, workshops and guidance produced by EP service.

Monitoring of attendance at 90% and below with EBSA

Initial conversation to explore attendance: staff/parents/CYP

Tier 2: Universal Plus Support (Occasional or Intermittent Avoidance)

Individual support at a school level:

Assessment of CYP using resources and guidance from EP EBSA documentation.

Development of personalised and holistic action plan

Regular review of plan to measure progress and impact of support.

DSPL 9 parent/carer support: coffee mornings/school based face to face parent support sessions

Tier 3: Targeted Support (Occasional, Intermittent or Frequent Avoidance)

Following initial conversations and the implementation of an action plan, school colleagues can book onto EBSA Solution Circles to further explore support, strategies and resources:

Prior Information form to be completed with parental agreement.

Each session will last for one and a half hours and have a primary or secondary focus. The solution circle will enable 2 school colleagues to present their case and gather feedback and support from those in attendance.

DSPL 9 Manager

DSPL 9 SISO

SWHP Family Worker

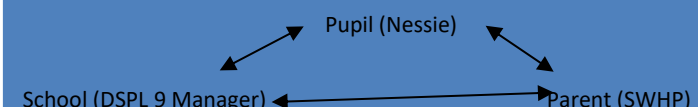
Nessie Lead Therapist

School representative x 3

Tier 4: Specialist Support (Intermittent or Frequent Avoidance)

Following access and use of the above tiers, SENCo can refers pupils and their parents to access a 12 week 1:1 triangulated response.

Referral form to be completed with parental agreement.



Please note: Consent must be provided prior to this support being accessed.

Whole school approach to EBSA

All schools are responsible for supporting EBSA within their schools through the following channels:

- Clear systems in place for the early identification of attendance difficulties (monitoring attendance at 94% or below, a persistent absentee is a CYP who has 90% or less attendance)
- Clear systems in place for reduced timetables including completion of all relevant documentation from the guidance document. This must include evidence of regular reviews and a plan to increase the child's attendance developed in collaboration with parents. All documents in relation to this can be found here.
- An identified member of the SLT to lead on and co-ordinate responses and support
- Accessing Educational Psychologist Service guidance and resources
- Having initial conversations with staff/pupils/parents
- Robust transition plans in place for those CYP

Individual schools across Hertfordshire have access to the Education Psychology Service resources which were produced and circulated in 2021

Guidance for Parents: Emotionally Based School Avoidance

Guidance for Schools: Emotionally Based School Avoidance: Executive Summary

In addition to the above information, the following resources are also available:

Herts Local Offer
If your child is too anxious to go to school

Just Talk
Not attending school or college due to anxiety (EBSNA)

Virtual Schools Attachment and Trauma Toolkit
Slides and information to share with your school community.

Anna Freud: Addressing Emotionally Based School Avoidance

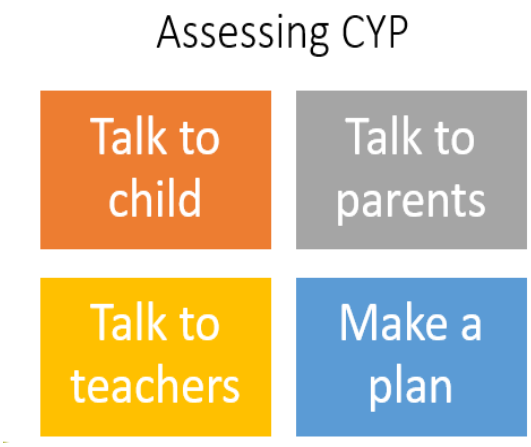
Children's Wellbeing Practitioners Service:
School Avoidance/Anxiety Recorded Webinars
Part 1 and part 2 of the training is available following the link above. Resources can also be found on the website.

Support for parents:
Nessie
Nessie is commissioned by HCC to deliver workshops and support for parents/carers. The support incudes workshops, a parent support line 1:1 targeted support sessions and drop in and chat coffee morning.

The Children's Wellbeing Practitioners service delivers free online emotional wellbeing workshops, without referral throughout the year for parents/carers and young people which are bookable via Eventbrite:

• Child emotional wellbeing & regulation	• Emotional wellbeing for adolescents
• Child sleep difficulties	• Adolescent sleep difficulties
• Child self-esteem	• Adolescent self-esteem
• School Transitions	• Exam stress

Tier 2: Universal Plus Support
Individual support at a school level



It is the schools responsibility and in particular the role of the SENCo/Pastoral Lead to ensure that they follow EP EBSA guidance (detailed below) and work in collaboration with parents to ensure:

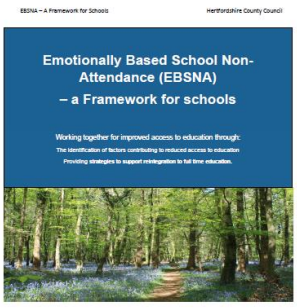
- Assessment of CYP using resources is completed
- Development of personalised and holistic action plan created
- Regular review of plan take place to measure progress and impact of support

DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package Webinars

To launch another successful year of the DSPL 9 EBSA Support, there will be two webinars to allow colleagues to be aware for he support that is on offer across all tiers and how they can be accessed. The webinars will provided on Monday 21st September at 9.30-10.30 AND 1-2pm with attendance only needed at one of the sessions.
To access further information (including the teams link) click here

Whole School EBSA Audit

- In order to gauge and reflect upon the EBSA support that is provided, it is recommended that schools complete a whole school EBSA audit. As with all auditing tools, this enables schools to celebrate the support that is working well and reflect upon areas that could be strengthened and developed.
- The resources listed within this section of the guidance may support school in strengthening areas within their EBSA provision.



HCC EBSA Framework for School: Working together for improved access to education

The framework is most suitable for school-aged students from 5-16 years, although may also be useful for children in their Reception Year and for those in years 12 and 13.

- It is likely to be most effective if it is used as an early intervention strategy when the student has been experiencing difficulties being in school over a period of one term or if there are concerns about rapid deterioration them coming into school.
- The tool consists of three questionnaires (parents, CYP and school) which once completed form the basis of conversations and targeted action planning.
- Click here to access this tool.

Assessments

Assessing the CYP to learn more about their EBSA can take a variety of different shapes and forms depending on a range of factors. The purpose of the assessment is to identify specific needs that can be addressed through the implementation of an APDR cycle.

- The following suggestions may also be used:
  - RAG rating/traffic lighting the school day/timetable
  - Good day/bad day (available here)
  - School wellbeing cards: Risk and Resilience card set: www.schoolwellbeingcards.co.uk
  - Therapeutic Thinking tools and resources
  - Regular check-ins
  - Protective Behaviours

Within the HCC EBSNA Framework for School, there are useful documents to support you with organising meetings with parents and a framework for gathering information:

- Top tips for running and effective meetings with parents/carers (pg39-42)

Development of APDR plan/cycle

Following all the above actions, it is the responsibility of the school SENCo/Pastoral Lead, in collaboration with the CYP and parent, to undertake an APDR cycle agreeing actions, targets and a review date. To support in the consideration of strategies and tools to support EBSA please consider the strategies provided through the HCC EBSNA Framework for School pages 19-38.



Tier 2 Resource List

In addition to the information above, the DSPL 9 EBSA Team have also collated a range of resources which school can use to support when considering the specific EBSA needs of the child and exploring early triggers and support:

	Appendices
Nessie EBSA Toolkit	Use link to access tool
School Stress Survey	Appendix 10
Ladder Activity	Appendix 11
Sorting Activity	Appendix 12
School Refusal Assessment Scale (parent)	Access tool here
School Refusal Assessment (child)	Access tool here
Survival in School PowerPoint	Access PowerPoint here
Survival in secondary school PowerPoint	Access PowerPoints here

Tier 2: Universal Plus Support
Parent/carer monthly EBSA Support Groups

DSPL 9 offers support to parents and carers of children and young people who are experiencing EBSA. This support is provided on a half termly basis in the form of coffee mornings and consultations.

Face to face coffee mornings:

The purpose of these meetings will be to:

- Provide a safe space for parents/carers to share experiences with local parents/carers in similar situations.
- Provide an opportunity for parents/carers to speak to services about their experiences and seek support, signposting, strategies and resources.

Flyers with all the information will be circulated amongst schools, settings and local organisations for each of the sessions. Please promote this group and share the details with any parent who would benefit from attending the groups. Please contact admin@dsplarea9.org.uk if you would like to attend any of the sessions.

	Date	Time	Venue
Autumn Term	19.10.26	10-11.30am	ASDA
Spring Term	25.01.27	10-11.30am	The Green Room, Bournehall
Summer Term	26.04.27	10-11.30am	Otley Way

Summer Term Transition Coffee Morning

A dedicated coffee morning to support parents of children experiencing EBSA as they transition to their new year group or secondary school.

Monday 5th July
10-11.30am
ASDA community centre

Face to face EBSA parent drop ins

Schools can book a session for the DSPL 9 Manager and the Family Support Worker to visit the school and provide advice and signposting for parents of children experiencing EBSA. Schools will be allocated up to a 1 hour slot which will enable 2 parents to attend each for 30 minutes.

Autumn Tem 2026	Monday 12th October 2026	11.30am-12.30pm 1-2pm	Please book your date and time using this link
	Monday 30th November 2026	11.30am-12.30pm 1-2pm	
Spring Term 2027	Monday 1st February 2027	11.30am-12.30pm 1-2pm	
	Monday 15th March 2027	11.30am-12.30pm 1-2pm	
Summer Term 2027	Monday 10th May 2027	11.30am-12.30pm 1-2pm	
	Monday 21st June 2027	11.30am-12.30pm 1-2pm	

What is NESSie?
NESSie is a Hertfordshire based organisation that support the positive mental health of children and young people.

NESSie provides easy access to arts therapies, counselling, support and training so that children, young people and their families can thrive. We provide support through partnering with local schools, county councils and community organisations within Hertfordshire and the surrounding counties. Parents can also reach out to us directly.

Together our therapists have over 200 years of experience. We welcome diversity and have specialist trauma, ASC and LGBTQ+ therapists within our team. We have excellent feedback from organisations and parents and a long history of working relationships with local statutory and community partners.

To find out more click here.

What is SWHP?
South West Herts Partnership is a family focussed/needs-led partnership working alongside children and their families to ensure access to a wide range of early support with a non-judgemental friendly approach. Our ethos is underpinned by principles of choice, flexibility and respect.

To find out more click here.

Tier 3: Targeted Support
EBSA Insight and Solution Circles

EBSA insight and solution circles will be managed and chaired by the DSPL 9 manager to ensure consistency across the meetings. Insights and solution circles will take place twice per each half term (see dates below). The purpose of the meetings will be to provide additional support and continued professional development for SENCos and Pastoral Leads through group discussions and formulation of next steps.

PLEASE NOTE: It may not necessarily be the SENCo that is best fit to attend these meetings. Should you as a school feel it more beneficial for a different member of staff to attend (pastoral lead, HOY, class teacher, TA) this would be appropriate.

Developed by Colin Newton and Derek Wilson (the pioneers behind the Circle of Adults approach), the Insights and Solution Circle is a high-impact, 45- 60-minute problem-solving framework designed to get teams "unstuck."

While many professional meetings focus on "fixing" a person or a problem, this approach focuses on understanding and community.

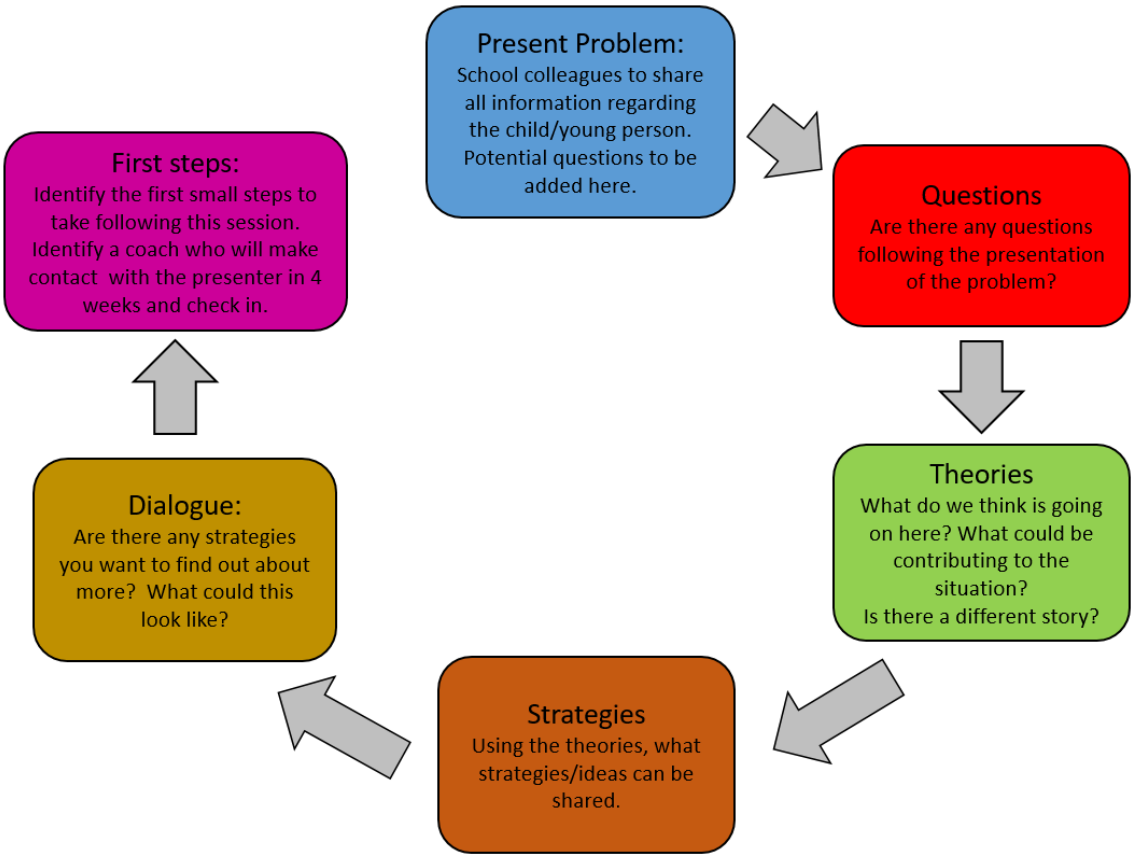
Each solution circle will be attended by a core group of professionals:

- DSPL 9 Manager and SEND Lead
- DSPL 9 SISO
- SWHP Family Support Worker
- School representatives x 2

Each session will last for one and a half hours and will have a combination of primary and secondary colleagues attending. The solution circle will enable 2 school representatives to present their case and gather feedback and support from those in attendance.

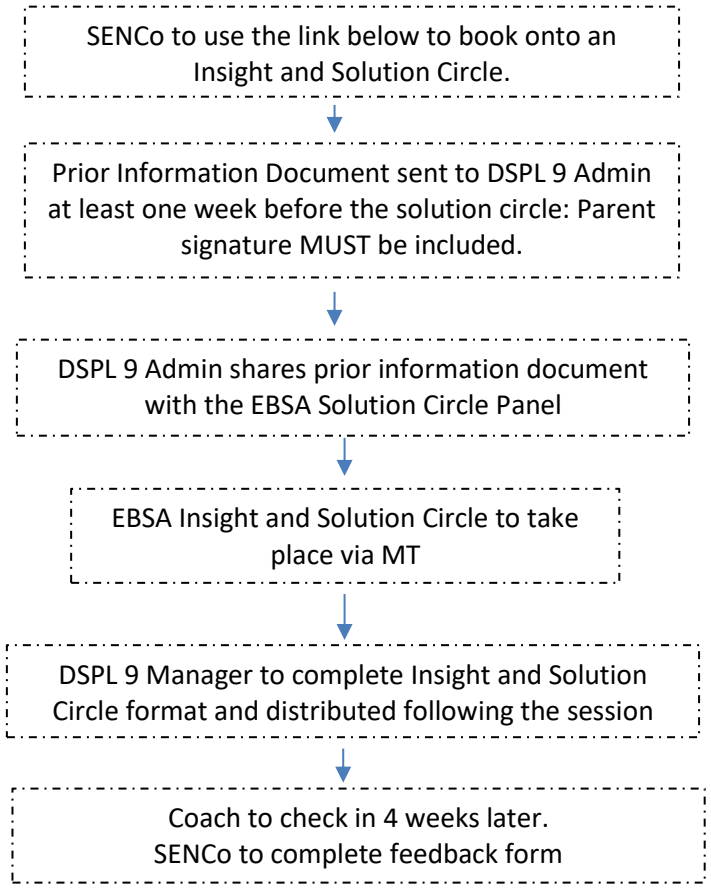
The session will follow the structure below:





As this element of the package will be around a named child, a prior information sheet will need to be send prior to the solution circle taking place and parental consent will be compulsory.

Tier 3 process flowchart:



See criteria to access tier 3 support on page 5.

Solution Circles Dates:

All sessions will run from 1-2.30pm and are available to both primary and secondary colleagues. Each session will allow for 2 cases to be discussed.

Term	Date of Insight and Solution Circle	Deadline for Prior Information Doc
Autumn Term	Monday 28th September	21.09.26
	Monday 19th October	12.10.26
	Monday 9th November	02.11.26
Spring Term	Monday 18th January	11.01.27
	Monday 8th March	01.03.27
	Monday 22nd March	15.03.27
Summer Term	Monday 19th April	12.04.27
	Monday 17th May	10.06.27

To book an EBSA Solution Circle please click here

Please note: Failure to send the signed prior information document one week before the insight and solution circle may result to your slot being given to another school.

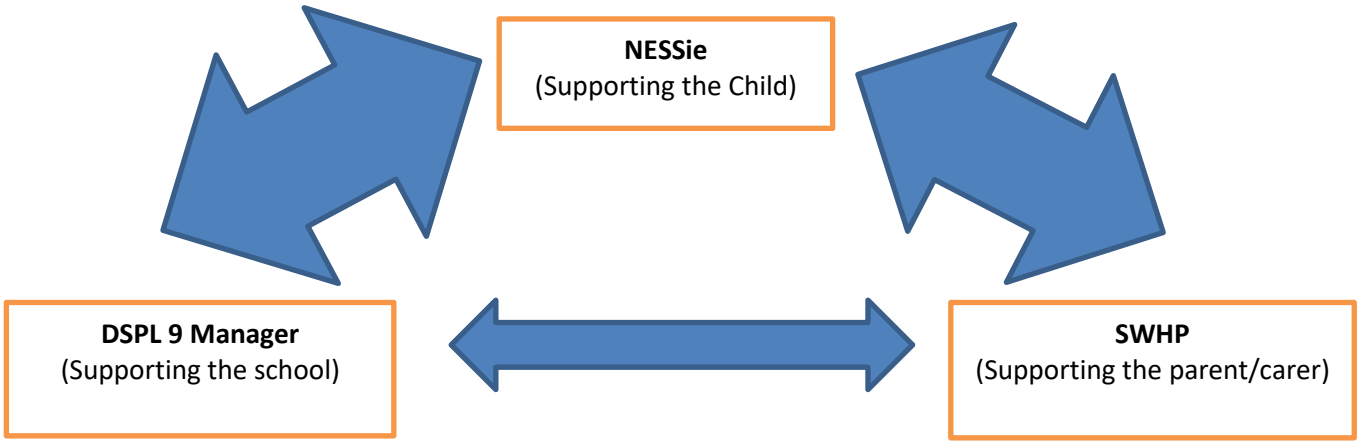
Transition Focused Support

The EBSA team provide transition support available for year 6-7 EBSA cases. These will be taken on a case by case basis and depend on availability.

Please contact Gemma Hall on gemmahall@dsplarea9.org.uk for further information.

Tier 4: Specialist Support
EBSA 1:1 Child Support

The EBSA 1:1 child support will be overseen by the DSPL 9 Manager to ensure consistency across cases and to moderate support and impact. At this level, DSPL 9, in collaboration with NESSie and SWHP (South West Herts Partnership) will provide a triangulated approach to enable support to be available to the child, the family and the school. Please see diagram below:



Accessing Tier 4 support

The EBSA Tier 4 support panel will meet once during the first half of the autumn term and again in the first half of the spring term to consider applications for children experiencing EBSA at an occasional, intermittent of frequent level and already accessing support at earlier tiers. During the panel each application will be considered for suitability against the tier 4 criteria and from this 4 CYP will be identified to access the 12 week package of support.
PLEASE NOTE: Applications for the first round of support in the autumn term will not have necessarily attended the solution circles, however all other elements of support will need to be evidence in any applications received (see tick list on tier 4 referral form).

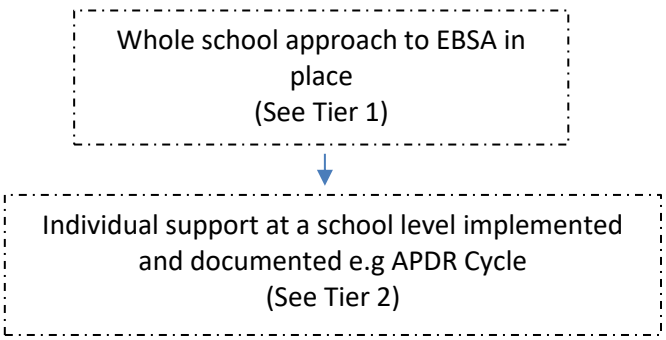
What if you are unsuccessful?
Feedback, signposting and next steps will be provided for those unsuccessful application.

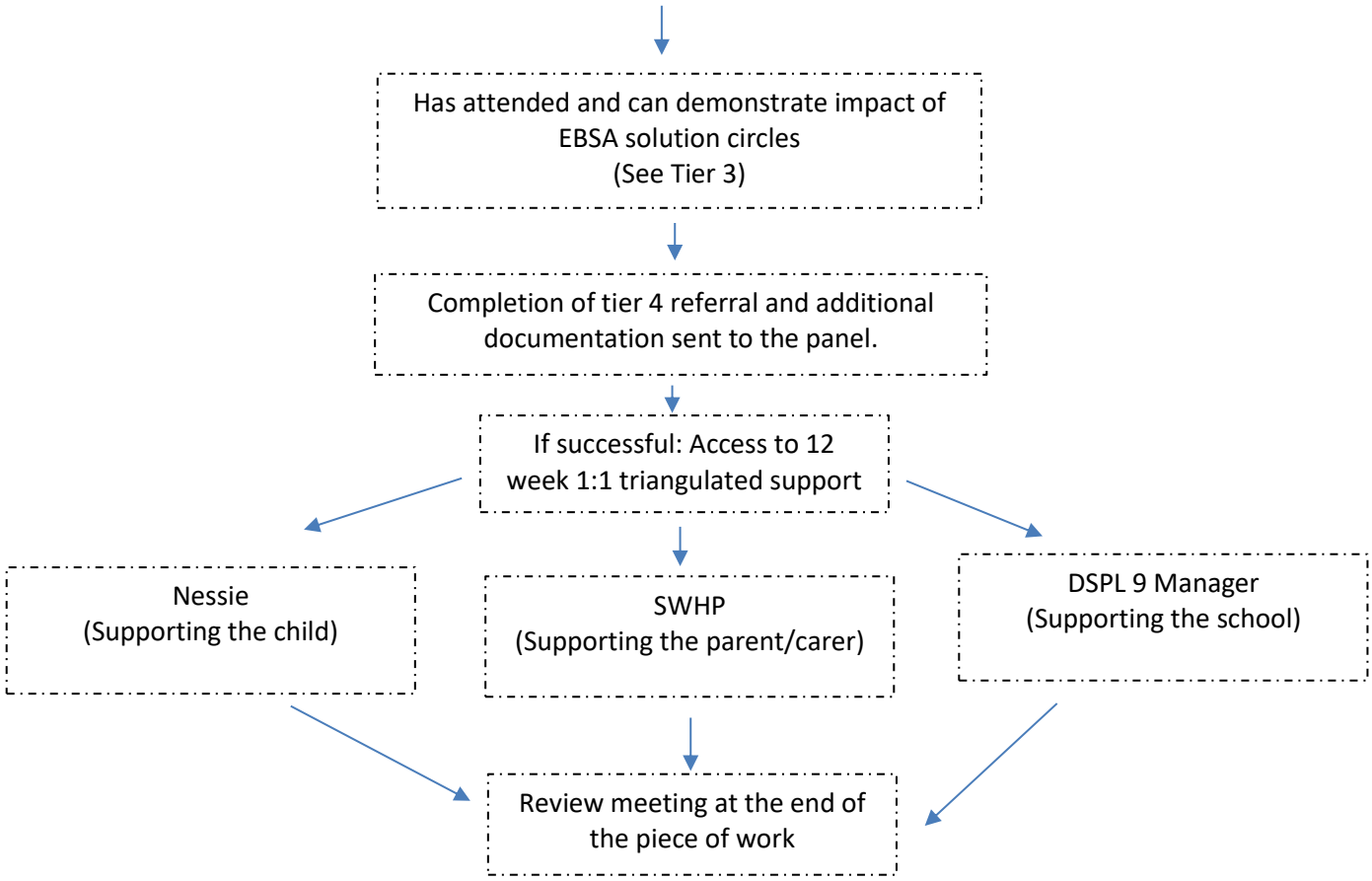
The panel will consist of:

- DSPL 9 Manager
- SWHP Family Worker
- NESSie Therapist

The purpose of tier 4 support is to enable all aspects of the child's EBSA to be addressed. It will enable outcomes to be considered both at school and at home and regular professionals meetings to ensure progress is being made and that the approach is having an impact.
Those successful in their application will be able to access a 12 week piece of work where a triangulated approach to supporting the CYP with EBSA will be used. A total of 6 CYP will be supported over a 12 week period.

Flowchart for tier 4 support





See criteria to access tier 4 support on page 5.

What will the support look like?
Each CYP and their families will access a 12 week piece of work built around their individual EBSA needs:

	Meetings	Focus
Week 1	Initial planning meeting: • Parent • CYP if appropriate • School • FSW • Nessie Therapist • DSPL 9 Manager	• All involved to meet and share up to date information. • All consent forms signed • Development of graduated exposure plan to identify steps to success. • Discussions around how each service will support and work with the CYP, parents and school to achieve the outcome.
Weeks 1-5	Weekly input from the services (Pupil voice completed at initial session with Nessie)	
Week 6	Review meeting • Parent • FSW • DSPL 9 Manager	• All involved to meet, consider the outcomes within the plan. • Celebrate successes • Consider any updates or tweaks that need to be made on reflection of the work to date. • Parents, CYP and schools will be updated of any changes.
Weeks 6-12	Weekly input from the services (Pupil voice completed at the final session with Nessie)	

Week 12	Closure meeting ● Parent ● School ● CYP if appropriate ● FSW ● Nessie Therapist ● DSPL 9 Manager	● Impact of the support to be considered and celebrated. ● Next steps and continued support to be discussed.

Aspects to consider prior to a tier 4 referral:

- Do both the CYP and parent understand what EBSA is and how this support will benefit them? Has the additional document been shared with all to ensure a good level of understanding prior to agreement?
- Have both the CYP and parent given consent to participate in this support?
- Is there a space on a weekly basis that can be used by Nessie and SWHP for sessions to take place?
- Have parents been provided with the dates and times for any meetings that will be taking place as part of the tier 4 support?

Tier 4 Dates:

	Application Deadline	Panel meeting	Start of support	End of support
Round 1	05.10.26	12.10.26	02.11.26	08.02.27
Round 2	25.01.27	01.02.27	22.02.27	07.06.27

PLEASE NOTE:
There is an expectation that those schools who access tier 4 support engage in and attend all meetings, virtual check ins and sessions related to the support.

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Tier 3 Prior Information
Appendix 2	Tier 4 Referral Form
Appendix 3	Tier 3 Solution Circle Discussion Tool
Appendix 4	Tier 3 Solution Circle Evaluation
Appendix 5	Tier 3 Impact Feedback
Appendix 6	Tier 4: Parent Information document
Appendix 7	Parent/carer consent form
Appendix 8	SDQ
Appendix 9	Pupil Voice
Appendix 10	School Stress Survey
Appendix 11	School day Ladder Activity
Appendix 12	School day sorting activity
Appendix 13	School Refusal Assessment Scale (parent)
Appendix 14	School Refusal Assessment Scale (child)

Appendix 1

Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package

Tier 3: EBSA Solution Circle

Prior Information Document

Section 1:

Your name:	Role:
School:	
Email address	Phone number:

Section 2:

Child's name		
Date of Birth:	Gender:	
Year Group:	Attendance at school%:	
Indication of where CYP is in relation to EBSA spectrum:	Occasional Avoidance	
	Intermittent Avoidance	
	Frequent Avoidance	
Reduced timetable information (if appropriate):		
Parent's name:	Relationship to CYP:	
Parent email address:	Parent phone number:	
Is the parent accessing the DSPL 9 EBSA Parent Support Group? Yes/No		

Section3:

Please describe the current situation in relation to EBSA, its impact on the child/family/education; identified risks and other concerns.	
Other agencies involved with the family (and duration if known):	
Name of service/agency	Reason for input and duration if known

Parents view and comments:	
CYP views and comments (if appropriate)	
What outcomes would you like as a result of this referral/support?	
School: Parents: CYP:	

SENCo signature		Parent signature	
Date		Date	

Please ensure this referral and supporting evidence is sent to admin@dsplarea9.org.uk clearly titled as **DSPL 9 EBSA Tier 3 referral**

Appendix 2

Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package

Tier 4: EBSA 1:1 Child Support

Referral Form

Section 1:

Your name:	Role:
School:	
Email address	Phone number:

Section 2:

Child's name		
Date of Birth:	Gender:	
Year Group:	Attendance at school%:	
Indication of where CYP is in relation to EBSA spectrum:	Occasional Avoidance	
	Intermittent Avoidance	
	Frequent Avoidance	
Reduced timetable information (if appropriate):		
Parent's name:	Relationship to CYP:	
Parent email address:	Parent phone number:	
Is the parent accessing the DSPL 9 EBSA Parent Support Group? Yes/No		

Section3:

Please describe the current situation in relation to EBSA, its impact on the child/family/education; identified risks and other concerns.
Other agencies involved with the family (and duration if known):

Name of service/agency	Reason for input and duration if known

What outcomes would the child/young person like as a result of this referral/support?
What outcomes would the parents like as a result of this referral/support?
What outcomes would the school like as a result of this referral/support?

SENCo signature		Parent signature		CYP signature	
Date		Date		Date	

Please ensure this referral and supporting evidence is sent to admin@dsplarea9.org.uk clearly titled as **DSPL 9 EBSA Tier 4 referral**

Tier 4 Check list

Must include	Tick if attached to this document
Evidence of personalised and holistic plan	
Evidence of pupil voice (school refusal assessment scale/EBSNA Framework questionnaire)	
Evidence of collaborative working with parents (school refusal assessment scale/EBSNA Framework questionnaire)	
Evidence of reduced timetable (if appropriate)	
Evidence of attendance and impact of solution circles (if applicable)	
Completion (including scoring) of an SDQ	

Please ensure the above documents are attached to the prior information form and shared as part of the referral

PLEASE NOTE:
Should you be successful in accessing tier 4 support, one identified key member of staff MUST take the lead and commit to attending all meetings and supporting the process.

There is an expectation that those schools who access tier 4 support engage in and attend all meetings, virtual check ins and sessions related to the support

Appendix 3

Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package

Tier 3: EBSA Solution Circle Discussion Tool

Section 1:

Child's name	DOB:
School:	

Section 2:

Date of solution circle:
In attendance:

Section3:

Present issue:
Team ideas/solutions:
Discussions:
Next steps:

Appendix 4

Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package

Tier 3: EBSA Solution Circle Evaluation

Section 1:

Your name:	Role:
School:	

Section 2:

	Excellent 1	Good 2	Satisfactory 3	Unsatisfactory 4
1) How useful was the solution circle?				
2) How well did the professionals support you during the solution circle?				
3) To what extent do you feel you acquired additional strategies as a result of attending the solution circle?				
4) How confident are you in using/delivering these additional strategies?				

Section3:

What did you find the most interesting/useful?	What did you find the least interesting/useful/lacking?
What would you like to know more about?	

Appendix 5

Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package
Tier 3: EBSA Solution Circle
Impact Feedback

Section 1:

Your name:	Role:
School:	

Section 2:

Child's name	
Date of Birth:	Gender:

Section3:

Attendance at time of solution circle:	
Current attendance %:	
Reduced timetable status:	
Impact of additional strategies:	

Appendix 6

Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package
Tier 4: Parent Information

What is EBSA?

Emotionally Based School Absence/Avoidance (EBSA) refers to reduced or non-school attendance by a child or young person due to multiple factors. The avoidance or absence is rooted in emotional, mental health and well-being factors (Anna Freud Centre,2023).

Below we have listed different sources with further information for families and carers.

For further information on the Hertfordshire Local Offer click here.

The Anna Freud Centre has many resources to support families. Click here

For an easy-to-understand Youtube video click explaining EBSA, click here

DSPL 9 Support Package

Here in DSPL 9, we have recognised that EBSA continues to be an issue for many of our children and young people. In response to this, we have developed a support package to enable schools, parents and children to seek local support and work collaboratively to overcome the many barriers that lead to EBSA.

Your son or daughter has been identified by the school as experiencing EBSA and therefore eligible to access support through the DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package.

What does this mean?

Your son/daughter, you as a parent and the school will be supported over a 12-week period by the following professionals:

- **Nessie Therapist:** Supporting your child to work through the issues leading to EBSA and providing strategies and ideas to be able to understand EBSA and learn to cope better.
- **Family Support Worker (FSW):** Supporting you to consider how you can best support your child to overcome his/her emotionally based school absence.
- **DSPL 9 Manager and SEND Lead:** Supporting the school to ensure they are working collectively with the above agencies and providing support from a school perspective.

This work will form a triangulated approach encompassing all aspects of the child's EBSA.

How will this happen?

- Initially, you will be contacted by the Nessie Therapist and FSW to arrange a meeting to consider how the support will work, what assessments will need to be carried out, and any initial next steps/actions.
- You will meet on a weekly basis for 10 weeks with the FSW following the initial meeting.
- Your child will have weekly one-hour sessions with the Nessie Therapist at school. It is important the child is supported to attend these sessions outside of their teaching/ timetabling.
- The school will meet with the DSPL 9 Manager on weekly basis.
- At the 12th week, all those involved (including yourself) will attend a meeting to consider the impact of the support and any next steps.

What if I have any questions during the support?

You will be able to ask your FSW any questions you have when you meet or alternatively contact Gemma Hall (DSPL 9 Manager and SEND Lead) on gemmahall@dsplarea9.org.uk

For further information about Nessie please click here.

For further information about the Family Support Workers please click here.

For further information about DSPL 9 please click here.

Appendix 7

Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9
Consent to support from the EBSA Support Package: Tier 4

Name of child/young person:……

Known as: …….

Address: ……..

……

Date of Birth:……

School/s (if applicable): …….

Year/s in School (if applicable)……..

Emergency contact number…….

Emergency contact email ……..

Name of contact …….

Relationship to named above ……

The team around the family will be working closely with different professionals as well as schools. This helps our services to meet the needs of individual children, young people and their families.

We may need to share information about you and your family and also ask for information from professionals that will assist us to understand your situation. We need your consent before we contact professionals.

You may withdraw consent to information sharing at any time by informing us in writing you wish to withdraw consent. You may also ask for the information shared to be conditional, for instance if there is someone you don't want us to share your information with or obtain information from.

Any details of the services we provide or information about you or your family will be stored and used in strict accordance with our registration under the Data Protection Act 1998.

You do not have to consent to information sharing but this may make it difficult to provide the services that you or your family need. You should also know that we have a legal duty to share information with other agencies if we believe it will protect you, prevent harm to someone else or prevent/detect a crime.

If we use your information for other reasons, for example to plan our services or do research, then we will make sure that you cannot be identified.

We will not use your information for staff training without asking you for specific consent at the time.

I give consent for the person named above to take part in sessions with a Nessie Practitioner (including Trainee Clinical Psychologist):

Yes ☐

No ☐

I consent for DSPL 9/NESSie/SWHP to share and receive personal information, for the purpose of supporting the named above if needed, with the following named professional/s:

School / education setting Yes ☐No ☐

Hertfordshire County Council
(Including DSPL, ISL, SEN & Children's services) Yes ☐No ☐

Behaviour support services Yes ☐No ☐

Medical professionals
(including GP, CDC, CAMHS, Step2, Educational psychologist & PALMS) Yes ☐No ☐

By signing below I give consent for DSPL 9/NESSie/SWHP to store data electronically and in paper form, as appropriate (please see NESSie Privacy Policy for further information). Anonymous data may be shared by DSPL 9/NESSie/SWHP with commissioners of Hertfordshire and the Department of Health to help inform and improve wellbeing services. Parents / carers / persons can retract permission for us to hold personal information at any time by contacting the following: gemmahall@dsplarea9.org.uk

I give consent for support from a DSPL 9/NESSie/SWHP.

Name: .....

Signature:…… Date:……

Appendix 8 (Electronic copies via here)

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire T 4-17

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems daft! Please give your answers on the basis of the child's behaviour over the last six months or this school year.

Child's Name ..... Male/Female

Date of Birth.....

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
Considerate of other people's feelings	☐	☐	☐
Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long	☐	☐	☐
Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	☐	☐	☐
Shares readily with other children (treats, toys, pencils etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers	☐	☐	☐
Rather solitary, tends to play alone	☐	☐	☐
Generally obedient, usually does what adults request	☐	☐	☐
Many worries, often seems worried	☐	☐	☐
Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	☐	☐	☐
Constantly fidgeting or squirming	☐	☐	☐
Has at least one good friend	☐	☐	☐
Often fights with other children or bullies them	☐	☐	☐
Often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful	☐	☐	☐
Generally liked by other children	☐	☐	☐
Easily distracted, concentration wanders	☐	☐	☐
Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence	☐	☐	☐
Kind to younger children	☐	☐	☐
Often lies or cheats	☐	☐	☐
Picked on or bullied by other children	☐	☐	☐
Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, other children)	☐	☐	☐
Thinks things out before acting	☐	☐	☐
Steals from home, school or elsewhere	☐	☐	☐
Gets on better with adults than with other children	☐	☐	☐
Many fears, easily scared	☐	☐	☐
Sees tasks through to the end, good attention span	☐	☐	☐

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

Please turn over - there are a few more questions on the other side

Overall, do you think that this child has difficulties in one or more of the following areas: emotions, concentration, behaviour or being able to get on with other people?

No	Yes- minor difficulties	Yes- definite difficulties	Yes- severe difficulties
☐	☐	☐	☐

If you have answered "Yes", please answer the following questions about these difficulties:

- How long have these difficulties been present?

Less than a month	1-5 months	6-12 months	Over a year
☐	☐	☐	☐

- Do the difficulties upset or distress the child?

Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
☐	☐	☐	☐

- Do the difficulties interfere with the child's everyday life in the following areas?

	Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
PEER RELATIONSHIPS	☐	☐	☐	☐
CLASSROOM LEARNING	☐	☐	☐	☐

- Do the difficulties put a burden on you or the class as a whole?

Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
☐	☐	☐	☐

Signature ..... Date .....

Class Teacher/Form Tutor/Head of Year/Other (please specify:)

Thank you very much for your help

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SDQ SCORING 1

SCORING EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
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	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
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	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
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	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐

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SDQ SCORING 2

SCORING CONDUCT PROBLEMS

	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	2 ☐	**1** ☐	**0** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
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	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
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	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

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SDQ SCORING 3

SCORING HYPERACTIVITY

	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
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	☐	☐	☐
	2 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	2 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐

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SDQ SCORING 4

SCORING PEER PROBLEMS

	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	2 ☐	**1** ☐	**0** ☐
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	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	**1** ☐	**2** ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

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SDQ SCORING 5

SCORING PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

	0 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	0 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
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	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

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SDQ Record Sheet

Name ..... **Age** ..... **Male/Female** **Clinic/Study Number** .....

SDQ completed by: PARENT **on** .....

TEACHER on .....

SELF **on** .....

Scale		Normal													Borderline			Abnormal										
	P	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	....	40
Total difficulties	**T**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	.....	**40**	
	S	*0*	*2*	*4*	*6*	*8*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*	*21*	*22*	*23*	*24*	*25*	*26*	...	*40*				
	P	0			1				2				3			4			5		6		7		8		9		10
Emotional sympt.	**T**	**0**			**1**				**2**				**3**			**4**			**5**		**6**		**7**		**8**		**9**		**10**
	S	*0*			*1*				*2*				*3*			*4*			*5*		*6*		*7*		*8*		*9*		*10*
	P	0					1						2			3			4		5		6		7		8		9	10
Conduct problems	**T**	**0**					**1**						**2**			**3**			**4**		**5**		**6**		**7**		**8**		**9**	**10**
	S	*0*				*1*					*2*				*3*			*4*		*5*		*6*		*7*		*8*		*9*	*10*
	P	0		1		2		3		4		5				6			7			8				9				10
IIyperactivity	**T**	**0**		**1**		**2**		**3**		**4**		**5**				**6**			**7**			**8**				**9**				**10**
	S	*0*		*1*		*2*		*3*		*4*		*5*				*6*			*7*			*8*				*9*				*10*
	P	0					1						2			3			4		5		6		7		8		9	10
Peer problems	**T**	**0**			**1**				**2**				**3**			**4**			**5**		**6**		**7**		**8**		**9**		**10**
	S	*0*			*1*				*2*				*3*		*4*		*5*		*6*		*7*		*8*				*9*			*10*
	P	10		9		8		7		6						5			4		3		2				1			0
Prosocial behav.	**T**	**10**		**9**		**8**		**7**		**6**						**5**			**4**		**3**		**2**				**1**			**0**
	S	*10*		*9*		*8*		*7*		*6*						*5*			*4*		*3*		*2*				*1*			*0*

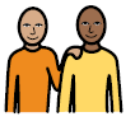
DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package

Tier 4: Pupil Voice

Name:	Date:
School:	
Please complete this form at the beginning and end of the tier 4 support.	



How I feel going to school	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	
How I feel in the classroom	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	
How I feel leaving my parents in the morning	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	
How I feel talking to adults in my school	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	
How I feel asking for help	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	
How I feel in the playground with my friends	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	
How I feel having my lunch	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	
How I feel about what I am learning	 Dislike	 Okay	 Happy	

	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not often/hardly ever
I feel listened to 				
I feel supported 				
I feel safe 				
I have friends 				
I know what to do when I have a problem 				
I feel supported in my learning 				

The best thing about school is:
Coming to school would be even better if…….

Appendix 10

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		
Total Score:		

Timetable Issues	
Other Issues	

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School Stress Survey – 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

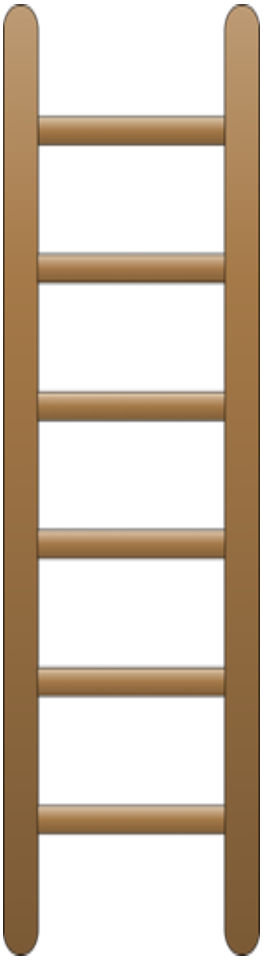
The scoring below is not an exact science – it is based on averages / a 'rule of thumb' rather than standardisation.

12 → 18	19 → 36	37 → 48
High and regular stress levels. Student will require additional support in managing their day-today 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.

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Appendix 11

EBSA Ladder



Most Worried About
Not So Worried About

The noise in/on…	Going into a lesson (eg maths)
Going into a busy dining hall	School rules such as….
Understanding what I need to do	PE lessons
Travelling to school	Going to the toilet
Putting on my uniform at home	Getting something wrong
Seeing pupils around school	Teachers asking me questions
The smell of…	Understanding what the teacher means
Speaking to another pupil	Lunch time

Other pupils asking me questions	Going into an empty classroom
Going into reception area/walking into the school building	Getting a question wrong
Seeing my friends in school	Meeting a member of staff in the school car park
Break time	Leaving the house

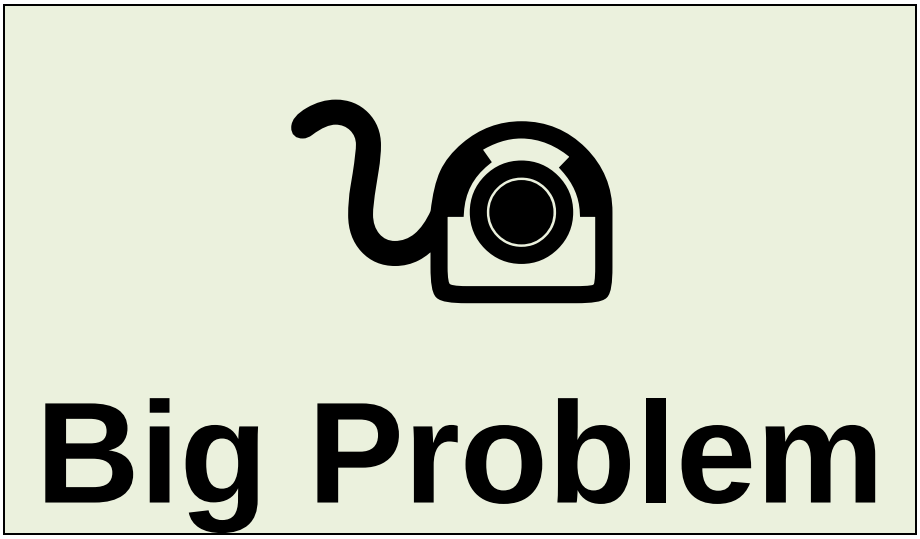
Appendix 12

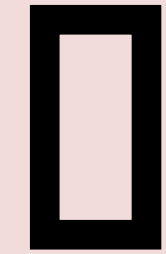
Sort It Game !

The faces can mean different things, but generally refer to ‘gut feeling’ (e.g. no problem to big problem, no worries to lots of worries) without too much time for thinking or discussion while sorting. The means that the student does not want or ‘need’ to discuss it – not appropriate for subjects but possibly so for some more sensitive ‘Aspects of Life’ cards.

1. Give the pupil the ‘face’ cards
2. Ask them what they think they mean (correct if necessary – using age appropriate terminology if possible)
3. Place the ‘word’ cards upside down – randomly
4. Explain how to ‘play’ the game
5. Model the procedure – you choose a card – turn it the right way and then quickly decide which pile (relating to the face) you think it goes with
6. Start – encourage limited thinking / deciding time (so it is a ‘gut’ reaction)
7. Ask them what they thought of the game







Sometimes a problem



Nothing to do with me

English	Maths	Science
Art	PE	DT
Music	ICT	Circle Time
Talking	Friends	Writing
Rules at home	Rules at school	Rows/fights
Getting to school	Being good at things	The Future
Stealing	The Past	Food
Anger	Love	Family
Bullying	Worries	Being liked by other children
Little brother	Being liked by teachers	Looking nice
Lies	My bedroom	Changes
Being late	Being in class	Noise
Losing	Breakfast	?
?		?
?	?	
Reading	Lunch time	
Brother or sister		

Reading

English

Maths

Science

Art

PE

Circle Time

Talking

ICT

Rules at home

Rules at school	Rows/fights
Lunch time	Brother or sister
Noise	